

STAFF REPORT

TO: Communications Subcommittee

FROM: Susan Edwards, Strategic Development Manager

REFERENCE: C797

SUBJECT: **Strategic Development Manager - RFN10-01-02**

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to update the Subcommittee on the recent developments in the communications area.

BACKGROUND

At the time of writing this report I am in my second day of having responsibility for the communications function. I look forward to taking on the role and working with the Communications Subcommittee. I believe that the communications function aligns well with the strategic policy work undertaken by my department.

INTRODUCING CHRIS CHOAT, COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

Chris Choat, Council's new communications officer, started in the role yesterday – 18 January 2010. Chris comes to us with a strong communications and local government background. He has recently finished working as the Communications Manager for Aquaculture New Zealand here in Nelson. Prior to Aquaculture New Zealand, Chris has worked at Manukau City Council and for consultancy firms doing local government related work. I am very pleased to have someone of Chris' calibre working with us.

The key aspects of Chris' role include:

- Providing effective, integrated, consistent high quality internal and external communications in support of Council and its business
- Maintaining and enhancing Council's reputation with its key audiences through quality communications strategies and activities
- Preparing communications plans to enhance internal communication and external communication with Council's stakeholders and community
- Marketing and public relations activities
- Overseeing publishing, print and design of Council publications to ensure contract services meet professional standards, cost efficiency and consistency of brand

- Media relations
- Working with the Webmaster on the Intranet and Council's website and overseeing the website content
- Preparing consultation programmes, including on the Ten Year Plan and Annual Plan.

We are currently working with Dry Crust on the details how the functions will be split between the internal communications role and the contract.

We consider that the internal communications role, complemented by the Dry Crust contract, provides an opportunity to enhance the Council's communication with its community.

TENDER FOR EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS WORK

The current contract with Dry Crust for the external communications and publications work is due to expire in February 2010. One of the first jobs for Chris will be preparing tender documentation for the new contract. Chris is planning to discuss the content of the external work with Subcommittee members at a workshop in around three weeks. He will report back to the Subcommittee on the tender documents at the next meeting. In the meantime, we will discuss with Dry Crust rolling over the current contract over the short term.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Strategic Development Manager's update report RFN10-01-02 be received.

Report prepared by

Susan Edwards
Strategic Development Manager