

M P (MEL) SMITH CNZM

21 May 2015

The Mayor and Councillors
Christchurch City Council
CHRISTCHURCH

Register of Pecuniary Interests and Other Specified Interests

In accordance with my appointment to undertake the role of Registrar of Pecuniary and Other Specified Interests in respect of elected members as Mayor and Councillors of the Christchurch City Council, together with the Chief Executive and staff members of the executive leadership team of the Council, I now transmit documents that I believe contain a fair and accurate description of the necessary information provided to me by individual elected members and relevant staff members as at 31 January 2015.

I note that the process of Requirements and Return are modelled, with necessary modifications and additions, on the process required of members of Parliament as provided for in the Standing Orders of the House of Representatives. That process has been in place since 2006 and the 2015 report of the Registrar has just been published. The process put in place by the Council is designed to assist the good governance of the City of Christchurch, to contribute in meeting the disclosure obligations imposed on elected members as provided by the Local Authorities (Members' Interests) Act 1968, to strengthen public trust and confidence, and to improve transparency, openness and accountability of the Council, councillors and staff, and its business.

As I reported last year a significant modification to the Parliamentary register is the inclusion of an item "Council appointments". This is an important item that does not exist in the central government context. To ensure full and accurate disclosure, and to avoid confusion for readers of the Register, my report includes as an appendix a full list of Council organisations, irrespective of type and of whatever nature, showing Council appointments ie both councillors and staff to those listed organisations. This list has been provided to me by the Council and is believed to include all Council organisations where elected members, or staff, have been appointed to those organisations. The list forms part of the Register as Appendix A and includes persons who have been appointed to a Council organisation because of their position or particular expertise but who are not elected members or a member of staff.

It should also be noted that there is nothing in the Requirements, nor the subsequent Return, relating to donations or other support received by an elected member of the Council. Elected members are already required under the Local Electoral Act 2001 to provide a return of donations and expenses within a specified time after the election and those returns are required to be open for public inspection. In any event there has been no election during the period for the current Register.

As I stated in my 2014 report, but it bears repeating, I am not aware of any other local authority that has implemented a formal process such as this and appointed an independent person to manage and report on that process. Over and above that, the decision to require the chief executive and the executive leadership to also fulfil the requirements of the process, is a first in local government. Officers in local government exercise very substantial powers across a range of local government functions. The need for accountability and transparency at officials' level is certainly no less, and arguably greater than at the elected member level.

The ratepayers of the City of Christchurch, and all those who have contact with the Council, should receive confidence from the fact that this process is in place.

Appendix B is the form of Return for the Register of Pecuniary and Other Specified Interests required to be completed by members of the Christchurch City Council and relevant staff. This is the document, completed by all elected members and members of the executive leadership team, from which I have derived the information contained in the 2015 publication of the Register.

I record that the form of return was completed by all elected members and relevant staff in respect of required information as at 31 January 2015.

This transmission document, along with the documents making up the register, will be available for public inspection at the offices of the Christchurch City Council and published on the Council's website.

The 2014 publication included two appendices (B1 and B2) which set out the background and history to the development of the Register. These documents have not been included in the 2015 Register but are available on the Council's website related to the 2014 Register.



Mel Smith CNZM
Registrar of Pecuniary and Other Specified Interests for the Christchurch City Council