

#### 4. CANTERBURY CIVIL DEFENCE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT GROUP CONSTITUTING AGREEMENT

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Corporate Plan Output: Emergency Management	

The purpose of this report is to place a draft Constituting Agreement for the formation of a Canterbury Civil Defence Emergency Group before the Council for its consideration, and comment back to Environment Canterbury.

There is currently a Civil Defence Emergency Management Bill before Parliament, and once it has become an Act, there will be a requirement to set up a Canterbury Civil Defence Emergency Management Group (CDEMG). It had been hoped that this legislation would be passed within this calendar year, but it would now seem that this will happen in the new year.

The Councils around Canterbury have been proactive in setting up a trial Civil Defence Emergency Management Group and this has now been in place for nearly 18 months. We have been using the Canterbury Mayors' Forum as an interim Civil Defence Emergency Management Group. Chief Executives or senior managers from the Councils have formed a Co-ordinating Executives Group (CEG), which is a group that is also required to be set up under the new legislation. That group has set up three working parties who have been doing a lot of work behind the scenes to achieve greater co-ordination and co-operation for Civil Defence Emergency Management in Canterbury, and preparing the way for the new structures.

The Draft Canterbury Civil Defence Emergency Management Group Constituting Agreement which is placed before Councillors will not be enacted or put in place until the new legislation has been passed, and Councils have in fact six months from that date to set up the Civil Defence Emergency Management Group. Because we are well advanced in Canterbury, it is hoped to set up that group as soon as practicable. The agreement by all the Councils of a draft constituting agreement is therefore a step in that process.

A copy of the Constituting Agreement is tabled. The Civil Defence Emergency Management Group is the formal governance body which oversees the civil defence emergency management work. It is a joint committee under the Local Government Act, and the Constituting Agreement has been based on the Waste Management Joint Committee. Each Council within the Canterbury area will have one representative on the Joint Committee, with one vote. That representative is required to be the mayor or an alternative who has been delegated the authority to act for the Mayor. The Constituting Agreement sets up the group and its functions and also sets up the Co-ordinating Executive Group, which together with its committees and working parties oversees most of the work that will be reported to the Civil Defence Emergency Management Group.

The Civil Defence Emergency Management Group will have full delegated authority to carry out its functions under the Act. The administering authority for the Civil Defence Emergency Management Group will be Environment Canterbury, and Environment Canterbury will also set up an Emergency Management Office which will service the Civil Defence Emergency Management Group and associated teams.

Costs associated with implementing civil defence emergency management actions that are the responsibility of the various Councils will fall on those Councils. Costs associated with the Civil Defence Emergency Management Group, its administration, and the Emergency Management Office will be collected by Environment Canterbury through their normal rating structure and processes.

For Canterbury, the formation of a Civil Defence Emergency Management Group and its structures is really a continuation and development of 'business as usual'. Canterbury has been leading the way in the development of co-operation in its civil defence emergency management structures, and has had a trial civil defence emergency structure in place for about 18 months. The Civil Defence Emergency Management Bill promotes the consideration of the four Rs of emergency management (reduction, readiness, response and recovery), and that is the basis on which most work in Canterbury has been done for some time. The stimulus for moving ahead with this work in Canterbury has been because we want to be prepared for the major earthquake that **will** happen on the major alpine fault, and have considerable impact on Christchurch and Canterbury. We are not suggesting that we are fully prepared for such an emergency, but we are well on the way, and our ability to respond is now better than it was in the past, and will be even better in the future.

The adoption of the Constituting Agreement does not change the current arrangements whereby Environment Canterbury, as well as administering the regional functions of civil defence in Canterbury, also provides, under contract, most of the civil defence emergency management work and structures for the Christchurch City Council. We made a decision last year to continue with that arrangement, and review it in three or four years' time when the new structures are in place and working well.

Both the Director of Operations and the Legal Services Manager have been involved in the development of the words in this constituting agreement. We are both happy with what is in it with the exception of clause 16.2 (relating to responsibility of members) and seek the deletion of the words "or otherwise agreed by the group" from that clause. We believe that these words give too much authority to the Civil Defence Emergency Management Group, on which Christchurch City Council has only one vote. That modification has been agreed by officers of Environment Canterbury and the Co-ordinating Executives Group.

**Recommendation:** That, subject to the deletion of the words "or otherwise agreed by the group" in clause 16.2, the Christchurch City Council accept the draft Constituting Agreement, and indicate that once the Act has been passed, it will agree to sign a Constituting Agreement along the lines of the draft submitted for consideration.