

CHRISTCHURCH CITY COUNCIL

Draft LTCCP 2009-19

- Received via Web

Submissions close on 16 April 2009

I wish to talk to the main points in my written submission at the hearings to be held between Monday 11 May 2009 and Monday 18 May 2009.

Are you completing this submission:	On behalf of a group or organisation
If you are representing, how many people do you represent?	6 Board members, 16+ staff, 40+ volunteers and 1000+ clients
Name:	Timothy Weir & Tony McCahon
Organisation Name:	Delta Community Support Trust
Organisation Role:	Services Coordinator and Community Development Services Manager (respectively)
Contact Address:	105 North Avon Road PO Box 26 091 Richmond Chch
Postcode:	8148
Daytime Phone:	389 0214
Evening Phone:	027 240 8413
Email:	tim@deltatrust.org.nz
Email Address for copy of submission:	tim@deltatrust.org.nz
Date:	16 April 2009
Your Submission:	<p>We want the Council to consider the following matters:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Budget to maintain Community Grant Funding levels, adjusting for inflation so that the city's progressive approach to investment in its social fabric is continued, in real terms. 2. Budget to provide additional Community Grant Funding targeted at specific efforts that address the issues of increasing social dysfunction and need arising due to and during the length of the current economic situation. 3. Focus on reducing inequalities by targeting relief efforts at the least well off who are the most vulnerable and by investing heavily in efforts that promote and protect health and wellbeing. <p>We think the Council should do this for the following reasons: We are thankful to be part of a city that has had a forward thinking Council which has taken seriously the centrality of the community and unpaid sector in the health, wellbeing and prosperity of its population. Few city councils understand the importance of their own role in ensuring the strength of the community sector and the importance of a resilient social fabric for a successful market economy like the Christchurch City Council has. However, we are concerned having been made aware that in the Council's draft long-term budget 2009-19 it intends to decrease community grant funding in the next year and then not adjust it for inflation. This essentially means the Council has decided that it is going to disinvest in the community sector and in community partnership. Furthermore, this has not been clearly and explicitly stated in the budget but rather is obscured and concealed. We feel this would be a step backwards for the Council and the wellbeing and prosperity of our city. It suggests that the Council is</p>

decreasing the emphasise it places on the importance of community and community partnership.

We believe that now is the time to be increasing not decreasing support for the community sector. Today is the "rainy day" that we should have been saving up for during the good times. With the current economic meltdown we are experiencing increased need for our services. For example our food parcel numbers increased 60% during Jan-Mar 2009 compared with Jan-Mar 2008. As well as our usual clientele suffering more, we now have a new type of clientele of those experiencing real emergency need for the first time. While we realise all sectors are suffering we believe that the community sector is the core sector that the success of the others extends from. Invest in this sector and it will flow through to the other sectors. Disinvest in this sector and all the sectors will suffer the consequences of the economic fallout more severely. We are developing innovative programmes to create social cohesion and resilience in the face of economic hardship, initiatives designed to facilitate neighbour helping neighbour and community involvement and productiveness even when there is no money to pay people. Now is the time to invest in our city's social fabric in such ways. It has been shown time and time again that how we look after the least well off in society is instrumental in the overall health, welfare and prosperity of a nation (eg research by Philippa Howden-Chapman on socioeconomic inequalities and health). Inequalities within a country have a greater impact on social cohesion, crime and health than the overall wealth of a country. The same goes for a city. Investing in reducing inequalities decreases negative social outcomes and improves social outcomes for all. Investing in preventative measures is more cost effective and more effective at reducing inequalities than downstream measures. We believe the Council will be unjust if it increases rates/taxes in a way that disproportionately falls on those on lower-incomes than higher. Higher income families/whanau have greater ability to weather the economic storm and have more resources to take advantage of common goods generated by rates. Investing in community and economic projects focussed on Christchurch's outward appearance will tend to only benefit the few well-off and will add little to real underlying community vibrancy among the many less well-off.