

## 5. THE FUTURE OF OUR ELDERLY : BERTELSMANN AWARD STUDY TRIP

**Officer responsible**  
Acting Director of Policy

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The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval to supplement the funding Councillor Stonhill obtained from her Bertelsmann Award to enable her to make a study trip to the United Kingdom.

### BACKGROUND

In 2002 Councillor Stonhill was successful in her application for a Bertelsmann Award to research the implications of an ageing population. Her original intention was to make a trip to the United Kingdom early in the calendar year 2003. However the SARS epidemic and the uncertainty around international travel at the time she was planning the trip has led her to defer it and she would now like to undertake it in March 2004. The delay in many ways has been fortuitous because in the intervening period there have been a number of developments that mean that the Council has a better understanding of the importance of the demographic changes that the country is facing.

The Government has advanced its Positive Ageing Strategy and developed detailed action plans for Government Departments and Ministries to implement that strategy. The passing of the Local Government Act 2002 has resulted in the role of the Council in addressing matters of community concern being clearer and better understood and there is now an expectation that in this as in other areas the Council will take a lead.

The Council has established an External Reference Group of representatives from key community organisations, networks and government agencies with a particular interest in older people. This reference group will both be involved in the ongoing review of the Council's policy and action plan; and help the Council establish effective collaborative partnerships to ensure the wellbeing of older persons in Christchurch. The development of a regional plan for positive ageing under which the Council's action plan will sit is underway.

### COUNCILLOR STONHILL'S STUDY PROGRAMME

The programme that Councillor Stonhill is proposing is designed to see how some of the better UK local authorities have responded to the challenge of the changing demographics and also to meet with experts in London and Sheffield. In London she will visit the Boroughs of Kensington and Chelsea (both of which have a large elderly population), the City of Westminster and the Alzheimers Disease Society UK and the Alzheimers Disease International (London). This latter is the umbrella organisation for an international network of groups concerned with dementia.

Her trip to Sheffield is to visit the University of Sheffield which has an Institute for Studies on Ageing which is one of the largest research groups in the field of ageing in Europe. It is also a key player in the UK National Collaboration on Ageing Research and has close connections with the European Forum on Population Ageing Research. While in Sheffield Councillor Stonhill will visit Sheffield City Council.

Councillor Stonhill's study award is for \$2,000. On previous occasions Councillors who have been awarded study awards have had the award 'topped-up' by the Council. At this stage it is not possible to give an accurate assessment of the costs of Councillor Stonhill's travel, but a rough order of cost is:

Air Fare Christchurch - London return	\$2,500
Accommodation 4 nights London	\$1,600
Accommodation Sheffield 4 nights	\$1,000
Internal travel and incidentals	\$1,100
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Total	<u>\$6,200</u>

As this is a study tour rather than official Council business, Councillor Stonhill would not be claiming a Councillors' daily allowance. Councillor Stonhill will also meet the costs of all meals, daily internal travel, taxes and all other associated costs. This is estimated to be approximately NZ\$3,000.

**Recommendation:** That funding, up to a maximum of \$3,000, be provided from the Elected Members Travel budget towards the cost of Councillor Stonhill's proposed study tour.