

## Submission by M Traves for LTP 2021 re Library – Museum

**A. Projected LTP Plans re Library:** I do not approve of the plan currently on the books to go back on the previous pledge by Council to build a new Library – Museum on freehold land within the town precinct. This is because:

1. Provision of a municipal library has long been a Council service (here and in other municipalities)
2. Council has a legal responsibility to ensure that archival material relating to the current council, and its forebears, is either held by Council so it's accessible, e.g. as part of a library research archive OR been sent to another institution which can do this
3. The current library is at breaking point in trying to provide these services.
  - the current building is too small and no longer fit for purpose
  - space is at a premium for books, digital resources and running short courses
  - there is insufficient space in the West Coast room for archival material which should be there, but which is still 'locked up' at the former museum building
  - and use of this room for non-research activities (JP's, short courses) is a problem for those wanting to work there
  - the library staff, well led by manager Liz Burke, do a sterling job but deserve better working conditions than those you are providing

**B. Archives:** It is not OK for Council to keep sitting on its hands regarding valuable archival material currently stored in the former History House Museum/County Council building and the old Harbour Board building. Council has taken advice on this but what are you doing about it? If there are plans in hand you should advise. There are people out here in rate-payer land who are both would- be-users, and who care about this.

**C. Pop-up-Museum:** the new site at the Regent is too small for adequate display or patronage from larger groups (bus tours, school classes) and to date the patronage has been low which is unsurprising as there are few tourists around and it's the start of winter.

**D. Other Comments:**

- a. Council could use forums it has for getting messages out much better than currently – the newsletter, Facebook, website. Progress reports and explanations about services like the Library or Museum – are much preferable to the full back page ads for the 'Art in the Park' event which did not happen. If you don't explain your decisions or actions properly to us, you're more likely to get knee-jerk reactions. Ratepayers don't want 'sound bites'..... tell us properly, even if it's not good news.
- b. By the same token I do not approve moneys Council keeps approving for making fancy approaches to town, pseudo art on the floodwall or party events in the town square, nor moneys wasted when Council does not take professional advice it pays for, then ignores it (as per the erosion debacle at Cobden).
- c. I also don't consider it necessary for Council to have a staff member assigned to running 'events' unless that term is widened considerably to one of marketing all council services, and an undertaking to improve patronage of under-used Council services, like the Runanga Pool.
- d. With Council's continual juggle to provide basic services to ratepayers without sending our rates bills through the roof, I do not see the organising and marketing of one-off street markets, arts and party events as an 'essential service'. Leave this to others, plenty capable out there.