

Office of the Mayor



4 May 2014

Long Term Plan
Otago Regional Council
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Dear Regional Councillors

SUBMISSION ON THE OTAGO REGIONAL COUNCIL'S LONG TERM PLAN

Introduction

1. The Dunedin City Council (DCC) has a number of areas of responsibility that overlap with the Otago Regional Council (ORC) and values the positive relationship that enables the two councils to work together in the interests of Dunedin residents and ratepayers. The DCC thanks the ORC for the opportunity to submit on the ORC Long Term Plan for 2015-2025 (LTP).

Consent Monitoring

2. The LTP consultation document proposes to amend consent performance monitoring costs to the DCC from a set fee of \$15,000 to 75% of actual costs, with the remainder being paid by general rates.
3. Neither the consultation document nor the supplementary communication received from the ORC provide information comparing actual costs of DCC consent monitoring fees against the current set fee of \$15,000. It is therefore not possible for the DCC to determine what impact if any this proposal will have on costs.
4. The proposal represents a cost increase for consent holders whom already pay actual costs, from 50% recovered from actual costs and 50% recovered from general rates; to 75% recovered from actual cost and 25% from general rates. It is therefore anticipated that the proposal will lead to a significant increase in costs to the DCC. Audit fees are also proposed to rise from 50% of actual costs to 100% of actual costs. The DCC does not have control over the frequency or length of such audits and so anticipates that this proposal will also significantly increase cost to the DCC.
5. In summary, the DCC does not consider that the ORC has provided enough information for an informed submission to be completed on this matter. The DCC notes that the ORC has ten large consent holders and would have anticipated a summary of how current fees were set and an analysis of what the proposal means to these consent holders. The DCC is concerned about these unquantified cost changes and wish to seek further information and discussion prior to a decision being made.

Hazards

6. The DCC thanks the ORC for the work it is doing in identifying and mapping natural hazards. This information enables the DCC to more appropriately manage land uses through the District Plan in areas at risk from natural hazards. The DCC is pleased to see the LTP include proposals to develop a Coastal Strategy for Otago and a Natural Hazard Risk Management Strategy for South Dunedin that will include options for mitigating groundwater and liquefaction hazards. The DCC looks forward to ongoing collaboration and information sharing in relation to natural hazards, particularly as responses to climate change, including in South Dunedin, are developed.

Biodiversity

7. The DCC is pleased to see that biodiversity is a proposed focus for the ORC over the coming years and that development of biodiversity and pest strategies is planned. The DCC adopted a Biodiversity Strategy in 2007 and is currently reviewing the approach to biodiversity as a second generation District Plan and an Environment Strategy for Dunedin are developed. To ensure the best outcome for Dunedin and Otago it is important to continue to develop plans and strategies alongside each other.

Public Transport

8. The DCC is supportive of the proposals to implement the Regional Public Transport Plan (RPTP), particularly the changes to bus routes which remove a lot of complexity from the network. This will make journey planning easier, and journeys more direct and faster. The DCC is supportive of a Central City bus hub and continued collaboration towards an optimum facility. The intention to increase Dunedin transport targeted rates by 6% per year over the 10 year period for improved bus services as outlined in the RPTP is noted.
9. The DCC is committed 'in principle' to proceed with a transfer of powers for public transport planning and operations from the ORC to the DCC. The continued collaboration with ORC staff regarding this matter is appreciated and will in due course allow staff to recommend to both councils on a suitable date for this potential transfer.

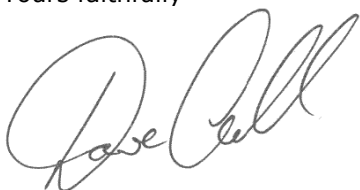
Cosy Homes

10. Along with the ORC, the DCC supports the Cosy Homes Trust in its mission to make every home in Dunedin warm and cosy by 2025. The DCC hopes that the ORC actively considers the Trust's submission requesting funding for their work programme.

Conclusion

11. The DCC welcomes continued engagement with the ORC on areas of mutual interest and responsibility, particularly in the priority work areas identified in the LTP consultation document including biodiversity, hazard and coastal management and public transport.
12. The DCC requests further information and discussion about the implications of proposed changes to consent monitoring and auditing, prior to a decision being made.
13. Thank you for the opportunity to submit on the ORC's LTP. The DCC looks forward to continuing the positive relationship between our organisations over the coming decade.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dave Cull', written in a cursive style.

Dave Cull
Mayor of Dunedin