

Submission opposing the sale of Aurora Energy.

I am very concerned that this proposal has come out of the blue for the majority of Ōtepoti/ Dunedin residents. It appears to be a knee-jerk response to the current (by no means unique to Ōtepoti) financial situation. The proposal takes no account of the long-term benefits to residents of the ownership of this strategic asset. I note too that the options, as displayed on the online form, lean towards the sale of Aurora Energy – not a good look, DCC.

I oppose the sale of Aurora Energy.

Selling key strategic assets is virtually never a sensible decision in the long term, no matter how appealing an immediate cash injection may seem. Aotearoa is still suffering the long-term effects of central government's asset sales in the 1980's. These effects include (but are by no means limited to) now baked-in increased prices for utilities and significant under-investment in the maintenance of key infrastructure.

It is incumbent on the DCC (as on all local bodies), to provide support and services for all residents. Electricity is an essential service, and selling Aurora would be handing control to an outside agency, with future risks to both prices and supply should the infrastructure not be maintained. The Customised Price Path currently in place will not last forever, and is not any sort of guarantee. It is disingenuous (at best) to suggest that there's no need to worry about future price increases and ongoing maintenance because the CPP has taken care of those issues.

From the service-to-residents perspective, it seems absurd to sell Aurora now, just as the long-overdue network upgrade programme is bearing fruit.