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Committee: Council
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Chairperson's Report

1. **New Year Greetings**

A Happy New Year to all, Councillors and staff. I hope that all Councillors and staff are well rested and ready to face the many challenges of the year ahead. It remains an exciting time for local government with the final passage of the Local Government Act 2002 late last year, and new transport legislation introduced to the House. For our Council completion of our first Long Term Council Community Plan and appointment of a new chief executive will be key priorities for the year, as well as implementing the requirements of the new Act.

2. **Higher Salaries Commission**

Councillors will have seen the proposed remuneration framework for local government released by the Higher Salaries Commission in mid-December. It is important to note that this is the final determination, and is not open for discussion. The only room for change is where a council identified an error in the data that has been used.

Councils have until 10 March to advise the Commission whether they will stay with their current “conditions of remuneration and expenses” until the 2004 local government elections or adopt the new “remuneration and expenses” proposed by the Commission.

Staff have commissioned Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu to update their job evaluation review used in the past to assess the value of our various councillor positions, in light of the Higher Salaries Commission determination. This will look at salary only options as well as salary/meeting allowance splits, and provide an independent rationale for the choices that Councillors will have to make. A specific report on this topic will be presented to the Policy, Finance and Strategy Committee meeting on 20 February.

3. **Local Government New Zealand National Council**

I have no matters to report at this time.

4. Local Government KnowHow Seminars

Local Government New Zealand will be running a three day seminar 5-7 March in Wellington on the Local Government Act 2002. Day One will focus on *Governance* and Days Two and Three on *Decision Making*. As this new Act is fundamental to our status as a local authority, I strongly recommend that all Councillors attend this seminar. Unfortunately one of the dates clashes with the programmed meeting of the Rural Services and Wairarapa Committee (6 March). I recommend that this meeting be moved to Monday 3 March.

On Friday 7 March the Seminar concludes with lunch at 12:30 PM so the Chief Executive Recruitment Sub-Committee meeting planned for that day will need to commence at 1:30 PM.

5. 2003 Asia Pacific Cities Summit, Brisbane

The 2003 Asia Pacific Cities Summit will be held in Brisbane on 13-16 April 2003. The summit aims to provide a forum for civic leaders and business representatives to form partnerships and share information on current challenges such as urban sprawl, greening, infrastructure and governance, as well as identifying those issues emerging as future challenges. I feel that it is appropriate that we are represented at this summit given the relevance of these topics to our Region and the relatively close proximity of the venue.

6. Recommendations

- 1. That the Report be received.*
- 2. That the meeting of the Rural Services and Wairarapa Committee programmed for Thursday 6 March 2003 be moved to Monday 3 March 2003.*

Report prepared by:

Margaret Shields
Chairperson