



# *City of Canterbury*

*City of Cultural Diversity*

## Memo

**TO:** Mayor and All Councillors

**DATE:** 11 November 2013

**FILE NO:** C-117-4

**SUBJECT:** Update on 2013 Rates and Services Review Engagement Program

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### **COUNCILLOR BRIEFING**

A briefing to inform councillors of the Community Working Group's preferred option, and the process by which it has been developed will be held on 13 November 2013. Members of the Community Working Group will attend this briefing to present the preferred option to councillors, and to be available to answer questions. Details of the briefing are:

**Wednesday 13 November 2013  
Function Room  
Administration Centre  
137 Beamish St Campsie**

The briefing commences at 6.30 pm and a light supper will be served from 6.00 pm.

### **COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP**

#### **Meeting 5**

The fifth meeting of the group was held on 23 October 2013. The meeting comprised a recap and review of meetings to date, and comments from the group on the criteria for a good solution that were generated at the fourth meeting. Feedback on perspectives of renters collected by one of the group members was also provided, and there was some discussion of the Basic Feasibility Assessment of the ideas that were generated at the third meeting.

The rest of the meeting was spent generating and evaluating options comprising a mix of fee increases, service reductions, efficiencies, borrowing, and rate increases. The initial evaluation resulted in considerable discussion about the application of the criteria, and it was agreed that no clear preferred option(s) had emerged.

It was also agreed that the evaluation needed to be repeated at the next meeting in a way that includes an agreed way of interpreting the criteria, and weightings for the criteria.

### **Meeting 6**

The **sixth** meeting of the group was held on 7 November 2013 and comprised refinement of the criteria, generation of new options that combined fee increases, service reductions, efficiencies, borrowing, rate increases, and acceptance of deterioration in infrastructure condition, and evaluation of these options.

A preferred option that can be supported by all the members of the Community Working Group that attended was found.

### **REVISED SCHEDULE**

As advised previously the date for submission of applications for Special Rate Variations has now been set by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART). 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 planned.

Important aspects of this revised schedule are discussed in more detail below.

### **Adoption of IP&R documents**

IPART requires the proposed rate increase to be specified in council's Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) documents, in particular the Community Strategic Plan, Council Delivery Program, and Long Term Financial Plan. These documents must be adopted prior to the submission of the application to IPART. IPART also requires evidence that the wider community is aware of any proposed rate increase.

IP&R documents that include the proposed rate increase, and other elements of the preferred option, will therefore be submitted to council at the meeting on 28 November 2013 to provide sufficient time to generate community awareness.

### **Extraordinary Council Meeting**

Council will need to consider any feedback arising from the community engagement program to generate awareness of the preferred solution, resolve that an application to IPART should be made, and confirm or amend the nature of that application. The due date for applications, being the 24 February 2014, is before the first meeting of council in 2014 (likely to be 27 February 2014).

It is proposed to convene an Extraordinary Meeting of Council in early February 2014. Further details will be supplied later.

### **Key Milestones**

The table below outlines the key milestones in the revised schedule to meet the IPART application date.

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
Community Working Group recommends preferred option	DONE
Councillor briefing to present and discuss preferred option	13 Nov 13
Revision of IPR documents to include preferred option	14 to 19 Nov 13
Adoption of IPR documents to include preferred option	28 Nov 13
Continue community engagement program to generate awareness of preferred option	28 Nov 13 to 31 Jan 14
Advise IPART of intention to apply	13 Dec 13
Extraordinary Council Meeting to resolve to apply	13 Feb 14
Submit application	24 Feb 14

### **BROAD ENGAGEMENT**

We continue to invite contributions to the Rates and Services Review via the website:  
<http://haveyoursaycanterbury.com.au>

Posters, flyers and feedback forms have also been distributed to Libraries, Childrens Centres, Senior Citizens Centres and to our community networks. Language assistance is also available via our Customer Service Centre for those who need it.

It would be greatly appreciated if you would continue to promote these means of participation in the review to people living and working in the City.

We are also continuing with other broader community engagement activities, including using our enewsletter, council column, social media such as facebook and twitter feed, council app, and posters and flyers distributed across the city to promote this website and invite people to participate in the review. Advertisements have also been placed in local English and other language newspapers.

We are planning face to face engagement including visits and presentations to community groups eg. parents and friends, chambers of commerce, and others that are conducted in council community centres; and a series of community forums around Canterbury in December 2013 – January 2014.

### **PROJECT STEERING GROUP**

The purpose of the Project Steering Group (PSG) is to provide governance – guiding all aspects of the collaborative decision making process. The group was selected through a call for expressions of interested distributed to a range of community organisations. The members of the PSG are:

- Cr Brian Robson, Mayor, City of Canterbury
- Mr Jim Montague, General Manager, City of Canterbury
- Mr Andy Sammut, Director Corporate Services, City of Canterbury
- Mr Nizar Hoblos, CEO, Lebanese Muslim Association

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- Ms Liz Messih, CEO, Canterbury City Community Centre
- Ms Jacquie Cheetham, Manager, Canterbury Earlwood Caring Association Ltd
- Ms Pauline Gallagher, Director, Riverwood Community Centre
- Ms Michelle Baldock, Board Member, Croydon Park Business Chamber
- Mr Michael Fung, Board Member, Chinese Australia Society Services

Two meetings of the PSG have been held, on 12 June and 18 September. The PSG has provided useful insight and advice on the formation and operation of the Community Working Group, and the activities and approach needed to ensure the broader engagement is effective. Members of the PSG have been invited to attend the councillor briefing on 13 November 2013. A further Project Steering Group meeting has been scheduled for 11 December 2013.

If you require further details about the program, please contact me on 9789 9447.



Jim Montague PSM  
**GENERAL MANAGER**