

5. INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABILITY

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The purpose of this report is to obtain approval for the Chairman to attend an international Sustainability Conference to enable him to gain a greater appreciation of worldwide approaches to this subject.

In view of the Council's commitment to sustainability and triple bottom line reporting it is important that some of the senior elected members and managers of the Council become knowledgeable about the latest international thinking and practice on these subjects so that they can appropriately champion the way forward for the Council as it breaks new ground for local authorities in this country.

An international conference on Sustainability is due to be held over three days in San Francisco on 9-11 May. The sponsors of the conference are the Natural Step and the speakers come from a range of corporate and public sector entities. The conference is designed for individuals who are interested in and engaged with sustainable development and seeking new tools ideas and models. Business and municipal leaders are especially encouraged to attend. It is expected that this will be an opportunity to network with an international group of more than 400 speakers and participants. It will be an opportunity to learn about the challenges, opportunities and successes in implementing sustainability programmes and relate what is learned to our particular situation through question and answer sessions, exercises and group discussions.

Eric Park, the Council's Sustainable Christchurch Leader, attended a similar conference approximately three years ago and believes that there is considerable merit in the Chairman attending this conference. It is proposed that the Financial Services Manager will also attend in view of his initiatives and ongoing involvement in leading the triple bottom line reporting initiatives of the Council. There will be considerable benefit in widening the experience and knowledge base of the Council in this area by hearing and seeing what others are doing in other parts of the world. To date most of the ideas have been gleaned locally from a narrow band of New Zealand entities.

The estimated costs of attendance including all travel, conference fees accommodation and meals is \$6,300.

Recommendation: That Councillor Alister James, Chairman of the Strategy and Finance Committee, be authorised to attend this conference.