

<b>Officer responsible</b> Leisure Unit Manager	<b>Author</b> Monique Alispahic
Corporate Plan Output: Events Management	

The purpose of this report is to seek approval to review the Events Funding Policy.

**BACKGROUND**

The Events Funding Policy records:

*“That festivals receiving core funding in the 1997/1998 annual plan be given funding on a **three-year rolling basis** subject to Council objectives, as defined in its evaluation and monitoring strategy, being satisfactorily met...”*

In the course of the 1999/2000 Annual Plan process, the Annual Plan Working Party sought clarification as to whether festivals receiving core funding could have their funding trimmed in the 1999/2000 financial year.

**LEGAL OPINION**

A legal opinion was obtained from Buddle Findlay that suggested Council had created an expectation that funding would be provided for a three-year period. If an event organiser has relied upon the policy and would suffer detriment, then the litigation risk of cutting funding to that event may outweigh any short-term gain.

The Council is required to observe the rules of natural justice in changing its events funding policy. Natural justice requires the Council to give notice of the proposed changes to the events organisers, in a manner that allows the opportunity for submissions on the changes.

Through extensive consultation it was deemed the litigation risk of suspending any of the major core funding line items, was so great it did not present clear advantages for the Council. Thus in the 1999/2000 financial year, savings were made from internal events budgets.

**FUTURE FUNDING**

It is recommended that the advice in the legal opinion be followed and formal notice be given to all core funding recipients of the Council’s intent to change its Event Funding Policy in respect of three year rolling funding, with any changes taking affect from 1 July 2000 (ie at the end of the three year funding period).

The formulation of an Events Strategy for Christchurch would embody the due process Buddle Findlay refers to, in which consultation will be undertaken. It is intended that an Events Strategy will establish clear direction for events in Christchurch and involve the major stakeholders associated with events and festivals in the city (including those in receipt of core funding). A report will be presented to the next meeting of the Parks and Recreation Committee outlining the Events Strategy brief and process.

**Recommendation:** That the Council advise all festival and event core funding recipients that the Events Funding Policy, including funding on a three-year rolling basis, is being reviewed as part of the development of a comprehensive events strategy.