

CHRISTCHURCH CITY COUNCIL

NOTES OF A SEMINAR OF THE COUNCIL

**Held in the Council Chamber, Civic Offices
on Wednesday 11 April 2007 at 12 noon**

PRESENT: Councillors Bob Parker (Chairman) Helen Broughton
(from 1.40pm), Bob Shearing and Gail Sheriff.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence were received and accepted from
Mayor Garry Moore, Councillors Sally Buck,
Barry Corbett, David Cox, Anna Crighton, Carole Evans,
Pat Harrow, Sue Wells and Norm Withers.

IN ATTENDANCE: Yani Johansen (Community Board Member)

1. GOVERNMENT RATING INQUIRY

Diane Brandish backgrounded matters leading to the Seminar, commenting on the Commission's request that submissions be fact rather than opinions and matters that work well.

A draft submission had been prepared and Geoff Barnes highlighted the matters contained in it, through a PowerPoint presentation.

The presentation covered:

- General comments on rates.
- Changes sought:
 - Rating tools
 - DVR efficiency improvements
 - Loan raising tools
 - Benchmarking
 - Share of Government revenue

Questions and comments followed including:

- Whether all Government land included railway land, Maori land and port land.
- The proposal for a tourism targeted rate was questioned in view of the importance of tourists bringing in dollars to New Zealand and the likelihood of it being subject to abuse.
- The practicalities of placing tolls on certain roads was queried.
- Government revenue sharing proposals should not be limited to only roading, but that of tourism etc.
- If rates were to continue to be subject to GST, was it not reasonable that this component go back to local authorities, rather than government consolidated funds.

- The rating system, needed overhauling as it was not fair that one household that had several incomes to support it, only paid the same as that of say an elderly person living alone in the same area.
- Was the rating system the best means of meeting local authority expenditure for future years, a share of GST might be a more acceptable method.
- Road tax should be spent by Government for transport rather than just roads therefore it should be perhaps renamed.

Conclusion

It was seen that the matter of rating is a big issue, in to which people were trapped through rising property values. Other factors should be taken in to account such as rent levels, age of property owner/tenant, time spent in that property, whether on fixed income etc.

There was general agreement to the draft submission content put forward, subject to it being amended to reflect the issues raised such as GST sharing, the need to look to the future etc.

The seminar concluded at 1.10pm.