

6. STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES STRATEGY

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PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To recommend the adoption of the final Strengthening Communities Strategy (Appendix 1).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. Three inter-connected staff teams have been working on the Community Development Strategy (now the Strengthening Communities Strategy), Community Group Grants Review and Community Facilities Plan since early 2006. During the process to create the Draft Strategy an external reference group was used to provide independent advice. Seminars were also held with community boards and Councillors. In November 2006 the Council approved a draft Community Development Strategy, Community Group Grants Review and Community Facilities Plan for public consultation.
3. The consultation period closed at the end of January 2007 and hearings took place on 26 February 2007. Since that time the hearings panel has met with a selection of community groups to discuss the content of their submissions further and with government agencies to discuss collaboration. A seminar to consider changes from the draft strategy was held on 5 June 2007.
4. A total of 98 submissions were received and 43 submitters presented their submissions orally to the hearings panel. Whilst the vision and many of the goals were well received by the majority of submitters, a number expressed a view about the definition of Community Development. Community Development had been broadly defined in the draft strategy but some submitters viewed it as being a particular way of working with the community that focuses on creating empowerment and community capacity and that is based strongly on social justice. Similarly, concern was expressed by some submitters about the apparent lack of a social justice approach to the draft strategy.
5. In the Community Group Grants area submitters welcomed the simpler structure and the idea of three year funding agreements. There were some however who considered that the grant schemes should be structured by purpose. Some submitters also favoured retaining the existing Social Initiatives Fund and the Youth Development Fund.
6. Submitters were generally supportive of the Council's proposed approach to facilitate access to community facilities. Some however emphasised the value they saw in some of the neighbourhood community facilities and urged the Council to consider retaining these in areas of high need.
7. A number of revisions to the draft strategy have been made as a result of the submissions and subsequent discussions with Councillors.

Strategy

- The strategy name has changed to 'Strengthening Communities Strategy'. The name of the strategy along with the differing views about the meaning of 'community development' were discussed by the hearings panel with community organisations and was also discussed at the seminar on 5 June 2007. 'Strengthening Communities Strategy' was the preferred name emerging from the seminar.
- The strategy introduction acknowledges that a number of different processes and disciplines can be used in working with and for communities to enhance their strength. These include community services, community capacity building, community development, community activism and advocacy. The strategy identifies these all as legitimate and effective when used appropriately.
- The deletion of the Strong Communities principle from the Draft Strategy on the basis that it is more of an outcome statement than an underpinning principle. This was discussed at the seminar on 5 June 2007.

- The addition of a principle on capacity building to recognise the importance of this activity and that it underpins significant amounts of the Council's work in this area.
- The addition of a principle on social justice to acknowledge that the Council's work in the Strengthening Communities Strategy is for all communities in the city but that on occasions the maximum benefit to the city will be achieved by the Council focusing resources on the most disadvantaged communities. This principle was discussed at the seminar on 5 June 2007 at which time the term 'vulnerable communities' caused concern to some Councillors. The word 'vulnerable' has been removed from the final version of the strategy.
- Bullet points have been added under each goal to spell out more clearly the sort of work the Council is planning to undertake to give life to each goal. Again this was discussed at the seminar and in accordance with Councillors' wishes a paragraph to preface these bullet points has been added to avoid them restricting the Council's activities unnecessarily.
- Goal 2. The wording for the goal statement as per the draft strategy has been retained. The paragraphs explaining the goal have been reworded to reduce confusion over the variable use of the term 'goal' and the focus has been expanded from just one area to one to three areas for significant collaboration. This latter change recognises the perceived difficulty of trying to identify just one area for this type of focused collaboration. These changes were all discussed at the seminar on 5 June 2007.
- The word 'connectedness' has been removed from the wording of the goal statement in Goal 4.
- The wording of Goal 6 has been revised to make it clearer that it refers to all forms of indoor and outdoor pastimes, rather than just those that are physical in nature. In addition the commentary on the goal has been improved to focus more specifically on the role community recreation and sport can have in helping people to experience a sense of belonging and in improving their links with others.
- Goal 8. The wording of the goal statement has been revised to refer to enabling residents to be able to 'participate fully in society', rather than 'in their community'. This wording change was discussed at the seminar.
- Further reference to Maori and Iwi has been made through the document to give greater effect to the Treaty of Waitangi principles in the strategy and to give better recognition of Maori and Iwi as potential partners for the Council in achieving the strategy's goals. Again these changes were discussed at the seminar.
- The strategy measures have been revised to provide a simplified and improved set of measures for monitoring the strategy.

Community Group Grants

- The number of funding schemes has been reduced to four with the Principal Organisations Fund being deleted. However the ability for Council and Community Boards to recognise and cement relationships with principal/key community focused organisations remains through the awarding of three year key relationship funding agreements at both metropolitan and local levels via the Strengthening Communities Fund.

The proposed Community Grants Funding Programme now comprises:

- (i) Strengthening Communities Fund
 - (ii) Small Projects Fund
 - (iii) Discretionary Response Fund
 - (iv) Community Organisations Loan Scheme
- Community Boards, where desired, are able to fund individual young people under a Youth Development Fund allocation. Funding of up to \$10,000 may be sourced and applied to the Youth Development Fund only from budget allocation within the Discretionary Response Fund. Each City Community Board has a Discretionary Response Fund budget of \$60,000 and the Peninsula based Community Boards have \$15,000 each.

- A set of community grants outcomes has been developed to consider grant funding requests. This recognises that Community Group Funding is one component of Council's contribution to achieving the goals of the Strengthening Communities Strategy, the Physical Recreation and Sport Strategy, the Arts Strategy and environmental and heritage outcomes. These grants outcomes were discussed at the seminar and in accordance with Councillors' comments they have been amended to incorporate community groups and activities working towards environmental and heritage outcomes.
- Community Boards will be able to nominate applications from local groups and organisations that they consider to be 'Key Local Organisations' to the Metropolitan Strengthening Communities Fund for contestable consideration under its fund. An amount of \$450,000 is to be tagged in the Metropolitan Strengthening Communities Fund to fund those local applicants that are successful in this process. All unsuccessful nominations will be returned to the appropriate local Community Board for consideration under its Local Strengthening Communities Fund. The rationale for this is that it is acknowledged that some ward areas experience disproportionately higher and more intense community and social needs, relative to the rest of Christchurch.
- An amount of \$40,000 sourced from the Metropolitan Strengthening Communities Fund has been applied to the two Peninsula based community boards for their Local Strengthening Communities Fund. This amount is based on population levels. The rationale for this additional funding is to ensure that the Peninsula based community boards have a suitable level of Strengthening Communities Funding that is free from reserve contribution restrictions.
- The criteria for what constitute "Metropolitan" and "Local" applications have been changed to apply to the project for which funding is sought, rather than the group in question. The criteria around what proportion of the city a project must apply to before it is considered "Metropolitan" for funding purposes have been altered in Appendix VI of the Strengthening Communities Strategy document.
- The dollar limits for the Strengthening Communities Fund (both metropolitan and local) have been removed.
- Closing dates for the Strengthening Communities Fund and Small Grants Fund have been staggered to reduce the period between applications closing and funding decisions being made for those applying to the small grants fund. This is in response to concerns raised by Councillors at the seminar.

Community Facilities

- A sentence has been inserted noting that in some circumstances the Council would support neighbourhood facilities particularly where they meet significant social need, rather than solely providing them at a suburban level.

8. In addition to recommending the adoption of the Strengthening Communities Strategy, this report also recommends the revocation of a number of policies to ensure that the Council articulates its strategic goals in this area once through the strategy and avoids sending mixed messages through retaining a number of overlapping policies.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9. The Council currently spends in the order of \$19m (net) operational expenditure each year and between \$2m and \$9m in capital expenditure on the Community Support activity. In addition some of the community group grants covered fall in other activities in the LTCCP.
10. The Strengthening Communities Strategy (incorporating Community Group Grants Review and Community Facilities Plan) is not a direct driver of any changes to the level of resources being used in the area of community support, community group grants and community facilities and does not necessitate changes to the LTCCP. In future LTCCP's the Council may wish to further consider the resourcing of these activities.

11. The LTCCP clearly requires a reduction in the resources to be used on community facilities by \$158,800 in 2007/08 and \$397,000 per annum in subsequent years. The Strengthening Communities Strategy (incorporating Community Group Grants Review and Community Facilities Plan) provides the general direction for the Council's involvement in community facilities in the future. The subsequent stage will identify how these savings will be made as part of the process to apply the directions indicated. Clearly a number of decisions will need to be made by the Council as this process unfolds.

Do the Recommendations of this Report Align with 2006-16 LTCCP budgets?

12. This report and the proposed Strengthening Communities Strategy are consistent with the budgets provided in the LTCCP and in regards to community facilities provide strategic direction for work to achieve the budgetary savings indicated in this area in the LTCCP.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

13. The Strengthening Communities Strategy has been developed in compliance with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2002. Legal advice has been sought at several stages for guidance on issues of process.
14. The Strengthening Communities Strategy (incorporating Community Group Grants Review and Community Facilities Plan) has been developed in accordance with the decision making and other provisions of the Local Government Act 2002. This proposal does not result in a "significant" decision being made, as provided for in the Local Government Act 2002 and the Council's significance policy. This means there is no requirement for formal consultation through a special consultative procedure. However, there has been engagement with stakeholders to understand their views at an early stage in the strategy development process and a period of consultation has taken place. Although the adoption of the new strategy is not a matter of "significance", as defined in the Act, it is a matter of importance for the council and the community, and extensive consultation was considered to be appropriate.
15. Under section 80 of the Local Government Act 2002 if a decision of a local authority is significantly inconsistent with, or is anticipated to have consequences that will be significantly inconsistent with, any policy adopted by the local authority or any plan required by this Act or any other enactment, the local authority must, when making the decision, clearly identify:
 - (a) the inconsistency; and
 - (b) the reasons for the inconsistency; and
 - (c) any intention of the local authority to amend the policy or plan to accommodate the decision.
16. There are a number of existing Council policies that will become obsolete on adoption of the Strengthening Communities Strategy. The following policies need to be revoked:
 - Community Policy (Appendix 3)
 - Social Justice, Community Development and Social Issues Policy 1993 (Appendix 4)
 - Grants: Procedures for Considering and Allocating 1991 (Appendix 5)
 - Grants: Special Grants Committee Policy 1990 (Appendix 6)
17. The Social Wellbeing Policy 2000 (Appendix 7) is largely consistent with the Strengthening Communities Strategy. However it may be deemed unnecessary to have a policy and strategy that cover the same area. The policy also refers to aspects of living standards and the distribution of wealth not covered by the Strategy. The Social Wellbeing Policy (2000) should be reviewed subsequent to the adoption of the Strengthening Communities Strategy.

18. In addition there are a number of policies that deal with the specific procedures around grants schemes and allocations that will need to be reviewed and possibly revoked as a consequence of the new grants arrangements resulting from adoption of the Strengthening Communities Strategy. These policies are:
- Community Funding Policy 1990-2003 (Appendix 8)
 - Discretionary Funding Policy 1990 and 2000 (Appendix 9)
 - Metropolitan Funding Committee: Funding of Council Projects 1990 (Appendix 10)
19. These policies will need to be reviewed as the detailed criteria and procedures for the new grant schemes are put in place by the Council.

Have you considered the legal implications of the issue under consideration?

20. As above.

ALIGNMENT WITH LTCCP AND ACTIVITY MANAGEMENT PLANS

21. This report is to propose the adoption of a new Strengthening Communities Strategy. There is broad consistency between the proposed strategy and the current LTCCP. As a long-term strategy, if adopted the proposed Strengthening Communities Strategy may well influence changes to be incorporated in the 2009-19 LTCCP. These changes are likely to manifest themselves in alterations to the Community Support Group of Activities.

Do the recommendations of this report support a level of service or project in the 2006-16 LTCCP?

22. The recommendations of this report support the level of service in the Community Support Group of Activities in relation to the percentage satisfaction with the quality of support provided to target community groups.
23. The proposed Strengthening Communities Strategy if adopted may drive a further consideration of levels of service and projects for the 2009-19 LTCCP.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIES

Do the recommendations align with the Council's strategies?

24. This report recommends the adoption of a Council strategy. It is aligned to the Council's Strategic Directions, most notably the following in the Strong Communities area:

Help communities to meet their needs, by:

- *Targeting those who are most disadvantaged;*
- *Providing accessible and welcoming public buildings, spaces and facilities;*
- *Funding and supporting community organisations, initiatives and festivals that help to achieve the city's Community Outcomes;*
- *Initiating and supporting community development projects;*
- *Helping public, private and community agencies work together to address key areas of social need;*
- *Advocating for social support to meet people's needs;*
- *Encouraging people to take part in community groups and voluntary activities;*
- *Encouraging people to take responsibility for themselves and their families.*

CONSULTATION FULFILMENT

25. In order to ensure that the views of relevant organisations were considered from the early stages of the strategy development an external reference group comprising people from community and voluntary organisations and relevant government agencies has been used. This has provided independent advice on the content and direction of this work. Meetings were held with the external reference group from April to October 2006. (For the terms of reference and membership of the external reference group see Appendix II of the Strengthening Communities Strategy document.)
26. The public consultation process for the draft strategy took place between 7 November 2006 and 31 January 2007. Originally, this consultation period was scheduled to close on 22 December 2006, but as a result of pressure for community groups to get their submissions in leading up to the busy Christmas period, the Council decided to extend the submission process until the end of January 2007.
27. During the public submissions period, copies of the draft strategy and the summary version were made available at all Council libraries and service centres, as well as advertised on Council's website. Letters containing the summary document, information on how to obtain a copy of the full draft strategy, timetables of various public meetings to be held, and offers to meet with recipients and discuss the draft strategy, were sent to around 2000 key stakeholders. The public document was mailed to all recipients and applicants for community grants (in 2006). Copies were distributed to each community facility, while regular users were mailed individual copies. During the consultation period, various stories, words of encouragement to put in submissions, and reminders of closing dates ran in various media outlets, including the Christchurch Star, press releases, Akaroa Mail, The Press, Mail and radio interviews on Plains FM. In addition, the Council's Community Development Advisers, Community Recreation Advisers, Metropolitan Community Advisers and other staff used their wide networks to spread the word, raise awareness of the draft strategy, and encourage submissions to be made.
28. As well as speaking at several meetings, forums and networks, Council staff facilitated nine information sharing consultation workshops around the city.
29. Respondents were able to submit by either completing and returning the form on the summary document, completing the online form at the Council's 'Have Your Say' website, or simply writing a letter to the Council.
30. Letters were sent to various Maori stakeholders, encouraging their feedback. In addition, the Council hosted a hui on 29 January 2007, at which a cross section of Maori representing various groups and organisations attended. As well as being encouraged to put in a written submission to the draft strategy, and extending the closing date for submissions by a few days to accommodate this, hui attendees were later contacted and encouraged to come to the hearings on the draft strategy to make an oral submission, even if they had not submitted written feedback.
31. The draft Community Development Strategy was presented at a meeting of the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs Community Reference Group to engage with Pacific communities.
32. At its meeting on 14 December 2006 the Council decided to hear oral submissions. On 22 February 2007 a hearings panel comprising the Mayor and Councillors Condon, Corbett, Evans, Shearing, Sheriff and Withers was appointed for this purpose.
33. The submissions were heard on 26 February 2007 with 43 submitters making oral submissions.
34. The Community Development Strategy Hearings Panel met on 23 April 2007 to consider the feedback received through consultation on the draft strategy. At this meeting the panel decided to carry out dialogue with selected submitters about some of the issues raised in their submissions and with government agencies around collaboration. These meetings took place on 18 and 25 May 2007.

35. A further seminar took place on 5 June 2007. At this seminar staff discussed proposed alterations to the draft strategy based on the consultation feedback and the discussions that had taken place in the Hearings Panel with Councillors.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Council:

- (a) Approve the Strengthening Communities Strategy (Appendix 1).
- (b) Revoke the following policies:
 - Community Policy (Appendix 3)
 - Social Justice, Community Development and Social Issues Policy 1993 (Appendix 4)
 - Grants: Procedures for Considering and Allocating 1991 (Appendix 5)
 - Grants: Special Grants Committee Policy 1990 (Appendix 6)
- (c) Request that staff review the Social Wellbeing Policy following adoption of the Strengthening Communities Strategy, and report back to the Council on the need for the policy, or amendments to it.
- (d) Request that staff review the following policies and report back to the Council on their revocation or modification, as the detailed criteria and procedures are developed for the new grants schemes.
 - Community Funding Policy 1990-2003 (Appendix 8)
 - Discretionary Funding Policy 1990 and 2000 (Appendix 9)
 - Metropolitan Funding Committee: Funding of Council Projects 1990 (Appendix 10)

BACKGROUND (THE ISSUES)

Strategy Development Process

36. Three inter-connected staff teams have been working on the Draft Community Development (now the Strengthening Communities Strategy) Strategy, Community Group Grants Review and Community Facilities Plan since early 2006. These pieces of work are closely related with the Strengthening Communities Strategy providing the framework for the more detailed planning of grants and community facilities.
37. An external reference group comprising people from community and voluntary organisations and relevant government agencies has been used to provide independent advice on the content and direction of this work. This group met approximately six times between April and October 2006 and staff have considered the range of views expressed by members of this group in the development of the strategy.
38. Joint Community Board seminars were on 29 June 2006 and 28 September 2006 to enable the views of community board members to be considered in the development of the draft Community Development Strategy, Community Group Grants Review and Community Facilities Plan.
39. The Council through its Strong Communities portfolio group and through Council seminars has considered options and provided input to this work at regular intervals. The Strong Communities Portfolio Group considered information and options on 2 March 2006, 22 June 2006, 24 August 2006 and 28 September 2006. In addition Council seminars were held on 25 July 2006 and 10 October 2006.
40. The Draft Community Development Strategy incorporating the Community Group Grants Review and Community Facility Plan was approved for consultation by the Council at its meeting on 2 November 2006.
41. A period of consultation has subsequently been undertaken. In addition to the draft strategy being widely circulated, featured on the Council's Have Your Say website and in media releases, consultation meetings have taken place in each ward. Visits have been made by staff to several meetings of networks involving organisations working in the voluntary and community sector and a hui was held with interested Maori groups on 29 January 2007.
42. Following the Council's decision to appoint a hearings panel to hear oral submissions, these were presented to the Council on 26 February 2007.
43. A total of 98 submissions were received on the Draft Community Development Strategy (incorporating Community Group Grants Review and Community Facilities Plan). These have been analysed by staff (see Appendix 2 for summary of submissions).
44. The notable feedback received from submitters is as follows:
 - A number of submitters expressed views about the way the term 'Community Development' was defined in the draft strategy. Several respondents viewed the Council's definition as flawed and suggested various alternative definitions. They believe community development is a process only, not an outcome. For them community development represents a particular way of working with the community that focuses on creating empowerment and community capacity and is based on social justice.
 - A perceived lack of a social justice approach in the draft strategy was raised by a number of submitters. By failing to indicate that the Council's community development activities will work towards social inclusion and equity, submitters argue, the draft strategy does not address key underlying social issues and wider determinants of health, and will thereby fall short of achieving any real change. This issue affects all strands of the draft document, from the strategy, to Community Group Grants, and Community Facilities.

Strategy

- The proposed vision was largely welcomed by submitters, who feel it is healthy and clear, will benefit the whole community, and provides good direction for the Council.
- The principle around 'Effectiveness' gained the most attention out of all proposed principles for the Council's role. Many submitters felt anxious about the possible future requirement to be more accountable, monitor their progress and measure their outcomes. While some largely supported this principle, others wanted the Council to provide the necessary resources, training and assistance to achieve essential accountability in order to secure funding.
- The principle proposing Partnership was largely welcomed by submitters, while it was clearly pointed out that the power relationship in this partnership must be equal, in order to be effective.
- The Council was urged to integrate the Treaty of Waitangi principles more fully through the strategy by recognising Maori and Iwi as important potential partners for collaboration.
- Overall comments indicated that submitters were largely supportive of the proposed goals. Some felt the goals need to be more measurable, with specific objectives, and effective tools with which to measure achievement. Effective implementation, other submitters urged, is the key to success.
- Collaboration among stakeholders, as proposed in goal 2 (*Promote collaboration among key stakeholders, including government agencies in community and voluntary organizations, to identify and address key community issues*) was welcomed by submitters, with enthusiasm to actively involve the wider community and community boards in identifying a priority goal. Some submitters were concerned that increased resources for a specific goal will mean a reduction or lack of funding for other key groups or issues. Others proposed potential priority goals, including the physical environment; the ageing population; social capital; and community capacity.
- Several submitters suggested ways in which the Council could improve participation in local decision-making, as proposed in goal 3 (*Increase community engagement and participation in local decision-making*), with most urging the Council to enhance the public's influence and autonomy in this activity.
- Views expressed by Maori revealed similar opinions to overall submissions regarding the first strand of the draft strategy, with general support for the proposed vision and goals. Maori were concerned that there should be increasing Maori participation in local decision-making. In addition, Maori contribution as a key player in the achievement of the goals was sought. In particular, Maori here seek formal commitment from the Council to make its relationship with Maori clearer and more visible. Grassroots community development was considered important, while enhanced cohesion and communication between community groups, and between groups and the Council was also sought. Safety was considered a key issue for the Maori community (goal 7: *Enhance community and neighbourhood safety*), with many calling for better processes for youth offenders.

Community Group Grants Review

- The proposed funding schemes were largely supported by submitters as being simpler, clearer and less confusing than the current structure.
- Many submitters welcomed the proposed three-year funding agreements, as well as the increased accountability and contestability of grants.
- Suggested amendments included structuring funds around the purpose of the grants, rather than the size; retaining the Social Initiatives Fund and the Youth Development Fund for community boards; increasing the allocation of local funds for community boards to distribute; allocating local Strengthening Communities Fund for the Banks Peninsula community boards; and allowing community boards more discretion in the allocation of local grants.
- Several submitters sought further clarification of the proposed funding schemes, including clear criteria and processes for allocating grants, while urging effective communication of any changes to community groups and organisations.
- Some submitters were concerned they will fail to receive grants in the future, as they do not directly contribute to any one goal.

- The feedback from Maori concurred with the remainder of submissions in that the proposed grant schemes are largely supported. Maori did however seek involvement in decisions around grant allocation, desire that grant applications be assessed according to their potential impact upon Maori and that generally, more funding should be allocated to areas where Maori disproportionately reside, as these are areas of greatest need.

Community Facilities Plan

- Opinions about the Council's proposed approach to focus its role in community facility ownership on a finite number of suburban facilities were largely split, with more people supporting this intention than opposing it. Those who opposed the Council's proposal regarding community facilities claim that 'one size does not fit all' and that local neighbourhood facilities cater for different customers than suburban ones do, therefore, the Council must retain and nurture a large range of facilities.
 - There was broad support for working closely with community groups, actively pursuing partnerships for the management of facilities, and the Council's proposal to co-locate facilities.
 - A number of views were expressed around any possible divestment of community facilities, as follows: The desire for the wider community and community boards to be involved in deciding on and implementing any change in the current arrangement of facilities; offering 'divested' facilities to the wider community for purchase or use first; and providing clearer communication and clarification of the criteria for investment/divestment. Many recommended ways in which the Council could increase the utilisation of facilities, to avoid divestment.
 - Maori were largely opposed to the Council's proposed approach to focus its role in community facility ownership on a finite number of suburban facilities, with similar reasons as those of the remainder of submitters. They expressed the view that local facilities are valuable to neighbourhood communities and urged the Council to promote facilities more actively in order to increase usage.
45. The Community Development Strategy Hearings Panel met on 23 April 2007 to consider the feedback received through consultation on the draft strategy. At this meeting the panel decided to carry out dialogue with selected submitters about some of the issues raised in their submissions and with government agencies around collaboration. These meetings took place on 18 and 25 May 2007.
46. A further seminar took place on 5 June 2007. At this seminar staff discussed proposed alterations to the draft strategy based on the consultation feedback and the discussions that had taken place in the Hearings Panel with Councillors.
47. The significant changes that have been made to the strategy document since the draft document are as follows:

Strategy

- The strategy name has changed to 'Strengthening Communities Strategy'. The name of the strategy along with the differing views about the meaning of 'community development' was discussed by the hearings panel with community organisations and was also discussed at the seminar on 5 June. 'Strengthening Communities Strategy' was the preferred name emerging from the seminar.
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- The addition of a principle on capacity building to recognise the importance of this activity and that it underpins significant amounts of the Council's work in this area.

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- A set of community grants outcomes has been developed to consider grant funding requests. This recognises that Community Group Funding is one component of the Council's contribution to achieving the goals of the Strengthening Communities Strategy, the Physical Recreation and Sport Strategy, the Arts Strategy and environmental outcomes. These grants outcomes were discussed at the seminar and in accordance with Councillors' comments they have been amended to incorporate community groups and activities working towards environmental and heritage outcomes.
- Community boards will be able to nominate applications from local groups and organisations that they consider to be key local organisations to the Metropolitan Strengthening Communities Fund for contestable consideration under its fund. An amount of \$450,000 is to be tagged in the Metropolitan Strengthening Communities Fund to fund those local applicants that are successful in this process. All unsuccessful nominations will be returned to the appropriate community board for consideration under its Local Strengthening Communities Fund. The rationale for this is that it is acknowledged that some wards experience disproportionately higher and more intense community and social needs, relative to the rest of Christchurch.
- An amount of \$40,000 sourced from the Metropolitan Strengthening Communities Fund has been applied to the two Peninsula based community boards for their Local Strengthening Communities Fund. This amount is based on population levels. The rationale for this additional funding is to ensure that the Peninsula based community boards have a suitable level of Strengthening Communities Funding that is free from reserve contribution restrictions.
- The criteria for what constitute "Metropolitan" and "Local" applications have been changed to apply to the project for which funding is sought, rather than the group in question. The criteria around what proportion of the city a project must apply to before it is considered "metropolitan" for funding purposes have been altered in Appendix VI of the Strengthening Communities Strategy document.
- The dollar limits for the Strengthening Communities Fund (both metropolitan and local) have been removed.
- Closing dates for the Strengthening Communities Fund and Small Grants Fund have been staggered to reduce the period between applications closing and funding decisions being made for those applying to the small grants fund. This is in response to concerns raised by Councillors at the seminar.

Community Facilities

- A sentence has been inserted noting that in some circumstances the Council would support neighbourhood facilities particularly where they meet significant social needs, rather than solely providing such facilities at a suburban level.
48. Work on developing an implementation plan for the Strengthening Communities Strategy is underway. There are significant details around the community group grants funding schemes which are yet to be determined. These details will need to be developed and the documentation that is associated with the grants processes developed. There is a significant job to be done in communicating the new grants arrangements to community groups. In the community facilities area there is significant work to be carried out in developing an implementation plan that identifies how the directions signalled in the plan will be applied to the existing and future Council owned community facilities, as well as in working through improved management, partnerships and facilitation roles.
49. Under section 80 of the Local Government Act 2002 if a decision of a local authority is significantly inconsistent with, or is anticipated to have consequences that will be significantly inconsistent with, any policy adopted by the local authority or any plan required by this Act or any other enactment, the local authority must, when making the decision, clearly identify:
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 - (b) the reasons for the inconsistency; and
 - (c) any intention of the local authority to amend the policy or plan to accommodate the decision.

50. For this reason it is important that the Council considers the degree of consistency between the proposed Strengthening Communities Strategy and existing policy.
51. There is a good deal of confusion between the Council's policies and strategies in general, with at times both covering similar ground. Staff are currently trying to develop a situation in which policies and strategies have different roles and are working to improve the Policy Register so that it only contains genuine, current policies
52. There are a number of existing Council policies that will become obsolete on adoption of the Strengthening Communities Strategy (if not already obsolete). The following policies need to be revoked:
- Community Policy (Appendix 3)

The policy identifies the Council's first priority as being to empower and enable those who are deprived of power and resources. This is inconsistent with staff understanding of Councillors' comments at the recent seminar around the Social Justice principle in the Strengthening Communities Strategy and the subsequent amendment of the principle to remove the word 'vulnerable'.

Other parts of the Community Policy are largely consistent with the Strengthening Communities Strategy. However it is unnecessary to have a policy and a strategy that cover the same area.
 - Social Justice, Community Development and Social Issues Policy 1993 (Appendix 4)

The policy makes reference to the 1974 Local Government Act which was superseded by the Local Government Act 2002.

The policy makes references to guaranteeing equal access to services and facilities and that 'equity means targeting resources to groups which have least access to services'. These are inconsistent with staff understanding of Councillors' comments at the recent seminar around the Social Justice principle in the Strengthening Communities Strategy and the subsequent amendment of the principle to remove the word 'vulnerable'.

Other parts of the policy are largely consistent with the Strengthening Communities Strategy. However it is unnecessary to have a policy and a strategy that cover the same area.
 - Grants: Procedures for Considering and Allocating 1991 (Appendix 5)

The policy refers to types of grants not in the current grants systems nor in the grants system emanating from the Strengthening Communities Strategy.

The policy refers to Council committees and organisational units that are no longer in existence.
 - Grants: Special Grants Committee Policy 1990 (Appendix 6)

The Special Grants Committee has not operated for some years and is unnecessary given that all Councillors are part of the Metropolitan Funding Subcommittee and the Council meets weekly.
53. The Social Well Being Policy 2000 (Appendix 7) is largely consistent with the Strengthening Communities Strategy. However it may be deemed unnecessary to have a policy and strategy that cover the same area. The policy also refers to aspects of living standards and the distribution of wealth not covered by the strategy. The Social Well Being Policy (2000) should be reviewed subsequent to the adoption of the Strengthening Communities Strategy.

54. In addition there are a number of policies that deal with the specific procedures around grants schemes and allocations that will need to be revoked or reviewed as a consequence of the new grants arrangements resulting from adoption of the Strengthening Communities Strategy. Namely these policies are:
- Community Funding Policy 1990-2003 (Appendix 8)
 - Discretionary Funding Policy 1990 and 2000 (Appendix 9)
 - Metropolitan Funding Committee: Funding of Council Projects 1990 (Appendix 10)
55. These policies will need to be reviewed as the detailed criteria and procedures for the new grant schemes are put in place by the Council.

THE OBJECTIVES

56. To provide clear strategic direction for the Council's work in strengthening communities and its community facilities activities.
57. To provide an effective new structure for community group grants.