



# 2013 Rates and Services Review

**Outputs from the  
Community Working Group  
Meeting 4  
9 October 2013**

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## Introduction

The fourth meeting of the group was held on Wednesday 9 October 2013 in the Level 2 Function Room, Administration Centre, 137 Beamish Street Campsie. Twelve members of the Canterbury Community participated.

The meeting comprised:

- An update on the Rates and Services Review timetable and process;
- A recap and review of meetings to date, and comments from the group on the outputs from the third meeting;
- Identification of key words that describe the future the group desires for the City of Canterbury;
- Prioritisation of the services needed to achieve this desired future, and discussion of what this meant in terms of values, ie. what was important to the group;
- Preparation of a list of key features of, or criteria for, a good solution to the challenge facing council.

The outputs from these activities are presented in this document.

## Next Meeting

The next meeting of the group will be held on **Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2013**. The topic for this meeting will be:

- **Options** – Develop specific options that might provide a solution to the challenge, and assess them against the criteria developed during Meeting 4.

## Update on Timetable and Process

### Meeting Dates

The date for the submission of applications for Special Rate Variations has now been set by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal. This date is 24 February 2014, which is one month earlier than originally anticipated. This means there is a need to complete the Rates and Services Review earlier than originally planned, and to bring forward the dates for the next two Community Working Group meetings.

The group agreed to the following new dates:

- Meeting 5 – **23 October** instead of 13 November
- Meeting 6 – **7 November** instead of 26 November.

The Community Working Group is also invited to attend and present the results of their work to councillors at a workshop on the 13 November. Details of this workshop are to be confirmed.

### Representation

Gaps in the demographic profile of the group have been filled (representation from East Ward, and the 40-49 age group), but there is still a gap in renters. Ways to fill this gap without recruiting new members (as it is considered too late to do this, new members would not have the necessary background from attending meetings to date) were discussed.

Several group members volunteered to seek views from people who are renters that they know. Specific questions for feedback will be distributed to Community Working Group members with the outputs from this meeting.

### Demographic Profile

After review of the Demographic Profile, the Project Steering Group suggested that an additional attribute of the profile be included – that of disability. As a result group members were asked to answer the following question (anonymously):

“Do you have a disability, chronic medical condition, or mental conditions which impact on the quality of your daily life? (YES / NO)”

The responses have been included in an updated Demographic Profile.

## Imagine Canterbury

Using picture cards, group members identified key words to describe the future they wanted for the City of Canterbury, and discussed these in table groups. These were then reported to the larger group, and consolidated by the lead facilitator.

The following key words describe the future the group desires for the City of Canterbury.

|   |  |   |   |
|---|--|---|---|
| energetic                                       | Fresh, clean and tidy                                      | comfortable life, liveable City   | good economy preserving local businesses                                |
| peaceful, beautiful and clean Cooks River       | active, healthy and involved people                        | quality services  | village atmosphere  |
| safe  | investment in young people because children are the future | alternative transport to cars eg. bicycles  | civic pride   |
| nature, space, and blue water                   | quality development  | safe, healthy activities for children   | relaxed atmosphere, sense of community, happy people both old and young |
| no visual pollution such as aerial power cables | sense of shared responsibility for the future              | recognition that there will be more people here and need to be accommodated and density will increase | multicultural character and harmony                                     |

## Services needed for Canterbury's Future

### Prioritisation of Service Areas

Group members were asked which services they thought were most needed and least needed for achieving the desired future. Each participant was given three green dots to allocate to most needed service areas, and three orange dots to allocate to least needed services.

The results are listed below by overall score from most needed to least needed.

Note that the purpose of this exercise was not to identify which service areas should be reduced, but to work towards identifying values ie. why these services are needed or not needed to achieve the vision.

| Service Area                           | Most        | Least           |
|--|-------------|-----------------|
| Street Cleaning and Maintenance        | ● ● ● ● ● ● |                 |
| Urban Planning and Development Control | ● ● ● ●     |                 |
| Roads and Footpaths                    | ● ● ● ●     |                 |
| Environmental Protection               | ● ● ● ●     |                 |
| Parks and Sporting Facilities          | ● ● ● ●     |                 |
| Children's Services                    | ● ● ● ●     | ● ●             |
| Waste and Recycling Collection         | ● ●         |                 |
| Community Health and Safety            | ●           |                 |
| Libraries                              | ● ● ●       | ● ●             |
| Economic and Town Centres Development  | ● ●         | ● ●             |
| Council operations                     |             | ● ● ●           |
| Aquatic Centres                        | ●           | ● ● ● ● ●       |
| Civic Leadership and Governance        | ●           | ● ● ● ● ●       |
| Community Information and Engagement   |             | ● ● ● ●         |
| Community Centres and Programs         |             | ● ● ● ● ●       |
| Cultural Events and Programs           |             | ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● |

## Values indicated by most and least needed services

Each table group was given one of the most needed services, and one of the least needed services, and then discussed the values indicated by these.

### Most important services

#### Summary of values:

- Share responsibility.
- Ensure peaceful community and quality development.
- Improve the quality of life.
- Support community health and safety.
- Protect the environment.
- Provide resources for people to be active, social and engaged.
- Make users pay for certain services such as development control.
- Impose fines on those that don't comply.

| Service Area                    | Comments  |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Street cleaning and maintenance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strongly linked to our desired future – cleanliness, civic pride, safety, and health.</li> <li>• Would pay more for this to improve.</li> </ul>  |
| Parks and sporting facilities   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Active healthy social and engaged people, civic pride, safety (as in young people not engaged), higher density living requires plenty of community open space.</li> <li>• People may be reluctant to pay higher rates, but it is easy to justify these for parks and sporting facilities, they are very visible public investment, well used and appreciated.</li> </ul> |
| Environmental Protection        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Links to many elements of the desired future.</li> <li>• Would pay more to continue to protect the environment, eg. better monitoring of illegal dumping.</li> <li>• Is the environmental education working, though, is the message getting through? Need to make sure action is effective.</li> </ul>   |
| Roads and Footpaths             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essential for safety, health (eg. trip hazards).</li> <li>• Sense of shared responsibility for the future.</li> <li>• Supports access for our community.</li> <li>• We would pay more to improve safety and road condition.</li> </ul>   |

| Service Area                           | Comments  |
|--|---|
| Urban Planning and Development Control | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is very important, it keeps the peace with the community, controls development and impartially authorises growth. It determines the nature of the suburbs. Inspection of boarding houses is very important for safety.</li> <li>• Rather than increasing rates, increase fees for development, and fines for non-compliance. The service should be user pays, and ultimately self-funding.</li> </ul> |

### Least important services

#### Summary of values:

- Need the governance framework to ensure desired future is achieved.
- Pursue efficiencies in council operations and service delivery.
- Ensure there is a means of communication with council.
- Preserve multicultural character and harmony.
- Support the disadvantaged in our community.

| Service Area                   | Comments   |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Cultural events and programs   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of festivals does not mean we are not supportive of the multicultural community.</li> <li>• Sense that the original objective of festivals may have been lost as they have become more regional and commercial.</li> <li>• Can festivals be run by community groups with subsidy from council?</li> <li>• Festivals are valuable, but less important than other things in the context of limited resources.</li> <li>• Would not pay more rates to keep this service.</li> </ul> |
| Community Centres and Programs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is needed, it is important to improve quality of life for residents, particularly as they target the disadvantaged. Many people rely on these services.</li> <li>• Would actually pay more to keep these because we realise that not having them would mean a significant impact on residents.</li> </ul>  |



| Service Area                         | Comments  |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Civic Leadership and Governance      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This can't cease as it provides a framework to operate.</li> <li>• Online services could replace functions where this is possible to reduce cost.</li> <li>• Number of meetings could be better managed through new technology</li> </ul>  |
| Community Information and Engagement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is needed! If we did not have these services we would have dissatisfied customers, no annual report, no communication, and no way of complaining or reporting issues.</li> <li>• Perhaps this was rated as less important because we don't see it, and don't fully realise the impact of not having it.</li> <li>• Would not pay more rates to keep this, because there is no output, and there are other more important services.</li> </ul> |

## Criteria for a Good Solution

After individual reflection group members discussed what they thought were the features of a good solution in table groups, and then reported these to the larger group. These features were consolidated into the list below.

A good solution is one that:

- Includes increased user pays as well as rate increases;
- Includes reductions to services as well as rate increases;
- Includes achieving efficiencies in council operations as well as rate increases;
- Maintains those services that most contribute to achieving the desired future;
- Ensures council can continue to meet its legislative obligations;
- Involves the community more through increased partnerships;
- Does not require council to spend more;
- Limits rate increases to just that required to meet the need;
- Is able to demonstrate value for money;
- Is equitable, ensuring that no specific group is disadvantaged;
- Can be measured to demonstrate efficiency;
- Is well publicised to and easily understood by the wider community.

These features form the criteria to be used to assess options generated at Meeting 5.