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Corporate Plan Output: Information and advice to Council	

The purpose of this report is to inform and update Christchurch City Council on the Bertelsmann Foundation's Cities of Tomorrow International Network for Better Local Government.

BACKGROUND

The Bertelsmann Foundation is based in Germany and lends support to future-oriented projects in five categories:

Socio - political
 News - media
 International understanding
 Culture and education
 Health and medicine

In 1993 the Christchurch City Council was awarded the Carl Bertelsmann Prize for its "highly efficient, evolutionary and citizen focused administrations".

The Christchurch City Council is part of the Bertelsmann network of 10 cities. (Phoenix - Arizona; Delft and Tilburg - Netherlands; Farum - Denmark; Braintree - England; Quebec - Canada; Hameenlinna - Finland; Neuchâtel - Switzerland and Mitaka - Japan. These cities have been joined by five German cities, Celle, Essen, Hanover, Kirchheim and Munster. This network, with the support and funding from the Bertelsmann Foundation, is committed to a cycle of work which, for the 1998-2000 period will focus on the following:

- Children and Youth
- Employment
- Senior Citizens

THE PROJECT: CITIES OF TOMORROW INTERNATIONAL NETWORK FOR BETTER LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The project is divided into three clusters - one on each theme. Christchurch will be the lead city for the cluster of cities involved in focussing on children and youth ie Essen - Germany; Neuchâtel - Switzerland; Tilburg - Netherlands; Quebec - Canada; Braintree - England.

'Building our city into a good place for Children and Youth'

The project was launched at a three day workshop in Weisbaden, Germany from 29 March to 1 April 1998, attended by the Director of Policy, Jonathan Fletcher, and Children's Advocate, Lyn Campbell.

Each member of the cluster may establish its own regional cluster to widen the net of expertise and influence. Christchurch will include other cities in New Zealand, Australia, South Africa and Japan.

The work programme will involve each participating city in the following:

- An analysis of the local authority to assess how well it caters for children and youth ie. A SWOT analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.
- Collection of examples of projects which have proven to be successful in making a difference to the welfare and well-being of children and young people.
- Implementation of one or two projects in each participating city to meet the identified needs.
- Development of an interactive website which will be used to profile the cluster's work and to collect suitable projects for a casebank.

While this activity will contribute to growing knowledge and understanding, this cycle of work will also draw upon experiences to learn about strategic management. All cities in the network will contribute to the cluster's work by evaluating the effectiveness of their projects and assessing what has been learned about strategic management.

In particular the progress on implementation of the project will help us to learn about how cities can establish and nurture value-creating partnerships, smart networking, and ensure accountability of participants in partnerships.

This vast pool of experience should enable many conclusions to be drawn about good strategic management practice. These learning points will be able to be applied across a wide range of our city's activities.

Christchurch will also be able to draw upon the results of the clusters working on employment and senior citizens, which will add value to our involvement in this cycle of work.

IMPLEMENTATION

All cluster members have committed to the Christchurch proposal. The Bertelsmann Foundation has committed a consultant to assist with administration. Participating cities are currently undertaking a SWOT analysis of their local authority and establishing regional clusters.

A part time person is being employed, with Bertelsmann funding, to assist in Christchurch with administration and in our role as lead city, to work with the Children's Advocate and Director of Policy.

The network will next meet in January 1999 to evaluate progress and the effectiveness of this cycle of work in terms of 'making a difference' in our cities.

POLIS PROJECT

The POLIS project runs parallel to the Children and Youth Employment and Senior Citizens projects. It focuses upon:

- (a) The governance relationship between elected members, the Council organisation; and
- (b) The relationships between elected members and their communities.

There is a symbiosis between this work and the strategic management aspects of the cluster projects. This is a particular strength of this cycle, as co-operation between the political and administrative arms of city governments is a key to the challenges facing cities in the next millennium.

Christchurch benefits from this project in a number of ways. The network enables the city to keep up to date with innovative developments in 15 leading cities throughout the world. From this cycle of work we will learn a significant amount about how to build the city into a good place for children and youth, even though this is an area in which we are ahead of average. We will also be well informed of thinking on and developments in employment promotion and in providing for senior citizens. Further than that, the strategic management considerations that run across all three projects will provide valuable insights into how cities maintain good lines of communications with their communities, establish and nurture value creating relationships, and work together with other groups in the community to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes. The learning here will be of value not only within the areas of the projects, but across a wide and increasing range of the Christchurch City Council's activities.

Chairperson's

Recommendation: That the report be received.