

6. FUTURE PATH CANTERBURY PROJECT AND ITS POSSIBLE RELATIONSHIP TO THE LONG TERM COUNCIL COMMUNITY PLAN

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The purpose of this report is to:

1. Outline the Future Path Canterbury project and progress to date; and
2. Provide some options for future Council involvement, including the project's association and relationship with the upcoming Long Term Council Community Plan.

BACKGROUND

At the 16 July 2002 Council meeting the following resolution was passed *"That the Council review its future participation in Future Path Canterbury and that a report on this issue be submitted to the Strategy and Finance Committee"*.

CONTEXT OF REPORT

The Future Path Canterbury project involves the Christchurch City Council, adjoining TLAs (Waimakariri, Selwyn, Banks Peninsula, Hurunui, and Ashburton) and ECan in a project to develop a 50 year vision for the mid-Canterbury area. The study area includes Ashburton to Hurunui and the metropolitan area of Christchurch.

The following Mission Statement was adopted by the respective councils:

- *To understand the likely future of the study area in 50 years and develop a vision for that area.*
- *To identify gaps, linkages and strategies to move towards the vision.*
- *To implement the strategy through appropriate agreements, partnerships and actions.*

The project is funded by ECan with some staff time contributed from the TLAs including the CCC.

UPDATE ON THE FUTURE PATH CANTERBURY PROJECT

A stakeholders group was convened at the beginning of 2002 year comprising elected members, community and business leaders. A series of public seminars were held between February and April regarding key issues facing the study area with a number of invited speakers. A community values statistical survey was also conducted among 650 residents of the study area, which identified some broad concerns and desirable outcomes. Over time attendance by the initially invited stakeholders has dwindled (from an invitation list of over 70 to attendance of about 25). As a result this stakeholders group has been used essentially as a focus group for development of key themes, ideas and scenarios to be canvassed for a scheduled wider public consultation process to be held later in the project.

The current stage in the Future Path Canterbury project is the development of likely scenarios including a preferred scenario or vision answering the question – *what does our community want the area to "look like" in 50 years time?* This has involved a series of workshops with the stakeholders identifying influential factors and trends affecting the Canterbury area. These workshops are expected to conclude in September.

Finally, there is a currently scheduled round of public consultation on these scenarios for November/December of this year. However as the report outlines below, it is suggested that assuming the Council continues its involvement in the Future Path Canterbury project, community consultation is delayed and "tied" into the upcoming Long Term Council Community Plan process as part of the Local Government Bill.

CONCERNS/ISSUES SURROUNDING THE FUTURE PATH CANTERBURY PROJECT

There are a number of issues and concerns which have been raised regarding the progress to date of the Future Path Canterbury project, including:

1. A desire to ensure "real issues" and achievable implementation "actions" are canvassed during the process, and that it does not produce "dreams" or "visions" which are either unachievable or which are not based in what respective councils and the community can deliver;

2. A reasonably long lead-in process to engaging the stakeholders in the scenario process (eg the seminar series and process to date has been perceived by some as slow to deliver);
3. Differences between urban and rural community issues and some doubt about how well one process can adequately address both communities/areas;
4. A view that some of the cross-boundary issues can be handled by “as-needed” relationships between each of the directly affected TLAs and that the Future Path Canterbury project does not have the authority for making decisions about preferred scenarios;
5. Stakeholder attendance has declined from the initial meeting suggesting a loss in momentum;
6. A delay to public consultation on the project has been considered and recently supported by the multi-council staff team to improve the quality and content of the scenarios;
7. There is a need to clarify the relationship and potential overlap between the project and the LGA review and the upcoming/expected Long Term Council Community Plans;
8. There is a requirement in the LGA review that a protocol be developed for how TLAs will work together, including on mutual issues in their LTCCPs, and the relationship of the Future Path Canterbury project with this is uncertain.

BRIEF OUTLINE OF LONG TERM COUNCIL COMMUNITY PLANS (LTCCPs AND LGA REVIEW)

A related report to the Council outlines anticipated requirements for the Council to prepare an LTCCP. As a lead into meeting those requirements it will be recommended to the Council that we go through a process of collaboration with other councils for public engagement to produce a statement of outcomes and priorities for the Christchurch community which links to those of our neighbouring councils.

The Future Path Canterbury project's scenario building exercise which has nearly been completed can be seen as a useful input to this work, including stimulating dialogue with other organisations of the community around long-term objectives for the way they want the city to develop.

It is expected that community consultation on the LTCCP process will occur in April-June 2003. It would be advantageous to combine community consultation for the LTCCP and the Future Path Canterbury project. We should not have two large consultation processes on substantially overlapping subjects.

To be a useful input into the upcoming LTCCP process a delay in timing for the Future Path Canterbury project's community consultation would be required.

OPTIONS FOR FUTURE CCC INVOLVEMENT IN FUTURE PATH CANTERBURY

To address some of these issues, including improving the link to the LTCCP, a few options are outlined below for future involvement by the City Council.

1. CCC Stops Participating

This option would entail the CCC formally withdrawing from the Future Path project and informing respective councils, stakeholders and as appropriate members of the public.

Positive:

Reduces staff time commitments (although not heavy commitment now – approximately four hours per week for one FTE).
Addresses the first issue raised above.

Negative:

More difficult to establish relationships with adjoining TLAs and ECan for future cross-boundary issues and required collaboration under the LGA review.
Sends pretty strong negative political signal to adjoining TLAs and ECan.
May send wrong signal to community at large about CCC's interest in long-term development.
Loss of ratepayer investment value (by ECan and albeit limited by other TLAs) in the process to date.
Future Path Canterbury project would continue with ECan-led consultation on long term vision for Christchurch.

2. **Continue to end of Stage 1 (Scenarios) and use as part of the Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP) consultation process**

This option would delay the current Future Path scheduled community consultation process on the scenarios (stage 1) and link it to the upcoming consultation on community outcomes as part of the Long Term Council Community Plans (LTCCP).

Positive:

Maintains current (and future) working relationships with TLAs and ECan.

Delays the process to better link it into the upcoming LTCCP process and thereby avoids unnecessary duplication of consultation on community desired outcomes.

Enables additional time to complete assessment of the scenarios and likely consequences, which would be useful input into the LTCCP process.

Could use outcomes/outputs from delayed stage 1 to assist with cross-boundary issues with adjoining TLAs.

Meets standing commitments made by Council for the project (at least to stage 1).

Negative:

Does not immediately address the first issue raised above, although if a reasonable link is made to the LTCCP "real" outcomes would be required.

Does not specifically address the separation between urban and rural issues.

3. **CCC gets more engaged and recommends Urban/Rural Split to Process**

This option would involve a greater level of commitment and definition of the Council's involvement, including recommending a split between urban and rural processes and a lead role by the Council in urban matters.

Positive:

Provides better focus for CCC's urban concerns

Could target more specific outcome oriented process, analysis and project assessment

Continues process and "relationships" with adjoining TLAs/ECan

Negative

Is probably premature considering the LGA review and upcoming LTCCP process

Would require more structural and financial commitment from CCC

May be difficult to achieve refocused effort under Future Path Canterbury umbrella and apparent loss of momentum

OPTIONS ASSESSMENT

Option 1 - At this stage staff believe that if the Council pursued Option 1 and resolved to pull out of the Future Path Canterbury project there would be a reasonably significant rift in relationships between the CCC and adjoining TLAs (both at elected member and officer level) as well as ECan. This could hinder future relationships to address cross-boundary issues and undermine expectations under the LGA review for developing appropriate protocols for addressing mutual issues.

Option 2 - Staff believe committing to completion of initial community consultation, but tying it into the upcoming Long Term Council Community Plan would achieve two significant objectives:

- 1) avoiding duplication of community consultation; and
- 2) maintaining relationships with adjoining TLAs and ECan for the upcoming LTCCP.

There would be a need to ensure any continuation of the Future Path Canterbury project and CCC involvement in community consultation does not limit the LTCCP process and community engagement. Staff believe that tying the community consultation process of the FPC as part of the LTCCP would address this issue.

Option 3 - Staff believe this option is unrealistic considering:

- 1) the upcoming LTCCP process;
- 2) there has been a loss of momentum (eg stakeholder attendance) which may prove insurmountable for successfully refocusing on urban issues the CCC is most concerned about.

CONCLUSION

Overall staff would recommend that the Council pursue Option 2 as outlined above.

Recommendation: That the Council continue with its involvement with the Future Path Canterbury process (Option 2 above) subject to the community consultation process on scenarios being undertaken as part of the community consultation process on the Long Term Council Community Plan.