

5. REGIONAL INITIATIVE TO PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS

Officer responsible Planning Strategy Manager	Author Eric Park, DDI 941-8290
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PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to establish whether the Canterbury Waste Subcommittee wishes to be involved in business sustainability initiatives currently being planned by the Christchurch City Council's Target Zero (Resource Efficiency) and procurement teams.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. The Canterbury Waste Subcommittee resolved, on 9 August 2004, that the Christchurch City Council Resource Efficiency Team should lead a "Recycling in the Work Place" project in conjunction with other agencies. The initiatives outlined below would expand this project and link with the 'regional information sharing' project which the Subcommittee also supported and requested be further developed and reported on.
3. The Christchurch City Council's Target Zero (Resource Efficiency) Team has begun to develop a "Sustainable Christchurch Cluster" concept which would see increased collaboration amongst government agencies (such as the City and Regional Councils, Ministry for the Environment and Energy Efficiency Conservation Authority) in their "business sustainability" programmes and also amongst "service providers" such as the Recovered Materials Foundation, Sustainable Business Network, Landcare, Sustainable Business Group, Enviro-Mark[®]NZ, the Natural Step, Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology and independent consultants.
4. The Target Zero Team has also begun developing, in conjunction with the above "cluster" partners, a project outline for a new business sustainability programme. This is based on successful programmes in Christchurch and elsewhere which have been jointly funded by local/central government agencies and also by the very businesses being assisted.
5. In addition, the Target Zero Team has begun working more closely with the Christchurch City Council's new procurement team to assist it in implementing the Council's "Sustainable Supply Chain" policy, adopted in December 2003.
6. It is expected that all of the above initiatives could relatively easily be expanded to become regional initiatives if other councils are interested.
7. The "Cluster" concept and associated business sustainability initiatives outlined above could be developed either:
 - (a) By the Christchurch City Council alone with other regional and central government agencies; or
 - (b) By all councils in Canterbury together as a "whole of government" approach with other regional and central government agencies.
8. Expected advantages of Option B include:
 - Reduced overall staff time required to establish and operate effective business sustainability programmes across the region.
 - Increased interest amongst both central government agencies and businesses if all councils in Canterbury are involved.
 - Councils and businesses across the Canterbury region benefiting from the experience gained by the Target Zero team to date and the Christchurch City Council's ability to be more proactive in this area than smaller councils.
 - Improved co-ordination and consistency of approach by the Council, government and service providers to businesses across the region.
 - Improved cost effectiveness of business sustainability programmes as well as an enhanced ability to attract central government and other agency funding for regional initiatives.

PREFERRED OPTION

9. A “whole of government” partnership in the Canterbury Region (Option B) would likely be the most effective approach in terms of both local and central government agencies and businesses.
10. If Option B is not selected, the Christchurch City Council Target Zero Team will still lead the “Recycling in the Workplace” project as requested earlier by this Committee.

FINANCIAL AND LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

11. The Local Government Act 2002 requires that local authorities:
 - **Section 14(e)** “collaborate and co-operate with other local authorities and bodies as it considers appropriate to promote or achieve its priorities and desired outcomes, and make efficient use of resources”; and
 - **Section 14(g)** “ensure prudent stewardship and the efficient and effective use of its resources in the interests of its district or region”.
12. While costs are not able to be determined at this early stage, one of the aims of any Sustainable Canterbury Cluster would be to seek regional synergies efficiencies and cost savings in meeting such obligations by working in a “whole of government partnership” across the region. Informal discussions to date indicate that a “whole of government” approach will result in significant synergies and therefore increased effectiveness of sustainable business programmes for which budgets have already been allocated. Existing budgets available for regional waste minimisation initiatives are outlined in Zefanja Potgieter’s report “Background Material on Regional Waste Minimisation” in this agenda.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Canterbury Waste Subcommittee support and contribute to development of a “whole of government” partnership for sustainable business in the Canterbury region, including the “Sustainable Canterbury Cluster” and associated initiatives as outlined in this report.