

24. 11. 2011

## 25. URBAN DESIGN PANEL REVIEW



<b>General Manager responsible:</b>	General Manager, Strategy & Planning DDI 941-8281
<b>Officer responsible:</b>	Programme Manager - Healthy Environment
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**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. The purpose of this report is to address a number of short term operational issues faced by the Urban Design Panel. This report does not address the issues regarding the number, composition, or scope of panels that may arise as a result of the Central City Plan and Suburban Masterplanning exercises. A more comprehensive report addressing these issues, along with the role of community members on Urban Design Panels, and the funding required to support this is in preparation. It is considered appropriate that this more holistic report be considered in the New Year once the Minister's decision on the Central City Plan is known and once consultation has been completed on at least the first four Suburban Masterplans.
2. This report therefore specifically addresses some capacity and payment issues within the scope of the current Urban Design Panel's terms of reference, and recognises the need to source a wider pool of people post the earthquakes.
3. The report therefore seeks to:
  - (i) Recommend the continuation of the Urban Design Panel (UDP) until the end of June 2012;
  - (ii) Recommend the expansion of the pool of panellists from 18 to 24;
  - (iii) Recommend that the Mayor and Chief Executive have delegated authority to address any future expansion of the pool of panellists;
  - (iv) Recommend an amendment to panellist remuneration.
4. The present Urban Design Panel was established as a trial, and therefore needs to be reviewed. Given the strong interest in the panel approach in both the Central City Plan and the Suburban Masterplanning work, a review at this stage is premature until these documents are further developed or adopted. However it will be important to fully review the panel's effectiveness as part of the comprehensive report addressing the long-term future of the panel in the New Year.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

5. The UDP was set up in 2008, formed from nominated representatives from various professional institutes related to urban design.
6. There is currently provision for eighteen UDP panellists. An increase in the number of projects requiring assessment by the panel is anticipated, even within the current terms of reference. With more of our current panellists involved in applications it is considered an appropriate time to bolster the UDP pool of panellists to meet the anticipated increase in number and complexity of proposals for review, particularly in regard to the Central City. For the immediate future, it is recommended that the number of panellists be increased to twenty four.
7. Further expansion of the pool of panellists may be required depending upon the number and breadth of consents. To respond quickly to additional UDP resourcing, it is proposed that any further expansion to the pool of panellists be at the discretion of the Mayor and Chief Executive. The Chief Executive and Mayor have the ability to appoint nominated panellists, but the total number of panellists is currently a Council decision under the UDP Terms of Reference.

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8. The panellists have been serving on the UDP for over three years without any increase in rate of remuneration. They are paid only for time sitting on the UDP, which excludes preparation time, travel and other expenses (with the exception of the two out of town panellists). An increase in remuneration to reflect the expertise and service provided to the UDP would be appropriate at this time. Senior experts are often paid in excess of \$200/hr, this report recommends raising the remuneration from \$150/hr to \$180/hr.
9. The review in 2012 will consider scope and appointment processes, in the light of the Central City Plan and Suburban Masterplans. It will also consider process improvements for any panels, as well as improved nomination processes by contributing professional institutes, remuneration and tenure.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

10. Additional costs will be incurred with any increase in the number of panel meetings resulting from the rebuilding of Christchurch in 2011/12 and therefore additional panellist time required, and the proposed increase in panellist remuneration. Due to the changing nature, timing and scope of a number of projects in the City and Community Long-Term Policy and Planning area it is expected that these costs can be met within existing operational budgets.
11. The 2012 review will need to address funding if any significant expansion of the panel's role-function is adopted. Staff are mindful of the need for any panel not to become a direct development cost, which will have a funding impact for the community.

**Do the Recommendations of this Report Align with 2009-19 LTCCP budgets?**

12. Yes

**LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS**

13. No legal considerations have arisen in connection with the UDP since the review undertaken in 2010.

**Have you considered the legal implications of the issue under consideration?**

14. There are no additional legal issues arising from this report.

**ALIGNMENT WITH LTCCP AND ACTIVITY MANAGEMENT PLANS**

15. As discussed in previous reports to Council, the UDP aligns with a number of community outcomes including:
  - An attractive and well designed city
  - A safe city
  - A prosperous city
  - A healthy city
  - A city for recreation, fun and creativity and
  - A well governed city.

**Do the recommendations of this report support a level of service or project in the 2009-19 LTCCP?**

16. Yes. The proposal is part of the district planning levels of service in the LTCCP (pages 94 and 200).

**ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIES**

17. The UDP aligns with the Council's Safer Christchurch Strategy, Climate Smart Strategy and the Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy. It also aligns with Chapter 12A (formerly Proposed Change 1) of the Regional Policy Statement, and the draft Central City Plan.

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**25 Cont'd****Do the recommendations align with the Council's strategies?**

18. In terms of the Council's Strategic directions the recommendations of this report contribute to achieving the following aspects of these strategies:

**Safer Christchurch Strategy**

*Enhance safety from crime through preventative and supportive actions*

- The use of planning and design as a means of reducing crime and fear of crime is an activity that can contribute to improving the safety of our community.

**Climate Smart Strategy**

*Provide leadership in addressing climate change*

- The Council has a critical role providing leadership for the community on responding to climate change through great urban design in respect to our public spaces, buildings, infrastructure and through Council processes.

**Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy**

*Enrich Lifestyles by:*

- Ensuring that the Greater Christchurch area is a liveable, safe, prosperous and healthy place.
- Recognising and protecting cultural identity and enhancing a sense of place.
- Improving community safety and encouraging neighbourhood design that makes people feel safe.
- Promoting good urban design to make our communities more liveable and attractive with good connectivity.

**CONSULTATION FULFILMENT**

19. Given that this report deals with a minor increase in capacity, rather than a review of the panel function no consultation is considered necessary.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Council:

- Approve the continuation of the Urban Design Panel until at least the end of June 2012.
- Approve an expansion of the available pool of panellists from 18 to 24.
- Delegate authority to the Mayor and Chief Executive to address any future need to expand the pool of panellists.
- Approve an increase to the panellists' remuneration from \$150/hr to \$180/hr.