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## Briefing - Council NOTES

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<b>Date:</b>	<b>Tuesday 24 October 2023</b>
<b>Time:</b>	<b>9.30 am</b>
<b>Venue:</b>	<b>Council Chambers and Mayor's Lounge, Civic Offices, 53 Hereford Street, Christchurch</b>

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

#### **Council Briefing, Seminar or Workshop Recommendation**

Cllr Sam MacDonald, Cllr Melanie Coker, Cllr Tim Scandrett, Cllr Sara Templeton, Cllr Mark Peters, Cllr Celeste Donovan, Cllr Yani Johanson, Cllr Andrew Keown, Cllr Andrei Moore, Cllr Jake McLellan, Cllr Kelly Barber, Cllr Tim Scandrett, Cllr Victoria Henstock, Cllr Pauline Cotter,

Online: Cllr Tyla Harrison Hunt

Chair: Mayor Phil Mauger

#### **Civic and International Relations**

*Presenters: Jonathan King, Head of Office of Mayor & Chief Executive & Duncan Sandeman, Manager Civic & International Relations*

....Thanks for giving me the opportunity to come before you this morning and talk about the Civic and International Relations activity management plan for the upcoming LTP. We're a small team with four of us, plus 1, plus 1 being my administrator. Last year, as you will see or as you will have seen in the document, we delivered 197 engagements and doing the math that's about 50 each or about four engagements a week. I think most around the table here are well aware of what Civic and International relations do as we have touch points with most of you.

I've been involved in a number of LTP's over the years and the first one of those that I did when we were doing the planning about 10 years ago, the civic and international relations budget was \$250,000 more than what it is today. So the key thing there is that over successive LTP's we have managed to strip out most of the discretionary spending and get rid of things that we that we didn't need to do to be left with what we are have got today.

I am proposing some minor amendments to my levels of service... The minor changes I'm making are generally editorial in nature. However, I am proposing in the civic events to drop the Apprentice graduation. That is because time has moved on. Previously, apprentice didn't receive a graduation, but under changes with Te Pūkenga they have absorbed the ITO's and now that sits with them rather than for us to have to pick up. That's all I'm proposing to talk about here and I'd be more than happy to take any questions or comments.

### **Open for Questions**

*Cllr Yani Johanson:* Is there an international relations annual work programme? Like I'm just mindful of those of us who have been involved in the development of the strategies...

*Response:* Yes, and I briefed Council on that back in May on that programme and there is a piece of work outstanding on that. But as I've mentioned, we're a small team delivering a lot of engagements. So the capacity of being able to circle back on that has been delayed.

*Cllr Yani Johanson:* Right. I guess what all I'm trying to understand though is what in terms of that plan is the LTP supporting or not supporting, do we know? Well, is it possible to get visibility of that? I mean, obviously maybe not today, but certainly as we go through, I think it would be helpful.

*Response:* So in the levels of service that you'll see on the slide in front of you, there is the "leads city wide coordination and collaboration support of the agreed visions priority set out in the IPF action plans." So this is a broad strategic document, whereas that is getting into the operational part of the delivery and it is our intention that we will deliver that annually to the Council for consideration.

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*Cllr Yani Johanson:* Sorry, what I'm trying to understand though is, are there things in that policy framework, in terms of the action plans that we, for whatever reason are struggling to deliver, need extra resources to deliver, or are not going to deliver? And if so, when do we get visibility as part of the LTP over that. Like, I mean the Antarctic stuff is, you know, something, I mean I'm really supportive of. And maybe there's further opportunities there that we might like to invest more, I don't know, but. Yeah, I guess I'm just trying to sort of understand the process around those strategies and action plans informing the LTP, rather than the LTP informing them.

*Response:* I don't really have any answer other than what I've already provided you, Councillor Johanson, but I think, I'm trying to understand with what you're saying, one of the areas that may well have an impact on resourcing will be if we have to establish an additional sister city based on decisions the Council has yet to make on the Pacifica area, but that is subject to a separate piece of work that has yet to be done.

*Cllr Yani Johanson:* I'd be really interested to understand more on and to look at what resourcing would be required.

*Mayor Mauger:* One thing that is very clear to me is that we do get, and Duncan has told me from time to time, it's with people queuing at the door who wants to be our sister city. We do not need anymore because they do cost a few bob to go and see. We're better off to hang on to the ones that we've got and relish, like Kurashiki, we went to 50 years and it's been a very long time in the building. We don't need another ten that we don't do justice to any of them because they do cost a lot of time and effort. And the other thing is that since I've been there, you realise that Duncan's team, that is the furthest from a nine to five job than you've ever got. I had staff down at Diwali, yes, on the weekend. And so that that's his own time. The time is all over the place. And as Pauline knows, a citizenship ceremony, yeah, there's a hell of a lot of work that goes into doing that so that there's a lot on all the time. And I never knew any of this before I got sitting here so. Thank you for your presentation.

*Cllr Yani Johanson:* Just my fault, like we've got the coronial inquiry happening and I'm just trying to understand where that support for that comes from? Does it come from civic and international relations?

*Response:* No, it's not. It's not from us. That's from Mary Richardson's group, where that comes from.

*Mary Richardson:* Part of the Community services team are helping.

*Cllr Yani Johanson:* Right. I mean just because of the international flavour to it, is that something that we should be thinking about or is that more just...

*Response:* So in instances like that, and indeed any other instance which it doesn't fall squarely in the civic and international relations teams remit but there is an international dimension, those teams will come and see me for advice, and so that's where we would provide advice, but we don't hold the responsibility for the support of that activity.

*Mayor Mauger:* Yeah, and one of the things I'll just cast my eye down there. One of everything that you guys do is important, but I don't know whether everyone realises how important our Antarctic relations are to all the other countries we go to. I went to South Korea, saw them... And the other countries that come here especially, the United States of America, what they contribute to the whole city as a whole, and that is all funnelled through Duncan's group.

*Cllr Aaron Keown:* Have we considered instead of like the sister cities relationship, when you have cities knocking at the door, and especially those ones coming through the Antarctic programme that we don't do like trade partnership cities? And have and even use, leverage, ChristchurchNZ and the Mayor's office to open the door and then start up those trade delegations. And so we have our friendly trading partners, is that an angle we can take?

*Response:* Certainly there is. So a good example of that would be our relationship with Busan and South Korea. That is not a sister city relationship, but we do have an MOU to cooperate on Antarctic matters, and that includes the business side of Antarctica. As well as the science and the international dimensional.

*Cllr Aaron Keown:* Do those relationships have an official name?

*Response:* It would just be an MOU. That's what we would call it as opposed to categorising it as a friendly city or a sister city or anything like that.

*Cllr Aaron Keown:* Right. And is there a way to expand those relations? Because there's clear measurable benefit.

*Response:* So we're always looking at that, particularly in regards to the focus areas of the international relations policy framework, which is South Korea; it is Australia, West Coast USA and Pacifica and China, the Pearl River Delta of China. So in those areas specifically and that was agreed upon citywide as the key areas of focus. But if there is a key Antarctic relationship to be had, then we take note of it.

*Cllr Aaron Keown:* So the big growth is if you don't mind, Mr. Mayor, the big growth going forward would appear to be India given that they are overtaking China as the largest country, the largest democracy in the world, we have a strong relationship especially through cricket (although not so much after the weekend, but we're still friends) and so that would seem to be the big growth and should Christchurch not try and be the leading trade city with India before someone else takes that spot.

*Response:* So you make a good point, but the when time comes for us to overhaul the international relations policy framework, that'll be certainly something that will be looked at. But at the moment, the agreed areas of focus are the ones that I've already mentioned.

*Cllr Aaron Keown:* So when's that change potential?

*Response:* I don't know that on top of my head, I'll have to circle back to you.

**Question**

*Cllr Kelly Barber:* Thanks for that, Duncan. I think you guys do amazing work. In terms of capacity, what are the ramifications of, say, changing the sister city relationship like with Christchurch, UK? I mean, do we get a lot out of that and perhaps substituting in a, you know, a place in India?

*Response:* So the relationship we have with Christchurch, UK, is 50 years old. It is our second oldest sister city. And I think that the level of engagement that we have with Christchurch is commensurate with the distance and the disparity in the size between us, much larger and them much smaller. But what I would say is that our relationship is active and that it is our only toehold in Europe and that does provide for wider European engagement through having that relationship. But if we were to look at substituting a relationship that would be something that would have to consider extremely carefully because I don't want to come and recommend to Council that we sacrifice 50 years of a relationship unless we have an extremely good reason.

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## **Governance and Decision making**

*John Filsell, Head of Community Support and Partnerships, and Helen White, Head of Legal and Democratic Services*

Helen and I will be doing a wee bit of an interchange.

The governance and decision making. Most of this will be very, very familiar. A summary of what the activity delivers: We hold elections, the representation reviews, polls. We provide smart secretarial services, information to support Council and Community Board committee decision making at a governance level. The probably one of the main changes that Helen will discuss in more detail is an increase in the investment in governance capacity.

Over 800 meetings, 2700 reports overseen, live streaming of 600 meetings, 3000 applications for unrelated hearings, to district licencing. It's quite an extensive citywide activity. And it largely happens, it's directed by statute, but it's also directed by community. We'll come to that...

So why do we do this? I mean, obviously, outside of the legal requirements, to state a passage from Council strengthening Community strategy that we find relevant: participation, engagement and understanding decision making processes by our diverse city wide and localised communities build social capital, increases resilience and results in better decision making as close as possible to the communities affected by their decisions made. That's really the why and if we see the graph on the top left hand side, that is our key visual, our key metric, our thing that keeps us honest.

Very briefly changes to previous activity plans. This plan we are focusing on greater transparency, live streaming of meetings, recording of meetings, less decision making in PX review and importantly, a commitment to actively review decisions made in PX to see if they can be released. And just to touch on the proposed new level of service about building governance capacity. As you know, currently member development is dealt within a policy which is member lead and an entitlement for an allowance. This year we have already delivered some supports to governments that have, with your off-site meetings as well as a chairperson training that was available for all members who wish to attend. So I'll be coming back to you with some different options about how going forward we can better support governance capacity. This is an increasingly complex world for democratic institutions and it's important that all Members have the right training, tools and support in order to be able to make the best decisions for the communities that they serve.

... Going back to the graph on the top left, the, the teal coloured line, tracks the percentage of our community that understand how Council makes decisions. So the last residents survey in May that was 35% of us. The year before that it was 31, so we are tracking high 20s to mid 30s. That's a key metric for us, because it embodies effectiveness, efficiency, localism, transparency, a bit of trust. So we follow that carefully and you know, our recommend that you support levels of service to increase that over time. Interestingly, if you, in your own copies, if you just look at the commentary underneath, whilst we have 35% of general residents who understand how Council make decisions,

that increases to 45% of people who've actually interacted with us, understand how Council make decisions. So generally speaking, the people who interact, even if they're not looking for, and don't get the decision they were perhaps hoping for, once they engage with us, you, they tend to have a greater understanding.

Very, very briefly, the this plan does not propose any changes in the quantity of service or the cost. We are, as Helen said, we slowly reprioritize our overtime, are taking our lead from you and from our communities. The just a couple of the risks and challenges that we see. Council are about to embark on some difficult decisions that can impact the... We're also picking up an increase in aggressive behaviour and abuse targeted towards particularly our elected members. So we're keeping an eye out on that and providing support at a Council and at a Community Board level.  
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### **Open for questions**

*Cllr Sara Templeton:* Thank you and thanks for addressing the Elected Member development cause I was going to ask about. So, two quick things, does this area cover the representation review?

*Response:* That's not for the life of this long-term plan. The representation review is after the next election.

*Cllr Sara Templeton:* Yeah, but the long-term plan is 10 years and if we don't budget for the next one in four years time, then there will be a budget increase next time round. Like it should be...

*Response:* It should be in there Councillor, but we have focused....If you, look at [section] 7, year 28/29, there's a big increase in cost. I think our budget for Rep review and an election.

*Cllr Sara Templeton:* So the rep review comes in in 26/27. That's when that should be happening, so can we just look at that because that's the six years from the last one? And also 26/27, 27/28, it's a that space there. There's a decrease between the next local government election and the following one, so 25, and then 28. So in 2028 we've got a much lower budget than 2025. And it seems unlikely when it comes to that.

*Response:* Sorry, what was the year? What year was that Councillor?

*Cllr Sara Templeton:* Elections. The next two elections we've got a budget of 1.4 million for the next election and then only 1.3 the following election. It just seems a little unlikely. That's all just if you...

*Response:* We can check that.

*Cllr Sara Templeton:* ...yeah, fewer post boxes. I don't know. Yeah, but the other thing is that the organisation now has a legislated role in trying to increase voter participation. And I'm just wondering if we have got a plan in place and appropriate budget for doing that? So if that could be fed back to us that would be great.

### **Action 2.1**

*Cllr Pauline Cotter:* And look, it's good to hear that you're thinking about training for governance cause I think it's really important, but there's no increase budget in there for that.

*Response:* But the plan would be to manage that within existing budgets and I'll be coming back to you with options about that.

*Cllr Pauline Cotter:* That concerns me because I know that there's already very little in there really.

*Response:* It's not itemised to that level of detail, the budget. what's before you and the activity plan, I mean.

*Cllr Pauline Cotter:* Currently there's an allocated amount per year, per elected member, but that includes conferences, but generally it's enough to go to 1 conference, probably; there's not enough to really do many courses or anything like that. So I'm just wondering if there needs to be more budget in there. Do you really think you can deliver more training in the existing budget?

*Response:* It's about reprioritizing how training is delivered and to look at the needs of all members rather than members self determining what they individually want to attend.

*Cllr Pauline Cotter:* Right, so do more like group joined up training like you did the Chair's one.

*Response:* Those are exactly the options to bring back for the Council to determine. So the policy is currently, it is an entitlement and provided you follow the process that that training is available to you.

*Cllr Pauline Cotter:* I know. This is difficult. I know that we're running tight budgets here, but we need to hear, honestly from staff, if more budget is required and then it's our decision how to find it or if we find it. So if you're confidently saying that you can deliver training within budgets then that is what I'm hearing.

*Response:* It's about reprioritizing.

*Cllr Yani Johanson:* I wondered if this includes the LGZ membership or because obviously we spend a lot of money on conferences with LGNZ and training as well, and I just wondered if we're looking at that. The second question is: can we set a target for voter participation? Because I think that to me seems a bit of a gap that we don't have a target to improve it and there's nothing I could see in here that looks to address that.

### **Question**

*Mayor Mauger:* So just I'm a bit confused. How would you do voter participation?

*Cllr Yani Johanson:* Well, there's many ways you can do it. We've consistently made a lot of suggestions to central government around justice and electoral reform, and I don't know where those things have got to. There's the advertising campaigns that we do. There's the engagement with young people, for example, or communities that are less likely to vote, so there's quite a number of things. One of the things that I've always been really keen for us to do is support civics education in schools and work with, like, government around kids vote, for example. But that obviously requires maybe some resource and but the key thing is to set a target so that we can work towards improving it. Because we've only had very, very modest improvements in the last while.

*Cllr Sam MacDonald:* ... The only thing I was just trying to understand was around the professional development stuff because I'm not that keen on moving to a model where it's all pooled and we all have to go on the same courses and the reason for that is - I don't mean this disrespect to anybody - is we're all at different stages in terms of our professional careers, so some of us do stuff outside of in that and like for example, Yani mentioned around LGNZ for example, you know, I won't go to their conferences. So I'm just thinking in terms of... I'm just not that keen on moving to a generic "We all go and do the same course" and that that kind of thing... It should be more tailored to the individual based on these. For example, I went and did a principles of Maori Governance course the other day and I actually found it really useful because but there are a lot of people around the table that are a lot further ahead than that than I am. You know, I wouldn't necessarily get that if we were just going to do a chairperson course where I've chaired stuff before. So just be keen on your thoughts on how we can make that work, because in my view - I don't know what other people think - it should be tailored to the individual. If we're genuinely trying to lift, you know, competency around the table?

*Response:* And that's why I'll be coming back with options which include the status quo, which is the current policy, which is the self determined model. But to test whether there's appetite to look at different ways of delivering that support, but ultimately that's a Council decision because it is a Council policy.

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*Cllr Pauline Cotter:* But Helen's saying you've only got the budget for the Group One. You don't have the funds to offer self-determined options.

*Response:* Currently, the Council policy is that it is self determined. And I'll be coming back with options to see whether there's appetite to change that policy, which would include looking at whether there are group options or not or a bit of a mix of what you have and what it could be. But ultimately, it's Council policy.

*CE Dawn Baxendale:* And also just to add to that, and ultimately if it's a mix and match or whatever different options you've got, what the cost of those are likely to be so Members are fully aware and then determine whether the needs been increased budget or the same budget or how that's distributed.

## **Action 2.2**

*Cllr Melanie Coker:* Mine was just around more detail on the budgets actually, because if something's being prioritised, something's being pushed down and it will be good to see more information about it.

## **Action 2.2**

*Cllr Kelly Barber:* Has there ever been any attempt to divide out councillors and community boards in expenses and costs for the different parts?

*Response:* In the breakdowns, that make up these budgets, they are divided quite specifically. However, we work very, very closely together they to produce joined up service because, of course, Councillors are members of Community boards. So there's a degree of a joint effort there, but you can very, very easily split but not at this level. This is this is too high?

*Cllr Jake McLellan:* Regardless of the budget we have on budget, do we know if all of that's drawn down or if only part of what we have set aside is actually drawn down in the year?

*Response:* In relation to being the development? So the past three years there's been minimal budget due to changes that were made for the COVID years and we're only part way through this year.

*Cllr Jake McLellan:* I'm just wondering if it's a budget that's actually under subscribed anyway.

*Response:* It's very difficult to say because the past three years haven't been drawn down aside from conference, so they're we don't have that set pattern.

*Cllr Jake McLellan:* Interesting.

*CE Dawn Baxendale:* What about historically Helen, pre COVID times?

*Response:* I'd have to look into that, I'm afraid I don't know. John, do you?

*Cllr Jake McLellan:* I'm feeling as if we might be arguing about how much we should put on budget, but it may be that the use is actually not what, because I know I've never tapped in to it once.

*Response:* Historically it's slightly under drawn down for a range of factors. But in recent years the there's been a lot of unreliability and a lot of exceptional circumstances, so I wouldn't want to use that history to predict the future, but we need to do the work.

## **Action 2.2**

*Cllr Tim Scandrett:* You know, prior to getting elected, I spent quite a bit on personal development and going on courses myself. So as Elected Members, you shouldn't just expect to for these things to be paid for those ones that are going to enhance us as Elected Members, I think it's fair enough. But there's a limit to everything cause in another document with the Long term plan it also says we've got to share the pain and the load, so to kinda suddenly think, 'Ohh no, I'm not gonna pay for it because it should be paid.' I think it's pretty short sighted.

*CE Dawn Baxendale:* We gotta get it right.

*Cllr Sam MacDonald:* I think it's fair to that as it is public money, but where there's a genuine benefit to enhancing the competency around the table is - but it's a good thing regardless of what it is -

actually going and meeting different people and interacting with colleagues and or people from professions aren't necessarily here all day, it's actually a really useful thing for us as well, so you wouldn't want be too critical. Every organisation I've ever worked in is very complimentary about people going to do professional development because it does bring back value to the business. You may not see it on day one, organisation or business.

*Cllr Tim Scandrett:* Say that you're going to an LGNZ conference. You're seeing the issues from another Council that you know, so yeah.

*Cllr Sam MacDonald:* Yeah, I just wouldn't be too critical.

*Mayor Mauger:* It's good to meet up with some people who are going through the same problems as us, but seeing how they deal with it so it's quite helpful.

*Cllr Sara Templeton:* Yeah, just while you're doing that piece of work, can one of the things that we struggle with sometimes is knowing what's happening when it comes to professional development. So when I was first elected there was a lot of LGNZ courses that were run and you could look on their website and say OK, this one's coming up in Christchurch soon, it's something that would suit me and you'd apply to go on it. There's just not that availability of that kind of specific elected member stuff now, apart from sort of the webinars and things on online that we don't get access to because we're not paying for it as a council. But also you know, relevant conferences and those kind of things. We just don't hear about them. So we don't know that they're happening in a way that we could enhance our knowledge in and governance experience and stuff. So a way to find out what's happening and what might be interesting for people would be also really good.

## **Action 2.2**

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## **Legal Services**

*Helen White, head of Legal & Democratic Services*

Thank you. So legal services, we're a support service, we provide support to the other business units of the Council. We're not a front facing service. So we help you deliver your priorities; we help the business units deliver their activities as well as managing and supporting minimising legal risks to the Council. We support all areas of the business apart from employment relations, which is supported directly by People and Culture. And the benefits of having an in-house team is that we're cost effective because we're not providing profit to partners in an external firm. We know how the Council works; we understand the context and that delivers a lot of non financial benefits.

Just a bit of background over the last three years, our legal service has been on our journey. Three years ago we invested to save, to improve the model and provide more of that work in-house. And our levels of service to deliver 75% to that work in-house and we're pretty close to that right now. We've worked hard to get that balance right and there's always going to be matters for reason of capacity or competence and skill and expertise. We will need to buy that in when it's in the interest of the Council to do so. To counter the benefits from investing in the in-house capacity three years ago, which initially we delivered a real reduction of nearly two for every \$1 that had been invested the like for like cost of external services has increased over that time by up to 20 nearly 25%. So that means I'm looking at how I continue to grow and improve on the internal capacity. And so some of the things that we're currently doing is that we're an upskilling a team member to become a licenced immigration practitioner so that they can support all the overseas recruitment that's being undertaken across the board, as well as bringing in a lot of the work for Public Works Act, which historically we have always externalised. And we're working in partnership with our external firms who are adding value to upskill the internal teams on that. And lastly, an on-going piece of



work to improve our processes and systems so that we can free up the lawyers to spend more time on the high touch and higher risk work and less time on the lower risk work.

So just to address a couple of questions that I've been asked recently.

- I've been asked: Why can't we provide services, say, to other councils and why can't we trade? And that is because the Law Society prevents us from doing that. We can only provide legal services to the Council and its subsidiaries.
- Another question I've been asked recently is why do we use lawyers from out of town? And the reason for that is last year we undertook a very thorough new procurement process. We set up four new procurement panels where we've appointed effectively the best of breed, and that does mean that some of our lawyers are not based in Christchurch because they are the ones with the skills and expertise that this Council needs. And also generally we are not charged for travel for when those lawyers do need to attend physically in Christchurch.

And just lastly, if I can just show you the graph... 86% of the users of Legal Services are satisfied with the service they get. That's been increasing year on year and 86% is the highest since this level of service was put into the activity plan. And that comes from the different parts of the business that use our services and particularly they value how we communicate and engage in the relationships that we've established across the business as well as our ability to deliver on. So that is the legal services in a nutshell.

**Open for questions:**

*Cllr Yani Johanson:* First can I just say thank you for the work that you have done. I'm really encouraged by what you've shared with us today about the change. I think for those of us that were here for a long time like, really, we're getting quite concerned at the high cost of the external legal advice. And so I think hopefully this is a really good model we can look at other units across Council as well where we are spending a lot on consultants. I just had two very specific questions. One is, is it possible in the budget to separate out our direct staff cost versus the contract personnel costs?

*Response:* For legal services the external costs are listed there as the operating costs. It does have the staff and other contract personnel staff. That's what it's listed, but we have very few contract personnel. We occasionally will contract in from one of our external firms on a secondment rate to cover a vacancy.

*Cllr Yani Johanson:* Sorry, I'm just trying to understand from the, is it the 25% that we're paying? To the external...?

*Response:* That comes out of direct operating costs.

*Cllr Yani Johanson:* OK. And the staffing that we have in terms of internal, is that also in that budget line?

*Response:* That's in the staff and contract personnel cost line.

*Cllr Yani Johanson:* Ah, OK, I see. So that's how we look at the difference between the two.

*Cllr Yani Johanson:* OK, second question from me was. In regards to, we can't operate as a service for others et cetera. But within the CCHL and the Council companies, could we provide the service to them and/or do we do that at the moment or if not, can we look at that to reduce costs as well?

*Response:* No, we don't currently, but that is something that we can look at in the future. Other councils do provide support to their organisations. Yeah, but currently we wouldn't have that capacity sitting vacant to fill up by doing the work for the group. So it would need to be part of a bigger plan.

*Cllr Yani Johanson:* Yeah. And I think that's been raised as part of the CCHL review as well. If we can look at shared service arrangements.

*Response:* And I'm happy to look at that when the time is right, yes.

**Action 2.3.**

*Cllr Sara Templeton:* Yeah, it just kind of follows on from Yani's, it was going to be Yani's first one over that, the external versus internal. I'm just wondering if it's possible to get a breakdown of the types of things that we use those external legal services for.

*CE Dawn Baxendale:* It's probably worth doing that over a three-year period because there will be different things.

*Response:* I'll do what I can. These are metrics that are not easy to deliver, but I'll do what I can on that.

## **Question**

## **Risk and Assurance**

*Nicholas Hill, Head of Risk and Assurance*

I'll just run through some of the key points and then open for questions I think. So this is the first time we'll have the Risk and Assurance as a unit coming to Council with an activity plan. I've been here for about two years, just a little bit over, and in that period and we've had quite a lot of change in the space, in the activities that we do, which is predominantly focused on health, safety and well-being, which was previously part of the People and Culture unit, internal audit and risk management services. So again, we're an internal supportive enabling service and we also help all of Council and we do so on a regular basis at least at the Heads of Service level. And we focus on a more projectized way from time to time in different areas.

As Helen was describing with the legal services, we're also a cost-effective service, I think if we're looking at current sort of consulting costs per staff member week, we'd probably be buying in a single day from an external service provider. So we're probably getting about five times as much value simply in dollar terms as far as that core resourcing goes. Our focus at the moment and I'm not proposing any major changes to where we're at, comes about through that combination of services that happen, the addition of some additional staff where we've brought in some people from regulatory compliance who do internal audit and this has been part of bringing these risk focused services together. Because fundamentally, the work that these people do is the same. They just have a different focus. So we've been able to bring in quite a range of skill sets together, which is really effective. So we're in the process of looking at consistently delivering our services, consistently supporting the organisation and getting a really clear understanding of Council. Therefore, I'm not proposing any major changes to where we're at the moment and we've also grown the health, safety and well-being team, which has been really effective as well as supporting across the organisation as opposed to different areas pulling in specific resources. For the purposes of projects, for example, we're able to help out with site visits, help build awareness across management. So we're really in the business of boosting capability across the organisation and we'll see those benefits increase over time as we do that.

We've proposed a couple of levels of service changes. They're internal, one is around our internal audit activities. Previously it was that we would do a certain percentage of the plan so a certain number of activities. We focused this around the good practise frameworks that we need to follow in order to deliver the services as opposed to the specific activities we're going to do and likewise for health and safety. The previous target was around ensuring that we met all of our health and safety obligations, but now we're defining that more clearly around the standards, so ISO 45.1001 and the external audit that we'd expect to have for that. The budget at this stage doesn't include a breakdown of our health and safety parts because it's a new activity plan, so we're just gonna note there around the total cost there. We're also looking at ways of increasing our efficiency so that we're reducing the administrative costs across the organisation and which is a primary focus for us so. Again, we're not looking for any major increases. We are in some ways still looking at really

understanding what the true costs are. But I think we're in a pretty good space at the moment. Are there any specific questions?

**Open for questions:**

*Cllr Melanie Coker:* With the level of service that's deleted, which I think you sort of touched on, but, I don't really understand why it's been deleted really because it seems like it was quite good. Do you know the one I'm talking about....? It's the 13.6.11.1.

*Response:* So that focus, and we could probably update the way we've described the new one, but that is around how specifically we will achieve that through the standard and framework. I don't know if I've answered the question. ....

*Cllr Melanie Coker:* It makes it sound like you're going from a 'we'll plan out what we're going to kind of do' and 'will respond to stuff in an agile way', which I would imagine you would actually do a combination of those two things rather than, I mean it's just the way that this reads it's all.

*Response:* I'll certainly go back and have a look at how we've described that.

**Action 2.4**

*Cllr Yani Johanson:* Just wanting to understand if you're planning on doing anything additional or require additional resource to address the findings of the wastewater treatment plant response which talked about our internal risk registers really not being sufficient and seems to be massive gaps in the way in which risk was identified, registered, monitored and escalated.

*Response:* Yeah, great. I think it's a good question. So we per say I don't own risk. We support other parts of the organisation projects business units to do that. So what we have been doing is increasing our training and providing support and oversight for projects and business areas across the whole Council. So I don't see that as something that we need specific additional resourcing for. It's something that I think we will improve over time with consistent application of advice. So we have good staff who are able to provide that advice.

*Cllr Yani Johanson:* So you were doing audit of the risk register just in terms of how it relates to different Council departments, check if there were things in there that were sufficient or maybe insufficient and then come up with a sort of action plan to address.

*Response:* That's essentially the process that we're undertaking. Over, I can't remember exactly when, but around a year ago or so we moved into doing a quarterly review for each business unit. So that's within our existing resourcing to be able to do that.

*Cllr Yani Johanson:* And I guess what I was trying to understand from that activity management plan or the levels of service is, if we're going to be doing less reviews over a longer period of time? And I'm just looking at page 84 just to try and get a sense of, yeah, I guess I'm just wondering how much capacity we have to make sure that those reviews are done in a timely fashion and the recommendations are implemented in a timely fashion. I think from some of the stuff I've read in the past where high findings and moderate findings have been raised, it still seems like quite a big lag between them getting addressed.

*Response:* If we say that we're going to do a certain number of audits, for example, those audits may be small or they may be very large; good practise would suggest that we have a combination of, you know large in-system level reviews, some small reviews, some response reviews, which we'll be doing in line with a business unit and moving more towards automated work. For example, the way the level of service was described would be, say 75% of the 10 planned audits for the year. That's essentially what it was. That didn't provide the flexibility to do that, diversity of work in a way that in a way that the world's changing, I suppose, you know, we expect to see a lot more say AI type work around automated financial abuse and so on.

*CE Dawn Baxendale:* Councillor Johanson, in terms of the question around high and medium outcomes and recommendations from audit, that is something we have been working on now for

four years because there was a very long backlog. We have reduced that backlog significantly and actually we get that reported to ELT and into the Audit and Risk Committee. So it is something we monitor very closely, something I think that the organisation can actually say it owns far better than it's ever done before.

*Cllr Yani Johanson:* I guess what I'm really interested in is, I mean, I think having the independence of the audit and risk unit doing the work that they do is really good. And I guess I'm a little bit concerned the reliance on the units to deal with the risk when we've got sort of experts over here. So I guess the question I've got is, do we have enough independent resource into our audit and risk unit to be able to, you know have the resources required to do that sort of monitoring?

*CE Dawn Baxendale:* So that's not what Nick is saying. And to be clear, we move from having a traditional internal audit service, which it was historically, to a risk and assurance unit, including incorporation of health and safety and well-being as a issue of risk. And taking activity in relation to that and fundamentally the work with the service units is both to strengthen their knowledge and understanding of risk, which is what Nick has just said for over a year, they've been working directly with the units to really move that on. And we've seen the benefit of that. So it's not that the team is separated out and not engaged. In fact, if anything there far more embedded than they've ever been in this organisation and Nick, I think you might need to bring it more to life to help the Council understand the difference that we've been doing.

*Response:* Do you want me to talk through that now?

*Cllr Yani Johanson:* Yeah, it was really just getting an understanding is, if we had more of people in your unit, could we alleviate or do more around risk reduction and where is that kind of spot in terms of requiring the business units do the work versus the work that you're able to do. And I mean you've kind of touched on the having that flexibility might help.

*Response:* Yeah. I mean, I'm never going to argue that I should have less and who doesn't want more? So to speak. But fundamentally, we aren't the ones that are responsible for delivering that work. We have to have the units doing that, otherwise we would lose that independence. And we can't impose new work on those units and dictate to them exactly how something needs to happen. We make recommendations, we make suggestions and we provide that oversight, support and reporting. And we can, yeah, brainstorm with them.

*Cllr Sara Templeton:* Thanks. Just going back to the actual levels of service saying that Mel was talking about. What I liked about the older one that's being deleted is that it's a little bit more plain language than just a reference to an ISO, and I'm just wondering if there's a way to make this more intelligible for the general public and Counsellors by having some wording in the level of service that doesn't just reference the standard, the number of the standard we're trying to reach. And in that first one health, safety and well-being 13.0.9 the measurement method of measurement as well is which says documented safety management system and I'm just checking that that's safety and well-being and that the well-being stuff measured as well, not just the safety.

*Response:* Yes. So in that sense, from this perspective, we're looking at our psychosocial harm as a type of safety, type of harm. It is incorporated within that, but I definitely take your point; I've made a note around the plain English to make sure that it's explicit.

*Cllr Sara Templeton:* And if we could just maybe change the wording of the method of measurement stuff as well. Because we need to make sure that the well-being space is captured appropriately. Thanks.

#### **Action 2.4**

*Cllr Celeste Donovan:* I'm just got a question about the difference between workers and contractors/ subcontractors. Are we capturing risk to contractors? And by which that would include councillors and elected members? Because I understand that there's been a recent case with for Whakaari Island, where there are some significant health and safety implications. Have we done an

analysis of what we need to do now and do we have a risk register for things relating to people that aren't classified as workers?

*Response:* So I would say yes and no. No in the sense that there is always unknown stuff out there and we, you know, like I was saying before around consistency and we do still have a relatively new team, in particular in health and safety and they are developing their ways of working across the organisation and they're not going to stop doing that because we're focused on continuous improvement within our team and to support continuous improvement across the organisation. In terms of identifying risks, yes across the organisation those health and safety risks are identified. However, this is always going to remain a key focus for us and at the moment am I completely satisfied that we have every key risk identified for staff, you know, other people such as contractors, no, we don't. We are focused on identifying what they are and collecting information about events and incidents. And we do need to do some work around our systems and processes to ensure we have consistency and visibility of those things.

*Cllr Celeste Donovan:* Follow up. At some point, can we get a bit of an update on the work around the contractor space because I'm aware of the work around the worker space, but more, but I haven't heard anything in relation to, because we did have a discussion around the risk register for contractors. And I'm not aware of where that's gone.

*Response:* OK, great.

## **Action 2.5**

*Cllr Tim Scandrett:* With regards to the new committee members, independent committee members on the health, safety and well-being committee and also on the audit and risk, so there's a really high level of expertise within which they're stacked, which we are cross pollinating, obviously, so as Nick said, some of the areas that are newer than others but we're really getting some speed on there and but it's crucial to do it properly so.

## **Briefing concludes**