

LTCCP 2006-16 SUBMISSION

Submissions close on 5 May 2006

I wish to talk to the main points in my submission at the hearings to be held between Thursday 25 May and Wednesday 7 June 2006.

I am completing this submission:
For yourself

Number of people you represent:

My submission refers to:
Full Version of the LTCCP

Page Number:
86

I also want to respond to:

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Your Submission: **Do you have any comments on the major projects in our Draft Community Plan?**

Do you have any comments on groups of activities (The activities and services the Council provides?)

The CCC devotes 6 pages in its LTCCP to democracy and governance. It identifies low public participation as a potential problem, a problem which in fact plagues all local bodies in New Zealand. In mitigation of this, it argues for wider public consultation and dissemination of information through a variety of channels.

Realistically, the first, or often only contact many people have with the council is through talking to the front desk staff at the service centres, such as when they go there to pay their rates or dog licences, or to buy rubbish bags etc. Yet for a saving of \$300,000, which equates to barely \$1 per ratable property in the city, the CCC is proposing to outsource that function to a company (NZ Post) that has no administrative connection to the running of the city at all. In order to make this paltry saving, the council is prepared to further disconnect itself from the lives of the people it attempts to represent and has such difficulty engaging with.

Call centres, while useful in themselves, will not completely replace this function. People who use the service centres often go there to carry out quite routine functions such as bill payments or rubbish bag purchases. However while they are there they are presented with the human face of the council and the other services that it provides. They see displays of council materials that they would not see if they were paying their bill at NZ Post. At NZ Post, they will not be talking to a council employee who is aware of the functions of the council and its service provision. Call centres can provide some of this service but they draw a different type of person - one who has rung for a specific purpose, and who will not be visually prompted to learn about other council services during their conversation. This positive contact with the council can best be provided by a face to face encounter at the local service centre.

It is of course responsible of the council to continually assess the nature of its services but I believe that in this case, the gains in terms of money saved would be dwarfed by the loss in terms of public image and contact that the council has with the public of the city.

Do you have any other comments or suggestions you want to make?