

OPEN

MINUTE ITEM

ATTACHMENTS

**Ordinary meeting of the
Community Services Committee**

**Thursday 2 March 2017
Commencing at the conclusion of Council meeting
Council Chamber**

Civic House

110 Trafalgar Street, Nelson

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HOUSING STRATEGY FOR NELSON CITY COUNCIL

In 2004 a Housing Forum was convened in Nelson. This was hosted by Nelson City Council (NCC) and representatives from all agencies and businesses concerned with housing attended. It was a forum where the whole housing picture could be understood. It continued until 2009 and while the spirit of the forum was very positive, there was little action.

In 2010 \$40,000 was allocated by NCC to develop a housing strategy. The plan was that the TDC would match this budget and also be part of the strategy. However TDC did not come to the party and this idea fell by the wayside. In 2016 it was resurrected and 3 meetings were held with NCC staff and members of the community sector. However, no councillors attended, there was no representation of any other sector and with the election looming, there was a reluctance to commit council to anything.

We do not want the housing strategy to be eclipsed again. We feel it is vital to the health of the community to have a properly functioning housing strategy under the auspices of Council and community. Nelson has its own set of housing challenges and housing supply issues that may mean national legislation has to be modified.

NB. We do not think it is Council's responsibility to take over social housing. That is government responsibility and it should be placed fairly and squarely where it belongs. But we think that Council should be working closely with all agencies concerned with housing in order to facilitate processes and expedite problems they are facing. Housing is now a supremely difficult issue for many organisations and individuals. NCC must have the courage to confront these issues in partnership with all sectors.

Hence we suggest:

1.

- Establish a Housing Advisory Group involving Ministry of Social Development, the community sector - Nelson Tasman Housing Trust, iwi, Victory Community Centre, Tahunanui Community Centre, Voice Nelson, Nelson Residents Assn., Greypower-property developers and the Property Investors Assn. At least 2 NCC councillors and NCC staff should be represented on this group.
- Use this advisory group to consider priorities for housing in Nelson, to review all housing proposals in the light of priorities and to provide information to Council about what is happening with housing/tenants in Nelson. From this create a housing strategy.
- Incorporate the housing strategy into the 2060 Vision, the Long Term Plan and the Annual Plan. Budget for it.

2.

- Ensure that the HASHAA legislation and the SHAs are included as part of this strategy, rather than as parallel processes.

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- Ensure that affordability criteria (determined by advisory group) and community consultation are included in all SHA proposals
- Ensure that every development proposal - SHA or not - is approved or declined according to affordability and how it fits with the housing strategy/Nelson's housing priorities

NB. Please see information below re Queenstown and Tauranga Councils' policies re affordability for SHA projects. Please note Queenstown's evaluation criteria for housing proposals.

http://econtent.tauranga.govt.nz/data/documents/policies/housing_accord_policy.pdf

<http://www.qldc.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/Planning/SHA/Housing-Accord-and-Special-Housing-Areas-Lead-Policy-24.11.16.pdf>

<http://www.qldc.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/Council-Documents/2015-Full-Council-Agendas/3-Jun-2015/Item-1/Attachment-C-Evaluation-Panels-Assessment.pdf>

3.

- Develop a Warrant of Fitness for private rentals. This is particularly urgent in Nelson as 85-90% of the rentals are privately owned and therefore do not have to conform to any code. A rental housing survey carried out in 2015 by Voice Nelson found that more than 50% of respondents were paying more than 50% of their household income in rent, that mould, damp and condensation were endemic, that heating and heating costs were an integral part of the housing problem and that insecurity of tenure was a major worry for many.
- Establish a central point where people can go in their search for rentals

4.

- Continue to manage/fund pensioner housing
- Continue to contribute to emergency housing

5.

- Allow all sections of minimum size (determined by advisory group) to build a second small dwelling without R.C processes
- Waive fees and levies for construction industry where any affordable housing (determined by advisory group) is concerned.