

SUBMISSION

DRAFT ANNUAL PLAN 2014-15

FROM: Malcolm Deverson (Projects Manager) and David Inder (Chairperson)

Representing
Clutha Agricultural Development Board
2/37 Clyde Street
P.O. Box 149
Balclutha
Phone: 03 4183188



We are pleased to provide these comments on your Draft Annual Plan. We are continuing to work in the community on grassroots activities to progress the knowledge and capabilities of farmers to benefit their own communities and to encourage strong and engaged rural communities.

Our submission this year largely relates to - Community Leadership – page 13-14

We support the Council's intention to "*enhance and strengthen productivity, diversity and sustainability of Clutha's production sector.*" (page 13)

However, we believe that the three sentence explanation of the council's intentions to meet that goal is wholly inadequate. In the restructuring of the economic development organisations and contracts for economic development services that the council has undertaken in the last two years, the community has been promised "*more efficient and more effective*" district development. We believe that much more detail on the Council's contract with the Clutha Development Trust should be made public so that we can judge that assurance. Specifically we would like to know what proportion of the \$367,850 budget and also the \$52,550 one-off projects money (page 14) is to be spent on agricultural production efforts. Again the Council assured the community that they understood that agriculture was the backbone of the district. We believe that it is fair to ask for the evidence that this assurance has been acted upon.

We acknowledge the reference by the Acting Chief Executive (page 6) in the last sentence of his comments. We would like to see evidence that the Council is supportive of the sector that provides these "*solid economic gains*" rather than just reaping their benefits.

We asked in the submissions round last year in May that the \$409,600 sum in the economic development budget at that stage be accounted for in specific terms but one year later we are none the wiser.

We note that in the table on pages 13 & 14 there are performance measures and targets for 2012-13 and 2014-15. Does this mean that there is no accounting for the year 2013-14? We believe that the agricultural community would like some measure of accountability for the Council's expenditure in this area for that year.

It is clearly stated on page 89 that the "*majority of benefits*" should be "*apparent in the year of expenditure.*" Doesn't this mean that the Council's plan should tell us the benefits of last year's expenditure now?

In the Annual Plan document of 99 pages, which has such impressive detail as the actual roads to be sealed and their exact length, we cannot believe that Councillors and Council staff can be

happy with a three sentence explanation (along with a few very thin performance measures) for the use of over \$800,000 of funds over two years on economic development matters.

Rural Clutha District - page 51

We would like to make the point (again) that there will be concerns in the rural community at the statements about the down-grading of service to some farming ratepayers:

“In the longer term it may result in very low volume gravel roads no longer being maintained. In the future there is the possibility that low volume sealed roads will become uneconomic to maintain, and may have to revert to metal.”

We repeat the point made last year that rural roads in Clutha are just as important to the national economy as some more high-profile roads in our larger cities. We expect the Council to continue to make submissions to the funding authorities to this effect.

Thank you for your attention to these comments.

PLEASE NOTE: We do NOT wish to be heard in person in respect to this submission, but would be happy to answer questions before or after your process.



Malcolm Deverson



David Inder

12 May 2014