

3. SUSTAINABLE CHRISTCHURCH UPDATE

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The purpose of this report is to update Council on the “Sustainable Christchurch” initiative and seek Council’s approval/direction on some specific projects outlined in this report.

BACKGROUND

In August 2000 the Council adopted recommendations in a report, “Lets Dream a Little – Building a Sustainable Christchurch” to take Christchurch towards being one of the world’s leading sustainable cities, socially, environmentally and economically. The Council adopted a way forward with the following two parallel courses of action:

1. **Get our own house in order**, ie improve Christchurch City Council operations to become an exemplary example of how an organisation can contribute to a sustainable Christchurch, with particular emphasis on this initially;
2. **Facilitating improvements in Christchurch by:**
 - Leading development of a community vision for Christchurch;
 - Better co-ordinating existing and implementing new Council initiatives;
 - Encouraging other leading businesses and organisations to join the Christchurch City Council in becoming case studies for sustainable practices.

Some key achievements since a Sustainable Christchurch update report in October 2000 and a Strategy and Resources Committee Seminar on 25 May 2001, include the following:

GETTING OUR OWN HOUSE IN ORDER

Measure to Manage: Since November 2000 the Christchurch City Council’s use of the following resources has been measured every month:

- The number of pages printed and copied, both at “convenience printers and copiers” throughout offices and at the Civic offices copy centre.
- The number of A4 pages purchased. The Council currently uses close to 1 million sheets of office paper per month, which equates to approximately 14 pinus radiata trees per month.
- Total coal use. Note that since January 2001 this represents coal use only in the Civic Offices boiler since the QEII pool boiler has now been replaced with an LPG boiler utilising heat exchange and heat pump technology.
- Electricity consumption for all council operations, including Civic Office, water and waste water pumping stations.
- Domestic air travel, measured in both kilometres travelled & cost.
- Transport fuel, including premium 96 octane petrol, 91 octane petrol and diesel.

In addition the total tonnage of carbon dioxide (a green house gas) emitted as a result of Christchurch City Council operations consuming the above resources has been calculated. A total of 161 tonnes carbon dioxide was emitted as a result of the above Christchurch City Council operations in June 2001. To offset the carbon dioxide Council operations release to the atmosphere, just from the six resource groups currently measured and listed above would require approximately 22 hectares of native forest, this is an area approximately the size of the Christchurch Botanic Gardens.

Results of the above measurements have been posted on the Council’s intranet site and on a poster in the Civic Offices ground floor foyer as well as distributed to all service centres. Further internal publicity is planned to increase staff awareness of the M2M resources being measured and methods to manage a reduction in the use of these resources in Council operations.

Triple Accounting/Triple Bottom Line Reporting: A team of staff has been formed to develop the format for and promulgate triple accounting in the 2001/02 Annual Plan. This team includes: the Director of Policy, the Financial Services Manager (Paul Melton), the City Streets Unit Manager, senior managers in the City Water and Waste Unit and Parks and Waterways Unit, the Team Leader Leisure Planning/Policy, the City Solutions Waste Minimisation Officer and the Sustainable Christchurch Leader. This staff team, together with the chairman of the City Services Committee, has been participating in a series of workshops on triple accounting run by Landcare Research, which had its first triple bottom line report ranked 14th out of 202 in an international November 2000 survey. The guidance notes for all staff for preparation of the 2001/02 Annual Plan will be substantially revised to guide staff in preparing the next annual plan in the new triple accounting format.

People Step + Environmental Step: Two separate staff workshops were held in February 2001 to "define" environmental and social sustainability in relation to Council projects and initiatives. This was in recognition of the significant potential for improvement in these two areas, which are prerequisites for a sustainable society. Following this, staff have recently started to develop a "People Step" and "Environmental Step" which will soon be trialed as a guide to assess the extent to which any existing and new projects and initiatives contribute to social and environmental sustainability of the City. These "Steps" will be used in conjunction with and alongside existing financial analysis and reporting of all projects/initiatives to ensure financial sustainability.

Zero Waste Building: The Timaru District Council recently adopted a "Zero Waste Building" goal for its Civic Offices building and has already reduced waste quantities by 85%, which will result in annual savings of over \$3,500 in waste disposal costs alone. The Corporate Services Manager visited Timaru and is leading a project to emulate this success in Christchurch City Council offices. A recent organic waste audit conducted in the Civic Offices as part of this initiative indicates that the Civic Offices alone produces 100 kilograms of organic waste each week, 80% of which could be composted, according to the Garden City Compost Plant Manager. City Solutions staff have already both developed an organic waste collection system and established a worm composting system in their offices. Methods for collection of the remainder of the organic waste from the Civic offices are being investigated to allow it to be composted at the Garden City Composting as an interim measure until a medium size worm composting unit for the Civic Offices can be properly evaluated. Such a composting unit could potentially be installed on the Civic Offices roof although the feasibility of this has yet to be assessed. This initiative follows the trialing of an operating worm composting bin in the foyer of the Civic Offices which has generated significant interest.

FACILITATING IMPROVEMENTS IN CHRISTCHURCH

Local Government Act: The Department of Internal Affairs, Te Tari Taiwhenua, June 2001, *Reviewing the Local Government Act 1974, Have your say Consultation document*, proposes the following a "statement of the purpose of local government ...:to enable local decision-making by and on behalf of citizens in their local communities to promote their social, economic, cultural and environmental well-being in the present and for the future."

The Council could usefully consider how it wishes to reflect its aspirations for sustainability in a governance model following the 2001 Local Body Elections.

Canterbury Dialogues: One of the key strengths of Canterbury Dialogues, and its role, will be in promoting cross-sectoral dialogue, providing provocation which will stimulate communication and raise community awareness, understanding and commitment to the concepts and directions of the Sustainable Christchurch initiative of the Christchurch City Council. The three areas in which such dialogue is expected to be able to help advance the Christchurch City Council initiatives are:

- Dialogue around seminars
- Dialogue around indicators
- Dialogue around visioning

Canterbury Dialogues is currently re-assessing how it engages with the community sector and will liaise closely with the Christchurch City Council's Social Policy Leader to build strongly on the Healthy Christchurch community engagement process which has already commenced. This recognises that Council staff and Community Boards already have a well-established relationship with a vast range of community groups and should play a leading role in not only developing a community vision but also making sure it is implemented. Funding for this community sector engagement process will be included in the \$50,000 total funding allocated for the Canterbury Dialogues process in the 2001/02 financial year.

The role of the Canterbury Dialogues Board has changed now to become a working group that will oversee the work of Canterbury Dialogues, as outlined above. It could be useful however to change the Christchurch City Council's representation on this Board/working group to include an elected member and the Sustainable Christchurch Leader, replacing the Central City Policy Leader (Dave Hinman)

Membership of New Zealand Businesses for Social Responsibility (BSR), which promotes the following benefits for those organisations which join:

- Regional bi-monthly meetings providing the opportunity for networking with other like-minded businesses and individuals, as well as insights into topical business issues
- A bi-monthly newsletter providing a comprehensive coverage of and speaker notes from regional meetings and BSR-related international speakers visiting New Zealand. The newsletter also reports on activities of related local and overseas organisations and socially-responsible business opportunities.
- The BSR holds an annual conference, which provides a forum for "learning and discussing the latest 'state of the art' in achieving a triple bottom line in business excellence".

The annual membership fee for the Christchurch City Council to belong to Businesses for Social Responsibility would be \$1,500, excluding GST. The Council could consider whether it wishes to join BSR.

- Recommendation:**
1. That the Council consider how it wishes to reflect its aspirations for sustainability in a governance model following the 2001 Local Body Elections, in anticipation of a revised Local Government Act which promotes "enable(ing) local decision-making by and on behalf of citizens in their local communities to promote their social, economic, cultural and environmental well-being in the present and for the future" as the purpose of local government.
 2. That a Councillor be appointed to the Canterbury Dialogues Board, which is effectively being re-formed as a working group to oversee and guide dialogue with key sectors of the community around issues of sustainability.
 3. That the Council become a member of New Zealand Businesses for Social Responsibility.

Chairman's Recommendation: That the above recommendation be adopted.