

Submission form

PLEASE READ BEFORE COMPLETING YOUR SUBMISSION

The public consultation period is from Tuesday 10 March 2009 to Thursday 16 April 2009.

It will help us if you clearly:

- state the issue you want the Council to consider;
- state what specific action you think the Council should take, and
- state why that should be done.
- type or use black ink for your submission.

Please note: We are legally required to make all written or electronic submissions available to the public and to Councillors, including the name and address of the submitter. In making submissions available to the public, the submissions will be posted electronically on the Council's website. Information will be available to the public subject to the provisions of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987. If you consider there to be compelling reasons why your contact details and/or submission should be kept confidential, you should contact the Council Support Team, telephone 941 8999.

You may send us your submission:

On the internet:

You may enter your submission using the form provided on the Council's website at www.ccc.govt.nz

By email:

ccc-plan@ccc.govt.nz

Please make sure that your full name and address is included with your submission.

By mail:

(no stamp is required) to:

Freepost 178

Draft LTCCP

Christchurch City Council

PO Box 237

Christchurch 8140

No anonymous submissions will be accepted. Whether you use this form or not, you must provide your full name, address and telephone number. If you are submitting on behalf of an organisation please state this and your role within that organisation.

Submissions must be received (NOT postmarked) at the Tuam Street Civic Offices no later than 5pm on Thursday 16 April 2009. To ensure receipt, hand deliver last-minute submissions to the Civic Offices, 163-173 Tuam Street.

Your submission

If you wish, you can present your submission at a hearing. If that is the case, please tick the appropriate box below. The hearings will be held from 11 May 2009 to 18 May 2009. Five to ten minutes will be allocated for speaking to your submission, including time for questions from the Councillors. The Council will confirm the date and time of your hearing in writing, by email or by telephone call.

I do NOT wish to discuss my submission at the hearing, and ask that this written submission be considered

OR

I wish to discuss 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: For yourself On behalf of a group or organisation

If you are representing a group or organisation, how many people do you represent?

Contact Name Melanie Williams

Organisation name (if applicable) _____

Organisation role (if applicable) _____

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Email (if applicable) melanie.williams@clear.net.nz

Signature [Signature] Date 16/4/09

This submission supports the on going provision of and commitment to the Tuam Street Early Learning Centre

Don't throw the baby out with the bath water

I believe the Council has been short sighted and not followed it own vision for the City when deciding to sell or close the Tuam Street Early Learning Centre (TLC). This is not the decision of a World Class Council for a World Class City.

Relevant Community Outcomes

A Learning City

- Our City provides diverse opportunities for learning and innovation.
- Our economy thrives on skills, knowledge and innovation.

A Prosperity City

- Our people have access to adequate income and opportunities to contribute to the City's well-being.
- Our City has the infrastructure and environment to support a job rich economy, while protecting and enhancing our essential natural capital.

A City of Inclusive and Diverse Communities

- Our City encourages a diversity of lifestyles, and a sense of social connection, place and identity.

A Liveable City

- Our City provides ... and a range of utilities that allow people to enjoy an acceptable quality of life.

The Tuam Street Early Learning Centre (TLC) is an asset to the Christchurch City Council. It is a fantastic service with great staff and an excellent reputation. Because this service is part of the council it is of a very high quality, the staff are all well qualified and have opportunities to train and increase there skill level. TLC is not just there to make money as it seems some of the private facilities are.

Support the staff you have. The service TLC provide is of a very high standard and it fits in well with the community outcomes – why stop it and change it for something less desirable.

Council is at risk of losing the excellent staff they have at the TLC because they are not being valued and are living with uncertainly. They may well take up other opportunities.

You also risk losing staff who use TLC for childcare now or in the future.

TLC is a wonderful centre with fantastic staff, it is an asset to the Council and the Central City.

Project Central City – If the council is keen to increase Central City living, reduce Central City congestion etc. having childcare co-located with work is a great solution.

In saying that TLC don't fit into the plan for the Central City or Central City East is plain ridiculous. These plans want people and families to be able to live work and play in the Central City. The Plan is for the Central City to meet all the needs of its residents within walking distances. Surely these residents are not expected to have to drive to the suburbs for Childcare.

TLC represents a huge opportunity.

In moving to the new site in the old post office, the council moves closer to the Police and the Hospital – both these organisations need excellent staff and need to keep the excellent staff they have.

The Council is moving close to the new Ngai Tahu site.

Surely there is a possibility here to create a World Class Central City Early Learning Centre in partnership with all these groups who must see childcare as important to the future and to their staff.

Surely this is an opportunity that a World Class Council would use to show other employers how it is done.

The council should be looking at providing more not less. For instance, council could consider providing after school care and holiday programmes for school aged children of staff – we do it for the community after all. Why not a custom build Early Learning Centre and after school or holiday care facility? This would be a great asset for the Central City.

The facility would not be redundant in school time. It could be used for all types of things – training and meetings, etc, what about a fun office with a desk and computer for the parent and TV, DVD etc. for a sick kid, allowing parent to attend work.

Staffing is a huge expense for the Christchurch City Council so it makes sense to ensure your staff can work to their full potential. Helping them balance the demands of work and home is vital.

Advantages to CCC

TLC as part of the council and in or adjacent to the civic offices means skilled workers can return to work sooner and care for their families more easily. Mothers can continue to breast feed their babies rather than having to express milk at work – (which take much longer and is less nurturing). Mothers and Fathers can see their children in their lunch hours and are close by in case of an emergency or just a change in plans.

Benefits for Christchurch City Council

- Improved attendance and productivity
- Improved image
- Higher morale, commitment and loyalty of staff

- Improved staff retention
- Improved and more equitable recruitment

Workers with children make up the majority of the workforce. These workers work best if they have good support system including care for their children while at work. Supporting employee with children is worthwhile for the Christchurch City Council. These workers are generally more stable, reliable and mature than those without children. They tend to be loyal and committed employees. (Adie, J (1995) The Workplace Guide and Family, Department of Industrial Relations, Canberra)

Approx 13% of NZ parents reported in a 1998 survey that lack of appropriate care had resulted in them turning down a promotion or quitting a job. (NZ Childcare Survey 1998, Stats NZ)

It is well known that when parents are worried about their children output slows. Swedish study – When children are both in quality care and close by parents can forget about them and put 100% concentration into the job.

Managers surveyed in USA on the benefits of providing childcare

Ability to attract new employees 88%
 Decreased absenteeism 72%
 Improved attitude toward employer 65%
 Created favourable publicity 60%
 Decreased job turnover 57%
 Improved attitude towards work 55%
 Improved community relations 36%

Overseas research estimates that it costs between 30% and 150% of a persons salary to replace them (Study of the Australian Office of the Status of Women)

Companies that provide childcare have an increase in morale not only from the parents involved but by employees in general (Office of the Status of Women, Cost benefit study, Department of the PM and Cabinet, Canberra)

Changes in the structure of family and the community

- Less support available from extended family
- More families with both parents working
- More single parent families
- Men are taking more responsibility in caring for their children
- Society has become less tolerant and more aware of low quality care

Look to the future - What proportion of families will need childcare in 5 years time or more importantly 10 and 20 years time. This opportunity is a great chance to help get the balance right, lets not waste it.

Other Policies to Consider

Children's Policy

The Christchurch City Council is committed to ensuring that its policies, planning and programmes impact positively upon the welfare and wellbeing of children/tamariki and their families/whanau.

Included in the outcomes are:

- A nurturing community
- Effective partnerships
- Improved services and resourcing

Central government have introduced paid parental leave, Working for Families, 20 Hours Free Care and other schemes to make it easier for parents to work and raise their children. As a local government authority, council should also be working in this direction.

Central government is increasing funding levels for early childhood education and childcare.

The Local Government Act although childcare facilities are not specified, local authorities are required to be good employers.

(Schedule 7 no.36 says: an employer who operates a personnel policy containing provisions generally accepted as necessary for the fair and proper treatment of employees in all aspects of their employment, including provisions requiring - (a) good and safe working conditions... (g) recognition of the employment requirements of women)

I would argue that childcare would definitely fall under "good working conditions" and it is a requirement of many working women and men.

Children's lifelong learning patterns are influenced by their early experiences, especially their interactions with people, places and things. Good quality childcare maybe more important than the Uni you when to. I couldn't be more delighted that both my children have attended TLC.

This is a great opportunity to provide a facility that sets a benchmark and looks to the future. In the future the number of families where both parents need to work is only going to increase. If the council is truly committed to being a family friendly employer and Council they should be increasing their support of families, not reducing it.

I also believe that the council has an ethical responsibility as local government and major employer to promote and provide top class working conditions for its employees as an example to other businesses in the city.

I attach also a comprehensive submission prepared jointly by TLC parents.
I support the views documented in this submission and agree with the
decision it seeks.

Thank you for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized 'M' followed by a horizontal line and a flourish.

Melanie Williams

LTCCP Submission

1.0 Issue

1.1 Issue addressed by submission

This submission:

- supports the ongoing provision of and commitment to high quality Early Childhood Education (ECE) by the Council, in accordance with its adopted Early Childhood Education Strategy (as revised in January 2001); and
- requests that the Council continue this provision and resile from its decision to sell or outsource the three centres currently operated by the Council.

While the submission relates to all Council-run ECE facilities, specific details have been given regarding the Council's proposal to sell or close the Tuam Street Early Learning Centre (ref Draft LTCCP page 207).

1.2 Summary of key concerns

As explained further, this submission opposes the sale and outsourcing of Council-operated ECE because a comprehensive review has not been undertaken to inform the Council as to the benefits and costs of its involvement in ECE. Given that the recommendation requires a breach of the Council's own ECE policy, it is considered that the correct process would be to first review the policy prior to making any site-specific decisions. At present, no consideration has been given to the way in which the Council's direct involvement in ECE assists it in more effectively performing the advocacy and monitoring role it has committed to for ECE in the City.

In relation to the Tuam Street Early Learning Centre, the benefits of retaining a childcare centre that is co-located with (or in close proximity to) the Civic Offices outweigh the costs. In particular:

- There is no guarantee that the future owner will not close or relocate the centre to a site inconvenient for current users of the facility, leaving no comparable childcare facility. TLC is the only ECE centre within the four avenues offering a flexible facility, unrestricted and 'mainstream'¹¹ access, continuity of care, full business hours and within walking distance of the central business district.
- There are a number of social and environmental benefits of retaining a centre in close proximity to the Civic Offices that have not been considered by the Council. Council strategies and policies (supporting use of public transport, a commitment to public investment in early childhood education and support of staff wellbeing) would be compromised.
- The South of Lichfield Master Plan which has been used partly to justify the proposal is not a final or adopted document and is not publicly available. Property decisions appear to be driving action in other policy areas.
- In this economic climate, a purchaser may not be found for TLC and this would mean it would be closed.
- There is no guarantee that the high standards of quality that make TLC such an effective provider of childcare will be maintained under new ownership.

1.3 Submission compilation

The content of this submission has been prepared by several parents of children enrolled in the Tuam Street Early Learning Centre (known as 'TLC'), including both council staff and other central city workers.

None of the staff members who contributed to the preparation of this submission have any involvement with property transactions, Council-managed early childhood education or the South of Lichfield Master Plan.

Staff involved in compiling the attached information have done so as private individuals who are affected by the Council decision to sell the centre. These staff members rely on the provision of this centre for childcare while working at the Council. To date, there has been no specific consultation with any parents regarding the Council's proposals. Letters to parents have advised that views are to be made known via a submission to the LTCCP.

¹¹ In this document, 'mainstream' means that the facility is not focussed upon a particular teaching emphasis (eg Christian, Te Reo etc)

2.0 Contents of submission

Section 3.0 sets out a key concern in relation to all childcare facilities operated by the Council and the Council's wider role in ECE, and some recommendations for a more appropriate decision-making process regarding this role and the future of these facilities.

Sections 4.0 to 6.0 provide information specific to the Tuam Street Early Learning Centre. However, many of the comments made are also likely to be applicable to the other childcare centres operated by the Council, particularly those comments concerning adopted Council strategies and policies in Section 5.0.

- Section 4.0 provides some background information,
- Section 5.0 sets out the advantages of retaining the centre, and
- Section 6.0 details the disadvantages of selling TLC.

Section 7.0 details the decisions sought by the submitters.

Appendices are also provided as follows:

- Appendix One provides extracts from the executive summary of a Ministry of Education literature review (2008) concerning outcomes from ECE.
- Appendix Two provides an extract from an Australian Government report on quality ECE and its beneficiaries.
- Appendix Three provides information regarding breastfeeding and EEO considerations.
- Appendix Four provides a table of the 17 childcare centres referred to in Council reports as being available to central city workers and provides information regarding their actual licensing, opening hours and other restrictions to access.
- Appendix Five provides a map showing the childcare centres that have similar opening hours and access to the TLC facility and shows the importance of TLC in servicing central city workers.

3.0 Comprehensive Review Recommended

3.1 *Quality Information and effective consultation*

The Council's recently adopted Governance Statement refers to one of its key policy documents as being its Consultation policy. That policy states the Council "values and is committed to effective community consultation". An objective in the policy is "to ensure the Council has enough quality information, including information on the views of the community, to make decisions"².

The most recent thorough review of the Council's involvement in ECE occurred in 2001. The staff report and Council decision in 2009³ has focused more narrowly on three Council-run facilities and does not comprise or include:

- (a) a comprehensive review of the Council's role or commitment to Early Childhood Education,
- (b) the contribution of any such role or commitment to achieving the Council's wider objectives, or
- (c) "effective consultation" as there was no attempt to seek views of those affected.

Without a thorough review of the issue, including obtaining all relevant information, the proposals before the Council risk becoming ad hoc decisions.

² Your Council Your Voice – Christchurch City Council Governance Statement June 2008

³ In addition, this concern appears to have relevance to the potential for market rates to be charged for preschools in Council buildings and properties, as discussed in a Christchurch Mail article dated 18 March 2009.

3.2 Core business

The staff report noted that ECE is not “core business” for the Council. It is unclear as to who, how and when this decision was made, particularly given its departure from current Council policy and strategy which reflects a strong level of commitment to on-going involvement in ECE. Whether or not the Council’s core business should include direct involvement in ECE ought to be decided after a full review of the importance of ECE to achieving the Council’s wider objectives. Elected members are advised to consider issues surrounding the importance or otherwise of ECE in achieving community outcomes, and more specifically of the Council’s role in ensuring good access to quality facilities, evenly spread across the community in order to achieve the world-class city we hope Christchurch will become. To make an ad hoc decision at this time may preclude options in the future.

3.3 National and international context

In 2002 the New Zealand Government released its strategic plan for Early Childhood Education for the period 2002-2012.⁴ The strategy seeks to:

- Increase participation in quality ECE services
- Improve quality of ECE services
- Promote collaborative relationships.

Progress toward achieving these objectives has been charted through various studies including various locality based evaluations published in 2008.⁵ Also in 2008 an evaluation of the sustainability of ECE services was published⁶ as was a review of the introduction of free ECE for 3 and 4 year olds who attend teacher-led early childhood services⁷.

In 2008 the Ministry of Education commissioned a comprehensive literature review of international research findings related to ECE⁸. This document is a significant one and extracts from the Executive Summary are attached as **Appendix 1** to this submission. This includes the key findings from the review. While there is a raft of specific positive outcomes related to quality ECE, of specific interest to the Council would be the ‘big picture’ findings related to quality ECE in the community. In summary it states:

“these evaluation findings tend to suggest that public spending for ECE programmes will result in good returns in terms of maternal employment, higher levels of the participant’s lifetime earnings, reductions in usage of special education services, lesser criminal activity, and reduced use of social services that are expected to have a flow-on effect to the economy”.

It also states that:

“Most of the economic evaluations of ECE programmes have shown that benefits of public spending exceed the costs. Gains are not realised, or are not as great, if the ECE is of poor quality.”

In light of recent topical disruptive behaviour in the City by young people, the contribution that the Council can make to supporting the development of well rounded children through on-going involvement in quality ECE should be considered. in the context of community outcomes of importance to Council.

⁴ Pathways to the Future: Nga Huarahi Arataki – Ministry of Education September 2002

⁵ Locality –based evaluation of Pathways to the Future: Nga huarahi Arataki – Stage 1 baseline report to the Ministry of Education.- Linda Mitchell, Arapera Royal Tangaere, Diane Mara & Cathy Wylie 2008; and Stage 1 report to the Ministry of Education – Linda Mitchell and Edith Hodgen.

⁶ Evaluation of the Sustainability of ECE Services During the Implementation of Pathways to the Future – Nga Huarahi Arataki – Final Report to the Ministry of Education 2008 – Julian King, Health Outcomes International

⁷ Early Effects of Free Early Childhood Education – Report to the Ministry of Education – N. Froese and Martin Jenkins 2008

⁸ Outcomes of Early Childhood Education: Literature Review – Report to the Ministry of Education – L Mitchell, C Wylie and M Carr, New Zealand Council for Educational Research - 2008

In Australia the Government is a direct provider of ECE services and the benefits of quality ECE are canvassed in a report funded by the State and Territory Governments and published in 2006.⁹ The report includes a section on the need for quality facilities and the beneficiaries of quality child care. The relevant pages are attached as **Appendix 2**.

3.4 Conclusions regarding need for comprehensive review

A consideration of the vast resources readily to hand and which we have introduced above, together with consultation with relevant authorities, partners and stakeholders, is important before the Council makes any decisions on this matter. To be clear, it is considered that decisions about specific facilities should be in the context of better and more complete information. The focus needs to commence with the 'bigger picture' rather than three specific facilities. Only once such a comprehensive review is completed would it be appropriate to consider the future of the Tuam Street, QEII and Pioneer Early Learning Centres. The findings of historical and recent research which is readily available confirm that high quality ECE has real benefits for communities and these are quantified in some cases in research. TLC is a very high quality facility and the three facilities that the Council provides are able to make these types of benefits available to their customers at no cost to rate payers. A new provider might not be able to provide the same quality service as they strive to profit from the service, and these gains to the community could be diminished. The analysis in the February 2009 staff report looked only at numbers of alternative facilities, it did not consider the quality of service provided at any facilities. Given the strategic policy framework the city operates, there is no good reason to depart from Council's current commitment to providing these services.

Council has a commitment to making decisions based on quality information and in this case there is much readily available information that has not been put before Council and it is considered that this is not in accordance with the commitment Council has made to the citizens of Christchurch in its Consultation Policy.

4.0 Background to Tuam Street Early Learning Centre

TLC is a licensed early childhood centre, catering for a maximum of 32 children at a time, including up to 12 under twos. Operating hours are Monday to Friday from 8:00am to 5:30pm. The centre operates during school holidays and is only closed during public holidays and two weeks over Christmas and New Year. It is subject to regular accountability reviews by the Education Review Office and has educational programmes based on the Ministry of Education core curriculum for early childhood education.

The Council proposes to (emphasis added):

sell the Tuam Street Early Learning Centre as a going concern, including or excluding the relocation of the current building by the purchaser. A lease would be offered on the land until such time as the Council or subsequent owner needed the site. If a sale cannot be achieved then the proposal is to close the Tuam Street Early Learning Centre. (Draft LTCCP, page 207)

At its February 16 – 18 meeting, the Council adopted a staff recommendation to sell the Tuam Street Early Learning Centre. The wording of the recommendation was different from that shown in the LTCCP as follows:

*"If the sale is not achievable then close Tuam Street in line with the Master plan for the South of Lichfield."*¹⁰

The letter to parents advising of the Council's decision (25 February 2009) also stated that:

"if the sale is not achievable then close Tuam St in line with the Master plan for the South of Lichfield".

⁹ A Review of the approach to setting national standards and ensuring the quality of care in Australian childcare services – 2006 C Tayler, M Wills, J Hayden and C Wilson for the Community Services Ministers' Advisory Council

¹⁰ Appendix 4 of Council agenda (16 – 18 February 2009)

5.0 Benefits associated with TLC

5.1 Attributes and key features of TLC as recognised by the Council

The staff report referred to above makes the following statements about TLC (emphasis added):

- *The **quality of care** that the three centres provide is of a consistently high level as is clear each time the Education Review Office undertakes its three yearly audit of the centres. (para 2)*
- *Currently provision of the three early learning centres is **rates neutral** due to fees charged and Ministry of Education funding. (para 11)*
- *Research was completed in 2006 into the Council's provision of these three centres. Staff and parents of the centres at that time were asked about the Council's role and the feedback was that the Council should **stay in the business** because of the quality of care provided. (para 18)*
- *[Demand for childcare] In the past 12 months there have been parents calling into the centres to see if they could drop their child off for care. Some parents asked for extra time if it is available while others have been strictly 'off the street' and casual (para 23)*
- *In 2007 – 08 48 per cent of users at Tuam Street were **Council staff**. (para 25)*
- *The Council was the **first** to provide early childhood care in the city in 1932 to allow mothers shopping in the central city a place to have their children cared for. ... The Ministry of Education are providing funding incentives for centres to hire qualified staff. (para 31)*

The Council's 2008 Annual report notes in relation to 'community support' that "Local Government is responsible for promoting the cultural, economic, environmental and social well-being of communities in the present and for the future". It made the following statements about its involvement in early childhood education and the TLC facility in particular (emphasis added):

*The Council owns and operates three Early Learning Centres – Tuam Street Early Learning Centre, which caters for **inner-city users**, and QEII Pre-school and Pioneer Early Learning Centre, which mainly provide support for leisure centre users. Unlike most commercially run centres, these three centres provide **flexible hours** of access in addition to the normal hours of operation.*

How the Council measured up

Early childhood education

***Satisfaction** with child education and environment provided by the Council*

*Actual: **98%** (Target: 90%)*

Occupancy rates of Council owned and operated early learning centres

*Actual: **80%** (Target: Maintain 75 - 85% occupancy across centres)*

Early learning centres

*Early learning centres had a **lower net cost** in 2007/08 following higher revenue received from the Ministry of Education and lower net operational costs.*

The Council has also identified its commitment to children through its Early Childhood Education Strategy (revised and adopted in 2001). For example (emphasis added):

"1.2 Benefits

*The Council has long recognised the **educational, social, preventative and supportive role** of quality early childhood education."*

*"... Provision of these services is in the public interest, it is appropriate to treat public expenditures for childcare as a **public investment**, not merely as a public cost, and to create public policy to do it effectively (Friendly, 2000)."*

*"... High quality childcare / early childhood education has **social value** as*

- *a strategy to enhance all children's healthy development, safety and wellbeing;*
- *a support to families regardless of their labour force status;*

- part of a comprehensive approach to alleviating poverty; and
- a key tool for developing women's equality, participation, and transferable skills."

"Access to reliable childcare allows parents, especially mothers, to **participate in the paid labour force, training or education**. Without the availability of affordable, reliable childcare, women (both single parents and those in two-parent families) may be compelled to remain out of the labour force, to work at poorly-paid part-time employment, or not to take advancement..."

"Reliable, quality childcare also helps to **enhance the work effectiveness** of workers who are parents across the economic spectrum by diminishing tensions between work and family responsibilities."

"1.3 Policy Context and Strategic Fit

"... the new policy was formulated after an **extensive review** of ECE services in the city ..."

"... By supporting quality Early Childhood Education in the city, the Council is also meeting the objectives of the following policies:

Social Well-being Policy, which states that:

*The Christchurch City Council is committed to **enhancing the social wellbeing** of its citizens and communities.*

...

Children's Policy, which states that;

*The Christchurch City Council is committed to promoting **the healthy, happy development of children** to their full potential, both as children now and for the future well-being of our community.*

...

EEO Policy

*The Christchurch City Council is committed to having in place practices within the Council which work towards eliminating all forms of discrimination and which are consistent with the Council's Giving Value – Being Valued cultural statement. This includes barriers to the **recruitment, retention, development and promotion** of its employees.*

"2.1 Council Provision of Early Childhood Education"

...

"Objective: To **facilitate the provision** of quality, accessible and affordable childcare services ... within the inner city (for use by Council staff and other community users).

"The provision and management of the Tuam Street Early Learning Centre helps to **facilitate use of the inner city.**"

A copy of the full Strategy can be made available to elected members upon request. Additional research on links between labour force participation and childcare can also be made available¹¹.

As identified in the February 2009 staff report (para 10) and the draft LTCCP, the Council would need to substantially revise its adopted position if it moves to sell the TLC facility.

In addition to the text shown above, paragraph 1.3 of the Strategy also outlines the detailed process of review that was followed in 2001. The Council, through this thorough review of the issues confirmed the need to continue its role as a provider of three childcare services.

¹¹ New Zealand Cultural Norms of Parenting and Childcare and How These Relate to Labour Force Participation Decisions and Requirements (Mervyl McPherson, PhD – Social, Demographic and Evaluation Research and Massey University; Nov 2006 – Families Commission Blue Skies Report No 14/06). Also: Investing in Childcare: Challenges Facing Working Parents and the Private Sector Response (US Dept of the Treasury 1998) www.treas.gov/press/releases/docs/chdcare.pdf. Also: Wellington City Council case study, including the Positively Poneke crèche example: www.wellington.govt.nz/haveyoursay/publicinput/pdfs/earlychild-policy.pdf. Also: Vancouver City Council Civic Childcare Strategy <http://vancouver.ca/commsvcs/socialplanning/initiatives/childcare/ccstrategy3.htm>.

5.2 Additional attributes of TLC as identified by users of the facility

The following attributes of the centre were not identified within the staff report but are considered by users of TLC to be relevant:

Physical Access

- The centre is located within easy access of both **public transport** and **carparking** facilities
- Changing to using suburban child care closer to the homes of TLC users is not a practical option for parents who have no access to a private vehicle and who are dependent on public transport.
- The centre is located adjacent to the workplace of many users, enabling:
 - ease of access for mothers to **nursing** infants, in accordance with the World Health Organisation recommendations¹². Some centre parents have noted in discussion that it would have been a logistical nightmare in their return to work if they had needed to travel any distance to breastfeed their infant. The current close proximity of the centre to parents' workplaces will assist the Council in meeting the intent of the Employment Relations (Breaks, Infant Feeding and Other Matters) Amendment Act 2008. The Act supports Government policy by protecting and promoting breastfeeding.
 - swift attention in case of children being **unwell** or in an emergency.
- Parents currently **travel** with their children between home and the centre, reducing the time that would otherwise be spent apart and reducing associated childcare costs.
- The current location of TLC enables the children to gain **unique learning experiences** through field trips. There is easy walking access to facilities / events within the central city and parents who work in the central city are likely to support the field trips through parent help. This year alone the children have made a number of field trips to facilities / events such as the library, art gallery, busker festival and the Christchurch Music Centre. It will be difficult for other childcare providers to enable similar unique learning experiences if the centre is located away from the central city.

Business hours

- The centre is open year-round, through full business hours and enables ease of transition from the under-two area to the over-two area. It is also the only centre within the Four Avenues to offer casual access. This **range of services** is not provided at all centres but is necessary to support full engagement of parents in the workforce.

Affordability

- The centre is not profit-orientated, enabling parents with **lower incomes** to use the facility. This is further eased with the 20 hours subsidised ECE (not necessarily available at all childcare centres).

Excellent staff

- Parents who advise TLC staff early in their pregnancy that they wish to **enrol** their child are likely to be able to attain a place at the centre. Despite there being no vacancies in the Over-Two section, staff are proactive in finding ways of retaining children through to school age once enrolled. Contrary to the statement within the February 2009 staff report concerning the potential for usage to drop over time if the centre is retained, there is no known history of this occurring and no immediate potential for it to occur.
- TLC staff are a **fantastic team** that the Council should be very proud of. They are efficient, understanding and provide very high quality care of our children. Discerning parents require quality care for their children before they will commit to returning to work and the co-location of quality childcare adjacent to the Council has assisted many parents in returning to work at the Council over the years.

¹² International and national recommendations advise exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months and continued breastfeeding up to two years or beyond. Refer Appendix 3 regarding EEO considerations.

- CCC facilities have only employed qualified staff for many years, whereas this is only now becoming law in NZ. This has provided both a solid foundation for incoming staff and shows that the Council is innovative, able to **take the lead** and provides a point of difference as an employer. Managing a high quality facility such as TLC shows that the Council has a commitment to the children of the city.
- TLC staff **turnover is very low** and families commonly enrol more than one child in the centre, leading to a strong relationship being built over time.
- The centre provides a quality learning environment for **student** teachers.

Incident-free

- Staff of TLC advise that there have been no '**incidents**' (refer risks of retaining the centre in the February 2009 staff report) in the current facility and the only known 'incident' in a council-run preschool occurred elsewhere, over 15 years ago; policies are in place to minimise risk eg no child is left alone without two teachers at the facility.

Council employee retention

- The facility has enabled the council to attract and retain **skilled employees**. For example, of 15 families who currently use TLC, 6 are mothers working between 10-full time hours in the field of resource management/planning – an area where there is a national/international shortage in skilled people. On-site centres play an important role in attracting quality employees and increasing retention.
- Some of the children at this facility are from families who have no family support in the City or indeed in the South Island. In this regard, a quality facility such as TLC becomes that **additional support**, that shoulder to lean on for some families. We rely on the support we get from TLC to balance family life and work life.

Central city revitalisation

- The facility supports the **central city** through its location near the core of the central business district. The Council's revitalisation project aims to increase the number of residents and grow businesses within the central city. The South of Lichfield project intentions are to provide for increased intensification and mixed use facilities. Childcare centres are not inconsistent with this intention. The South of Lichfield Master Plan, which is the document relied upon by the February staff report to justify long-term land use decisions for the TLC site, is not available at the time of preparing this submission as it has not yet been adopted by Council. It is considered that if flexibility is sought for future use of Council-owned land, an important step will be committing to relocation within the central city.

Social relationships

- The children enrolled at TLC gain some of their **identity and sense of belonging** from their time at TLC. They make close friendships and they enjoy their time in the stimulating learning environment that is provided. Significantly changing or closing the facility will be very unsettling for these children, and as a result, their parents.

Celebrating success – performance excellence

- TLC is a high quality facility and Council should be celebrating their **achievements** in providing a service which 98% of its customers are satisfied with. It is not relevant whether other Councils in NZ provide child care; we are trying to become a "world class boutique city" and we should look further afield and decide what is right for our community.

6.0 Disadvantages of selling the centre

6.1 *Inconsistency with community outcomes, strategic directions, strategies and policies*

In addition to the Early Childhood Education Strategy as discussed under section 3.1 above, the Council has a range of other adopted policies which collectively establish its position as an innovative leader in local government and a good employer. While selling the centre *may* result in the continuation of a co-located childcare facility, there is no guarantee of this. Given that the Council anticipates the current facility being located elsewhere in the future, and not

necessarily within proximity of the new Council building, there is limited ability for the Council to ensure that its own stated intentions are able to be met in the future.

It is considered that any decision which results in moving toward :

- (a) a lack of a long-term guarantee of quality childcare in the central city, together with
- (b) potential impacts on children and families and
- (c) potential impacts on the environment (through potentially increased traffic movements),

would be inconsistent with the Council's statements of its strategic intents, which include those found in the following documents:

LTCCP: Community Outcomes

The Council has developed nine community outcomes, including those under headings of 'A Prosperous City', 'A City of Lifelong Learning', 'An Attractive and Well-designed City', 'A Well-governed City' and 'A City of People who value and protect the Natural Environment'. Under each of these community outcomes is a series of statements and 'indicators' which are used to inform the Council of progress against these high-level outcomes. Several relevant statements and indicators are listed below.

- *Our economic development prioritises **future wellbeing** – including measurement of full and part-time employment rates.*
- *Our decision-makers plan for a **sustainable** Christchurch.*
- *A broad range of **learning opportunities** is available in Christchurch – including measurement by the numbers of children who have attended early childhood education.*
- *We manage our city to minimise damage to the **environment**.*
- *Measurements of **bus** patronage figures and modes of transport to work.*

Strategic Issues – identified in the draft LTCCP

On page 21 of the draft LTCCP, it is identified that children of parents on **lower incomes** tend to have lower levels of educational attainment, which helps to perpetuate the cycle of disadvantage. Provision of an affordable and high quality childcare centre in the city's central business district will help to overcome this identified strategic issue.

Page 23 of the draft LTCCP identifies that planning for a more compact urban form, and enabling active travel and **public transport** use, will also allow us to become less reliant on non-renewable sources of energy. Ensuring that there is a childcare centre that is readily accessible to public transport nodes would assist in addressing this strategic issue. This is further emphasised on page 25 where it is stated that the Council will, over time, work to concentrate urban development in order to reduce the distances people have to travel to get to work, and maximise the potential for public transport use, walking and cycling.

Strategic Directions

The Council's Strategic Directions provide the overall goals and objectives for the Council. They indicate how the Council will contribute to the city's Community Outcomes. These are set out in the LTCCP under the heading 'What is the Council trying to achieve'. In terms of Community Support, the LTCCP strategic directions state that the Council wishes to achieve the following (emphasis added):

Ensure that community facilities across the city are:

- *Fairly spread **geographically***
- *Meet social, **educational**, cultural and recreational needs*
- ***Physically accessible**, safe, and enjoyable to use*
- *Designed and located in order to **maximise** community identity and **participation**.*

The LTCCP lists the Council's key community support assets and this list includes Early Learning Centres. The Council specifically notes that its objective for the future is "to provide early-learning centres with a safe cultural and emotional environment" (Page 100 Volume 1 draft LTCCP). It states this is in support of the Early Childhood Education Strategy and Ministry of Education regulations and legislation. It goes on to state that its ongoing plan for the future in

relation to this objective will be subject to review. A review of such an important topic, already considered through a policy and Strategy, should properly involve a comprehensive review of the issues. This does not appear to have occurred in the process used to date.

The Council has also stated on several occasions that it aims to be a 'world class boutique city'. This requires plotting an innovative course to achieve objectives. It will not occur through making decisions within silos; rather, it will require a comprehensive assessment of the issues and the courage to take a fresh course to provide for strong communities and economic prosperity.

Healthy Workplace Policy

This policy articulates the type of employer that the Council aims to be. The co-location or close proximity of a childcare centre enables, in part, the fulfilment of these statements (below – emphasis added). The sale of TLC and its potential disestablishment and/or relocation to a remote site is considered to be a backward step.

"Our people – elected members and staff – are vital to the achievement of the Christchurch City Council's vision, goals and objectives. The business is its people."

*"Through its Healthy Workplace and Wellness Policy the Council reinforces its commitment to being a good employer and acting in good faith by promoting wellness and ensuring that our people ... feel **supported**..."*

*"A healthy workplace is one that promotes and encourages the **well-being** of people at work. There is a lot more to well-being than physical health."*

"Sustainability

*In August 2000 the Council recognised the opportunity for the City to become an **international leader** in sustainability and a showcase of a great place to live. The Council has committed itself to lead a process to build a sustainable Christchurch with clear economic, **social and community benefits**..."*

"Work and life policies

*The Council is committed to developing workplace policies recognising the **work and lifestyle needs** of employees while maintaining an effective organisation that meets the needs of citizens and visitors of Christchurch."*

Sustainable Christchurch Policy

A disadvantage to selling the centre (and its potential relocation to a site remote from the current/new Council building) is the effects on environmental wellbeing as well as social wellbeing. This is a result of the likely increase in traffic movements and decrease in use of public transport. The staff report does not demonstrate any clear economic benefit of selling the centre and does not consider environmental wellbeing issues. The Sustainable Christchurch policy states that:

*"The Council recognises that **all four well-beings** (social, cultural, economic and environmental well being), must be considered and integrated, when thinking about sustainability,..."*

"The Council defines sustainability as:

*A dynamic process of continual improvement that enables all people, now and in the future, to have **quality of life**, in ways that protect and enhance the Earth's life supporting systems."*

Childrens Policy

The Policy states that the Council is committed to:

"promoting the healthy, happy development of children to their full potential, both as children now and for the future well-being of our community".

"ensuring that its policies, planning and programmes impact positively upon the welfare and well-being of children/tamariki and their families/whanau".

The outcomes anticipated include:

*"equitable access to opportunities" and
"improved services and resourcing".*

The roles identified for the Council include

“partnerships and strategic management”, “resourcing”, “supporting” and “educating”.

It is considered that the decision to sell or close the centre moves the Council away from its current adopted policy.

6.2 Lack of alternatives for current and future users

The Council staff report identifies a number of childcare facilities available in the central city, with the implication that staff could use these facilities as an alternative to TLC. In addition, the report notes in paragraph 6 that:

“Ngai Tahu are looking at building a new childcare facility on the King Edwards Barracks site and it is anticipated that staff would be able to access this facility”

In order for the King Edwards Barracks site to be a real option for staff, the Council would need to be able to guarantee that Ngai Tahu’s site will in fact be developed to provide a childcare centre, at an appropriate time to serve affected staff moving to the new building, with the same range and quality of services as currently provided and with a similar fee structure to the current service. At present, the option seems vague at best.

Appendix 4 provides a table showing the various alternative childcare options identified within the staff report. The table demonstrates that the actual options available to users seeking a convenient central city location are far fewer than implied in the report. The staff report identifies 17 childcare options in central Christchurch. Our investigations have discovered that:

- 2 of the 17 are not child care centres: they are businesses related to childcare eg nanny agencies.
- A further 3 of the 17 are not in fact within the four avenues.
- Of the 12 that are within the four avenues, 5 have restricted access or particular teaching emphasis which may rule them out for some people (eg limited to hospital patients only, instruction in Te Reo or Samoan, Christian character).
- Of the 7 remaining child care facilities located within the four avenues, only five offer the continuity of care of both under 2 and over 2 year old children.¹³

There are therefore only five child care facilities in the four avenues (including TLC) that could really be said to be in the same market as the TLC. These five are listed below and mapped in **Appendix 5**, along with a note regarding other restrictions to access:

<i>ABC Parkside (438 Hagley Ave)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * uncertain future: Australian company in receivership. * waiting list currently averages 6 months.
<i>CPIT Early Learning Centre (130 Madras St)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * not in line with business hours – short hours Fridays. * waiting list currently 18 months.
<i>Kindercare Learning Centre 204 (cnr Salisbury Street and Gracefield Ave)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * lack of flexibility: 3 and 4 year olds are required to enrol for minimum 2 days. * lack of flexibility: do not offer half-day enrolments.
<i>Hagley Community College Preschool (510 Hagley Avenue)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * fully booked: not even running a waitlist.
<i>Tuam Street Early Learning Centre (161 Tuam Street)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * waiting list: 18 months for Over 2’s; 1 – 1 ½ years for Under 2’s.

Of the five centres listed above, only the Tuam Street Early Centre is providing a flexible facility for inner city workers. It is also within walking distance of the current Council building and public transport nodes.

¹³ This is important to enable continuity of care and stability for the children concerned.

6.3 Demographic information

The Council's decision to discontinue in part its commitment to early childhood education (through ceasing participation in the direct provision of this service) is not consistent with the continuing increase of births. Data from Statistics New Zealand show increasing birth rates¹⁴ across New Zealand, including within Canterbury. This, coupled with the steady increase of children attending day care puts more pressure on parents and childcare centres. The Council's decision would compromise its current on-going support for central city workers and their children, and would lessen the potential for central city revitalisation to reach a broad demographic. While the Council's commitment to residential intensification in the central city is likely to be aimed at young professionals, entrepreneurs and adults nearing retirement age rather than young families, a more complete demographic spread would be supported through continued commitment to daycare centres within the central city.

6.4 Cost of central city land

Given the relatively high price for Central City land, the opportunity to build to significant heights and the requirement for centres to provide outdoor space, private suppliers may be less likely to provide the service offered by TLC within the central business district or may require increased fees to cover the associated opportunity costs. A publicly operated, rates-neutral childcare centre is likely to be the most efficient mechanism for guaranteeing on-going access for central city workers to quality childcare.

6.5 Uncertainty – self-fulfilling prophecy

The current uncertainty now prevailing in terms of the future of TLC has the potential unfortunate consequence of becoming a self-fulfilling prophecy. The centre usually receives between three to six enquiries each week about potential new enrolments; these callers must now be advised that for certainty they ought to book their child elsewhere. Parents with enrolled children may begin to put their children onto waiting lists elsewhere to ensure continuity of care should the centre be sold and/or closed.

6.6 Process issues

There are a number of process issues associated with the manner in which the proposal has been considered and decided. Some of these are referred or alluded to above and we particularly wish to reinforce the matters set out in section 3.0. The following matters are also drawn to the attention of elected members.

Misleading nature of the proposal as released in the Draft LTCCP

- **Historical context:** The stated reasons for the proposal are based around an historical context regarding the original basis for the centres, with the explanation that the centres are not used in that manner any longer. Given that the Council changed the Early Childcare Education Policy in 2001 to commit more generally "to facilitate the provision of quality, accessible and affordable child care services", the historical context of provision is not relevant. The centre provides and manages a quality inner city preschool facility and, in doing so, facilitates use of the central city and meets the Council's EEO objectives (as outlined above). The proposal is misleading because it implies that the facilities are not providing the service they were intended to provide.
- **Number of alternative facilities:** There is reference to the availability of 17 childcare facilities within the four avenues. As outlined in Appendix Four, not all the facilities referred to are within the four avenues. In

¹⁴ In the year ended June 2008 the number of live births registered in New Zealand was 64,145, an increase of 4.1% from the year ended June 2007. This was the highest number of live births in a June year since 1972. The number of live births has been increasing every June year since 2002, with a particularly high rate of increase since 2006. Canterbury's birth rate was among 5 other regions that have increased more than the national average. This rapid rise in births will increase the number of 3 to 5 year olds in the population over the next few years and consequently impact on roll growth at early childhood services.

addition, the statement implies that there are alternatives for parents to find child care in the central city, without any analysis of spaces at any centres or whether they provide a comparable service. This information has now been provided to elected members in this submission.

- **Funding:** The Draft LTCCP refers to increasing regulation but without increased funding to assist with the cost of compliance. However, the report considered by Council in February and which led to this proposal appearing in the LTCCP made it clear there were unlikely to be any additional costs. It is understood that any reduction in funding would result only from having a lower percentage of qualified teachers. It is misleading to imply in the more widely available document that status quo direct provision of three ECE facilities by Council will result in increased costs.
- **South of Lichfield Plan:** While the February council decision rationalised the closure option as being “in line with the master plan for the South of Lichfield”, there is no mention of this in the draft LTCCP. This is misleading as people considering the draft LTCCP will not be aware that this is an important reason behind the proposal. The LTCCP does not acknowledge that the proposal relies on a document that is not in its final form.

Timing of decision

Despite the proposal, the Draft LTCCP shows continued support of the three (rates neutral) Council facilities within its budget so there does not appear to be any urgency in making this decision. However, the costs associated with making the wrong decision are potentially high. For example, if a full review (that has not yet occurred) finds that the Council should retain a role in the direct provision of childcare then costs would include those associated with starting up new facilities, recruiting new staff etc.

7.0 Decisions requested

That the Council:

- (a) In the absence of a comprehensive review of the Early Childhood Strategy which made decisions on this issue in context, **retain its involvement in direct provision of Early Childhood Education Centres;**

and

In relation to the Tuam Street Early Learning Centre:

- (b) retain ownership and management of the centre;

and

- (c) commence investigating a new site within practical walking distance of the new council building, and either:

- i. purchase and develop the site as a childcare centre; or
- ii. enter into an agreement for a centre to be built as part of a larger development (eg King Edwards Barracks), to the Council’s specifications including appropriate timeframes;

and

- (d) relocate the current service and staff to the new building at an appropriate time, at or about the time of relocation of all other council services to the new Civic Offices.

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION LITERATURE REVIEW RE: ECE

Extract from the Executive summary of a Ministry of Education literature review (2008) concerning ECE:

Executive Summary

This literature review was commissioned by the Ministry of Education to provide policy makers with a synthesis of research that analyses the impact of early childhood education (ECE) for children and families.

Key findings from the review

Child outcomes

Cognitive

Consistent evidence from a large body of international and New Zealand evidence found ECE participation is positively associated with gains in mathematics and literacy, school achievement, intelligence tests, and also school readiness, reduced grade retention, and reduced special education placement.

Learning dispositions

Learning dispositions and key competencies are seen as combinations of ability, inclination, and sensitivity to occasion, and refer to the competencies and skills that enable children to keep learning. Learning outcomes in *Te Whāriki*, the national early childhood curriculum, are summarised as learning dispositions and working theories. Learning dispositions in the studies reviewed included attitudes of perseverance, curiosity, confidence, and social competence such as the ability to work with others. In general, the small number of New Zealand and international studies that examined associations between ECE participation and learning dispositions found positive impacts.

Aspects of ECE that can affect ECE impact

Duration

Longer duration of ECE experience is linked with *cognitive* (“academic”) gains for children from all family socioeconomic backgrounds. Benefits of longer duration diminish over time, but may still be evident for mathematics and other schooling outcomes. High-quality ECE with longer duration has the strongest effects. An early starting age before age 3 is associated with gains, but there is mixed evidence about whether starting before age 2 is more advantageous than starting between age 2 and 3.

With respect to *learning dispositions*, longer duration and an early starting age in good quality ECE centres is beneficial, but longer duration in centres rated low-quality in terms of structural features (especially teacher qualifications) and adult–child interactions and communication is not.

Quality

Good quality ECE is the key to achieving gains on all outcomes measured. Aspects of adult–child interaction and opportunities afforded by the environment are associated with greater gains for cognitive outcomes and learning dispositions, and with lower levels of antisocial/worried behaviour. Aspects that are particularly important for outcomes are:

- the quality of staff–child interaction;
- the learning resources available;
- programmes that engage children; and
- a supportive environment for children to work together

With respect to reducing problem behaviour and increasing levels of sociability, the closeness and quality of relationships between teachers and children was of core importance. Staff showing respect to children, listening to what they say, responding sympathetically, and using language and reasoning were associated with better social-emotional outcomes. The *EPPE* study also found better physical environment and space was associated with decreased antisocial and worried behaviours.

Outcomes for parents

Maternal employment

Policy changes in Quebec and Argentina that both increased ECE supply and reduced its costs contributed to increased maternal employment as measured by the percentage of mothers in paid employment. The rate of increases in maternal employment was lower than the rate of expansion of ECE places. Where one kind of ECE only is expanded, that may influence decisions about hours of employment, e.g. expansion of full-time ECE provision was associated with full-time employment increases in Quebec.

Studies estimating probabilities of being employed or on welfare in relation to changes in child care costs and subsidies indicate that decreasing ECE costs is one factor that contributes to increased employment of low-income mothers. The decrease in costs has to be sizeable to make a marked difference to maternal employment. Availability of ECE, whether the mother has previous work experience or higher education levels, employment conditions and rates of pay, and availability of paid parental leave are other factors in maternal employment decisions.

Economic outcomes

International evidence demonstrates that investing in good quality ECE can bring cost savings and benefits to governments and economies as well as to children and families. Although cost benefit analyses measure only some quantifiable outcomes, these find that through provision of good quality ECE services, employment and tax revenues are increased, and savings are generated in educational and social expenditure.

Economists have cautioned that social, economic, and school policies also affect ECE cost benefit returns.

Good quality ECE has greater benefits for children from low socioeconomic families, but children from middle and high socioeconomic families also gain, as our earlier chapters have demonstrated. Economists, using conservative estimates of benefits based on recent relevant research evidence of ECE effects for children from across the socio-economic spectrum, have projected cost benefits of offering universal high-quality ECE for 2-, 3- and/or 4-year-olds. Most of the economic evaluations of ECE programmes have shown that benefits of public spending exceed the costs. Gains are not realised, or are not as great, if the ECE is of poor quality. Without considering the opportunity costs of that spending, comparing the investment to other types of early years intervention or alternative policy options, these evaluation findings tend to suggest that public spending for ECE programmes will result in good returns in terms of maternal employment, higher levels of the participant's lifetime earnings, reductions in usage of special education services, lesser criminal activity, and reduced use of social services that are expected to have a flow-on effect to the economy.

Conclusion

In summary, the existing research base shows positive outcomes (cognitive, learning dispositions, and social-emotional) of ECE participation for learners in the short and long term. These were most evident in centres rated as good quality in respect to responsive and stimulating adult-child interactions and rich learning environments, and in centres employing qualified teachers, with adult: child ratios and group sizes that enabled teachers to work with small groups of children or interact one on one with individual children.

ECE participation can enable parents to learn more about parenting, develop social and community networks, and build greater confidence; and participate in paid employment. These gains can be thought of as empowering. They also interact with those found for children, and each contributes to family and societal functioning.

A number of studies showed that investing in universally available good quality ECE can bring benefits to governments, as well as to children and families.

EXTRACT FROM AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT REPORT

Extract from a report - A review of the approach to setting national standards and assuring the quality of child care services - which was commissioned by the Australian Federal Government Department of Family and Community Services and Indigenous Affairs in conjunctions with the State and Territory governments

CHAPTER TWO LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Early life and long-term outcomes

Learning in the early years is a critical need for all humans. Educational, neuroscientific and medical research is accumulating a strong empirical evidence base linking early life experiences and later outcomes. The quality of experience and support that children receive in non-parental care settings, along with the care provided by parents or guardians, is a key contributor to children's physical, intellectual, social and emotional development during early childhood as well as children's outcomes well into the future.

2.3 THE BENEFICIARIES OF QUALITY CHILD CARE

Since the 1970s there has been unprecedented demand for out-of-home experiences for young children in the vast majority of western nations (see Hayden, 2000). Social trends, employment, increased mobility and decreased access to extended family caregivers underlie much of the demand. In parallel, there is a growing awareness about the potential benefits of quality group care for young children. ECEC services can target at least four categories of beneficiaries: children, families, communities, and societies/nations (Hayden & Macdonald, 2001). The benefits for each group are based upon two major assumptions—that the service is of high quality and that there is equity in the accessibility and affordability of such service across all populations (Lynch, 2004: 4).

2.3.1 Children

Programs that provide socialising and learning experiences under the guidance of trained professionals have now become the norm for most families in OECD countries¹⁵. In particular, child care plays a key role in promoting the development of, and life opportunities for, children in low-income families (Fuller, Kagan, Caspary, & Gauthier, 2004). There is a significant co-relationship between school-readiness factors such as early cognitive and language development and the use of prior-to-school child care services which meet standards of quality such as trained teachers, low child:staff ratios, positive interactions for children, staff and families, responsive program planning and parental and community involvement (National Institute for Early Education Research [NIEER], 2005; Thorpe, Tayler et al, 2004). Children who participate in quality ECEC programs show a stronger performance on IQ tests and are also less likely to repeat grades or be placed in remedial or special education classes (Burchinal et al., 2000; World Health Organisation, 1999). Improvements on numerous scales of cognitive, emotional, behavioural and biomedical health outcomes have been most significant for children from low-income families who attend quality programs.

2.3.2 Families

ECEC services provide information, assistance and support to families in their care-giving role. They also allow maximum flexibility for family members in making life choices about workforce and other options. These services also facilitate family-to-family networking and linkages between families and communities (Anderson et al., 2003). In addition ECEC programs have been shown to have residual outcomes in terms of assisting parents in dealing with behaviour problems, providing parental education, and facilitating mothers' social and economic resources (Wilkinson, 2000). Such programs are also linked to reduced incidence of child abuse and violence in parents. A recent study of mothers of newborns showed that social support (emotional, material or informational assistance) increased the attentiveness and positive response of mothers to their babies (Clarke & Campbell, 1989; Yoshikawa,

¹⁵ Further details of the kinds of ECEC provision in twenty OECD countries may be found in *Starting Strong* (2001) and *Starting Strong II* (2006). The release date of *Starting Strong II* was not available at the time of completing this report.

1995). The children of depressed mothers, in particular, benefit from ECEC programs which can be a vital support for these mothers (Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000).

2.3.3 Communities

The best interests and wellbeing of children are now known to be correlated to the development of services and environments which benefit families and which contribute to the development of supportive and healthy communities (Dahlberg, Moss, & Pence, 1999; Hayden & Macdonald, 2001). ECEC services are entry points for community cohesion and development. Support, liaison, networking and linkages throughout these services enable families and children to access existing community resources and influence the development of new resources and services. Services achieve this by being the vehicle whereby links, relationships and opportunities for networking develop both on a micro, personal level and between agencies and organisations (Hayden & Macdonald, 2001). In this sense quality is seen in the fostering and nurturing of social relationships: building community, enhancing civil society. Access to ECEC services allows parents to participate in the workforce and contribute to the community in ways additional to child-rearing.

2.3.4 Society/nations

The increasing literature about the importance of early years on later social adjustment and cognitive development is drawing more attention to the societal goals achieved by ECEC services. Society benefits when children have a solid early foundation that enhances their experience, implants social norms and supports children's school readiness and other forms of success. Economic benefits have also been associated with high-quality early childhood services (Anderson et al., 2003; Lynch, 2004). Parents, particularly mothers, are able to contribute to economic production, giving rise to extra revenue and taxes, and allowing the nation to minimise its social welfare assistance. As one analyst stated recently:

Even economists who are particularly sceptical about government programs make an exception for high-quality ECD programs (Countries) should be investing in high-quality early childhood development programs to improve the quality of life for millions of children, reduce crime, make the workforce of the future more productive and strengthen the overall economy... The resulting budget relief gained by providing ECD services to poor children will ultimately contribute to funding some of the nation's most pressing future needs (Lynch, 2004: vii-ix).

BREASTFEEDING AND EEO

A key benefit of retaining a co-located or 'close-proximity' childcare facility with the Civic Offices is the ability for breastfeeding mothers to have ease of access to their children. Breastfeeding is usually considered to be more efficient than expressing milk, and better accommodates growth spurts. The following extracts from a recent paper examine the implications for Equal Employment Opportunity requirements.

Guidelines for Supporting Breastfeeding in the Workplace

Prepared by Judith Galtry and Marcia Annandale

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES' CONTESTABLE FUND PROJECT

www.eeotrust.org.nz/content/docs/breastfeeding_guidelines.doc -

Why is Support for Breastfeeding an Important EEO Consideration for Employers?

The need to accommodate breastfeeding in the workplace is an important equal employment opportunity and anti-discrimination consideration for employers for the following reasons:

- Women's labour market participation rates have been increasing over recent decades. One of the biggest changes in recent years has been the rise in employment among women with young children.¹⁶
- Through smoothing the transition back to work, the introduction of workplace policies and provisions to support breastfeeding may positively influence new mothers' workforce participation.¹⁷
- In the absence of workplace support for breastfeeding many new mothers may decide not to return to work following maternity leave/parental leave. This is potentially costly for both employers and the women concerned.
- Sometimes women take longer periods of maternity leave to breastfeed because their workplaces do not accommodate breastfeeding. Again, this may be costly both for women themselves in terms of possible loss of income, seniority and opportunities for promotion and, for employers, in terms of finding and training temporary replacements.¹⁸
- It is generally recognised that organisations that recognise and support diversity potentially benefit from a range of skills and experience.¹⁹ In its Diversity Survey, the Equal Employment Opportunities Trust (EEO Trust) identified formal policies and practices to support breastfeeding at work as among a range of measures that encourage a diverse workforce within organisations.²⁰ The EEO Trust has also published information on how employers might best support breastfeeding.²¹

Breastfeeding Recommendations

- International and national recommendations advise exclusive breastfeeding (i.e. breast milk without any additional fluid or food) for the first six months of a child's life and continued breastfeeding for up to two years or beyond.²²

¹⁶ Census 2000 data obtained from Statistics New Zealand; Statistics New Zealand. (1999). *New Zealand now - Women (Census 96) (1998) - Reference reports*. Wellington: Statistics New Zealand.

¹⁷ Galtry, J. (2000). *Policies and practices to support breastfeeding in the workplace*. Background paper prepared for the World Health Organisation/UNICEF Technical Consultation on Infant and Young Child Feeding, 13-17 March. Geneva: World Health Organisation.

¹⁸ Australian Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency (EOWA). (2002). *Employment Matter Guidelines: Arrangements for dealing with pregnancy, potential pregnancy and breastfeeding*. Free to download from www.eowa.gov.au;

¹⁹ Australian Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency. (2002). *Ibid*.

²⁰ EEO Trust. (2002a). *EEO Trust Diversity Index 2002 Summary*. Auckland: EEO Trust.

<http://www.eeotrust.org.nz/information/pdfs/trustsummary02.pdf>

²¹ EEO Trust. (2002b). "Breastmilk is best: How can workplaces help?" *Work & Life Bulletin*, December. Auckland: EEO Trust.

²² Ministry of Health. (2002). *Breastfeeding: A guide to action*. Wellington: Ministry of Health; World Health Organization. (2002). *Infant and young child nutrition*. Fifty-Fifth World Health Assembly, 16 April 2002. Geneva: World Health Organization

- It is critical that workplace policy and practice enable employed mothers to meet these best practise recommendations, especially during both the first six months of exclusive breastfeeding and the transition period to partial breastfeeding and complementary feeding (when breastmilk is complemented with other age-specific foods).

Benefits of Breastfeeding for Infants, Mothers and Families

The Ministry of Health notes that breastfeeding is important for infant and young child health because it:

- reduces the risk of infectious disease such as meningitis, gastro-enteritis, respiratory and ear infections
- reduces the risk of food allergy
- may reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome.²³

The benefits of breastfeeding also include:

- convenience and ready availability with no heating required
- low risk of bacterial contamination
- low cost
- less risk of over or under feeding
- enhancement of eye and brain development
- the bioavailability of nutrients.²⁴

For mothers, the benefits include increased protection against:

- breast cancer.²⁵
- ovarian cancer.²⁶
- osteoporosis.²⁷

Breastfeeding also offers women:

- a range of other less easily quantifiable advantages in terms of their own well-being and self-esteem
- enhanced bonding with their offspring.²⁸

The parents of breastfed infants are also less likely to have to take time off work to care for sick infants, as breastfed infants are less likely to be excluded from childcare on account of illness.²⁹

²³ Ministry of Health. (2000). *Guidelines for healthy infants and toddlers (Aged 0–2 Years). A Background Paper*. Wellington: Ministry of Health.

[http://www.moh.govt.nz/moh.nsf/7004be0c19a98f8a4c25692e007bf833/d755f603abd677cb4c25667100062841/\\$FILE/fnghit2.pdf](http://www.moh.govt.nz/moh.nsf/7004be0c19a98f8a4c25692e007bf833/d755f603abd677cb4c25667100062841/$FILE/fnghit2.pdf)

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Collaborative Group on Hormonal Factors in Breast Cancer. (2002). "Breast cancer and breastfeeding: Collaborative reanalysis of individual data from 47 epidemiological studies in 30 countries, including 50302 women with breast cancer and 96973 women without the disease." *Lancet* 360 (9328): 203-210; Newcomb, P.A. et al. (1994). "Lactation and a reduced risk of premenopausal breast cancer." *New England Journal of Medicine* 330(2): 81-87.

²⁶ Gwinn, M.L. et al. (1990). "Pregnancy, breastfeeding, and oral contraceptives and the risk of epithelial ovarian cancer." *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology* 43(6): 559-568; Siskind, V. et al. (1997). "Breastfeeding, menopause, and epithelial ovarian cancer." *Epidemiology* 8(2): 188-191.

²⁷ Blaauw, R. et al. (1994). "Risk factors for the development of osteoporosis in a South African population." *South African Medical Journal* 84: 328-332.

²⁸ Lobbok, M. (2001). "Effects of breastfeeding on the mother." *Pediatric Clinics of North America* 48(1): 143-158.

²⁹ Jones, E.G. & Matheny, R.J. (1993). "Relationship between infant feeding and exclusion rate from child care because of illness." *Journal of the American Dietetic Association* 93(7): 809-811.

COMPARABLE ALTERNATIVES TO TUAM ST EARLY LEARNING CENTRE

The staff report identifies 17 childcare options in central Christchurch. Our investigations have discovered that:

- 2 of the 17 are not child care centres: they are businesses related to childcare eg nanny agencies.
- A further 3 of the 17 are not in fact within the four avenues.
- Of the 12 that are within the four avenues, five have restricted access or a particular teaching emphasis eg limited to hospital patients, instruction in Te Reo or Samoan, Christian character).
- Of the 7 actual open-access child care facilities located within the four avenues, only five offer the continuity of care of both under 2 and over 2 care.

These are:

- ABC Parkside (2), but its future is uncertain due to the collapse of the Australian parent and not yet confirmed sale of the New Zealand operation (see articles). However, it does have a long waiting list (on average 6 months, although it varies).
- CPIT Early Learning Centre (4), but it has a waiting list of 18 months (see email)
- Kindercare Learning Centre 204 (8), but it lacks flexibility - min 2 days a week for 3 & 4 year olds, no half-day bookings. It currently has 1 space available in O2 but normally there is a waitlist to get in, although they weren't able to confirm how long as this varies over time.
- Hagley Community College Preschool (6), but it is fully booked at present and not accepting names on a waitlist but recommend to phone at the time space is needed in case one is available then.
- And TLC (17)

Name	Address	Opening hours	Under 2's Licence	Over 2's Licence	Weekly fees (based on 40 hours)	Waitlist as at Feb 2009	Comments
1. ABC Developmental Learning Mona Vale	37 Darvel Street Christchurch Tel: (03) 348 5747		9	25			Outside the 4 Avenues Australian parent in receivership; future of NZ centres uncertain
2. ABC Parkside	438 Hagley Avenue Christchurch Tel: (03) 365 7606 0508 222 543	7.00 - 6.00	16	50 (incl. 16 U2)	\$120 with 20hrs free; \$195 for under 3	On average 6 months	Australian parent in receivership; future of NZ centres uncertain Location not strictly in CBD Spoke to staff - waiting list takes on average 6 months to clear.

Name	Address	Opening hours	Under 2's Licence	Over 2's Licence	Weekly fees (based on 40 hours)	Waitlist as at Feb 2009	Comments
3. ABC Salisbury Street	150 Salisbury Street Christchurch Tel: (03) 379 3570	7.00 - 6.00	0	58		No spaces available till March 2010 at the earliest	No Under 2 licence Australian parent in receivership; future of NZ centres uncertain Long waitlist, no spaces will become available until March 2010 so at this point not accepting more names on the waitlist.
4. CPIT Early Learning Centre	130 Madras Street Christchurch oostermanb@cpit.ac.nz	7.30 - 5.30 Mon-Thu 7.30 - 4.45 Fri	12	37	\$82.50 with 20hrd free; \$165 for under 3	18 months	Short hours on Friday not in line with business hours. Long waiting list.
5. Elim Early Learning Centre	285 Cashel Street Christchurch Tel: 03 365 1223 preschool@elim.org.nz	8.00 - 5.30	7	21	\$135	Waiting list of 50-60; waiting time well in excess of 6 months	Community based; attached to a church Teaching based on Christian principles (special character) Location not strictly in CBD Spoke to staff - waiting list of 50-60 children; no children going to school until August 2009 and U2 get priority for those spaces, so waiting time likely to be well in excess of 6 months.
6. Hagley Community College Preschool	Hagley Community College 510 Hagley Ave 03 364 5158	7.45 - 5.30	15	27	\$168	Fully booked at present	Location not strictly in CBD. Spoke to staff who advise that the centre is fully booked at present, and especially for full time bookings this is unlikely to change any time soon so they are not even running a waitlist but can be called when the need arises to see if there is a vacancy.
7. Kidstart Christchurch One & Two	906 Colombo Street Christchurch						Part of Barnardos; a home-based care programme <u>not</u> a childcare centre

Name	Address	Opening hours	Under 2's Licence	Over 2's Licence	Weekly fees (based on 40 hours)	Waitlist as at Feb 2009	Comments
8. Kindercare Learning Centre (204)	Cnr Salisbury & Gracefield Ave Christchurch (03) 365 3640	7.30 - 5.30 Mon-Thu 7.30 - 5.00 Fri	20	30	\$124	1 space available at present. Usually a waiting list of varying length.	Lack of flexibility - Kindercare's Enrolment Policy requires all 3 and 4 year old children to enrol for a minimum of two days. They do not offer half day enrolments. Spoke to staff. They have 1 space available at present as a child has just gone to school. Normally, however, they do have a waitlist but cannot confirm how long as it changes.
9. Number One Nannies Canterbury Westland	906 Colombo Street Christchurch						Part of Barnardos; a nanny service <u>not</u> a childcare centre
10. Portobelo Preschool	32 Armagh Street Christchurch (03) 366-4341	8.00-5.30	4	39 (incl. 4 U2)	\$137.50	Spaces available	No under 2 care offered.
11. Rangī Ruru Pre-School		9.00 - 12.00 Mon-Fri 1.00-4.00 Mon-Thu	4	35 (incl 4 U2)			Outside the 4 Avenues. No under 2 care offered. Focus on sessional teaching; no afternoon session on Fridays. Hours not in line with business hours. Part of a private school (expensive)
12. Tafesilafa'i Preschool	122 Barbadoes St 03 379 6400	9.00 - 3.00	8	22			Pacific Island Language Group (special character) Samoan focus Attached to the Catholic Diocese of Christchurch (special character). Hours not in line with business hours.
13. Te Hohepa Kohanga Reo	34 Phillips Street Phillipstown, 8011	9am-3pm	5	20 (incl 5 U2)			Outside the 4 Avenues Instruction in te reo (special character) Hours not in line with business hours

Name	Address	Opening hours	Under 2's Licence	Over 2's Licence	Weekly fees (based on 40 hours)	Waitlist as at Feb 2009	Comments
14. Te Waka Huru Hurumanu ELC	Coventry Street Christchurch	9	37 (incl 9 U2)				Part of CPIT Instruction in te reo (special character)
15. The Cathedral Grammar School Preschool	26 Park Terrace Christchurch	8.00-2.00 3.00-5.00 Family Room (afterschool care)	0	45 (min age 3 years)	\$158 (\$8,220 p.a.) \$97.50 p.w. additional for Family Room care (after 3 p.m.)		Part of a Christian School (special character). Hours not in line with business hours. Unaffordable.
16. The Playroom, Child Health Services	Christchurch Hospital Riccarton Avenue Christchurch		5	16			Restricted to the patients of the Christchurch Hospital
17. Tuam Street Early Learning Centre	161 Tuam Street	8.00 - 5.30	12	20 (32 with up to 12 U2)	\$180 or \$110 with 20 hrs free	Under 2s: 18 months Over 2s: 12 - 18 months	Flexible - can book by the hour. Can do casual care.

