

# **Community Development Strategy**

A collaborative response from Project Port Lyttelton and endorsed by the Lyttelton Harbour Business Association.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this strategy. Project Port Lyttelton would like to attend the submission hearings.

We agree that community development is a process where the community identifies its aspirations and goals and works collectively to achieve them. Community Development can take many forms from small scale to larger scale initiatives and involve many different groups and organisations.

## **OUR VIEW OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FOR CCC**

Community development should be the single most important initiative of the council. This is how the council relates to its biggest asset, the people of Christchurch and the Peninsula. If the Council wants better community participation and overall well-being for its residents, it must seek to step aside from its dominant position and enable community wisdom and processes to be an integral part of the process.

## **For our community, effective community development for the Christchurch City Council should focus on:**

### **1. Community Boards**

Community Boards could play a more central role. If they had more power /resources at a local level they would be able to work more effectively with their communities to create desired local outcomes. For Banks Peninsula this means several things.

- Wage parity with City Community Boards would encourage a more diverse age range on the Boards with elected people who then could afford to spend more time working with their community.
- Boards taking a leadership role with local communities. Actively facilitating community outcomes and experimenting with different ways to engage with their communities. For example community boards could initiate facilitated community dialogues. These sessions could answer collective community responses to issues that are important to locals.

**Recommendation:** to achieve better community development outcomes please pay our community representatives better so allowing them to engage more effectively with our community.

## **2. Council Consultation**

The council needs to be a strategic partner in the community development process and not just chief judge and adjudicator. Help communities feel valued in the process. Strong communities will feel they can make a difference.

The current top heavy council structure and strictly controlled council processes dis-empowers people and many feel their voices aren't heard. Well facilitated community "hui" may be a better way forward than the current written and verbal submission process.

**Recommendation:** value the contributors in your communities. Develop a better process to make all parties be and feel heard.

## **3. Council Funding for Community Development**

The proposed levels of funding for Banks Peninsula Community Boards for local community initiatives is too low for the Community Board to be very effective with community development. How will they be able to achieve anything if they have a small projects budget of \$11,000, a discretionary budget of \$15,000 and reserves allocation of \$20,000? Funding allocations based on the number of taxpayers is erroneous. We need to look further than that crude measurement.

The proposed funding allocation for local vs. metropolitan funding will disadvantage groups that are trying to achieve pilot projects locally. For example Project Port Lyttelton is doing some ground-breaking work in Lyttelton. See [www.lyttelton.net.nz](http://www.lyttelton.net.nz). Because our work is only based in this community we will be unable to apply for significant grants and yet the work of PPL could have ramifications for the whole city.

**Recommendation:** A one size fits all grants policy disadvantages innovative communities in funding rounds. Please review this methodology.

#### **4. Council in kind support**

Council sharing resources with people can also strengthen community development outcomes. CCC should think harder about doing this. Council should really take into account all the voluntary work done by local communities. Wherever they can Council should aim to assist these groups.

- One example is helping with community facilities. Peppercorn rentals for council properties should be given to community groups who are actively developing community life. Communities need the facilities; community groups should not have to go through the burden of applying for grants to pay the council market rentals for properties. This just creates more unnecessary work for the local community.
- A similar line could be taken with community festivals. Don't make community organisers apply for grants to pay for traffic management plans and rubbish collection. Just do this automatically for them.
- Volunteer boards that actively strengthen communities should be recognised. For example the Lyttelton Harbour Business Association and the Lyttelton Visitor Centre should get complimentary membership in the council owned Christchurch Information Site

**Recommendation:** Let community boards negotiate with their communities in an open and transparent way about what council buildings and services will be supported to aid community development.

#### **Your Strategic Goals**

Goals 1-8 are all important. However we feel goals 2-4 are the most important and should have the most resources attached to them.

Goal 2: Promote collaboration among key stakeholders, including government agencies and community and voluntary organisations, to identify and address key community issues

Goal 3: Increase community engagement and participation in local decision-making

Goal 4: Help build and sustain a sense of local identity

An evidence-based approach is also required but this should not happen at the expense of the other goals. Too often Council only researches. Information dissemination is often more critical. Let communities have easy access to the information that you find out about them. For example services that are lacking, socio economic data etc.

**Recommendation:** Have local statistics easily available for local communities and weight goals according to their level of importance. We think goals 2,3 and 4 are the most significant.

### **Facilities**

Local council facilities are really important to the people of Lyttelton. Without council ownership we wouldn't have an Art Gallery. Local rents are too high to enable the gallery to succeed financially.

Our community garden wouldn't be as attractive a place to visit without the community building attached to it. The community building provides a base for many of us for voluntary work. All the museums need council owned buildings for the same reason as the art gallery. The Recreation Centre is also important, as are the sports buildings and the community pool.

In Lyttelton, how modern the building is, is not a key factor. The building just needs to be accessible, relevant to community needs and well used. We do support the concept of "Living Buildings".

As stated above we really need council support by way of peppercorn rentals. We do not want to have to apply for grants to pay rental to the council for council facilities. In return for free buildings we will assist with building maintenance.

**Recommendation:** value the work of local community volunteers and help facilitate better outcomes for them. People who are actively helping their communities should not be burdened with extra paperwork and the possibility of raising funds to pay rents on council buildings.

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