

## **Productivity and Finance Submission**

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**Date:** 15<sup>th</sup> February 2019

**We are submitting in particular to Question 8:**

### **How are local authorities factoring in response and adaptation to climate change and other natural hazards (such as earthquakes) to their infrastructure and financial strategies? What are the cost and funding implications of these requirements?**

We are residents in the Southshore area of Christchurch and we feel it is important to put in a submission with regard to how our local authority ie Christchurch City Council has been preparing for climate change and sea level rise.

Since our city has had the added misfortune to have had significant earthquake damage and our Council is determined to lead the way with climate change there have been significant errors made in haste which has resulted in unnecessary stress and strain on the local residents which other local authorities should be aware of so that the same mistakes are not made. The Christchurch District Plan, which normally takes up to 10 years to implement was rushed through in around 18 months under the guise of earthquake emergency work.

Christchurch has blatantly become a city of 'haves and "have nots' and the residents in Southshore have been fighting for years now and we are worn down with this Council trying to evict us from our beautiful seaside suburb by way of 'managed retreat'. They are doing this by way of the media – there is hardly a week goes by where Southshore doesn't feature in the newspaper creating unnecessary fear which has resulted in our property values being severely reduced and problems with people trying to build or rebuild or do additions to their houses. We can't even have a local café in our area due to the draconian restrictions which the Council have implemented. Also, we are at risk of insurance companies pulling out of our area and all this because of the bad press we are constantly getting from the council. They fail to mention that our sea level rise has been minimal for the past 100 years or that our sand dunes are accreting at the rate of approximately 2 meters per year.

Before the earthquakes most of our houses along the estuary front had protective walls in front of their properties and these should have been repaired or replaced by the government when they took over these properties, however this was not done and the land was in fact artificially lowered when the houses and foundations were removed and fill was never brought in.

The Council will not provide protection for our estuary side, whilst we look enviously across the ditch at the affluent suburbs of Sumner and Redcliffs which are having millions of dollars spent on protective walls.

I think this is something that will certainly rear its ugly head in all areas of New Zealand where local authorities prefer to spend the money on affluent areas and meanwhile neglect the areas which they want people out of in order to reduce property values. They overlook however the devastating effect it has on the residents' wellbeing as most people have their life's savings tied up in their most valuable asset, which is their family home.

New Zealand is a country surrounded by sea and New Zealanders love living by the coast. I agree there are areas which have been eroding and these areas are the ones which need urgent attention and adaptation measure taken where possible, however, to lump all of New Zealand seaside suburbs into a 'one size fits all' plan would be a mistake, but the local authorities cannot be trusted to make fair

and equitable decisions as has been the case in Christchurch. Unfortunately, human nature will prevail and as we have found it only takes one or two people in positions of authority and a lot of damage can be done to the unfortunate suburbs who are targeted.

I wonder if Southshore in Christchurch would be treated the same as St Heliers Bay in Auckland – I think not!!

We would like the Council /Government to monitor risks, sea level rise etc and not get caught up in the media frenzy. Areas deemed most at risk should get priority for funding and this should **NOT** be based on how affluent a suburb is. Adaptation/mitigation of risks should be the way to manage climate change or sea level rise not managed retreat which puts undue stress and strain on both residents and council employees who have a conscience. There has been so much of the ratepayers money wasted for example; not putting work out to public tender (but instead giving to preferred Council consultants who charge exorbitant prices) and forming endless so-called consultancy groups where the consultants are paid a fortune to consult with the public, but there is never any notice taken of what the community wants – instead the Council will do what it wanted in the first place. Call us cynical, but we can give many instances of this happening in our community.

Let the way the Christchurch City Council has mishandled this implementation, to be a lesson for Government and all other Local Authorities of what NOT to do.

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