

## 6. RICCARTON/WIGRAM ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE REPORT OF 20 JULY 2004 MEETING

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The purpose of this report is to submit the outcomes of the Environment Committee meeting held on Tuesday 20 July 2004.

The meeting was attended by Neville Bennett (Chairperson), Lesley Keast, Mike Mora and Ken Cummings.

Peter Laloli was also present; an apology was received and accepted from Paddy Austin.

### 1 DRAFT BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY

Co-author Kelvin McMillan was present to discuss the draft strategy.

The Draft Biodiversity Strategy focuses primarily on indigenous biodiversity, and in particular on the plants, animals and ecosystems that occur naturally in Christchurch.

#### BACKGROUND

The Draft Biodiversity Strategy has been prepared in response to recent policy changes and initiatives at a national level, and also to better co-ordinate the many aspects of Council work that benefit indigenous biodiversity.

At its March 2004 meeting the Parks, Gardens & Waterways Committee approved the first version of the draft Biodiversity Strategy, which has since been amended to include input from Ngai Tahu. The Committee also supported the associated budget, for the 2005/06 funding round, and the inclusion of a reference to the Biodiversity Strategy and its funding implications in the LTCCP.

#### THE DRAFT STRATEGY

The draft strategy provides a framework for the Council to work with local communities to protect, restore and celebrate the plants, animals and ecosystems that occur naturally in Christchurch. It explains what is meant by biodiversity, why biodiversity is important, and what can be done to enhance biodiversity in Christchurch. Community involvement is recognised as an important component in achieving the five goals of the strategy, which are:

- Goal 1: Conservation of Christchurch's Biodiversity
- Goal 2: Restoration of Christchurch's Ecosystems
- Goal 3: Raised Awareness and Understanding of Christchurch's Biodiversity
- Goal 4: Participation by People in Supporting Biodiversity
- Goal 5: Ongoing Research and Monitoring

The document provides an overview of the different ecosystems found in Christchurch, their various components, including plants, birds, fish and invertebrates, and the threats they face, particularly from weeds and animal pests. It also sets out a vision for the ecosystems of the coast, waterways and wetlands, Port Hills, dry plains and suburbs of Christchurch. Building on the existing matrix of natural areas around the city, the strategy recognises 25 priority sites for their enhancement potential and /or need for protection.

In addition to protecting and enhancing areas of high ecological value, the strategy aims to raise awareness and improve ecological functioning across the entire fabric of the city. This means improving water quality in the City's waterways, controlling weed species and preventing the establishment of new invaders, improving connections and corridors between ecological refuges, and reducing the distance from one patch of vegetation to the next, thus improving habitat quality across the City, not just for plants and animals, but also providing a healthier environment for people.

A list of actions, required to achieve the goals of the draft strategy, are set out in an Action Plan, which forms part of the document. By its nature, this Action Plan will be a working document and will provide an important tool in co-ordinating implementation of the strategy.

## **TIMEFRAME**

The timeframe for the Biodiversity Strategy is scheduled as follows:

- Draft Biodiversity Strategy presented to Council at its 1 July meeting
- Public consultation begins mid-July (extends over 2 months and will include 2 public workshops)
- Submissions collated at the end of September
- Facilitated forum held in October to receive feedback on the summary of submissions and recommended amendments
- Final Biodiversity Strategy document to Council in February 2005

## **COMMITTEE DELIBERATIONS**

Members were very supportive of the draft strategy, and the high quality of the document.

It was **agreed** that a submission be prepared for consideration by the Board, noting the closing date for submissions being 8 September 2004.

## **2 REVISED DRAFT CITY-WIDE PLANTING STRATEGY**

Liz Briggs, the Project Leader, was present to discuss the draft strategy.

### **BACKGROUND**

The draft City-wide Planting Strategy was approved for consultation by the Council at its meeting held on 30 June 2004.

The City-wide Planting Strategy is a framework and philosophy to guide the planting practice in the Council's public open spaces. However, the principles will be implemented through a series of other Council and community initiatives, as illustrated in the revised draft. Also, to ensure that the agreed outcomes are achieved on the ground, it is important that the "designers" of the planting plans are given the appropriate brief, resources and time, including methods for integrating design initiatives across the organisation.

The draft document will be circulated to groups and key stakeholders over a six week period.

### **COMMITTEE DELIBERATION**

Members were supportive of the draft strategy, and the high quality of the document.

It was **agreed** that the information be received.

## **3 LITTER / CITY CLEANING**

At the last meeting of the Environment Committee it was recommended to the Community Board that it request the Council -

- 1 To review its policies and by-laws regarding litter enforcement;
- 2 Raise the litter infringement penalty to \$500;
- 3 Fund an effective enforcement process.

At the Board meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2004, the Board recommended that the report be referred back to the Environment Committee on receipt of a report/update from the Sustainable Transport and Utilities Committee regarding litter control.

At today's meeting the Committee was in receipt of the report.

Whilst the STU Committee had made various recommendations, members were of the opinion that the Council should be looking to adopt a more aggressive approach to the problems of litter.

Accordingly, the Committee is recommending that "Strategy 3 – Deal with the results aggressively" (included in the STU report "City Cleaning – Let's Pick It Up") be adopted also.

*“Strategy 3 – Deal with the results aggressively*

*Dealing with litter before it enters the waste stream is the most powerful approach to achieving the goal, but the Council also needs to aggressively deal with, and be seen to deal with, litter and litterers.*

*Recommendations:*

- 1 Send a message of zero tolerance – get parking wardens and other enforcement staff to use the Council’s statutory powers to find litterers, backed with a communication campaign.*
- 2 Trial an area with an education and zero tolerance campaign (could be an area around a shopping mall, or a central city area).*
- 3 Review our agreed service levels for collecting litter against those used in other major metropolitan areas and tighten if we need to.*
- 4 Combined street and Greenspace litter collection and cleaning contracts for particular areas, so that one contractor is responsible for litter collection in that location.*
- 5 Ensure that every Council unit actively involved in addressing litter has key performance indicators that are tied to the litter goal.”*

**4 HERITAGE WEEK**

The Committee noted the various activities that are being formulated for the October Heritage Week.

**5 NEW SUBDIVISION RESIDENTS’ SURVEY**

The interim survey report was received.

**6 COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS**

That, in respect of the Committee’s consideration of Litter/Street cleaning, “Strategy 3 – Deal with the results aggressively” (included in the STU report “City Cleaning – Let’s Pick It Up”) be recommended to the Sustainable Transport and Utilities Committee for adoption.

**Chairman’s**

- Recommendation:**
- 1 That the report be received, noting that the Committee will prepare a submission on the Draft Biodiversity Strategy.
  - 2 That, in respect of the Committee’s consideration of Litter/Street cleaning, “Strategy 3 – Deal with the results aggressively” (included in the STU report “City Cleaning – Let’s Pick It Up”) be recommended to the Sustainable Transport and Utilities Committee for adoption