

Summary submission form

Instructions

You may send us your submission...

Please read before completing your submission

It will help us process your submission if you clearly state the issue you want the Council to consider, what specific action you think the Council should take, and why that should be done.

If you wish, you can present your submission at a hearing. (If that is the case, please tick the box). The hearings will be held between Thursday 25 May and Wednesday 7 June 2006. Generally, 10 minutes are allocated for hearing each submission, including time for questions.

It will help us if your submission also refers to the page of either the full version or the summary version.

Please note: we are legally required to make all written or electronic submissions available to Councillors and to the public. This includes the name and address of the submitter. All submissions will be published on the Council's website from 10 May 2006.

No anonymous submissions will be accepted.

By mail

Please mail your submission (no stamp is required) to:

Freepost 178
Our Community Plan
Christchurch City Council
PO Box 237
Christchurch 8003

By email

Please email your submission to:
ccc-plan@ccc.govt.nz
Please make sure that your full name and address is included with your submission.

On the internet

You may enter your submission using the form provided on the Council's web site at:
<http://www.ccc.govt.nz>
Please follow all the instructions on the web site.

Please remember to indicate if you wish to present your submission in person at one of the hearings.

Please ensure your submission arrives no later than Friday 5 May 2006.

Your submission

You may use this form for your submission on the draft Our Community Plan if you wish. Whether you use this form or not, please include your name, address and contact telephone number with your submission.

Tick one I do NOT wish to present my submission at the hearing, and ask that this written submission be considered OR I wish to talk to the main points in my written submission at the hearings to be held between Thursday 25 May and Wednesday 7 June 2006

Are you completing this submission: For yourself On behalf of a group or organisation

If you are representing a group or organisation, how many people do you represent? 25

My submission refers to: Full version 86 Page No. Summary version Page No.

Do you also want to respond to: Development Contributions Aquatic Facilities Other

Contact Name Lesley Keast

Organisation name (if applicable) Friday Forum

Contact Address 27 Boston Ave

Ch Ch.

Phone No. (day) 03-9426716 Phone No. (evening) -

Email (if applicable) lesley.keast@paradise.net.nz

Signature [Signature] Date 5/5/06

SUBMISSION TO CHRISTCHURCH CITY OPPOSING THE PROPOSAL TO CLOSE PUBLIC LIBRARIES AS SET OUT ON PAGE 86 OF THE FULL DRAFT LONG TERM COUNCIL COMMUNITY PLAN.

Accessible public libraries are especially valuable to older people. The Statistics NZ Cultural Survey 2002 states library use is most common in the 65 and over age group, and for these people the reading and other material available through libraries is of particular importance. Some reasons for this follow:

Most in this age group are retired or not in full-time employment so have more opportunity to follow personal interests and read for information or pleasure.

They have more leisure time to fill. Books can be read in many circumstances, picked up and put down, unconstrained by the scheduling which governs TV or radio. Readers and those listening to talking books, CDs and other audio material have the choice of content to suit their needs and to occupy time which may otherwise drag. Older people are more likely to live alone or be limited in social contacts, loneliness can be a major problem. Access to books, magazines and the human contact in libraries can be a great comfort, reading can provide an escape from mundane and sometimes oppressive existence.

For the ill, those with physical restrictions and people removed from familiar surroundings reading is a solace and an avenue into a wider world otherwise denied to them. As advancing age and deteriorating health close off other options access to books becomes more and more important.

Fading eyesight makes large-print books, talking books and music CDs especially precious.

Hearing loss is common as people age and the ability to read is hugely important in filling the gap this leaves.

For those on limited incomes libraries are one of the few forms of entertainment or self-development readily and affordably available.

The great range of books, magazines and other library resources open a very wide range of learning and entertainment possibilities. These are enormously important in keeping the mind active, a most desirable part of maintaining mental and social health as one ages. We need a well-informed citizenry, especially as we face a changing world where adaptability and ability to participate in the community will become even more important. Resources are limited and we must encourage self-reliance and independence as far as possible to avoid serious problems as our city population ages.

Older people are often responsible for care of grandchildren or other youngsters. Books are essential in childhood and libraries provide far more of these than any family can afford. Libraries are also a great place to take children to keep them occupied. If they learn to enjoy reading they are much less likely to get involved in anti-social activity. Grandparental assistance in raising healthy families is highly important when parents have little spare time, getting children into the library habit

has major societal benefits.

All the above factors depend on reasonable access to libraries. Local libraries are especially important to older people for obvious reasons, some of which are:

Mobility is often restricted. People who are not working are less likely to be travelling near libraries in other areas. Heavy traffic, congestion and stressful driving conditions and rising fuel costs discourage avoidable car use. Those without private transport, especially those not on suitable bus routes, find it difficult to reach libraries in other suburbs, the time required, cost and general inconvenience are serious burdens, especially to those who cannot walk far.

The ability to combine a library visit with shopping in the one locality is greatly valued. Redwood, Bishopdale and Spreydon libraries, specified as subjects for closure, are all adjacent to a cluster of shops - unlike those at South Colombo Street or Upper Riccarton. Direct transport costs, the expense of maintaining traffic infrastructure such as roading and parking and the need to reduce air pollution and other adverse impacts will become considerably greater in the coming years. Decentralising services and improving local self-sufficiency will be important in minimising future problems.

The comfort of having familiar neighbourhood facilities is considerable. A sense of community is vital in maintaining quality of civic life. A local library is a place where people can go into a relatively tranquil atmosphere, browse for books, read magazines and newspapers and enjoy a break in a safe, calm and comfortable environment. This means a great deal to those who may otherwise be housebound or living in less than ideal circumstances.

For many older citizens libraries are the one communal resource they can use freely and frequently whereas sports fields, swimming pools, leisure centres, concerts, festivals, subsidised car racing tracks and floodlit cathedrals are of little or no use.

Christchurch has an ageing population. Elimination of accessible library services, whether those in suburban shopping areas or the mobile library, would have a disproportional effect on those citizens facing the constraints of advancing age and restricted incomes. The proposal in the LTCCP would be severe in its impact on vulnerable people, and very hard to reverse if implemented. The estimated amount saved is entirely disproportionate to the damage it would cause.

The proposal directly contradicts many of the aims set out in the Plan, especially those relating to social equity, strengthening of communities and sustainability. Unless these proclaimed aims and values are simply window-dressing the proposal to close libraries does not fit into the overall vision and purposes set out in the introductory pages of the LTCCP.

The draft proposal should therefore be deleted from the final plan.