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Corporate Plan Output: Parks Plans and Policy Statements	

The purpose of this report is to seek approval to release for public comment the Draft Management Plan for Duncan Park which includes consideration of the renewal of the lease agreement with Ferrymead Pony Club.

BACKGROUND

The late Mary Duncan bequeathed Duncan Park to the Christchurch City Council in 1949, for the purposes of a public reserve.

Duncan Park consists of 23.4 hectares extending east from the Avoca stream over a steepish spur and down into Horotane Valley. The north boundary is on Port Hills Road and the south Boundary adjoins rural/horticultural properties higher up Avoca Valley. Access is from Port Hills Road.

The Duncan Family originally farmed the site. In the 1860s the site was also used as a shooting range and military camp for various colonial volunteer training events.

Since 1962, the park has been leased by the Ferrymead Pony club, which organises activities for its members, focusing on two main events held in March and May, when pony club members from throughout the district meet on the park and participate in the day's programme of dressage, show jumping and cross country. One of the highlights at the Mary Duncan meeting is the cross-country course, which is unique in Christchurch, due to its steep terrain.

Although entrusted to Christchurch City by the late Mary Duncan with the aim of providing for and supporting educational and botanical values, no use was initially found for the land. For a period of 15 years it was neglected, becoming infested with noxious weeds - there was an estimated 13 acres of gorse. Erosion had also caused considerable damage. Early club members had the massive task of re-establishing the land. Maintaining and developing the land, fencing, water reticulation and other club amenities including the club house, caretakers cottage, equipment shed, cover pens, dressage arenas and cross country ODHT course, has been the not inconsiderable task of subsequent members and committees.

NEW LEASE AND LICENCE

The club has a membership of approximately 100 riding members, with some of these utilising the park for grazing. The club has applied for a new lease as their current lease terminated in April 1999. At present the club is on a month-to-month lease.

Consideration needs to be given to the renewal of the lease for the main club areas of stables and clubrooms and to granting the Pony Club a licence over the more extensive grazing and riding areas. The distinction between a lease and a licence is that a leasehold confers exclusive use rights on the lessee whereas a licence gives the licensee the right to undertake prescribed activities within the licensed area, with the area being available for general recreation when not required by the licensee.

Under the proposed leasing/licensing arrangement the club would be granted a lease for a term of 10 years and a licence for a term of five years with the Parks Unit retaining the right to retire areas for planting and tracks from time to time. The community's views on this proposal will be canvassed through the management plan consultation process. Formal Council approval to the lease/licence renewal will be sought when the community consultation has been completed.

THE DRAFT MANAGEMENT PLAN

The draft Management plan has resulted from investigations into possible ways of upgrading Duncan Park in order to provide better recreational amenities for the Heathcote area in which it is situated and to enhance its value to the community at large.

There are a number of issues that need to be resolved – including erosion, public access, plantation management, stream management through the Water Services Unit, fencing, and lease to the pony club's use of the park.

The purpose of this landscape draft management plan is to resolve these issues and to provide a clear programme for the ongoing management of the Park over the next 15-20 years.

Concurrent with this planning process, an overlapping planning process has been evolving. A Waterway restoration and Enhancement Study for the Avoca stream catchment has been developed in a community and City Council Water Services partnership. The Parks Unit and Ferrymead Pony Club have played a full part in that planning and consultation process, and design outcomes of the Avoca stream study, set out by Lucas Associates, have been integrated into this development plan.

Section 41(5A) of the Reserves Act 1977 allows the Council, by resolution, to determine that written suggestions prior to the preparation of a draft plan would not materially assist in its preparation. In this situation due to the extensive public discussions that have already taken place in respect to the future of the park it is appropriate to exercise this power.

The draft management plan for the Duncan Park has been separately circulated to members of the Committee.

- Recommendation:**
1. That Council, pursuant to section 41(5A) Reserves Act 1977, resolve that written suggestions prior to the preparation of the proposed draft management plan would not materially assist in its preparation
 2. That subject to the adoption of recommendation 1 the draft management plan for Duncan Park be released for public comment pursuant to section 41(6) of the Reserves Act.
 3. That the renewal of the lease/licence agreement, pursuant to section 54 of the Reserves Act, with the Ferrymead Pony Club be considered in conjunction with the Draft Management Plan for Duncan Park.

Chairman's

Recommendation: That the above recommendation be adopted.