

**FENDALTON/WAIMAIRI COMMUNITY BOARD
SUBMISSION ON THE DRAFT ANNUAL PLAN 2005/06**

The Board appreciates the opportunity to present a submission to the Council's draft Annual Plan for 2005/06 and wishes to be heard in support of this submission.

1. UNIFORM ANNUAL GENERAL CHARGE (Page 24)

In submissions made in past years, the Board has proposed that the level of the Uniform Annual General Charge was too low and was not representative of a charge on ratepayers commensurate with the costs involved with providing core Council services. Given that approximately 50% of the rate take relates to these core services, the Board still contends that a much higher Uniform Annual General Charge should be applied in recognition that generally the majority of ratepayers utilise core services.

The Board therefore submits that the Council consider raising the existing level of \$115 per rating unit.

2. FUNDING FOR FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE (Pages 27 - 31)

The Board notes the ongoing cost requirements in relation to the operation of both the Christchurch Art Gallery and Canterbury Museum and is also aware of the Council's recent considerations regarding an option of introducing user charges.

The Board continues to support the proposition of entry charges being levied on visitors using these facilities in a similar manner to those for other recreation, arts and cultural facilities in the city. While there may be difficulties in differentiating between different types of visitors, the Board considers that a charging system should be implemented thereby reducing the overall imposition on local ratepayers.

In a wider context, the Board would also invite the Council to consider other funding options such as the introduction of a 'hotel bed tax' or targeted rate covering the city's accommodation providers. Such an approach would, in the Board's opinion, contribute to meeting the operational costs of the Council's infrastructural facilities and services.

The Board submits that the assessment of such options be undertaken by independent consultants.

3. UNDERGROUND WIRING CONVERSION (Pages 72 and 74)

The Board again notes with disappointment the paucity of funding provided to enable underground wiring conversions to occur as part of the street renewal programme.

The Board supports the statement made by residents in its community that the Council's undergrounding policy discriminates unfairly on a significant number of elderly within its ward, and that it is a cost that should fall within the usual capital programme for street renewals, when the kerb and channelling is programmed.

The Board does not believe that this is a Fendalton/Waimairi issue but that it impacts on the whole city. It is submitted that there would not be many ratepayers in streets that are due to have kerb and channelling done, who could readily meet the 50% contribution required.

Given that the cost of achieving this integration, seems beyond the present means, the Board would again suggest that the Council consider the option of slowing the renewal programme to better accommodate, the total upgrading of affected streets.

The Board submits that there are a number of advantages in taking this holistic approach in terms of overall construction costs being reduced as all work would be done at the one time, safety for the public including the road users would be improved through the removal of poles, environmental and visual amenity would be enhanced and maintenance requirements on the asset owners would also be lessened.

The Board would be willing, if the Council adopted this approach, to explain to its local affected residents the reasons for any further delay in their renewal programme.

There would be no extra funds expected from the ratepayers to fund this option.

The Board would also invite the Council to consider any future capital dividends overseen by CCHL to be tagged and used for future undergrounding upgrades, as part of the Council's street renewal programme. This funding when it did come in could accelerate the renewal programme and help achieve the goal the Council set itself in its meeting of 14 December 1993 that all services would be undergrounded within the next forty years.

4. COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Last year the Board noted that the draft plan for 2005 included a specific funding provision for consultation with Maori and that this was in addition to the general costs of consultation with the wider community.

While acknowledging that the Local Government Act 2002 requires the use of processes for consulting with Maori, the Board would again be concerned if this intention was repeated in the current draft plan. It is the Board's view that the process of consultation with interest and sector groups should be provided for within the overall costs, where relevant, of any project being undertaken by the Council.

5. DECENTRALISATION

The Board has submitted on previous occasions the importance and desirability of providing Council services to the community in the community.

The announced revised increase in the funding needed for the new Civic Offices building is of concern to the Board. One option the Board asks that the Council consider is the corporatising of some current activities undertaken by business units. If implemented, this should result in fewer employees needing to be accommodated thereby reducing the scale and cost of the building required.

Better utilisation of existing Council decentralised facilities is also suggested as another means of reducing the overall capital cost requirement in providing a new Civic Offices building.

6. FLAT WATER FACILITY

The Board has followed the Council's consideration of this matter with much interest. If in due course, the Council decides not to utilise the funding provision for this facility then the Board would ask that the \$10.4 million balance be assigned towards citywide infrastructure projects including the undergrounding of overhead services.

7. CAPITAL ENDOWMENT FUND (Page 97)

The Board submits that the Council should re-evaluate the objectives of the Capital Endowment Fund with one option favoured by the Board being to limit the life of the fund maybe for the next five years and that the accumulated funding at that time, be made available for progressing the Council's capital programmes and core service initiatives.

8. BISHOPDALE SHOPPING CENTRE & BISHOPDALE COMMUNITY CENTRE

The Board was recently pleased to learn that the Facility Assets Unit would during 2005/06, be undertaking interior improvements to the Bishopdale Community Centre including in particular, an upgrade of the hevac system. User groups have been raising this particular issue and the Board appreciates the commitment now to be given by the Unit to improving the interior environment for users.

With regard to the Council's wider ownership interests in relation to the pedestrian areas and carparks, the Board is aware that the previous Council did undertake to carry out a strategic review of its involvement in the Bishopdale Shopping Centre. This has still to occur and the Board would ask that this be expedited and reported on.

9. JELLIE PARK AQUALAND (Page 82)

The expenditure proposed for the upgrading of this important and popular facility is endorsed. The Board would ask that the overall funding be sufficient to meet the needs of the project upgrade as a whole including carparking, roading and traffic management requirements.

The options for the Jellie Park Aqualand redevelopment as presented to the Council Seminar on 10 May 2005 are noted by the Board.

The Board seeks the Council's endorsement of Option 3 as best meeting community and user needs for the long term and also having regard to the findings to date in developing the Council's Aquatic Facility Strategy.

The Board is well aware of the intense use of the present facility particularly by local schools and other specialist user groups and understands the drivers for the upgrade as presented to the Council. Option 3 will in the Board's opinion, provide the future proofing required.

The Board would appreciate being kept informed about the details relating to the upgrading and timing proposed for the improvements.

10. LOCAL PROJECTS AND IMPROVEMENTS

The Board recently identified a number of issues it wishes to address during the current term. These include such matters as roading and road safety improvements, new footpaths, remedying localised flooding problems, city plan related issues, eg Memorial Avenue advertising, tree protection.

The Board appreciates that it can make a contribution to resolving some of these issues in the form of allocating its own project funding, however would prefer to work in partnership with business units through the implementation and consultation phases of their work programmes.

The Board is especially keen to be involved in assisting in the prioritising of specific projects including any ongoing funding support that may assist.

11. CLEANLINESS OF STREETS/LITTER

As was stated to the Council last year, the Board is concerned to still note the lowering of standards in respect of the cleanliness of city streets and open space areas.

Targeted initiatives last year for the central city along with anti litter education programmes are endorsed, however the Board submits that more attention now needs to be given to suburban locations to ensure that the communities expectations over the cleanliness of streets and litter collection measures are effective.

The Board also seeks a higher level of enforcement of the Litter Act provisions and any associated Council by-laws.

12. HERITAGE BUILDINGS

The Board supports any measures being taken by the Council to ensure that a workable planning approach together with appropriate levels of funding assistance is available to safeguard the retention of heritage buildings in the city. Partnerships with external agencies and business interests aimed at preserving historical aspects of the city's built environment is endorsed.

13. ORANA WILDLIFE PARK (Page 38)

The Board continues to support this facility as a significant educational and leisure asset to the city, as well as a major tourist attraction. The park is unique in that it is not a Council owned facility like the Wellington and Auckland zoos which receive council operational funding grants of \$1.12 and \$1.5 million respectively.

In 2003/2004 the Park received a grant of \$175,000 from the Council. A Deloitte's review in 2002 recommended that this level of funding be increased to \$225,000 per year and in 2004/2005 the Council increased their contribution to \$200,000. The Board would submit that this level of funding be increased to the level recommended by Deloitte's in 2002 and sourced from the social initiatives budget.

14. ROAD SAFETY (Pages 38 & 84)

The Board notes that funding for road safety promotion has been reduced from \$623,000 to \$425,000, which amounts to a 32% funding decrease.

On page 84 (Streets and Transport) significant funding has seemingly been cut completely for minor safety projects, road safety at schools, safe routes to schools and pedestrian safety initiatives/crossing facilities.

The Board does not support such a large reduction in these programmes as road safety continues to be an important and recurring issue in the Fendalton/Waimairi community particularly around schools.

15. SAFER CANTERBURY

The Board commends the Council in its leadership in the development of this strategy in partnership with other agencies.

Alongside Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design, the Board would wholeheartedly support the inclusion of these principles in all planning, development, renewal of parks, public amenities, roadways, and cycleways projects.

The Board would also submit that the Council allocate funding to have crime prevention safety audit undertaken for all the Councils' parks and open space areas.

16. STREET TREES

Throughout the Fendalton/Waimairi ward there are many streets with the flowering cherry as the dominant street tree.

The Board is aware of recurring issues associated with the suitability or otherwise of this particular species and would ask that the Council ensure that appropriate resources are allocated to allow a planned and ongoing replacement programme to occur.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Wall', with a large, stylized initial 'M'.

Mike Wall
CHAIRMAN

10 May 2005

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