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Corporate Plan Output: Special Events/Activities	

The purpose of this report is to inform Councillors of the proceedings of the 1998 IPC (International Paralympic Committee) Swimming Championships that were held in Christchurch between 9-17 October 1998.

BACKGROUND

This event was brought to Christchurch through the enthusiastic efforts of the Christchurch City Council, the Hillary Commission, Parafed Canterbury and Paralympics NZ. The Christchurch City Council, Hillary Commission and the Community Trust provided financial support for the event.

An organising committee was formed in late 1997 to plan and coordinate the event. Neil Blanchfield was contracted to manage all aspects of the event.

THE EVENT

The 1998 IPC Swimming Championships were the most significant disabled sports event to be held in New Zealand. Over 900 people were actively involved with the event. Competitor and team official numbers totalled 678 from 51 nations. Volunteers numbered 117 as well as 66 NZ swimming officials volunteering their services for the week.

The swimming events were held at Queen Elizabeth Park. The 50m, training and dive pools were all utilised during the event. Competitors, and team officials were accommodated in five of the city's inner city hotels. Swim officials were housed separately in inner city apartment units. Transport was provided for all participants to and from the airport and QEII Park by Christchurch Transport Ltd buses throughout the whole event.

A full IPC swimming programme was held with swimmers competing in classification-specific events. The majority of the competitors were athletes with physical disabilities. Athletes with intellectual disabilities also competed at this event.

Official functions included an opening ceremony (parade up Colombo Street and ceremony in Victoria Square), civic welcome to team managers (mayor's lounge) medal presentations at the pool (flag raising and national anthems) and a final function (last medal presentations, three-course meal and dance music-live band). The final function provided a great opportunity for all participants to celebrate the week's performances at the pool.

The swim champs did not receive as much media coverage as expected, especially when both the scale and significance of the event are considered. However, the event did receive good publicity in a range of newspapers, radio and television networks. A website was also set up for the swim champs with results, stories and photos being updated daily.

The estimated economic impact that this event had on Christchurch city was to the value of approximately five million dollars. A complete economic impact assessment has not been completed. Nearly \$1.5million was generated solely through the competitors payments for accommodation, meals, transport and entry fees. Another \$45,000 was taken in championship merchandise sales at the pool.

Chairman's

Recommendation: That the information be received.