


## 11. AVON RIVER SAFETY PROJECT



<b>General Manager responsible:</b>	General Manager Community Services, DDI 941-8554
<b>Officer responsible:</b>	Sports Services Manager
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### PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to inform the Board on the Avon River Safety Project, and to inform the Board of an approach by the river users for additional funding from Council for enhancements to the project (refer Attachments 1 and 2).

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. The Avon River Safety Project addresses the issue of safety on the Kerrs Reach and Owles Terrace launching areas to improve safety for non-powered water craft users. The project involves the installation of pontoons at Kerrs Reach and at Owles Terrace plus signage along the river to improve safety and knowledge by users of the rules of the river.
3. Council set aside \$600,000 in its capital works budget for the 2005/06 financial year for this project. This figure was considered a provision for the project rather than a firm estimate of the cost of the work needed as precise costs were not available at the time. This figure was then carried over into the 2006/07 financial year.
4. A design was agreed by the river users groups and tenders sought.
5. Due to the unique nature of this project, further detail emerging of the needs of the user groups and a lack of similar projects upon which to base construction estimates the tender price received for the project was \$755,000 to carry out the safety works.
6. In order to progress with the project an additional \$155,000 was reallocated from within the existing capital works budgets and agreements finalised with the successful tender company to carry out the work.
7. Late in 2006 the river users came back to Council officers with a number of changes and additions to the agreed designs which resulted in subsequent time delays and re-drawing of the plans.
8. Most of these changes were able to be incorporated into the existing plans without affecting the overall budget and have been accommodated by variations to the agreement with the construction company. Sign off of the amendments to the plans was finally given by the user groups on 16 April 2007.
9. The river users/leaseholders have also identified additional works over and above the agreed plans which are not crucial to the functionality of the asset but which would enhance the project and maximise the usability of the asset. An additional \$120,000 is required to complete these enhancements.
10. Approval for the re-allocation of a further amount of \$120,000 for the additional enhancements is sought from Council via a report to be presented on 3 May 2007.

### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

11. The Avon River Safety Upgrade Project was initially estimated to cost \$600,000 and this sum was included in the budget for the 2005/06 financial year. Due to the unique nature of this construction and a lack of similar projects nation-wide upon which to base construction estimates and upon further detail emerging of the needs of the user groups, the actual budget needed to adequately complete the project was subsequently revised to \$755,000.
12. An additional \$155,000 was then allocated to this project from within the existing Capital Works budget to enable the project to proceed.
13. The Avon River users and leaseholders based at Kerrs Reach have signed off on the plans for the project but have subsequently requested additional enhancements to the project totalling a further \$120,000.

14. The additional funds to carry out this extra work can be found by reallocating funds from within the existing Capital Works programme with no impact on rates.

#### **LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS**

15. None.

#### **ALIGNMENT WITH LTCCP AND ACTIVITY MANAGEMENT PLANS**

16. A sum of \$600,000 was included in the 2005/06 Annual Plan for the project and carried over to the 2006/07 financial year. The recommendation supports the Council's 2006/16 LTCCP and delivery of Council's Capital Works projects for 2006/07.

#### **ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIES**

17. The recommendation aligns with Goal 1 of the Council's Physical Recreation and Sports Strategy - a safe physical environment that encourages participation in recreation and sport.

#### **CONSULTATION FULFILMENT**

18. Significant consultation with the river user groups has been undertaken throughout this project.

#### **STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Board:

- (a) Receive the report.
- (b) Support the application by the river users for an additional \$120,000 from Council for additional enhancements to the project.

## **BACKGROUND**

19. The Avon River Safety Project was initiated in 2004, following regular concerns being expressed to the Council from the rowing groups and other users of the Kerrs Reach rowing facility regarding safety and overcrowding on the river. A report was presented at a Council Seminar in March 2005 expressing these concerns and outlining a number of options to pursue to minimise the increasing near accidents on the river with all of the waterways options being supported.
20. A sum of \$600,000 was included in the 2005/06 LTCCP for the project.
21. Due to the seasonal nature of the sport and hence a lack of opportunities to progress the planning and development discussions with users plus difficulties in the establishment of a representative group for all users, there was limited progress on the development stages of the project and the budget was carried over to the 2006/07 financial year.
22. There were also some design change requests received from the user groups late in 2006 which required some significant re-design of the agreed plans and put the planning of the project back.
23. After considerable consultation with river users a concept was agreed upon incorporating the following three components:

- (a) **Installation of Pontoons and Riverbank Improvements at Kerrs Reach**

The installation of pontoons and by excavating a portion of the embankment in the Kerrs Reach will provide two benefits, (1) a much wider area available for launching and taking out the canoes and rowing skiffs, and (2) the introduction of the pontoons provide for low and high tide entry at the same point, therefore impact on the useable river width is minimised.

- (b) **Improvement to the Launching Ramp at Owles Terrace**

This work will specifically improve the launching area for the Waka Ama craft, however, these improvements should also make the facility more attractive to casual users and dragon boats. It is also proposed to install a section of pontoon at this location.

- (c) **Signage and Education**

It is proposed to install new signage at Kerrs Reach, Owles Terrace and at strategic places along the river which will advise users of the "rules" that apply to this area of water and to be vigilant and careful in the use of this recreation facility.

24. A design was initially agreed to by the users and tenders for the civil works were sought. Only one was received at this time and was significantly higher than budget so the project was re-tendered and eight tenders were received - with the lowest being the original tender received in the first round.
25. Upon receipt of these tenders and the subsequent revision of budgets, additional funding was re-allocated from the existing capital works budget to enable the project to proceed and a tender accepted.

## **Current Situation**

26. At a meeting on 16 April 2006, the river users groups unanimously accepted the final staged plan for the pontoons, signage and river bank work. It is expected that construction could begin in May 2007 with a construction period of approximately three months.

## **Request for Additional Funding from User Groups**

27. The river user groups have also requested a number of additions to the existing agreed plan which would be considered non-essential but which would improve conditions for users and add further value to the facility. These additions would require an additional \$120,000 to be added to the project.

28. The requested changes include:

- Asphaltting the concourse area.
- Replacing the concrete ramp adjacent to the Avon Rowing Club.
- Replacement and re-grading of the existing concrete slab outside the Christ's College storage shed.
- Paving an area adjacent to the Arawa Canoe Club.
- Formalising the cycleway/footpath between the existing buildings and the river.

29. These additional works would add to the usability of the facility and enjoyment for all users and would enhance the overall outcome of the project. It would be cost effective to complete this work at the time of construction.

#### **THE OBJECTIVES**

30. Ensure the Avon River Safety Project is completed and Council's investment in the asset is maximised.

#### **THE OPTIONS**

31. Two options exist for the Board:

- (a) Support the request by the river users groups for an approach to Council for additional funding for the additional river project enhancements.
- (b) Do not support the request by the river users groups for an approach to Council for additional funding for the additional river project enhancements.

#### **THE PREFERRED OPTION**

32. Support the request by the river users groups for an approach to Council for additional funding for the additional river project enhancements.

## ASSESSMENT OF OPTIONS

### The Preferred Option

33. The Board supports the request by the river users groups for an approach to Council for additional funding for the additional river project enhancements.

	<b>Benefits (current and future)</b>	<b>Costs (current and future)</b>
<b>Social</b>	Enhanced safety and usability of the asset.	
<b>Cultural</b>	N/A.	
<b>Environmental</b>	Nil.	Minimal.
<b>Economic</b>	Nil.	Additional \$120,000 capital expenditure and minor additional ongoing maintenance costs.
<b>Extent to which community outcomes are achieved:</b>  Fulfilment of LTCCP outcomes.  <b>Impact on the Council's capacity and responsibilities:</b>  Nil. Continuation of service and delivery of capital programme.  <b>Effects on Maori:</b>  Nil.  <b>Consistency with existing Council policies:</b>  Supports the 2006/16 LTCCP and 2006/07 Annual Plan.  <b>Views and preferences of persons affected or likely to have an interest:</b>  Avon River user groups strongly support the proposal.  <b>Other relevant matters:</b>  Nil.		

## Maintain the Status Quo

34. The Board does not support the request by the river users groups for an approach to Council for additional funding for the additional river project enhancements.

	Benefits (current and future)	Costs (current and future)
<b>Social</b>		Lower level of service.
<b>Cultural</b>	Nil.	Nil.
<b>Environmental</b>	Nil.	Nil.
<b>Economic</b>	Saving of \$120,000 capital expenditure and slightly lower ongoing maintenance cost.	May cost more to complete this additional work if undertaken in future.
<b>Extent to which community outcomes are achieved:</b>  Fulfilment of LTCCP outcomes.		
<b>Impact on the Council's capacity and responsibilities:</b>  Nil.		
<b>Effects on Maori:</b>  Nil.		
<b>Consistency with existing Council policies:</b>  Supports the 2006/16 LTCCP and 2006/07 Annual Plan.		
<b>Views and preferences of persons affected or likely to have an interest:</b>  Avon River user groups strongly support the proposal.		
<b>Other relevant matters:</b>  Nil.		