

# **CHRISTCHURCH CITY COUNCIL**

## **NOTES OF A SEMINAR MEETING OF THE COUNCIL**

**Held in the Council Chamber, Civic Offices  
on Tuesday 7 February 2006 at 1.30pm**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Carole Evans (Chairman),  
The Mayor (from 1.46pm to 2.40pm),  
Councillors Helen Broughton, Sally Buck (from 1.42pm to  
2.45pm), Barry Corbett, David Cox, Anna Crighton,  
Graham Condon, Pat Harrow, Bob Shearing, Gail Sheriff,  
Sue Wells and Norm Withers.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Kerry Burke, Councillor Robert Johnston and Peter Berry  
(Environment Canterbury).

### **1. ENVIRONMENT CANTERBURY REPRESENTATION REVIEW 2007**

Councillor Robert Johnston, Deputy Chairman, Environment Canterbury, advised that the Regional Authority commenced the process of its Electoral Review which must be commenced by 31 August 2006, in time for the process to be completed for the 2007 Local Government Elections.

As a first step the Council had embarked on a series of pre-consultative informal meetings throughout its area.

He explained the formula that applied in terms of the number of constituencies and their boundaries, commenting that there was little latitude for movement. Regional Councils were permitted to use the basis of community interest to assist in the process.

In addition their Council had:

- Determined its voting system be on the basis of First Past the Post.
- Maori representation issue had been looked at and consultation had been held with a number of Maori iwi, including holding a hui. As a result the Council had resolved not to have a separate Maori seat.
- The Council was permitted to have a maximum of 14 seats but not less than six. Presently it was working on the basis of 14.
- Consultation had recently taken place through the Mayoral forum, the four southern local authorities and more recently the northern local authorities.

There were a numbers of issues to be resolved as to balancing up the numbers, Selwyn District being the only one that fitted the criteria. On a purely clinical basis Christchurch would have nine seats and Rural Canterbury five seats.

There were a number of options that could be used in determining the constituency boundaries including passenger transport areas, air quality zones, river catchments etc. At stake was the ability for residents to be able to engage with their representatives.

Sir Kerry Burke further emphasized the work being done by the Council in looking at the number of representatives including:

- The distance to be travelled by each
- The area to be served
- The population of the area
- The effectiveness of representation
- The workload of individuals

Peter Berry provided a PowerPoint presentation pointing out the legislative requirements and tabled a paper on the three options the Council was currently examining.

He noted the boundaries between that of Christchurch City and Environment Canterbury's Christchurch constituency did not quite coincide.

The promise of Local Government Commission Guidelines had never taken place. He further outlined the range of options being explored by the Regional Council. He emphasized that they were options only and the Council had yet to determine which option or options it would utilise for the formal consultation to take place.

### **Questions and Comments**

Questions and comments were made by members in respect of:

- Why had not ECan looked at reducing its representatives down from 14 in number?
- Why couldn't the forming of a unitary authority be examined at the same time?
- Was there any means by which there could be a two vote system for the likes of city representatives on the Council?
- Was there a chance for a review of options at this stage?
- Could Christchurch be divided along the boundaries created by joining two community boards together and have two elected representatives from each of these rather than three?
- The need for metro issues which differed from those of rural and this needed to be supported.
- What was the timing by which it would be known what the southern territorial local authorities preferred?
- The fact that the Regional Council was likely to consult on a preferred option basis.
- The need to ensure the City Council's views are taken on board.
- The opportunity to come up with a formula that is really preferred, rather than something that did not fully meet the wishes of the Regional Council.
- A further option was that of utilising a "fuzzy edge" approach to adjust population shortages on the edge of the city.

The seminar concluded with the view being expressed that:

- Council officers would now prepare a report to the Council including the options heard today, the City Council would decide on a position and communicate that to Environment Canterbury.

- A report was sought on unitary authorities, as somehow Christchurch City was becoming distorted in the wider Canterbury region.
- A further joint City Council/Environment Canterbury Council meeting was needed, the last one being cancelled, to talk about transport, the northern arterial outlet etc in an informal manner.

The seminar concluded at 3.18pm.