

### 3. CHRISTCHURCH CITY COUNCIL OLDER PERSON'S ACTION PLAN

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The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the Council's progress in implementing the Older Person's Policy Action Plan (OPPAP) and to recommend a future strategy for monitoring and implementing an action plan.

#### INTRODUCTION

The Christchurch City Council adopted the OPPAP in February 1999, in consultation with Council units. The action plan outlines activities undertaken to implement the Older Person's Policy (1998).

A review was undertaken in 2000. At that time issues were raised about the effectiveness of the implementation of the action plan. This appears to have been due to a failure to direct staff time and resources into ensuring the action plan was effective, relevant and "living". The review identified that while some Council units had undertaken significant activity in accordance with the outcomes of the Older Person's Policy, other actions specified in the action plan received little or no attention. The 2000 report identified that some Council units appeared to have little or no awareness of the action plan or their responsibilities for ensuring implementation.

No review was undertaken in 2001 and 2002.

#### KEY STEPS 2002-2003

- (a) The former City Manager, Mike Richardson, asked policy staff to take a lead in ensuring that steps were taken to address demographic changes and potential implications for the Council. It was seen that a strategic approach would be required, bringing together research, policy and planning to develop an integrated and collaborative approach.
- (b) In November 2002, a Positive Ageing Forum was initiated by Councillor Stonhill to bring together key stakeholders from organisations such as Canterbury District Health Board (CDHB); Community Public Health; Third Age (Canterbury Development Corporation (CDC)); Age Concern; Presbyterian Support; Pegasus Health, etc. As a result, it was decided to invite broader representation from agencies to include Housing New Zealand (HNZ), Ministry of Social Development and the Inland Revenue Department to form an External Reference Group (ERG), in accordance with recommendations from the Older Person's Action Plan. Chair Gill Coe, CDHB, was appointed in April 2003. Draft terms of reference are attached.
- (c) Staff from most Council units participated in an interactive workshop on 20 June to review the Older Person's Action Plan. Key tasks were to report on progress and identify lead responsibilities. Discussions took place on the implications of changing demographics across a wide range of activities including housing, transport, urban development, employment, intergenerational linkages, health and safety.

While there was value in raising awareness of the need for collaborative planning across Council units, it was recognised that restructuring within the organisation would impact upon the development and implementation of a strategic plan. Unless all relevant key decision makers were participating in collaborative planning, there could be difficulties in making progress. In addition until the realignment of Council units was completed and in place, progress would be limited. It was expected that greater progress would be made in 2004.

- (d) Elected member responsibility for the Older Person's Policy and Action Plan moved from Community Plans Special Committee to Community and Leisure Committee in June 2003. A seminar was held 16 July 2003 to update elected members on the OPPAP.
- (e) An Age Advantage forum was hosted by CDC on 9 and 10 October 2003. This forum brought together representatives from government agencies to focus on a variety of issues primarily around Third Age. A number of focus groups were formed to collaboratively develop and progress activities. Pam Wheeler, CDC is co-ordinating this project which has included the establishment of an interactive website. Work in progress will inform a proposed Canterbury Regional Plan for Positive Ageing which will be developed in 2004, led by Christchurch City Council in liaison with ERG and other territorial authorities.

## FEEDBACK ON IMPLEMENTATION OPPAP 2002-3

Various units reported on activities undertaken in relation to the Action Plan. These included the Art Gallery, Parks and Waterways, Leisure, Libraries, CDC - Employment, Environmental Services Unit, Policy and Community Boards.

### CONCLUSION - ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

Many issues and challenges have emerged, including the following:

- While some engagement with older adults is taking place, a renewed focus is needed to ensure planning decisions are based on up to date identified needs.
- When the Council restructure is completed and new divisions are established, each will need to ensure that priorities are identified and action plans are developed to cater for demographic changes. Many issues will require collaborative approaches both internally and externally.
- The Council is engaged in development and support of a wide range of activities for older people. However, future demographics will require different responses to different attitudes and needs, requiring provision for resourcing through Annual Plan.
- Individual Community Boards are well placed to work in partnerships with their communities to meet the needs and challenges of changing demographics. A co-ordinated approach will ensure that there are no gaps or overlaps in provision of services. For example the Hagley/Ferrymead Community Board identified provision of bus stops and recycling issues as two areas that have implications for all Boards.
- Issues specific to Maori and Pacific Island Older people need to be heard and understood. Maori Liaison Committee could potentially assist in this role.
- Up to date research is important. It is important that a co-ordinated approach to research is adopted both internally (the Council) and externally. ERG is assisting in the development of an external plan. There is a need for an Internal Reference Group (IRG) to assist in coordinating the Council plan.
- Riccarton/Wigram Community Board has identified concerns for provision for older people in new subdivisions in the Wigram/Halswell area. There is a need for Council units to identify such urban growth issues across the city and develop policies to ensure needs are met now.
- The ageing population offers new opportunities for promoting Christchurch and Canterbury as tourist destinations. Targeted and improved services and products, festivals and events, are needed.
- Older driver and pedestrian and public transport safety are important emerging issues.
- The needs of women in leadership and equity initiatives, grandmothing and caring are likely to be an important issue impacting upon the cohesiveness and quality of our communities.
- Problem gambling is an emerging social issue for older people.
- Fewer volunteers are involved in building strong communities.
- Connectedness - through Information Technology needs to be harnessed and directed to creating and strengthening communities.
- Reskilling and retraining our mature age workforce is critical. Opportunities for lifelong learning are a key factor.
- A Housing Strategy is important to ensure intergenerational communities where needs are met in a safe, supported and affordable environment.
- Neighbourhood groups are potentially keys to building community cohesion but need to be intergenerational, proactive and resourced to meet needs.

**Recommendation:** That the Council give high priority to the emerging issues created by changing demographics. This could be done through:

1. Developing a new Action Plan (Strategy for Positive Ageing), which emphasises collaborative planning to meet the challenges of changing demographics.
2. Providing a lead role in the development of a Canterbury Regional Plan for Positive Ageing in liaison with other territorial authorities, government and community agencies.
3. Prioritising this work within the new Strategic Development Division, bringing together research, policy and planning.
4. Supporting and endorsing the External Reference Group's terms of reference.
5. Considering staff and budget allocations.