

32. REPLACEMENT FURNITURE - COUNCIL CHAMBER

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The purpose of this report is to briefly outline the likely costs of refurbishment or replacement of the Council Chamber furniture and to seek guidance from the Committee on which of the possible options should be pursued.

As a consequence of comments from members regarding the desirability in improving the comfort of seating in the Council Chamber "ballpark" costs have been obtained for the following two options:

Option 1 - Refurbishment of Existing Chairs

It has been estimated that the cost to check/re glue joints as necessary, revarnish, reset springs, repad and provide quality wool fabric covering would be in the vicinity of \$25,000-\$30,000 for the 35 chairs involved.

Option 2 - Complete Replacement of the Existing Chairs and Tables

The alternative option would be to completely replace the existing chairs with modern ergonomic furniture together with new tables and elevated dais. The existing tables and chairs, which form part of the city's heritage, could be relocated to the original chamber in the Municipal Council Building in Oxford Terrace as part of the "Our City" museum/centre. The rough estimate in cost for provision of completely new furniture would be in the order of \$120,000-\$130,000 for an appropriate standard of furniture based on discussion with furniture suppliers.

No budget provision for either option exists at present and the matter would normally be referred to the Annual Plan Working Party as part of the budget process for the 2002/03 financial year, or a substitution item identified. A small contribution towards the cost of \$5,000 has been offered by "Our City".

The estimated cost of \$25,000 for option 1 could, however, be possibly funded from the general maintenance provision of the whole property portfolio. Option 2, and the electronic voting system mentioned below, are capital items and could only be funded at present by substitution.

Electronic Voting

The possible provision of an electronic vote recording system, as used by the Wellington City Council, has also been suggested as an improvement to Council meetings and to enhance the transparency of Council processes.

This would in fact mean that all resolutions would be recorded as being "divisions" and the details of voting recorded in the minutes. It is understood that the Wellington electronic voting system cost in the vicinity of \$20,000 five years ago. An Auckland company is the supplier for a United Kingdom system providing electronic voting. However, from conversation with Wellington City Council staff it would seem the costs involved are likely to be in excess of \$50,000 plus GST.

An indication from the Committee on whether they wish any of the options to proceed further is sought to allow for more detailed investigation and costing and reference to the Annual Plan Working Party if required in due course.

Recommendation: For discussion.

Chairman's

Recommendation: That the matter be considered in the 2002/03 Annual Plan process.