

## STAFF REPORT

**TO:** Chair and Members, Corporate Services Committee  
**FROM:** Cameron Fraei, Rates Officer  
**DATE:** 16 June 2010  
**SUBJECT:** Rates Rebate Scheme – RFN10-06-05

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### Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide an update to the Committee on the Rates Rebate Scheme.

### Background

Council administers the scheme on behalf of the Department of Internal Affairs. The scheme was expanded significantly in 2006 and since then, Council has had an excellent uptake providing low-income homeowners with rates relief.

### Update

#### 1. Application numbers and values

The 2009/2010 rating year has again seen a good uptake of the scheme. The following table summarises the year to date position:

Number of approved applications	1414 to date
Value of rebates granted	\$706,175

A reminder has been published in the latest Newsline the Mag advising ratepayers that they have until 30 June 2010 to apply to the scheme for a rebate relating to this rating year. It is expected that a further 150 applications will be received by the closing date, 30 June 2010.

Applications processed for the 2008/2009 rating year:

Number of approved applications	1563
Value of rebates granted	\$770,829

#### 2. Processing Changes

With a view to making the Rates Rebate Scheme processing more efficient and less complicated to applicants, the following changes have been initiated.

In the last few weeks, the Customer Services Team has been given additional training on how to process rebate applications. This will allow applications to be processed on the spot when the application is submitted.

The key change for our applicants is that they will be advised immediately what rebate amount they will receive.

The initial processing completed by the Customer Services Team has been successful and staff are working closely together to iron out any issues as they arise.

### **3. Scheme Changes**

The Department of Internal Affairs has advised that for the 2010/2011 rating year the maximum rebate amount has increased from \$550.00 to \$570.00. In addition to this, the income abatement threshold has been increased from \$21,910 to \$22,340.

These changes are effective from 1 July 2010.

### **4. General**

There are many ratepayers who rely quite heavily on receiving a rebate to make ends meet. The rebate makes a significant difference to those on a fixed income i.e. New Zealand Superannuitants; in most cases it covers a whole instalment.

The rebate can also be a lifeline to those who may be in arrears with their rates as it is often sufficient to clear outstanding rates

### **Recommendation**

**THAT the Rates Rebate Scheme report RFN10-06-05, dated 11 June 2010 be received.**

Cameron Fraei  
Rates Officer