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## Briefing - Council NOTES

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**Date:** Tuesday 22 August 2023  
**Time:** 9.30 am  
**Venue:** Council Chambers, Civic Offices,  
53 Hereford Street, Christchurch

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### 2. LTP 2024-34 - Joint development briefing

#### Council Briefing, Seminar or Workshop Recommendation

Cllr Sam MacDonald, Cllr Melanie Coker, Cllr Jake McLellan, Cllr Tim Scandrett, Cllr Sara Templeton, Cllr Pauline Cotter, Cllr Victoria Henstock, Cllr Kelly Barber, Cllr Tyrone Fields, Cllr Mark Peters,

Online: Cllr James Gough, Cllr Tyla Harrison-Hunt, Cllr Andrei Moore. Cllr Celeste Donovan

Late Arrivals: Late arrivals: Cllr Yani Johanson (apology) (9.55), Cllr Aaron Keown (9.54)

Chair: Mayor Phil Mauger

Principal advisor: CE Dawn Baxendale

#### Parks & Foreshore

(0.27 – 45.30) & (66.06 – 75.27)

(0.27 – 45.30)

The parks unit is responsible for three activity plans. So we'll work through them in the order of Parks and Foreshore first, the largest; Heritage and then Ōtākaro Avon River corridor.

#### *What this activity delivers*

Just to understand the full level of services that are provided by the parks unit:

- Community parks, and that's by far the vast majority, it is in the order of around 1000 parks.
- Harewood plant nursery provides the vast majority of plant material, not just for the parks programme, but also for Transport and Three Waters programmes where they need vegetation.
- The Botanic Gardens
- Regional parks
- The residential red zone
- Foreshore and marine access, so we're responsible for that interface between water and land and structures that live within that space. We're not responsible for the water.

- The environmental education team that covers environmental education, we have a contract with the Ministry of Education to provide services as part of the curriculum. Primarily for primary school aged children, but, we also do a lot of other education work on behalf of three waters in terms of water, waste. And also some civic education, some programmes for people that are interested in civic activity and what we do as a council.

#### *A snapshot of provision and use*

I barely just summarised most of those things just to put it in perspective.

And there has been some dialogue and language about the volume of parks. Parks and open spaces are getting a lot of focus around the world. I mean, a lot of a lot of the issues we have are not unique to New Zealand. Urban environments, intensification of housing pressure on existing land and the interface with climate change. But one thing that's becoming more and more apparent is - and there's evidence coming out now - that there's a strong link in relationship between people's overall well-being, including health, longevity of life. It's really becoming quite stark, but if you live in a city or an environment where you've got access to open space and parklands the metrics are higher. So it really is an important part of a vibrant, livable city, even environment.

We're pretty well spread. We do have some gaps in terms of provision and that's going to be one of our key focuses with our planning going forward, is trying to stay one step ahead of intensification. Because you can't respond once it's happened. Now that that comes with challenges. So we're going to have, you know, we grew up on 900 square metre quarter acre sections, one house, one house, one house, one house, then a park. You're gonna have four houses, four houses and four houses, and one of those sections might need to become a park, and it might become a very different park. Normally we define a park as a minimum of 3000 square metres. Well, I think the future is not going to look like that. So we gotta be mindful that what we're talking about here is that people's backyards is not gonna be in their backyard. And so these are the sorts of things we're starting to think about in terms of our planning looking forward. Because resilience, I mean parks are a big part of trying to make sure that we have long term resilient communities. And really, when you see really good examples of resilient communities, it's where everything is within walking distance and on their doorstep, and they feel like they're part of something and they've got what they need. And that takes a lot of different forms of course.

#### *What our community is saying*

So what have people been saying? I guess a variety of things, and certainly over the last three years, again, I guess it's been an interesting three years with the impacts of COVID: people got out and about a lot parks became quite popular. It's about all anybody could do through that period. I think people started to look at their city a little bit differently too.

We do beat ourselves up a little bit. And I think it's fair to say, you know, we're usually in the in the certainly in the top 30 percentile, if not the sort of top quarter percentile for the vast majority of our feedback that we get from residents. And if we miss out by 1 or 2%, we tend to sort of beat ourselves up a little bit and I think we got to be a little bit more realistic about what success looks like going forward. Particularly with the financial constraints that everybody is facing, we've got to be able to make smart decisions about what success looks like. And really, the key, I think is - and I mentioned this to ELT last week - I think we (and I mean parks, not our communications team,) but we as parks need to start communicating a little bit better what we're doing, why we're doing it in a more proactive manner and put some focus in the next sort of long term plan on how we communicate with people to make sure that there's an understanding because I think what we're going to be looking at is a time of change. And change is difficult for people, usually. And so we've really gotta be

quite focused on how we talk to our communities about what we're going to do going forward and how success should be measured.

*Why we deliver this activity: Community Outcomes: How this activity contributes*

So I'm taking a lot of this material as read and I'm just going to focus in on some of the some of the key aspects.

A green livable city. I don't think there's anyone in the world that doesn't want to live in that, but what does that mean for Christchurch? That's what we've got to start defining better so people understand what that means.

The cultural powerhouse: ... There's been some interesting feedback post the decision to bring parks maintenance services in house, mostly positive. And a link between people's connection with their parks and their gardens. It is part of our culture here in Christchurch and so we've got to stay quite focused on that.

*Strategic priorities: How this activity supports progress on priorities*

Inclusive and equitable. See that that touches on what I just mentioned about the changing dynamic of our city, the look and feel of our city with intensification. So we've got to stay focused on ensuring that we invest in an equitable manner because the places people live in are changing quite quickly and so we've got to stay one step ahead of that.

Reduced emissions as a Council, I mean that applies to everyone. Obviously, people look at the green space and think, well, that's an area where we should be focused and we certainly are with the adoption of the Urban Forest Plan. And that focus on indigenous species around waterways and the benefits that brings around water quality. So there's a big focus on the plan on that going forward.

*Climate Resilience goals*

Obviously with the change that was approved recently to bring maintenance services in house will have a very strong focus on minimising emissions. With all of our operational activities and finding the right balance, it's a balance between technology that's available and what's not available. So it doesn't mean we're necessarily going to be able to go entirely electric initially, but we're putting together a programme of what that looks like, what's available on the market. It is an area that's evolving reasonably quickly, but in the in the world we work in, you know things like tractors and so forth are not there yet. So we just need to set a realistic expectation around that. But we'll be looking at a 10 year plan for what that might look like.

Guardians of our natural environment and taonga probably goes without saying, but that's not without challenges. There's a lot of really amazing work going on across all of our teams and you know in particular the most obvious is in the Regional Park space. And this is something that I guess I would encourage Councillors to try and grapple with. You can put a limitless amount of energy into that and it costs. You know, when I get the questions often about, you know. "Could you do with more Rangers? Well, the honest answer is of course you could. But we have to find a balance. Because it all costs, So what we're really focused on is the resource that we've got. Making that resource as efficient as it can possibly be and, and we still have a bit of work to go in that space, of making sure everything that we do is the best way to deliver those outcomes.

And one of the best ways to deliver those outcomes is leverage the public. And that's where our focus is. So it doesn't mean that we have to have all the staff. What we need are the tools to leverage the wider community to get involved. And we and the team does a fantastic job with volunteer input, but it's by no means at an optimal level. So we're just really probably three years into the journey of driving that forward.

### *How we are planning for future impacts*

Regulation and reform is something we have to keep a very close eye on obviously. There are a lot of policy statements coming out of the crown at the moment that will impact on our: legally, what we have to do, it will impact our capital programmes as well as our operational programmes. That's probably the one I wanted to call out the most there. I've already talked about equity and access. That's a key focus for our planners. Population and demographic changes are obviously not happening particularly quickly, so growth's not massive. It's more the change within, particularly around housing and intensification, that we need to focus on, certainly in the shorter term.

### *The high impact issues and mitigations planned*

Climate change and adaptation - and now this is going to be quite a challenging space, for everyone, including you guys as Councillors and the community boards that you work with as well. How does that manifest itself? Well, if you look at how parks - at those 1300 parks - but if I focus on the Community parks, if you, if you think about how did those parks arise, they all came through the same process that's occurring where we've got development going on at the moment. Say Halswell for example, where a developer sets up a subdivision, sets aside some land for the community and puts a playground in it and plants a whole lot of stuff in it to make it look cool to sell. So we've had generations on generations, on generations of development like that, to the point that we've literally got playgrounds 300 metres from another playground and they're both, excuse the language, but they're not particularly good. They're crap. So we have accumulated a massive amount of asset that the vast majority of it is in pretty average functional condition. It kind of looks a bit old. You know, we slap paint on it to try and keep it fresh and that sort of thing. But going forward, we have to start thinking about letting go of some of that asset. Quality, not quantity. Within communities and that's going to be a big challenge for people, and Elected Members to let go of some things. We cannot afford to hold on to everything, that we should be focused on concentrating, optimising and creating better lower maintenance drivers, and really looking at a catchment by catchment basis.

So that's where we want to go with our planning. But this this is a partnership with community boards, frankly, because you're the decision makers. So it's not going to be done in a random way. It's going to be done in a carefully, planned way. I know that that no one wants to let anything go. But we need to be able to afford to provide the right assets to the communities, particularly in those areas that are intensifying. So there some of the biggest challenges that we're all going to have going forward. The alternative to that is to keep having me coming in here and asking for more OPEX as it keeps growing and growing and growing and growing in terms of quantity. Or, lowering the level of service that we can apply. And you can only go so far before you start having to get to a critical "well, it's not safe, it's not functional, it's gotta come out anyway."

Now our our Capital Investment programme plays a big part in that, so that we invest smart. And again, I'm going to focus on: less can be more for a community. Less volume can be more in terms of what we can deliver in terms of an outcome. So like all the other big, big infrastructure parts of the organisation like transport and water, sweating the asset is the key risk. We've got a lot of stuff that we struggle to look after. It's not as critical obviously, as the water coming out of the pipe. And we can make decisions about what, can stay in a park and what can't. But at some point, we're going to have to think about doing this differently unless we want to keep putting the rates up accordingly.

### *Our levels of service*

I'm going to stop at that point and just and I'm just going to focus on some sort of talking points across this activity that I put together. Some of the challenges in a bit more detail, if that's OK, or do you want me to stop now for any key questions.

### ***Open for questions***

Mayor Phil Mauger: Sorry, we have got a handful of questions.

Response: It's based on the material I just talked about. Why don't we deal with that now.

Cllr Jake McLellan: Glyphosate: In order will we get the opportunity as part of this next LTP to relook at that again with some advice about what the consequences of using alternatives are? And secondly, related to that question, do you know if not using glyphosate has simply just cost us extra or has it cost us extra, but we've also dropped down maintenance in order to, you know, lessen the impact?

Answer: I read the article. It's not entirely factual.

Cllr Jake McLellan: That's why I said with advice

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Answer: The initial decision was made some years ago for parks and well for the Council actually, and glyphosate was removed from Parks. The budget was adjusted accordingly, and that was applied to this current contract. So no, it didn't create cuts, it's the straight answer to that, yeah.

McLellan: Will we get the opportunity to relook at that with advice as part of the LTP?

Answer: Relook at it in terms of reintroducing it or? It's not on our radar, because no one's requested it. But someone could. In terms of how we intend to go forward post 24 internally, we want to move fairly quickly to a highly vegetated, minimal, not use alternatives. We don't want to use pesticides in parks, so we'd rather go to a product which eliminates them all together. Now you can't eliminate it entirely. Because there are pestplants that we are legally required to deal with, but we can certainly, we're already talking internally in our team about how we move in that direction without increased OPEX costs. So more than happy to come back with more detail if that's required.

### **Action**

Cllr Kelly Barber: Interested in what you had to say, about, say, reducing the number of playgrounds and parks and things like that that we have, you know, concentrating on quality over quantity... is there a mechanism whereby if you took something away from a community that you could earmark that money, circle it for another initiative nearby?

Answer: That's what I mean by optimising. You're not taking something away from a community. You're essentially saying... this house has access to four playgrounds when it really should have access to one playground of a much higher quality, and that drives our operating and maintenance costs down. There's lots and lots of examples across the city where that's the case. I'm not suggesting we're gonna run around and take all the playgrounds out. What I'm saying is that we've really got to be sensible about access, quality, you know, because we can't afford to upgrade every single playground in the city that we have right now, you know? So we're sweating the asset and that only goes in one direction... What I mean by optimising it's a spatially driven sort of planning approach.

Cllr Kelly Barber: If you communicate that to the local residents, then much more likely to understand it and appreciate.

Answer: Oh, this isn't something we're going to start doing. This is something that will come from a plan = a bit like the urban forest plan - that will be developed, consulted on, and then back to council for adoption.

Cllr Kelly Barber: And the other question I had was just around volunteers. I mean, I see this as a massive opportunity for us. You know, I live next to a lake that various people are – a retention pond – where various people are doing plantings and are looking after in the absence of Council staff spending a lot of time with it themselves. How do you propose to do that? Because I know there are people out there, rangers out there. I just think it's a massive, untapped resource.

Answer: A managing volunteers takes energy and takes resource. The opportunity that's in front of us with in-housing creates an opportunity for the jobs that the people that we employ that that becomes part of their job. So you know it's a little pyramid scheme, really, where you have one

person that talks to two people, who can etc. So that's the opportunity that's in front of us and that's the real key change. It also links to the stuff that Jake was asking me about, well, how do you move away from using pesticides? Well, you do things differently. You create an environment where weeds can't thrive, so you need people to do that. That's where the volunteers can come into it as well.

Cllr Tim Scandrett: Along those lines, with regards to the changing phase of parks, I think 2 examples which would be really good: Ruskin and Harman St. it's the Cornelius O'Connor Reserve. We put a community house and it wasn't used by the community, but now we've had all that infill and we've now got community there. And you upgraded the park, the playground there that's now being used, it's seen as a safe space. Whereas you know 6-7 years ago... no one would use it because it was seen as an issue. And Ruskin St. Reserve where we had waterways, we've opened them and changed them, you've bought a couple of sections... And in that area the infill is insane... So I can understand sacrificing something to get something that's actually used.

CE Dawn Baxendale: I think it's the principle that Andrew's really airing here, which is important because that aspect of "What does today's generation regard as play?" And the quality, when you've got a lot of asset that is just pepper potted everywhere... the opportunity.

Cllr Tim Scandrett: I think with regards to this, especially the Ruskin St... You could look at that now and say that is actually the future, because that area is so intensified and those are going to be looking at Woolston, Waltham and other areas. So that's a really good example.

Cllr Victoria Henstock: I heard you use the phrase "sweating the assets" a couple of times today. I was at an infrastructure event last night and we had an expert panel and that was something that they talked about. And the general feeling was that we didn't sweat the asset enough. And I wondered what you thought about that and whether you could identify legitimately some assets that could sweat. What are your thoughts on that?

Answer: In terms of what you see in a park, it's pretty typical now: grass, pathways, etcetera, etcetera. Playgrounds are the ones that we're probably sweating the most. But we're also looking at in the sense of, fundamentally, a lot of the structure is actually OK, it just looks a bit boring and tired, you know. So there's nothing wrong with sweating the assets. But ultimately, the more asset you have the more it costs. So sweating a parks asset is not like sweating street assets or a water asset because of the criticality. And because we can see it, and because we can do simple things, I don't have a problem with sweating our assets. I guess the issue I'm trying to raise is, through the development cycles, arguably we've ended up with too much or too much in the wrong places and not enough elsewhere. And so we need to change that model. That's really what I'm talking about.

Cllr Victoria Henstock: So on the basis of that then going into this long term plan, can we expect that you won't be coming to us with your handout asking for more funds and that you will be looking for a way to work within your current budget envelope and prioritizing?

Answer: That's a good question. But no, our focus is entirely - I'll touch on a couple of points that it will expand a little bit - but our focus is entirely on, from an opex perspective, absolutely trying to gain efficiencies with the opex funding that we have, the capital programme is slightly different where we feel that some sensible investment is going to improve that long term picture, I think if we if we can isolate Opex and Capex for the discussion. But at this point, we're not intending to come in here and ask for more Opex to deliver what we are already delivering.

Cllr Pauline Cotter: I think this is some really interesting discussion. And I mean, if you're talking about pulling back on playground renewals, that's tricky as well. And I think that does come down to a governance decision around the table because these are really, really important facilities for communities and some little parks might have two wee things in there, but they really serve the community around them. So whether or not we require more budget will be a governance decision on what weight we put on those facilities for our communities. And also touching on Kelly's point about volunteering, you know, how can we enable this volunteering to be more readily accessible?

How can people get involved? Do we need to put resource into some sort of a campaign? Do we need a dedicated team in here who actually work with the volunteers and build the programme up? Because we know the financial benefit is immense from that. So I don't know if you got that in here at the moment or do you need anything to get that going?

Answer: There are two aspects to that. Just so I'm clear, I'm not talking about taking people's playgrounds away. We're talking about ensuring that the right play equipment is available to people. So yes, we might have little bits here and little bits there, that's part of the problem in terms of managing and maintaining those little playgrounds. They all have to meet a minimum health and safety standard. We have to assess them every year and so forth. We're talking about concentrating and optimising and making those play spaces more valuable in terms of what you can get out of one space versus out of three small spaces that are still within the cache.

Cllr Cotter: No, that was my point. That was my point.

Answer: Secondly, the decision you made at finance and performance to in-house full services. You've already enabled that future development of accessing more volunteers. We talked in that meeting about having community based teams and they are the people that we can make part of the role is to harness volunteer support to work with them. I mean, there's lots of it going on already. But by adding essentially, you know, quite a lot more staff we will be able to enable them more with what we've already made a decision about.

In terms of communication, yes, we can do more and we can do it better. But we don't need more resource to do that.

Cllr Pauline Cotter: Great. OK. And probably working through the community boards is the way there too.

Cllr Pauline Cotter: And the other thing too of course looking back at and we're talking about green spaces, and intensified areas. We might call them pocket parks, they might be the equivalent of one or two old sections. Packe Street Park is the classic example where I think Council mows the grass, and that's about it. And the community is taking, you know, charge of that. And that's a really good model. And the other model that was good, I think [?] council up there, had a community project where they built a playground themselves, the community built it, that sort of thing. So it's actually getting communities to take charge of things and we might just oversee things for health and safety, but I think we're moving that direction.

Mayor Phil Mauger:

I'd just like to say this very realistic and clear presentation is really good. But just looking at, say you've got three pocket parks within 3 or 400 metres. And I know what you said: you're not going to sell any parks and I know how hard it is to sell a reserve. Are we better if we're trying to get the tree canopy up and say right park number #1, we'll just fill it up with trees and just have a path going through the middle of it? Will that save you a lot of opex going forward once they grow?

Answer: Oh absolutely. And it was one of the things I was going to talk about that has to be, it's part of the shift. We need naturalisation if you like for want of a better phrase. It is really a critical part of it for a whole lot of these reasons, climatic, you know, all the urban values I was talking about and cost management. Implementing the urban forest is the most important thing that this Council can do for the future residents of this city.

And what I want to emphasise with that is the decisions that you guys are making now, they're not for us: They are for 50 years' time, for the future generations. The most critical thing we can do is implement that urban forest plan. It will change the nature of our parks over time. It's not happening [now]... Trees don't grow overnight. And what that's going to do is it's going to dramatically reduce the maintenance costs of the land that we hold. And so I can't emphasise enough, sort of the next sort of two to three councils sitting around this table driving that programme is setting up the future of the city. But in terms of all of those wellbeings that come from there, it's a really critical thing.

Cllr Andrei Moore: I would just add, probably one of our best maintained parks is the one that's maintained by volunteers. It's absolutely brilliant. Anything we can do to enable that, I support.

Cllr Sam MacDonald: If we're thinking about the assets within the parks for example, like the playgrounds and things like that and given we have so many of them, is there an ability for us to front load capital to reduce opex? To kind of go actually these 30 parks all need a new slide or a swing, all that kind of stuff. Is there an ability to go: actually we front load that and that saves us? Like is the maintenance around the asset in the park or, is it the grass in the park?

Answer: Well, it's a combination, it's no one thing, it's a combination of things, of course. But yeah, look, it's really important though that it's carefully planned. Because if you can't plan it, you can't communicate it. And if we don't communicate it, you're going to get the shock reaction "you're taking my stuff away, I don't want that." So yes, we need to make sure that the capital programme has sufficient funding over the 10 year profile to enable that. But I don't think it's as simple as front loading it as such. It's making sure that we've got access to adequate capital that when we do renew playgrounds - and I'll just make this up - you know, we take two out to put one really cool one in. That achieves the goals that we're talking about.

Cllr Sam MacDonald: Is there anything in these activity plans that you think is hindering enabling you to implement that urban forest plan? So is there anything you think we could do to enable that to move quicker or be less restrictive or?

Answer: Look, I think that the key thing is making the decisions when the plans come to you. Because they take a long time to grow, so every, you know, every delay is a delay to that outcome, it's a delay to the decreasing demand for Opex.

Cllr Sam MacDonald: So that there's nothing in here that you think is hindering what you need to be able to do from your teams point?

Answer: Not at this, no.

Cllr Melanie Coker: With what you talked about with the playgrounds and if you were to reduce the number, to me, what would make sense from what people have said ... Well, my question is, do you think that other infrastructure would need to go in like in the roading space for instance? Because I have parents who will say, "well, we haven't got a park close by". And I'll say, well, there is one just over there". But then they're too scared about the kids crossing a major road to get to it. So that requires infrastructure in the transport space, which is then spending there rather than maintaining a park here... do you have any comments on that?

Answer: Well, that really just emphasises how critical sensible planning is. And when we do plan, we do look at physical barriers. When we start looking at catchments... Bruce Randall [Head of City Growth and Property] sort of approached us recently about some potential land in the Addington area, and so we had a really good look at what are the physical barriers, you know, where are the existing parks? That's a critical part of making the decisions. What we really need to emphasise, though, is we're not talking about taking away the capacity for play or the outcome of play. When we shouldn't focus on 'we're removing playgrounds,' we won't remove the overall outcome. In fact, we'll enhance the overall outcome. The play will be better, because at the moment everybody gets a Morris minor because it's about that era... Everybody's got a Morris minor, except a few new ones that have popped up. So do we want to keep changing the spark plugs in the Morris Minor? Or do we want to lift the game a little bit. That's really what we're talking about.

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Cllr Aaron Keown: So to confirm it is cheaper to run a park that's just all native bush, longer term?

Answer: Not necessarily native. In the urban Forest plan is quite clear that there's certainly dynamics that we'd like to achieve overall to get a balanced kind of ecosystem. That's why I use the phrase naturalisation more than ecological restoration. I mean, we're very clear around waterways and so forth to be native species that'll be dominant, but that's it's also very clear that it's very balanced.



Cllr Aaron Keown:... all the complaints we seem to get about trees and the ones people want cut down are non-natives, always the deciduous and all the rubbish and even that that comes with them, whereas the natives, yes, they do drop, but they spread it over the year. They're sneaky and they drop it and you don't notice your beautiful beech tree and stuff like that. The so you got those, but then there's the bird song that if we increase our natives, we increase our native bird species. So I thought that would affect that and people love those little native bush walks that we have so. So the question around that is - because our board is keen to explore ditching some parks and switching them to pockets of native bush and things including the fire brigade have come seen us about planting it non flammable park and doing all the work themselves - how do we speed that up? How do we embrace that? Is it just giving them the green light?

Answer: It depends which bits you're talking about. If the board wants to see a particular direction in their community, that's those conversations when we come to you for the which parks would you like to see looked at next for the urban forest?' The firefighter ones, a really simple one, it's just.

Cllr Aaron Keown: Yeah, because that that's a simple one. They want to do a demonstration part and do all the work. So yeah, it's a. But it's a real note and I'm sure they can water them too.

Cllr Aaron Keown: I've never seen an audit of our playground equipment versus other numbers. I'm picking, we've probably got more playground equipment per child, in this city than almost any city in the world. But that would only be an uneducated guess, but when I go through places like New York and that, and you see their parks and they are just jammed full of kids because there's one every four blocks. So there's one for every 80,000 people, and we've got over 1000, so. Have we ever done that?

Answer: I don't know the straight answer to that. You gotta be a bit careful with the "per person". It's about access. It's about where it is and can they access it. Which again just emphasises why it needs to be done on a carefully planned thought out way. And I'm not talking about this is going to happen overnight. This is just as a direction we want to go in, in the next long term plan.

Cllr Aaron Keown: Yeah, right. Because I think we should be saying to the public that, well, this is our current level of service. We have this many. Is that the ultimate use because you can drive past a lot of parks and see them hardly used a lot of the time and then other parks are very well used because they're like one of the best parks in the cities. Bishopdale Parks. Yeah, that's in my ward. There's certain things that you that you wouldn't even build now, but heaven forbid you try and take them out. You watch the demonstrations. And you know the items, I mean, there's the elephant slide, ... and the flying fox and the slide and things like that.

Cllr Sara Templeton: There's a level of service for the for the distance that people might walk to community parks and those kind of things, and it's being rewritten. Do we have a current one on playground equipment? As part of that? Just checking that we are not having to change a level of service?

Answer: Not listed and I guess what I'm very broadly signalling is that we need to look at levels of service in a slightly different way than simple metrics like "a park is a minimum of 3000 metres. This must be within a certain distance.

Cllr Sara Templeton. So I'm just checking that we' don't currently have one that needs altering for equipment.

Answer: No. Well, yes. It's written in there that essentially you can access the park and it will have these things within a certain distance. We have a management one.

Cllr Sara Templeton: I'm just like concerned, because, you know, lots of, especially as we intensify and you've got more families with less space, they're going to want some, especially if you got a couple of small kids walking them too far is not the easiest.

Answer: So I think what you're signalling is as we go through this planning - I think I'm saying the same thing - we've got to get away from distance and there's probably more about as Aaron mentioned, the metrics around population and density.

Cllr Sara Templeton: Except that when it comes to parents with small children, distance is actually quite important. So we need to have that conversation with the community. So is this leading to the, what we were doing years ago, playground equipment plan for the city, like the parks. Because it got put off a while ago. Because we were doing it five years ago.

Answer: There's some early works been done on... But we're going to focus on this for the next long term plan.

Cllr Sara Templeton: Yeah, so this what's being looked at for the plan. Is this being specifically consulted on?

Answer: We haven't substantively started this work. I'm signalling what we're looking at in the next long term plan.

Cllr Sara Templeton: So you're looking at doing that and bringing a consultation document?

Answer: Absolutely. Going through a normal planning process.

### **Action**

#### *Activity Plan*

I'll just touch on what I haven't covered so far about Parks and Foreshore. So Te Kaha is coming on stream and for us that means around September 2025, at this stage, we'll need to start putting staff into that environment and start the process of looking after the turf and so forth. My understanding is there is budget foreseen in the last long term plan for Te Kaha coming on stream, so it's not essentially asking for more. I don't believe. I'm pretty sure that was the case, so it was foreseen. But there'll be a bit of a change. We will deliver that urban environment there. The surrounds and also the activity on the turf. Just as we do at Orangetheory now.

... I'll just touch on, when we come back to talk about Capex, there are three key things that we're looking at

- 1) locking in the urban forest once the Crowns, better off funding runs.
- 2) Shortly, in fact, on the 29th of August, we will be Briefing Council on the Sports Field Network plan and what that looks like.
- 3) And then the other key thing is the Takapūneke investment over the next seven years.

So they're the three sort of key initiatives that we want to discuss with you going forward.

(66.06 – 75.27)

Cllr Tyla Harrison Hunt: It's just referring to page 47 on the agenda....

It's a 3 levels of service changes from the long term plan and why?

... About the internment. ... I just wanted to know what that means.

Answer: So the existing level of service I guess was an acknowledgement that our current cemeteries master plan associated operational plan doesn't effectively acknowledge the changing dynamics around different cultures and how they want to acknowledge their loved ones once they've passed. And we just felt that putting a number like 80% on it kind of meant it was OK, not to upset a whole lot of people, that we need to do some work in that space. That measurement wasn't a good measurement. That's why it's taken out. It doesn't mean we're not gonna have a measurement. We just felt it was a little bit blunt and less aligned to how we want to work, which is in partnership with people.

Cllr Tyla Harrison-Hunt: That's all good that makes it clear.

Cllr Pauline Cotter: Does that also apply to the to the biodiversity one? You're not cutting the programme, it's the measurement.

Answer: A lot of the changes that the guys have been looking at coming up with better means to measure and actually acknowledge some of these things are just too hard to measure they don't have clear metrics. It's not about stopping the work.

Cllr Sara Templeton: So can I just check though? So some of the levels of service here that are planned to be either changed or deleted have proposed changes. These ones on page 47 are planned to be deleted, so we won't be reporting on any kind of measurement. Can we? So I might just send through a thing saying can we reword it so it's measurable so that we know that we're doing it if that makes sense, rather than just deleting it completely.

Answer: So the challenge, we've got - because we've got so many activities - frankly, a ridiculous number of measurables and what we're focused on changing or eliminating are those that can be measured better, or differently, or are already being measured in another way. So we got to have slightly less and more meaningful ones.

Cllr Sara Templeton: So can we, then when we send these ones through that we've got concerns about, can we get a response that says how they will be measured.

Answer: Absolutely. If you fire them through the question [tool], and we can respond to how we're going to carry on.

CE Dawn Baxendale: So before you go to your next set of questions and it's absolutely right, Sara in terms of this individual element, but if I bring us up to the big picture: We have over 500 measures of levels of service and management measures. Many of which are input models that aren't meaningful enough to have anything to do with impact. So we do need at some point through our joint development work to step out of the activity plans and actually have a full session on Levels of Service in totality and what really is important to communities, to elected members and to staff and what we should be measuring that genuinely gives impact and value rather than just measuring a whole raft of things, cause everybody just wants to put an extra number.

... It needs to be a full conversation about the whole not taking away the question that you've been asked, Andrew.

Cllr Yani Johanson: So just to be clear, we'll get the presentation on the sports plan next week and then we'll be able to come back and look at the LTP activity management plan?

Answer: 29<sup>th</sup>. Yeah, it'll flow. I mean the process for that will be a briefing. Then you'll get a lot more detail about how we've been developing it and then it will go through its consultative processes, adoption and so forth.

Cllr Yani Johanson: So is there capex to support what's in that draft?

Answer: You'll see it's capex has been built into our draft programme. But it's essentially being considered a new bid because it's not existing and you'll see more detail of that in the in the presentation.

Cllr Yani Johanson: Just some very specific questions.

One is the old Information Centre in the Botanic Gardens. I note that there's a programme around Botanic Gardens, but is there a specific thing to demolish it or to retain it? Where would we make the calls around that?

Answer: There's nothing on the radar to demolish it at this point. The spatial plan kind of recommends that once, if we get to the point that we've developed the Science and Research Centre, then the future life of that could be reconsidered...Once we've actually got replacement facilities, which is a long term initiative.

Cllr Yani Johanson: No, this is the old the one by the river, by the lake, currently an Art exhibition Centre.

Answer: Well, it has multiple functions. Yeah, staff use it.

Cllr Yani Johanson: So would we be able to? I'm just trying to understand if we wanted to retain it rather than have it scheduled for demolition because some people are concerned and the spatial plan it talks about demolition. Could we put that in the activity management plan to retain it as a building and non heritage listed parks building?

Answer: What you're essentially asking is to amend the approved Council Spatial Plan kind of falls into that category of holding on to everything, even if it's not an optimal purpose. You know, the people that have developed the spatial plan for the Botanic Gardens, all of the built needs for the future are in that spatial plan, and it suggests that that building could be removed in the future. And primarily for the purpose of opening up that part of the Botanic Gardens for Botanic purposes. So not until at some stage in the future all the other facilities are built. There's the straight answer, so there's no need to do anything in the short term because there's no plans to do anything.

Mayor Phil Mayor: One of the things that Lynn said right at the start when you weren't here is that we've got to keep this conversation as high as we can and not get down into individual projects.

Cllr Yani Johanson: When we adopted the spatial plan there was a big discussion about whether things would be consulted on or whether that was, and we were sort of given undertaking that, you know, things would be consulted on at a high level, you know, significant projects through that plan. I guess what I'm trying to understand is that when we go out with the LTP and we've got a list of the Botanic Garden things that we're going to do. We should be consulting on some of those things that we're planning on doing for the next 10 years, right?

CE Dawn Baxendale: So rather than answering that question today, I think we need to look at everything that we've got and what is the appropriate level of consultation that we need to undertake as part of the LTP. And is there any further additional consultation that may need to be undertaken. That is not saying Yani that we will consult on every single item, just to be clear.

Cllr Yani Johanson: I mean, I personally support retaining it, but I appreciate people have different views, I just wonder. If it's more efficient to actually just put it as part of the LTP, than have a standalone discrete consultation that costs a lot that is a separate process.

CE Dawn Baxendale: You and I are in agreement. We just need to review exactly what should be the LTP as part of consultation and what shouldn't. We're not at that stage yet.

## **Parks Heritage Management**

(45.45 – 54.30)

### *Parks Heritage Management*

Parks is responsible for managing Council owned heritage, public monuments and artworks, so that's part of our portfolio. We don't look after the heritage grants and so forth, that's John Higgins [Head of Planning and Consents]. So we're talking about this building structures and monuments that we own.

### *This activity included the following services*

Essentially, the programme has been, I guess in a strange and ironic way, the earthquakes have created an opportunity to restore a lot of these buildings over the last 10 years. We're getting to the end of that programme now. The one exception to that, of course, is provincial chambers. That is a significant investment if Council is going to fund everything. We will continue to, well in fact we'll ramp up the opportunity to talk to the Crown and any other agency around how that might be able to be funded. So we have not got in the draft plan when we're building the capital programme the \$120 million estimate that was put together quite a few years ago now in that plan. There's about \$25 million on budget for the first stage, which is the sort of clock tower wooden buildings. And I guess that's a big decision for Council in this plan. Is, do you want to put more money somewhere on the plan in the future, or not? For the provincial chambers at this point in time. The other thing that in terms of challenges we have is, restoring buildings - heritage buildings - is obviously very, very expensive and there's some really obvious ones that you must do. But we're sort of getting now to the point that there's some of the heritage buildings out in the community, I think we need a better mechanism to enable boards to make smart decisions about how we acknowledge that heritage. Whether or not restoring you know a cottage, a small house, which is not a listed heritage item, but it has heritage value is the right level of expenditure versus acknowledging that heritage in a different

way, with displays and so forth. And the reason I say that is, even a simple house - there one in particular on my mind - the estimate to restore it (and it's a modest bungalow) is getting up around \$700,000. Now they must be tenanted, otherwise they deteriorate quickly and so we need to work on a mechanism to enable decision makers like yourselves to make smart and sensible decisions about how we manage some of the - it's not the right choice of language and I apologise to my heritage colleagues - but things that could be considered slightly marginal in terms of the value, but we still want to acknowledge the heritage somehow and capture that. So I think we need to work in that space over the next few years. Because we've virtually at the end of our programme of restoring the all of listed heritage items. We have a really modest budget to manage all of the heritage, all of the public monuments and public art, it's \$370,000 per annum. Now it's enough when those buildings are actively tenanted and all of those responsibilities primarily lie with the tenant. But that's a big work on for us in the future. I think we've got to be quite (we parks) have to come up with a solid plan of what that might look like going forward. So most of the capital is obviously being spent on McDougal in the short term and then finishing off some of the more community based heritage items that we have at the moment. There wasn't too much more that I wanted to bring up, so if there's any questions on that one.

*Questions:*

Cllr Yani Johanson: I just want to use the Kiri and Lu example like with the Mona vale gatehouse that that was incredible. That investment that we made and then using the Heritage building as a sort of attraction. So I guess I'm kind of interested in how do we - and I know we've done that with the YHA building as well - so I guess I'm really interested in how we can look at those sorts of unique partnerships to both restore the heritage but then also they have a good use for it.

Answer: We continue to do that. The Mona vale bathhouse. We just had a contribution from the Friends of the Botanic Gardens to initiate that and bring that programme forward. I mean, we're always looking at ways to partner with heritage buildings. The gatehouse was something that Council fully funded, but we used it in a means to generate a little bit of revenue. I don't think there's any question that everyone wants to retain the heritage listed. What I was suggesting there was how do we manage the non heritage listed but have heritage value? And so just to reiterate, we're nearly at the end of the redevelopment of those buildings, the heritage listed.

Cllr Yani Johanson: Even for the non listed heritage ones which you know maybe character or have a social significance. And I don't know if like, for example, the caretakers cottage of Woodham Park, you know, I don't know if it's a heritage listed building but, but it's a house that could be viable for people to live in, create artwork, maintain parks, do whatever, but it's just been left languishing for like 15 years, basically.

Answer: I mean that's a really good example and it's been languishing because we've had to get through the more critical heritage listed stuff first. It's not heritage listed, it's in a heritage setting. It's considered by our heritage colleagues to have heritage characters that they'd like to retain. But as a house, it's going to cost about \$800,000 of capital that you're never gonna get back from rent. So that's what I mean about, we need to give the decision makers better tools to make the decisions. We're gonna work on that internally to enable decision makers to go what's the best way to acknowledge this heritage? Is it to restore the house? It could be. Or is it to do it a different way? And we'll look at all the factors like the revenue that you'll get from rent. And so forth.

Cllr Yani Johanson: More is around that art strategy around annual contracts and parks, you know, what we do internally to make sure that we use that space. Not just with the idea of external people using it, but are there things that we can do that create a bit of value?

...

CE Dawn Baxendale: The issue here is the principle that Andrew is describing and it is our responsibility to bring you options.

You're not determining the outcome today and ultimately you will do your governance work when you get to the budget and you will either say yes we agree or no you don't or you'll change it. But we are signalling an approach that we think is a sensible thing to be doing in terms of the principle, not the individual example.

## Ōtākaro Avon River Corridor (54.45)

### *What this activity delivers*

It's essentially from Barbados St. following the river around and out to the Ihutai estuary. That was put together not at the last long term plan time, but a year later to acknowledge that it was a significant piece of land, it was a significant initiative and there were 3 units at the time that had funding allocated to work in that area and it was to define and capture, and the public were quite keen to see what Council were going to do in that area.

Staff have sort of been asking questions of themselves as to whether or not this plan still needs to be an activity plan. Because all of the elements in the funding already sits out in the Transport. Three Waters and Parks plan. And so we're sort of spending time and energy and effort creating a plan that's an overarching view which can be done elsewhere. And it's really been brought into focus with the potential for three waters reform. So the waters element could leave; transport really doesn't have a lot of skin in the game anymore. Pages Rd. is progressing on its own right. The cycleway is not going to be using the corridor by all accounts, at this stage, and even if it does, it's a relatively minor element. We work collaboratively anyway. We have a steering group, in fact, there's a meeting this afternoon. It's really whether or not we need to have an activity plan as such. I guess the staff position is it's not required, but that's not our decision.

In terms of what we're doing, we're progressing the capital programmes for all of the activities that are currently in the plan and we're working with (and Kelly's aware of this) working with the Co Governance Establishment Committee. We've developed a decision making framework for future initiatives. It doesn't impact the current and also working on what that enduring entity might look like and that's work in progress. It's quite a complex piece of work that thankfully I've got Mary [Richardson] driving to help out because that's her space and I'd be lost without it. But that's progressing on its own pathway anyway. If there's any feedback on that right now, that would be quite helpful for us.

### *Open for questions*

Cllr Sara Templeton: So with the Ōtākaro River corridor, what's currently in activity management plan, what is your suggestion for replacing that so that we get visibility of the corridor as a whole that's integrated and not siloed just in those different areas? So yeah, because that's the whole point.

Answer:

To include the Ihutai, the entire Ihutai is that what you're meaning?

Cllr Sara Templeton: Yeah, for their river corridor, so what's the way that we have visibility? So the suggestion originally was to put it into an activity management plan so we could see it as a whole rather than just getting bits and pieces here and there through different spaces. So how would how would the?

Answer: I guess what we're suggesting is that the activity that's occurring in that plan, also occurs in regional parks and various other things, that there'd be an explicit section within the parks and foreshore plan. For the parks elements, the three waters activities are essentially as it stands at the moment going to leave council anyway.

....

CE Dawn Baxendale: So Andrew, if I can help you, because I think Sara's question is not dissimilar to the one we had in the ELT, which is the practicality of merging the activity plans. We didn't have a problem with on the basis that the working group, which is all of the departments together under Andrew in terms of delivering the corridor works, actually still continues. And you would still need to brief the elected members about the totality of what is being delivered. It's just that rather than having an additional activity plan, making sure that's explicit in the individual activity plans. That was all, but you would continue to have a comprehensive briefing of the whole.

Cllr Sara Templeton: So the public have a large interest in the space as well, and so how do the public see the holistic work that's going on in that space? So I do get questions from people going, oh, what's happening with the red zone? Lots. There's no sort of space to see that for the public.

Answer: So I guess that's the real question and in fact, the conversation at the ELT it was suggested that we can still have quite a clear statement in the Long Term Plan about the activity and where to find it in the plan. Essentially, in the Parks and Foreshore area and Three Waters. I guess it's that question that if Three Waters progresses the way it's proposed at the moment, the only thing that's going to remain in, Council will be the Parks and Foreshore work, and transport, which is essentially the Pages Rd. project.

Cllr Sara Templeton: But given the state of, you know, the country at the moment, I don't think that we should be banking on Waters leaving us anytime soon. The thing is, we've said all along that we will plan for either eventuality, right? And I think we need to plan for either eventuality.

Answer: You know, we're happy to leave it as is. But if it does proceed the way it's planned at the moment, at some point we're gonna have to take it away.

Cllr Sara Templeton: I mean, it's there already. I don't think there's any harm in leaving it there until the next LTP, maybe.

Answer: And look, before we adopt the plan, in fact, before we even go out for consultation there'll be more clarity.

Cllr Yani Johanson: I mean, I actually like the idea of these activities having their own management plan and I thought we'd also ask for some work to happen around the Ōpāwaho/Heathcote having a sort of activity management plan as well. So you know my preference would be to highlight the visibility through the LTP process of having these areas highlighted. But I don't know if people remember, but when the Lyttelton/Whakaraupō group comes in every LTP, every annual plan, complaining that things aren't happening, work hasn't been done, and actually, you know, generally we find staff are actually working on stuff, but people are kind of struggling to understand the budget decisions versus the activity decisions. So I guess just the feedback that I would give is actually I think having a discrete activity management plan for a number of these important river parks corridors I think are really important. And I think it's a positive step forward to bring all the works together and be able to show people clearly what's proposed to happen. So that's just my feedback.

Mayor Phil Mauger:

Very good. Thank you. Andrew, have you got anything else?

Answer: No, that's essentially it. It's there's no changes proposed, by the way, to the current funding regimes and both capital and opex.

*Briefing concludes at 10.48*