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Tim Barnett
MP for Christchurch Central
Level 3, 103 Worcester Street
PO Box 13 295
CHRISTCHURCH

Ph: 03 377 8840
Fx: 03 366 4770
Mobile: 0274 570 809
Email: tim@timbarnett.org.nz
Internet: www.timbarnett.org.nz or www.labour.org.nz

ccc_plan@ccc.govt.nz

SUBMISSION TO THE CHRISTCHURCH O-TAUTAHI LTCCP 2004/14

Please find attached four matters that I would like to raise in regard to the draft Plan. Parliamentary scheduling allowing, I would like to be heard in support of the submission and intend to provide supplementary written material in such an eventuality.

I look forward to presenting these matters, and thank you for the opportunity to make comment.

Yours sincerely

TIM BARNETT

1. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICIES IN CITY COUNCIL EMPLOYMENT

This is the **sixth** time I have submitted on this matter. For the first time in 2003, in response to the 2003/04 Plan, I did not receive a written reply to my concern. I chased this up with the City Manager and to date have not received a reply.

My concern is very simple. There is strong anecdotal feeling that the City Council employs fewer people from refugee and migrant communities than one would expect, given the comparison of the city's population quite possibly a similar situation applies to Maori and Pacific peoples. The Council is a major employer and could be a leader in this field (as Central Government is).

The solution is an adequate equal employment opportunity element within the City Council's human resources programme with (when appropriate) positive action to recognize past discrimination. Such initiatives would be meaningless (and possibly not justified) unless combined with effective and reasonably accurate data on the composition of the Council's current workforce. Five times I have raised this ; five times I have failed to receive an adequate explanation of this glaring hole in the Council's employment policies.

There is currently a significant focus in the city on race and on racial discrimination. Will 2004/05 finally be the time to act? I hope so.

The outcome I seek is that the Council's workforce reflects the racial diversity of the city.

2. MONITORING THE QUALITY OF PRIVATE RENTAL HOUSING

The City Council has, under the Building Act statutory responsibilities in this area, and has to address the issues that inevitably arise from one of the nation's largest concentrations of private housing stock.

At Volume 2, page 102 the performance measures on this service relate to response time, not to quality of service or desired outcome achieved. I urge :

- i) A performance measure specific to the services in regard to the quality of rental housing, and
- ii) A greater focus in that measure on quality and outcome.

3. NURTURING DEMOCRACY IN THE CITY

The Local Government Acts offers new opportunities for expanding citizen involvement in the work of the City Council and places on the council new obligations concerning constitution. Although this matter is touched on numerous times in the Community Plan, I feel that it could be usefully expanded and reorganized into one section.

This should include such matters as :

- a) Community involvement in City Council decision-making (my observation being the written consultation is excellent, but the preparedness to meet citizens face to face is not always obvious);
- b) Free Internet access, including printing and personal e-mail checking facilities;
- c) Development of the concept of a "Democracy Centre", a physical and virtual place where local residents can go for help in writing and producing submissions, researching and lobbying for their cause, in debating the future of Christchurch. "Our City" was envisaged as a "venue for education, discussion and debate on local matters". Could this notion not be revived for the new forms of democratic involvement now opening up to us all?

4. RESOURCING OF CITY COUNCILLORS AND COMMUNITY BOARD MEMBERS IN THE NEW CITY COUNCIL STRUCTURE

If the number of City Councilor's is to be 12 after October, new and very significant elected positions will have been created. Each individual will represent almost as many people as a Member of Parliament, they will campaign with a spending limit higher than that of a Parliamentary candidate and they will receive a salary commensurate to that of a backbencher. The jobs to be done by Community Board members will also expand. MP's representing electorates receive funding from Parliamentary Service to enable them to employ staff, run an electorate office and report back to those they represent. If City Councilor's and Community Board members are to be able to perform their jobs properly they need equivalent resourcing. This is not evident in the Plan.