Report to the Policy and Finance Committee
from Steve Moate, Manager, Information Technology and Support Services

Preparation for the Year 2000 - Update

1. Purpose

To inform the Committee of further progress made to ensure that the Council's information technology and other systems are prepared for operation in the year 2000.

(This report updates the information provided in report 98.587)

2. Background

As indicated in report 98.587 a number of initiatives are underway to check both existing systems, and to ensure all new systems are not affected.

Over the last few months there has been increased awareness of, and interest in the issue by both the public and central government. A number of questionnaires and surveys have been responded to, in particular a major survey conducted by Local Government New Zealand in conjunction with Y2K Readiness Commission, the results of which have been recently released. The findings of this survey are to be discussed at a seminar organised by Local Government New Zealand on 31 March 1999, with this Council to be represented at the meeting by the Chairman.

3. Progress since December 1998

Since December 1998 Departments have continued to review their systems and develop contingency plans.

The Utility Services division has continued with their testing program and has now completed all of the most important components and the majority of the lessor important components. Loss of electrical power remains the biggest threat to providing water at fully capacity. Additional standby generator capacity is being procured for Te Marua Treatment Plant and plans put into effect made to ensure all other standby plant is serviced and all fuel supplies topped up.

The Emergency Management department has developed plans to activate their headquarters on 31 December 1999. They are collaborating with the Ministry of Emergency Management and Civil Defence to ensure that their communication systems will be available as a backup should other systems fail.

The Information Technology department has made preparations to test the computer network infrastructure over the Easter weekend. This will involve shutting down all of the computers and rolling the clock forward on all of the key servers and checking that they perform as expected.

The Finance department has received all of the updated software for the current FIS system which now needs to be tested.

Audit New Zealand has been commissioned to conduct a quality assurance audit of the procedures this Council has followed. This will be started in the week commencing 12 April 1999.

4. Outstanding Issues

The following is a list of the major issues still outstanding:

- The updated FIS software has to be installed and tested. This is being undertaken regardless of the fact that a replacement FIS system is scheduled to have taken over well before 31 December 1999.
- A detailed user requirements document for new laboratory software has been circulated to prospective suppliers. Proposals are scheduled to be received and a product selected by the end of May 1999.
- The Utility Services division will continue to develop and test their contingency plans for events such as power failure.

5. Follow up actions.

The issue of preparing for the Year 2000 will require continuous vigilance to make sure that systems that are currently compliant are not compromised by changes, and that all identified problems are resolved before 1 January 2000.

Specifically, the following actions are required.

- The Information Technology department will co-ordinate any follow up actions that are required after the Audit New Zealand quality assurance report is received
- The Finance department will complete testing of the existing FIS systems.
- The Utility Services division will be completing their program to identify, and test Year 2000 exposures and put in place the necessary contingency plans.
(e.g. Discussions are planned to be held with the relevant TAs to discuss alternative water pumping arrangements in the event of a major power failure.)
- The Emergency Management department will continue to develop its plans for activating their headquarters and communication systems.

6. Financial implications

As noted in my last report the cost of investigating systems for Year 2000 compliance is being met from departmental operating and maintenance budgets.

Based on the information available at this time there remain no significant financial liabilities from replacement of systems or equipment. However, the Council is incurring expenditure associated with putting in place contingency plans (e.g. standby power generation at Te Marua). Any such costs are being separately approved by the relevant Committees.

7. Recommendation

That the report be received and the contents noted.

Report prepared by: Approved for submission:

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