

# REGENERATE CHRISTCHURCH

## Southshore and South New Brighton Regeneration Strategy Project Chief Executive's Report

**From:** Ivan Iafeta, Chief Executive, Regenerate Christchurch

**Date:** 29 March 2019

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### Purpose

1. The purpose of this paper is to:
  - provide a report to partner agencies on Regenerate Christchurch's review of the Southshore and South New Brighton Regeneration Strategy Project (the Project); and
  - recommend that leadership of the work required to address earthquake legacy and climate change issues in Southshore and South New Brighton transitions from Regenerate Christchurch to the Christchurch City Council (the Council).

### Background

2. Regenerate Christchurch was established under the Greater Christchurch Regeneration Act 2016 "to support a vibrant, thriving Christchurch that has economic, social, and lifestyle opportunities for residents, business, visitors, investors and developers."
3. In February 2017 the Regenerate Christchurch Board directed Regenerate Christchurch to lead "a collaborative process to develop an agreed response to the significant opportunities and overlapping issues created by the Southshore Residential Red Zone, sea level rise, existing hazards and loss of community resilience for Southshore and South New Brighton."
4. In October 2017 the Board approved the development of a Regeneration Strategy to plan for how the community and agencies would "adapt over the long term to the effects of climate change and sea level rise".
5. Project partners are the Council, Environment Canterbury, and Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu.
6. The objective of the Southshore South New Brighton Regeneration Strategy Project is to develop a Regeneration Strategy that sets out the short, medium and long-term approach to adaptation to sea level rise, climate change and the social, environmental, cultural and economic effects, together with a draft implementation plan. (Regenerate Christchurch, Statement of Performance Expectations 1 July 2018 – 30 June 2019.)
7. In March 2018, the How Team (contracted by Regenerate Christchurch) delivered a community engagement strategy developed through an innovative co-design process. This strategy was intended to support the delivery of the adaptive planning process based on Ministry for the Environment guidance that forms the basis of the Regeneration Strategy. An evaluation found that relationships between agencies and the community were strengthened through this process, and trust between agency and community representatives had grown. This co-design process has established a stronger platform and improved social license for the next phase of community engagement.

8. Initially it was intended that the Regeneration Strategy would be delivered by March 2018. However Regenerate Christchurch's 2017-18 Annual Report committed to a new delivery date of March 2019, in recognition that the length of time required to deliver the Regeneration Strategy had been under-estimated and some internal resources had been reprioritised to the accelerated delivery of the Ōtākaro Avon River Corridor draft Regeneration Plan.

## **Review of the Project**

9. On 12 November 2018, I instigated a review of the Project due to concerns arising from an evolving project scope and slippage of key deliverables impacting on progress and confidence. The purpose of the review was to gain an assessment of how well the project was performing relative to its objectives and to ensure that it was:
  - well positioned to deliver on the intended Project scope and objectives
  - able therefore to deliver on the undertakings made to the Southshore and South New Brighton communities; and
  - in a robust position given the rapidly evolving policy context in which central and local government, scientific research, and communities are receiving and responding to new information at pace.
10. The review included internal analysis of project documentation, a site visit to the Hub located in South New Brighton, analysis of community feedback to the Coastal Futures website, discussions held between December 2018 and March 2019 with the Regenerate Christchurch Board, senior officials and elected members representing Project partners, and community representatives.

## ***Community feedback***

11. During February 2019 Regenerate Christchurch received feedback from community representatives seeking a decoupling of 'earthquake legacy issues' from the delivery of the climate change-focused adaptive planning process.
12. A proposal to Regenerate Christchurch submitted by the Christchurch Coastal Residents United organisation on 11 February 2019 sought a decoupling of earthquake legacy issues and climate change issues with a series of proposals largely related to delivery of estuary edge protection. Similarly, on 7 February 2019 the How Team sought a refocusing on earthquake legacy issues and an email from Kim Money on 13 February 2019 reinforced the Coastal Burwood Community Board's strong preference for action on estuary edge protection. Lastly, the South New Brighton Residents Association wrote to Regenerate Christchurch on 13 February 2019 seeking immediate solutions to earthquake legacy issues as a critical precursor to engagement on adaptation.
13. There appears to have been limited scoping undertaken within the Project to define and agree the nature or scale of the 'earthquake legacy' issues meaning that Project partners do not have a shared understanding of these components of the work. Despite this lack of clarity, the Project scope included the "facilitation of resolution of legacy and immediate issues concerning the community where possible" but excluded the "design and implementation of remedial works or earthquake repair works or any actions".
14. An analysis of community feedback submitted via the Coastal Futures website undertaken by Regenerate Christchurch in January 2019 found that increased flood risk through estuary edge damage in Southshore and subsidence and erosion in South New Brighton were the most

frequently raised earthquake legacy issues and these were closely linked to concerns about property values, insurability and fairness given that communities such as Redcliff's and Sumner have engineered edge protection. This analysis indicates that some parts of the community see action on protection as critical in the short term.

### ***Discussions with senior officials***

15. On 12 February 2019, senior officials representing Project partners discussed initial review findings and critical success factors and acknowledged that sizing of the Project had been challenging due to the lack of precedents to reference. They agreed that:

- The current timeline for the Project is not achievable.
- Leading adaptive planning processes to respond to coastal hazards is primarily a local government responsibility
- Changes to Project governance are required to better support decision-making and socialisation with elected members.

### **Findings of the review**

16. The review recognised that delivery of an adaptive planning process is complex, with relatively few precedents in New Zealand, and has not been tested in a community with unresolved earthquake legacy issues.

17. The review found that:

- The original Project timeline did not sufficiently allow for community engagement or the decision-making processes of partner agencies and was unrealistic when compared with adaptive planning processes held in other locations. Based on experiences in the Hawke's Bay and considering the impact of upcoming local body elections, it may take 18 months to two years to conclude the planning process, with subsequent approval and implementation steps to follow.
- The Project scope integrated earthquake-legacy issues into the application of the adaptive planning process for coastal hazards, however community representatives are seeking urgent action to address increased flood risk through estuary edge damage in Southshore and subsidence and erosion in South New Brighton. These issues continue to create anxiety and uncertainty amongst residents and further analysis of the nature of these issues and the potential options for addressing them should be undertaken to inform the pathway forwards.
- There has been limited socialisation by Regenerate Christchurch with elected members on the probable outputs of the adaptive planning process, despite the likelihood that solutions may be costly and potentially precedent-setting for other coastal communities.
- Regenerate Christchurch's Project planning and scoping were not sufficiently developed and governance structures would require further review and strengthening to support and enable efficient and effective decision-making.

## Transition of leadership

18. As noted above, Regenerate Christchurch received consistent feedback from community representatives that earthquake legacy issues should be addressed in advance of the adaptive planning process.
19. It is my recommendation that the unique circumstances in these communities create a case for Christchurch City Council to undertake an options analysis to investigate interim solutions to increased flood risk through estuary edge damage in Southshore and subsidence and erosion in South New Brighton in advance of entering a longer-term adaptive planning process. The outcome of this review may not support the need for interim solutions, however it is recommended that this analysis is undertaken to establish an evidence-based position regarding the provision of interim works.
20. In light of the review findings, Regenerate Christchurch recommends that leadership of the work required to address earthquake legacy and climate change issues in Southshore and South New Brighton is now transitioned to the Council in recognition that:
  - The How Team (contracted by Regenerate Christchurch) delivered a community engagement strategy developed through a co-design process. This has strengthened relationships between agencies and the communities and established a stronger platform for the next phase of community engagement.
  - The timeline needs to be responsive to the pace of the community and the timeframes for the Council to make decisions on recommended actions. This recognises that it may take 18 months to two years to conclude the planning process, with subsequent approval and implementation steps to follow.
  - Responding to coastal hazards is a local government responsibility.
21. Once Christchurch City Council has determined whether interim works are required, or has identified long-term uses for the land, we could offer our continued support - including use of section 71 or development of a regeneration plan under the Greater Christchurch Regeneration Act.

## Next steps

22. Regenerate Christchurch staff have initiated discussions with the Council to agree the approach of transitioning the leadership of work required to address earthquake legacy and climate change issues in Southshore and South New Brighton. As part of these discussions a transition plan will be developed to ensure continuity in the technical and project management documentation that underpins the work in these communities. This includes a focus on stakeholder engagement to ensure that messaging to the community provides reassurance about the pathway forward.