

5. OLDER PERSONS' WELLBEING

Officer responsible Director of Policy	Author Lyn Campbell, DDI 941-8890
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The purpose of this report is to propose to the Committee that it recommend to the Council's Annual Plan Subcommittee that provision be made in the 2003/04 Annual Plan for funding to begin its strategic planning and collaboration, to ensure the city is in the best position to respond to the increasing number of older people in Christchurch.

While the Council did undertake work to develop an Older Persons' Policy in September 1998 followed by an Action Plan in December 1999, little has been done since then to ensure that the Council and relevant agencies in Christchurch address the implications of the demographic changes.

In November 2002 a Positive Ageing forum was hosted by Christchurch City Council. This drew together key people from organisations which included Canterbury District Health Board; Pacific Islands; Crown Public Health; Pegasus Health; Nurse Maude Association; Presbyterian Support; Age Concern Canterbury; Richmond Fellowship; Third Age Programme, Canterbury Development Corporation; Alzheimers Canterbury Health Care New Zealand; Catholic Social Services; and Christchurch Hospital. An external reference group is in the process of being formed, with the aim of informing policy, assisting in the implementation of a strategy and providing an advocacy role, and identifying gaps, trends and needs.

It is suggested that now is an appropriate time for the Council to begin to address needs and provide leadership in consideration of issues, and appropriate responses.

There are two compelling reasons for the Council to take initiative now. The first is the changing demographics. The Canterbury District Health Board region currently has the highest number of people aged 65 and over (approximately 56,000) of any District Health Board. This group is projected to grow by 70% in the next 20 years. The over 85 age group will have an even more dramatic rise of 161% by 2021. As members of this group are the highest users of health resources and have a high degree of dependency and vulnerability in all areas of their lives, clearly there are major implications for the Council agencies and community.

Areas and issues which will need to be strategically and collaboratively addressed include housing; transport; health; taxation and Government funding; employment; social and recreational needs; accessibility to spaces, places and services; social cohesion and isolation; intergenerational support; urban planning.

The second compelling reason for proposing that the Council begins to address this matter now is the new Local Government Act, which says that the role of the local authority is to give effect to the purpose of local government defined as:

"The purpose of local government is to:

- (a) to enable democratic local decision making and action by, and on behalf of communities; and
- (b) to promote the social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing of communities in the present and for the future."

Given this purpose the Council would be remiss in not being in a position to provide leadership in facilitating consideration of the implications of demographic change to the nature and shape of the Christchurch Community. There appears to be considerable potential for effective collaboration and partnerships.

The work that the Council is doing to mesh in with the Government's work on positive ageing is a step in the right direction and it is anticipated that when the Older Persons Reference Group has completed its work later this calendar year the Reference Group and hence the Council, will have a clearer idea on the priorities to be addressed. The one thing that we can be certain about, is that there will be much more work to be done. While it is not clear what the nature and scope of this work would be, it is prudent for the Council to make budget provision for additional work to be undertaken in the 2003/04 year. It is therefore proposed that the Committee recommend to the Annual Plan Working Party that annual provision of \$75,000 be included in the 2003/04 Annual Plan for undertaking work associated with identifying priorities and planning for the increase in number of elderly in Christchurch over the next 20 years. This work is to be undertaken in co-operation with other Christchurch groups and agencies with an interest in the area. This money is to be spent only after the work programme has been approved by the Community Plans Special Committee in the 2003/2004 financial year.

Staff

Recommendation: That the Annual Plan Subcommittee be requested to consider the inclusion of an annual provision of \$75,000 in the 2003/04 AP for undertaking work associated with identifying priorities and planning for the increase in the number of elderly in Christchurch.

Chairperson's

Recommendation: That the Committee place a high priority upon this request on recognition of the importance of addressing the demographic changes for the Christchurch community.