

4. INTERACTIVE COMPUTER BASED EDUCATION TOOL

General Manager responsible:	General Manager City Environment, DDI 941-8656
Officer responsible:	City Water and Waste Manager
Author:	Darren Patterson, ECAN. 372 7072

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to seek funding to develop an interactive computer-based education tool, focusing on 'reduction'.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. The proposed education tool will increase awareness, knowledge and understanding of 'reduction', promoting the power of 'personal choice' and encouraging behaviour change to make a difference to waste generation.

On 11 September the Committee approved \$2,000 from the \$20,000 budget for this regional waste minimisation education project to allow the further development of the proposal prior to final approval.

Objectives

- to contribute towards a reduction in waste produced in Canterbury
- increase community awareness, knowledge and **understanding of waste reduction** - get reduction message out into the wider community
- encourage behaviour change through personal '**choice**' aspect of the resource and the consequences of the those choices
- support existing schools/community education programmes
- alignment of messages regarding reduction – same message from all councils in Canterbury
- to evaluate the interactive resource
- to evaluate the effectiveness of the resource and message(s) in schools and community groups through 'survey style' evaluations.

Rationale

3. It is recognised that waste education programmes and/or activities are already undertaken by a number of councils in Canterbury. This proposal is not to compete or replace existing education programmes and/or activities, but to develop a tool that will support and help meet identified regional waste education 'gaps'.
4. Canterbury Waste educators (Sally Cracknel, Molly Anderson (Hurunui District Council); Briony Woodnorth (Timaru District Council); Tricia Wood (Mackenzie District Council); Andrea Taylor; (Christchurch City Council); Kitty Waghorn (Waimakariri District Council); Sian Carvell; (Environment Canterbury) have met to discuss their waste programmes and identify whether there is a need for this new tool and if so where it would fit within their current programmes. White Horse Recycling (Ruth Clark) and Wastebusters Canterbury (Anita Coghill) were also invited but were unable to attend. District specific comments are provided in Appendix A but in general the following gaps were identified.
 - lack of understanding by schools (students and teachers) of 'reduction' being the first option when it comes to waste – not recycling and, therefore, what personal behaviours can contribute to waste reduction.
 - supporting schools in undertaking an 'action' component to reduce waste within the school environment. The Christchurch City Council educators are not in a position to work with teachers and students in schools and currently are working with Environment Canterbury educators to see how collaboratively this need can be met.
 - lack of awareness, understanding and knowledge of waste 'reduction' in the general public. When people think waste, they think recycling!
5. The overwhelming response was very positive and all openly supported the venture.

6. The key messages that the group felt integral to the success of the programme were:
 - (a) The understanding and importance of reduction and where it sits in the hierarchy of the Five R's.
 - (b) The power of choice when making everyday decisions about waste reduction and the consequences of these choices.
7. The interactive resource will be targeted at 10 to 12 years olds. It is consider that this age range will give us the flexibility to expand it both for use by the general public and be able to direct its use for younger age groups. Its primary method of distribution would be via CD-ROM to be used by the waste educators. However, it will also be hosted on the Environment Canterbury website for all within the region to access.
8. As a group, the example of an everyday activity that created waste and would have most appeal and relevance to a wide audience was the concept of 'what is in your lunch today?' Current thoughts are that users will provided with information on the impacts of various lunch items and different packaging options. They will be asked to choose items for their lunch and then graphically shown the impacts of their choices (see Figure 1). These ideas will be developed further as the project progresses and could be expanded to other items in a later module (e.g. to clothing). There has also been discussion on links with healthy eating programmes and discussions with the Ministry of Health and the Canterbury District Health Board will be undertaken once funding is approved to determine possible synergies.

Figure 1. Example of Environmental Themes Related to a Lunch Box



9. By focusing on the reduction message we will not be doubling up on existing information, ie recycling and composting. Reduction is the most important of the '5R' messages and one where through personal choice individuals can make a difference to their waste contribution. The resource would also ensure a consistent message on reduction coming from all councils in the region.
10. Sixty hours of an educator funded by Environment Canterbury would be available to develop the content of the resource. Teachers and students from Unlimited Paenga Tawhiti Secondary School have expressed an interest in working on the resource to ensure the way the messages are delivered will engage the target age group.

FINANCIAL AND LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

11. The cost of the resource development, excluding the Environment Canterbury educator's time (to be met by Environment Canterbury), is \$20,000 which allows for us to contract Hot Pyjama Productions Ltd to co-ordinate the development of this tool. Costs include concept development, project management, character and scene development and illustration, web design and development, animation sourcing including sound, CD production and printing of associated written material. A limited number of CD ROMs for each council will be produced. Should a Council require a greater number of CD's, the reproduction costs should be borne by the individual Council.
12. It is important that commitment for this project is given at this meeting if we are to produced and distribute an effective education tool before the end of the financial year.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Committee commit a further \$18,000 towards the development of an interactive computer based education tool on 'reduction'.