

7. COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD PROCESS 2004

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The purpose of this report is to confirm the Board's process for considering the 2004 Community Service Awards and to outline the consideration given to the planned development of city-wide criteria for these awards by the Board's Community Service Awards Criteria Working Party.

The nominations for the 2004 Awards are included in the public excluded section of the agenda.

BACKGROUND

At the meeting on 16 June 2003, the Board convened a Working Party "to develop criteria for assessing Community Service Award nominations in the future". The discussion over the need for criteria arose when the 2003 nominations were considered.

A meeting of the Working Party was not arranged at that time as shortly afterwards the Council initiated a review of the process for Civic Awards. Given the relationship between the different awards, it was decided to await the outcome of the Civic Awards review.

On 22 April 2004 the Council adopted new criteria for the nomination and judging of Civic Awards (the report to the Council has been circulated separately to Board members). The new process is to be followed for 2004 and then reviewed prior to the 2005 round.

The Board intended that new criteria for the Community Service Awards be available for use in the 2004 process. However, the city-wide timetable for the awards required the process to be commenced by April and the existing nomination forms were used.

Given that consideration is being given to reviewing and developing city-wide criteria for both Civic Awards and Community Service Awards for 2005, the Working Party met to discuss the Board's existing Community Service Award process and relevant aspects of the new Civic Award process that may be adapted for the Community Service Awards.

MAIN ELEMENTS OF CIVIC AWARDS PROCESS

The revised process for Civic Awards provides that these awards are "in recognition of substantial service, usually of a voluntary nature or beyond normal employment benefiting metropolitan Christchurch and its people". Any volunteer or voluntary organisation carrying out work of a substantial nature benefiting Christchurch and/or its people is eligible. Work of a "substantial nature" covers short-term or long-term projects or activities that have benefited the City in such a way as to have added to the quality of life of the residents.

An emphasis will be placed on ensuring that sufficient supporting information is provided with a nomination to enable effective assessment. The form will request (in plain English):

- Measurable details of service, such as the type of project/activity, time commitment, position or role of the individual or group, key success factors (or what has been achieved).
- Letters of support or evidence of the work.
- Information on any other recognition received for the same activity.

The nominations are to be judged by the Community and Leisure Committee and will no longer be forwarded via the community boards. No minimum or maximum number of awards is set.

A point rating system will be used for the judging, based on the following criteria:

- Utilisation of resources (financial, time and equipment).
- Initiative and creativity used.
- Effectiveness of the activity/project.
- Impact on the City.
- Impact on the environment.

WORKING PARTY'S CONSIDERATION

The Working Party considers that the revised Civic Awards criteria could generally be applied to the Community Service Awards, recognising voluntary work benefiting residents or organisations in each community board area rather than at the metropolitan level. It is understood that the required review of the 2004 Civic Awards process will be completed in time for any changes to be incorporated in the planned city-wide criteria for Community Service Awards for 2005.

In the interim, the Working Party considers that the Board should refer to the Civic Award criteria as informal guidelines in the assessment of the 2004 Community Service Awards.

The change to recognise service of a voluntary nature or "beyond normal employment" was discussed. It was noted that there may be difficulties in establishing whether nominees are receiving honoraria or similar compensation and the voluntary component of the work in such circumstances. This may need to be addressed on the nomination form.

The importance placed on obtaining sufficient supporting information was supported. It was acknowledged that care needs to be taken to draw a balance between seeking supporting information that is publicly known and information of a private nature. While the Civic Awards process indicates that letters of support or evidence of the work can be attached to the nomination, the Working Party considers that letters of support or specific evidence should be a requirement.

The Civic Award criteria specify that a recipient is not eligible to receive both a Civic Award and a Community Service Award in the same year. As Community Service Awards are considered first each year, the Working Party suggests that community boards retain the option of:

- Recognising the recipient with a Community Service Award for the local significance of the recipient's contribution, with the possibility that the contribution at a metropolitan level could then be considered in the following year(s).
- Deciding that the nominee's contribution may be more appropriately recognised at a metropolitan level, and therefore declining a Community Service Award nomination but suggesting that the nomination be put forward to the imminent Civic Awards process.

The Board's use of Certificates of Appreciation was also discussed. These certificates have been presented in the past to thank recipients for their voluntary contribution, such as in assisting with one-off events or short-term projects. The Working Party considers that these certificates may be viewed as a "second prize", which may detract from their purpose of recognising the contribution made and encouraging further voluntary service.

As an alternative to Certificates of Appreciation, the Working Party recommends that the Board refer suitable candidates to award schemes run by agencies such as Volunteering Canterbury and Keep Christchurch Beautiful. This would provide significant recognition and encouragement, while leaving the opportunity for the Board to recognise the recipient at the point when voluntary work of a substantial nature has been undertaken. Such an approach could further enhance the standing of the Community Service Awards.

No restrictions are placed on the number of Civic Awards to be presented each year and the Working Party does not favour a limit on the number of overall Community Service Awards or on the number of individuals or organisations receiving awards. It was considered that a robust nomination and assessment process will ensure that the quality of recipients is maintained.

The Working Party also does not see a need to make a continued distinction between the Board's Community Service Awards and Youth Awards. The qualifying categories for the Community Service Awards include sport, recreation, youth activities, education and community affairs, and substantial voluntary contributions by youth in those areas can be recognised with Community Service Awards. The Board also retains the option of sending letters of acknowledgement and thanks, as an appropriate form of recognition.

To ensure that an enhanced, city-wide process is in place for the 2005 Community Service Awards, the Working Party suggests that this matter be discussed by the chairpersons of the incoming community boards.

Working Party**Recommendations:**

1. That the information be received.
2. That the feedback on the suitability of adapting the revised Civic Awards criteria as city-wide criteria for the Community Service Awards for 2005 be forwarded to the staff involved in this project.
3. That the proposed city-wide criteria for the Community Service Awards for 2005 be discussed initially by the chairpersons of the incoming community boards, prior to formal referral to the boards.
4. That the Board refer to the revised Civic Awards criteria as informal guidelines in assessing the nominations for the 2004 Community Service Awards.
5. That the Board discontinue the presentation of Certificates of Appreciation and instead refer suitable candidates to relevant award schemes run by other agencies.
6. That the Board discontinue the presentation of Youth Awards and recognise the voluntary contribution of all age groups through the Community Service Awards.

Chairperson's**Recommendation:**

That the abovementioned recommendations be adopted.