

11. ENVIRONMENT CANTERBURY - CHRISTCHURCH AREA COMMITTEE - APPOINTMENT OF COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES

Officer responsible Community Relations Manager	Author Julie Sadler, DDI 941-8438
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The purpose of this report is to submit an invitation from ECan for the Council to nominate two Councillors to serve on the newly established Christchurch Area Committee. All Community Boards have received a similar invitation.

The following letter has been received from the Chairperson of the Committee, Sir Kerry Burke:

"Environment Canterbury is looking to build on its present meeting relationship with the Christchurch City Council and broaden this to a more representative level involving other key stakeholders in the city.

To this end the Council has recently established a Christchurch Area Committee as a means of achieving wider engagement and sharing of information with agencies and individuals in the city with an interest in the work of Environment Canterbury.

We are particularly looking for people who interface with the Council's resource management work and have networks in relevant organisations/sectors of the Christchurch community. In this way we hope to integrate the views and aspirations of Christchurch people with the environment in which they prefer to live.

The Christchurch Area Committee will function alongside the Council's other existing Area Committees, in the Northern, Southern and Central areas of the region.

Attached is a copy of the Terms of Reference for the Committee. The Committee will meet formally in February each year and in such other forums that that meeting agrees to programme for the year's activities."

It will be noted that the terms of reference provide for two City Councillors to be members of the Committee. Alternates are also being sought for all external members. However, the Legal Services Manager has previously advised that there is no statutory provision for the appointment of alternate members to standing committees. This advice has been passed on to ECan.

The Chair comments:

Following the October 2001 Local Government elections, both this Council and Environment Canterbury resolved to establish joint seminars between this Committee and ECan and now scheduled to meet quarterly and to establish joint working parties. This was intended to be the mechanism for communication and co-ordination between our councils.

The new Local Government Act provides that we must enter into a Triennial Agreement, with the first of such agreements to be in place by 31 December 2003. The agreements are to contain protocols for the co-ordination and communication between both councils.

I am concerned that the establishment of a Christchurch Area Committee has taken place without any discussion with this Council and is contrary to the intent of the new Act.

I am also concerned that clauses 3(b), 3(c) and 3(d) imply that our joint seminars and working parties are part and parcel of the Area Committee. This is not appropriate. I consider that the appointment of two Councillors to the Area Committee should be deferred until the matter is discussed at the next joint seminar meeting also noting that both of our councils will need to negotiate a triennial agreement in any event.

Recommendation: That the appointment of Councillors to the Christchurch Area Committee be deferred until discussions are held with Environment Canterbury on a process of communication and co-ordination between both councils as provided in the Local Government Act.