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Corporate Plan Output: Reticulation	

The purpose of this report is to respond to a request from the Hagley/Ferrymead Community Board to inform them of the house to house drainage inspection work currently being performed in part of their area. (see attached plan).

BACKGROUND:

The Council’s house to house drainage inspection programme began in 1993 with the inspection of some 10,000 properties in southern Christchurch by contractor Infiltral Ltd. The work has been on-going since that time at the rate of 15,000 properties per year, the intention being to cover the entire city within a decade. We are now into our sixth contract, being carried out by Associated Environmental Services Ltd (AES) who have also performed the two previous contracts.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of the house to house drainage inspection programme is to reduce the amount of stormwater inflow to the sewer system. Stormwater inflow is a significant contributing cause to sewer overflows that occur in the city during serious wet weather. The inspection involves a check around the exterior of buildings for above ground drainage faults that can potentially let stormwater into the sewer system. The most common faults found are low or broken gully traps having the potential to drain surface runoff, and roof downpipes discharging to gully traps.

PROCEDURE:

The inspection procedure is summarised as follows:

1. One week prior to inspection, a letter is dropped in the letterbox informing the householder of the upcoming inspection.
2. An inspector calls, wearing ID and carrying a Council issued Warrant authorising entry for the purpose of the inspection. The inspector knocks on the door first, but if no one answers still proceeds with the inspection.
3. If the property is clear of faults, a card saying no problems were found is left in the letterbox and this is the end of the inspection.
4. If a drainage fault(s) is detected, a Repair Notice is sent to the property owner describing both the fault(s) found and the repair work needed, and requesting the owner to complete repairs within either two or three months, depending on the magnitude of the repair work required. **The Repair Notice also advises that Council loans are available upon application, for repair work costing in excess of \$400.** Loans can be for up to 10 years at around current floating mortgage rates (reviewed annually) and are secured against the property. This facility was approved by Council in September 1992.
5. The property is then reinspected after the period stated in the Repair Notice and if the requested repair work is not completed at this time, the property owner is sent a Reminder Notice giving them one more month.
6. One month later, the property is reinspected again and if the requested repair work is still not completed, the property owner is sent a Final Notice under section 459 of the Local Government Act, requiring the work to be completed within 30 days or the Council will then arrange it and charge the property owner the cost of it plus 10%.

7. The property is then reinspected for the third time after the 30 days has elapsed and if the required repair work is still not completed, the job is given to the 'Council's' drainlayer, currently GN Brewer Ltd. G N Brewer Ltd invoices the Council for the repair work and the Council then in turn invoices the property owner.

All correspondence from AES highlights an 0800 number for enquiries. Repair Notices include information for 'do it yourselves', and also a form to be signed and returned in the envelope provided should the owner wish to engage the Council's drainlayer to do the repair work, subject to their acceptance of his quote.

In the current contract, 24% of the 4400 properties inspected to the end of April have had at least one fault detected. Gully trap related faults account for 87% of all faults found, and downpipe faults 12.5%, which is higher than average. Gully trap faults typically cost no more than \$65 each to repair but downpipe faults can cost a lot more, depending on the solution. Possible solutions range from just redirecting the downpipe discharge onto the ground when the downpipe serves only a small area of roof, to the installation of an entire new stormwater drainage system if one is not existing/working.

Since the start of the house to house drainage inspection programme six years ago, fewer than 10 Council loans have been taken out. I also believe there are no bad debts from property owners invoiced for repair work done after they failed to respond to their Final Notices.

Recommendation: That this information be received

**Chairman's
Recommendation:** For discussion