

introduction from the mayor and chief executive

This Christchurch City Council Annual Plan is a graphic example of changes that have been taking place in recent years in the way local government does its planning.

These days, council annual plans are simpler documents. They include only what their name implies – a one-year plan, in this case showing the work the City Council intends to deliver on behalf of the people of Christchurch in the 12 months from 1 July 2005.

Not so long ago, our annual plans held similar information, but each year the Council also had to look out over the subsequent years and give pretty firm indications of what was afoot. The year-by-year nature of local body planning, as well as requiring a power of work, meant local bodies could chop and change; in theory, a council could do a complete about-face from one year to the other.

Now, under a 2002 law, councils are meant to undertake their major planning exercise at least once every three years, in a public process which develops and creates what we call a long-term community plan. The idea is that councils should work harder, but less often, to understand what their communities want and then stick pretty much on that track for three years unless there's a powerful reason to change. Members of the public, by reading that long-term community plan, should have a pretty good idea of what their council has decided it will (and won't) do over that period. It's a kind of no-surprises guarantee.

Here at Christchurch City Council, now that we've got this one-year plan out of the way, we will start reviewing our long-term plan. You can see the current one at www.ccc.govt.nz/Ltccp/ on the Council website and read some material about the Community Outcomes on which it is based. We'll be working on that throughout the year and into 2006. When it's approved, it will be the major blueprint showing the Christchurch City Council's intentions for the three years from 2006 and, in effect, will be the most important piece of work I and my fellow elected members will do in this term of Council.

During this process, there are plenty of opportunities for people to get involved and have their say. I urge anyone with an interest in the city's development and future to take the time and get involved.

In the meantime, I commend this annual plan to you. Christchurch City Council remains in very good heart, in both spirit and finances. Compared to any other large city in New Zealand, Christchurch people's rates are low and I believe we get great value for what we are asked to pay.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Garry Moore". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Garry Moore

Mayor of Christchurch

introduction from the mayor and chief executive

Our 2006 Annual Plan focuses on what we are proposing to deliver for the 2005/06 year. It is not a year in which we are updating our long-term plans – this will be done next year when we develop our long-term community plan for the period 2006-16.

This Annual Plan uses the same basic structure as the long-term plan, looking at the various activities the Christchurch City Council undertakes on behalf of the city and setting out how budgets will be spent. Effectively, there is little difference between this year's Annual Plan and that projected in last year's long-term plan (2004-14).

Our draft Annual Plan contained all the information that was required by the Local Government Act 2002. However, we have tried to simplify this final annual plan by not repeating all the service descriptions and performance measures for each activity as they have not changed from our long-term plan. We have provided references back to the long-term plan for readers who would like greater detail.

Even with this more simple approach, this document is still about 60 pages long.

This year we are also producing a short summary document which we believe will identify the key issues and financial details, and hopefully give readers a simple snapshot of what is a very complex business.

The rate increase of 3.49 per cent, which is slightly below that projected in our long-term plan, has not been easily achieved. Cost increases, well in excess of inflation, have impacted upon Council, not only at the capital expenditure level, but also in a number of our operating expense items. Additional income is being received as a result of higher interest rates on our investments, however this is not sustainable in the long run.

The demand for more services from the community continues. A number of submitters to our draft Annual Plan suggested Council should maintain its rates increase at lower than inflation, but without lowering levels of service or reducing some functions - this is not an easily attainable goal.

The changes from the draft to the final have tended to be internal cost realignments. There have been no changes to service levels. Details of changes are covered on page 12.

As the Mayor has said, we are starting to review and develop our long-term plan for 2006-16. We will be inviting the community to provide feedback on that plan next year. I encourage you to take that opportunity and get involved in helping to shape our city.



Lesley McTurk

Dr. Lesley McTurk

Chief Executive