

Submission on CCC LTCCP

1. My name is Lianne Dalziel, MP for Christchurch East, P.O. Box 15-106, Christchurch Phone 382-0288.
2. I would like to be heard in person on this submission.
3. Although I am making this submission as a resident of the city, I am also mindful of my role as an elected representative of the constituents of Christchurch East. I therefore make this submission in a representative capacity.

The Vision

I wish to endorse the Council's Vision as set out on page 9, although I believe that there are subtle but important changes that ought to be made as follows:

The first changes relate to the language:

"boutique" I assume this word was chosen to separate or distinguish Christchurch from large cities that are world-class – and it does have the connotation of small and exclusive. It's modern use as an adjective hasn't made it into the dictionaries I have at the office, so I cannot offer an alternative.

"Unique" economic base – I would prefer the Council said "strong". Uniqueness is not a characteristic in its own right that supports the world-class status of the city. A city's weakness may make it unique – it's strength is what makes it world-class.

"most attractive" – I don't see why Christchurch would want to be New Zealand's most attractive city in terms of where we live – that really ties in with the 'must-see' and "global investment" – it is a quality that pulls people in; a magnet as it were for people and capital. I think the language should be about how proud we are live in this city, because of the commitment to protecting and preserving our natural and built heritage.

The second change relates to the substance under the great work opportunities and global investment destination headings.

My suggestion would be to rewrite the reference to attracting the world's sharpest thinkers and innovators, because actually some of them were born in Christchurch and some of them still live here and some return home from time to time too. And under one of the headings I believe there should be a reference to international education because of the economic benefits and diversity of culture it brings.

The Overview

The Overview pages 19-23 identifies changes to 4 major policies, the most significant of which is stated on page 22:

"The Council has reviewed its list of strategic assets, removing City Care and the Red Bus Company from the list. While they are still important companies and activities, as the market has matured, the need to consider them as strategic is no longer appropriate."

This appears to be a circular argument and seems to be at odds with the Council's vision. Both public transport and the maintenance of the physical environment are very much strategic activities in the sense that they deliver on that vision and strategic direction that lies at the heart of the LTCCP.

The difficulty is that there is no explanation as to why their status is being downgraded, leaving the implication that is the ownership of the assets that is not considered by the Council to be strategic. That, with respect, is a separate issue and should be dealt with as such. There are specific consultation requirements around a Council's decision to divest itself of strategic assets and simply removing them from the list through the LTCCP process does not meet those requirements.

I submit that they should remain on the strategic asset list so that if there is a subsequent decision to sell them Christchurch ratepayers get the opportunity to be engaged in a specific consultation around that decision.

As an aside with respect to the Lyttelton Port Company Ltd, if the Council seriously wants to look at this strategic asset as part of the broader infrastructure of the South Island and New Zealand, as Minister of Commerce I would be more than happy to talk through the barriers the Council perceives to exist around the Commerce Act.

Development Contributions Policy:

I fully support the principle that "growth should fund growth", however I think that this part of the plan identifies the tangibles in terms of roads, water and sewerage infrastructure). Representing as I do, both Aranui and New Brighton, I can see the intangible benefits of a community accepted as a partner to the process. Aranui should become the gold standard of community engagement where major developments are occurring. It is true that the developer was in this case the government, however I believe private sector developers could work along similar lines. The community of New Brighton does not express itself with a single voice, but what I hear emerging from the disparate views is a single-minded desire to advance the development of New Brighton while preserving the essence of the character of this seaside village. The Council could contribute to this by bringing together the different projects they are working on, so there is a greater sense of the big picture.

I mention this because there is a related issue under Revenue and Financing policy, which identifies a targeted rate to fund the Central City Mall redevelopment. This mechanism for funding the slow road at New Brighton fell off the annual plan without any reference back to the community and therefore the introduction of a general mechanism is welcomed.

How the Council Works Page 25

There is an increasing level of concern about the impenetrability of the Council decision-making process. I have no difficulty at the micro level – ratepayer complaints I e-mail to the Community Board chair, who follows up immediately. It's the macro level that poses problems.

The Cabinet could not operate without Cabinet Committees, and given the complexity of some of the issues the Council is facing, I believe it would be worthwhile considering the establishment of one or two standing committees. I think there is an unrealistic belief that because the number of councillors was halved and because some of the former standing committees were as large as the whole Council is now that somehow the committees are not needed.

With respect this is confusing form with function. The committee allows for the consideration of reports, discussion with officials and the formulation of recommendations, ahead of the meeting that makes the final decision. This separation of up to a week creates a healthy opportunity for reflection. It also provides an opportunity for the public to interact with the Council in a way that they can add value to the decision-making process. Wellington City Council has adopted the model of a single standing committee of the whole council and it seems to work well in practice.

Strategic Directions - Strong Communities – Page 49

The first goal and objective is to increase life-long learning by:

- Providing resources and information through libraries and websites;
- Providing learning facilities, programmes and activities;
- Advocating for high quality education and training
- Encouraging people of all ages to take advantage of learning opportunities

It is on this basis that I ask the Council to move the Aranui Learning Centre proposal on P 45 of the Capital Works Programme above the line – shifting this project into the priority part of the Capital Works Programme would do much to achieve this goal.

I will submit a supplementary submission on this.