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The purpose of this report is to advise the Spreydon-Heathcote Community Board of the opportunity to make submissions on the document “Scenarios for Local Government to 2010” which was produced as a foresight planning exercise by the Department of Internal Affairs, Local Government New Zealand and the Society of Local Government Managers.

Introduction

The document outlines three possible scenarios which depict different views of New Zealand in 2010. They represent different degrees of take up of the knowledge revolution and different levels of social cohesion. They are but three of many possible scenarios and the opportunity exists to include any other scenario that may be appropriate to local government.

Submissions are sought by 26 February. Over 5000 copies of the document have been distributed throughout the country, including to the national office of all business and community organisations. Community Boards have been invited to make submissions and have been provided with “Champions Kits” to help facilitate wider input from community groups. It is anticipated that Boards will lodge submissions and encourage community groups to do likewise.

The scenarios are **not** government, **nor** local government policy.

Following the current consultation phase the steering group which has been managing the process will **develop a preferred scenario** which will be fed into the policy development process of central government. From this will flow a programme for policy and legislative reforms that respond to the challenges facing central and local government into the next millennium.

As the responses to these scenarios will influence the government’s views on the future of local government it is well worth making sure that there is a strong Canterbury response.

Scenarios For Local Government to 201

The document introduces the following mega-trends that were identified by the Ministry of Research, Science and Technology for the early part of the 21 century:

- New Technologies
- Knowledge Revolution
- Social Organisation
- Globalisation
- Industry Convergence
- Changing Consumer Markets
- Environmental Tensions

The outcome of an Environmental Scan (conducted by BERL) to the year 2010 to cover trends in the New Zealand economy, society and local governance is also detailed.

Set against this background the following three scenarios were developed:-

Scenario 1: Muddling Along

New Zealand is caught like a possum in the glare of the oncoming future. But possums are hardy creatures and New Zealand muddles along by finding new markets for traditional agricultural products and combating falling prices with new production technologies. Skills and attitudes have not moved to embrace the knowledge revolution and New Zealand has fallen behind comparative countries in this regard. An entrenched underclass exists and there is considerable tension. Meanwhile the countryside still looks beautiful and provides attractive lifestyle options for the well heeled from overseas and from Auckland. But New Zealand seems to be on automatic pilot, not responding to changes and opportunities.

Scenario 2: Lean and Competitive

After a period of economic difficulty, New Zealand has adapted quickly to keep up with the changes of the early 21st century. Rapid uptake of new technology and the internet, and the success of the entrepreneurial approach, have made us a highly individualised society of sharks. New Zealand is diverse and entrepreneurial, but sharply divided and lacking in social cohesion, and although economically the nation is sound, socially it is in great danger.

Scenario 3: Governance for Citizens

Around the world, there is much interest in the social change that has occurred in New Zealand over the first decade of the 21st century. What marks New Zealand out from other countries is a strong and widely shared sense of purpose – a national intent. New Zealanders are a nation of Kahikatea, standing together.

The document summarises Scenario 3 as:

Local government has moved towards the view that it is there to provide for citizens rather than provide services to citizens. This has allowed a major disengagement between the governance process and services. With privatisation and contracting out, local government has taken on the role of promoting leadership decisions at local levels and implementing a very broad-based democratic process rather than simply a consultative one.

Local government is seen as the powerhouse for facilitating choices within common, agreed goals and brokering future desired outcomes. Local government's new identity is people-skilled, focused on empowerment of an informed citizenry.

It is suggested that the Board members meet informally and, if desired, invite community representatives to discuss the document.

Copies of the document have been circulated separately to Board members.

Recommendation: That a response based on the above points be prepared with the final wording to be agreed by the Board's Chairperson.

Chairperson's

Recommendation:

1. To adopt the above recommendation.
2. That, as a response has to be made by 26 February 1999, this matter be referred to the next Community Affairs Committee meeting, scheduled for 4.30pm on 16 February 1999, for drafting of a response.