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The reports contained in this Bulletin are as presented at the May Board meeting by the individual named as author at foot of each article.

The only change made from the original submissions is change of type face to conform to the overall Bulletin format.

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President's Report

I would like first of all to offer my sincere thanks to all those who supported me for another year in the position of National President of Greypower NZ Federation Inc. and hope I can live up to expectations. As President, I represent all members of Greypower fairly and without favour.

My impressions, of the Greypower Federation Annual General Meeting held at College House Ilam University Christchurch, are a real mixed bag of pleasure and disappointment.

It quickly became obvious that a small section of the delegates present had a pre-planned agenda of disruption. This was made clear when at times well intentioned suggestions made by delegates, that did not suit the disrupters, were strongly challenged with a very loud "NO".

There were also times when the Chair and Secretary came under fire for decisions made by the Federation Board as a whole, and which both the Chair and Secretary were bound to carry out.

The election of Board Officers was also a case in point, where an orchestrated campaign was carried out, but fortunately the majority of delegates present saw the manipulations for what they were and voted accordingly. To observe two blatant acts of deliberate poor behavior was not what one should expect from mature people at an annual meeting, and reflected badly on the persons involved.

While democracy won out it has not necessarily been acknowledged by at least one candidate who has suffered defeat two years in a row. Since the AGM this person decided to take on the position of President and detail how a series of meetings involving the Labour and Green political party's would be set up concerning a "Home Care" survey, and it was his intention to "Chair" all meetings. The origin of the joint meetings happened as a direct result of the March Parliamentary "Lobby Trip" and I had requested Vice-President Roy Reid to arrange meetings for politicians to attend. This failed candidate also made a written statement suggesting that Labour would possibly fund the travel of the "would be meeting Chair" around the country from Northland to Southland.

What a disaster that would have been if it had come to fruition. At the recent AGM in Christchurch Greypower was roundly criticized by the Minister for Senior Citizens, Hon John Carter because it had been publicly announced that we were taking part in such a survey, and he accused Greypower of aligning itself with Labour. In television, print, and radio interviews at the AGM I denied this accusation by the Minister, many times. As a consequence, I believe the media clearly understand that Greypower does not align itself with any political party, but would assist any authorized body which was carrying

out work that would help the elderly and particularly the disadvantaged.

Let me make it quite clear, if the unauthorized meetings funded by a political party had taken place, then the public credibility of Greypower would have been severely compromised and the Lobby Visits to Government Members of Parliament would have been difficult to arrange.

I am upset because the President's authority was deliberately and secretly usurped, by an inexperienced Board member, and had direct political funding taken place I would have been seriously embarrassed as President.

On a more positive note I am extremely pleased to report that the publicity and media coverage of the AGM was unprecedented. There has never to my knowledge been so much interest in or coverage of Grey Power and its Aims and Objects in my time on the Board. This has continued since the AGM with various media contacting me on an almost daily basis to get the views of our organization on all subjects affecting our members and those who although not members of Grey Power are still affected by the conditions from GST, Home Care, Adequacy of National Superannuation etc. It was also very pleasing to have Violet McCowatt contacted by TVNZ and interviewed on Campbell Live and the Breakfast Programme re the so called service in service stations by not attending to customers purchasing petrol, diesel and checking tyres etc. The feedback from many associations is also very encouraging and in particular they appear to enjoy the Lobby Reports and state that Grey Power is a force to be reckoned with and is looking after the interests of our members

For a Board that has been criticised for not being media savvy we have not done too bad and it is great to have such newspapers as the NZ Herald and the Christchurch Press contacting us so often when our previous President often complained he could not get any coverage at all in either of those two publications.

In conclusion I would like to welcome returning Board Members and also those who are joining the Board for their first time.

Les Howard

Treasurer's Report - Kiwi Bank

KIWIBANK DEPOSIT SCHEME

Deposits in the scheme now stand at **\$45.7million** and the number of members' accounts has increased to

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1451-an excellent lift above the previously recorded figure of 1080 in September 2009. Commission received for the May quarter was another record at **\$10,808** and deposits increased by 5%. The commission rate will move to a higher level when deposits increase by another \$1million. Grey Power has now received over **\$80,000** in commissions since the scheme's inception and our relationship with Kiwibank is very highly valued.

Publicity relating to the New Zealand Government's possible sale of state assets has prompted the Board to pass the following resolution.

Here is the verbatim resolution that was passed.

"Grey Power acknowledges the need for Kiwibank to enlarge its capital base in order to expand its business.

For that reason Grey Power supports in principle a partial share float to which only NZ citizens and Corporations are eligible to subscribe. Grey Power's support is conditional upon Government retaining a 60% shareholding **in perpetuity**.

GP would like to see a portion of the share float reserved for existing Kiwibank accountholders with no shareholding to exceed 5% of the capital in public hands other than a cornerstone shareholding by the NZ Superannuation Fund."

Explanatory Note

The foregoing is not intended to foreshadow a departure from Grey Power's stance on asset sales. Rather, it is an endorsement of our desire to see Kiwibank become a stronger participant in the New Zealand banking system for the benefit of all New Zealanders, particularly as its profits are not remitted offshore.

Graham Adams - Treasurer

Zone Reports

Zone 1 Report

Zone 1 is progressing along satisfactorily at the present time with renewal of year subscriptions arriving daily. Also a number of new member enquires and applications has been very encouraging.

Far North has held it AGM and again has a fairly full committee which is pleasing. Kerikeri has also held its AGM and has increased its committee. Kaipara is meeting today but should be OK. Whangarei is holding its AGM this week and it looks like it might be pretty tight in getting committee members. Why is it that out of 400 or 500 members you cannot get anyone to assist. It is not only in Grey Power but in just about all organisations.

The Conference and AGM has come and gone with not much change at the top so we can be assured of another year of good leadership and progress.

The way the Government is going we will have plenty to do as they seem hell bent on taking money from seniors and not replacing it.

Most Associations are holding Mid-Winter dinners around this time and it is good to see.

I am sorry these notes are so short but health problems have beset this household just recently but everything is well on the improves.

Jack Kerr Zone Director Zone 1.

Zone 2 Report

No Report Available

Zone 3 Report

Individual associations from within Zone 3 have contacted me with two major concerns.

The first concern is the open hostility and character denigration of members of the previous Board carried out by a small number of delegates prior to and during the AGM. The general feeling being expressed, in zone 3, is that serious harm is being done to our organisation by these unnecessary activities. I have been left with a very clear unequivocal message that the Board should know that the behaviour of the few has left some associations completely disillusioned on the value of attending future AGM's.

There is real sense of frustration, at association level that certain individuals are so hell bent on point scoring and disruption tactics with pointless time wasting tactics, that the real issues never have a chance to be aired. If the objective of this minority is to destroy Grey Power they are certainly on the path to success.

I have been left in no doubt by Zone 3 that they want Grey Power to concentrate on our core issues and get behind our President and make Grey Power a unified voice.

The second concern is the lack of time given to general business items tabled at AGM's and have these debated from the floor.

It is felt that lack of time for general business items is taking away the opportunity for debate of topical issues.

There is a strong feeling that a set time should be set aside at future AGM's to allow general debate on issues raised from the floor. From Zone 3 perspective there are three issues tabled at the last AGM which they feel need to be debated.

- 1 The discussion document on election of officers
- 2 Independent review of the constitution at zone level
- 3 National Civil defence warning systems

Zone 3 requests the new Grey Power Federation Board to allow these general business items be tabled and circulated to allow general discussion of these and other issues tabled for associations to give feed back.

As one Association President put it to me, *"I came away from the Christchurch AGM with the feeling I had completely wasted my time, and could not even tell my association on what had been achieved"*.

Zone 3 associations recognise that not every one agrees or places the same importance on the issues that are raised from time to time. We do however, respect the right of associations to raise issues and have these debated on their merit.

The Assisted Care enquiry is being well supported within Zone 3, with two venues being selected one in Hamilton the other in Rotorua both meetings are to be held in July.

Some associations have cases identified, within our zone. These are being prepared for presentation at the enquiry.

Bob Thompson Deputy Director Zone 3

Zone 4 Report

This report is being written before the first Zone meeting after the AGM, which will be held on May 20.

One result of the AGM that has been well received by our associations is that the four incoming Zone 4 Board members include two of the five women now on the Board, an excellent step towards gender balance at Board level.

A matter the Zone will work towards resolving in the next couple of months follows the decision of one Zone 4 association to go into recess, and another for the same reason to seriously consider this action. Both associations have failed to get 'younger' members to take over association organisational responsibilities from

much older members who have done their bit and deserve a break. It is not of course limited to Grey Power, but as our organisation is about elder citizens, it is a very likely problem. Would it be wise for the Federation to consider ways of anticipating and avoiding this particular problem?

Our feedback suggests that a number of our associations have strongly supported the membership drive. Wanganui's efforts have been notable, and our treasurer will be happy to report on their final figures at the Board meeting. We feel the drive has been worthwhile, and would endorse further efforts in the future.

Our associations have discussed Care concerns at the last two Zone meetings, so it is not surprising that 6 associations will be hosting meetings on the Care tour, which begins this week. We appreciate the efforts of the politicians to put emphasis on continuing Care problems, and hope that our strategies following the tour will make good use of the material the meetings generate.

Roger Booth Zone 4 Director

Zone 5 Report

No Report Available

Zone 6 Report

Most associations report good attendances at their monthly meetings, and this is put down to interesting speakers.

It appears that there seems about a 60% subscription renewal across the Zone, after only one month into the new financial year, with the odd exception, such as Waimate, where the sudden resignation of their President left them in a turmoil, in spite of this they expect to get over this in time for their AGM in mid-May.

With the usual round of annual meetings, two Associations namely Christchurch and Waimate, are expected to have new Presidents in the near future.

While most associations report increased membership, it's hard to identify if it is totally down to the new membership travel competition. It's felt the fact that Grey Power had had a lot of media exposure, such as the AGM meeting, and some of the government measures people see Grey Power as a lobby group that can put the brakes on some of the mean spirited policies, such as Home Help Cuts, etc.

While not trying to be too negative, it has to be reported that some membership secretaries have found some difficulties in implementing the requirements of the new membership competition, and the following comments have come through on Association reports, such as:

"The membership form has confused many people.....many using it as an application form".

I think when a debrief is undertaken we get a good report from Associations membership secretaries. To coincide with the competition membership drive two associations namely Temuka and Timaru have been reaching into their smaller country towns, such as Geraldine and Rakaia, they are to be commended for this effort.

The Ashburton Treasurer Mrs Joyce Bush has recently received a certificate and medal as part of the New Zealander of the Year Award. Joyce received her award in the category of Senior New Zealander of the year.

Most Grey Power members in Zone 6 are concerned at the increased prices or cut back in services in all areas of their daily life. As well as the old perennial problems that affect people on fixed incomes such as Rates, Power charges, food and petrol charges, these have been joined by the pending Increase in GST, Emissions Trading Scheme (and the increase charges in petrol and power this will bring.) and the increase in the ACC component of their car registrations.

At a recent North Canterbury Grey Power meeting, members expressed concern at the demise of the local regional council E-Can (replaced with commissioners), and a motion was taken to write to the Minister of Local government, Rodney Hyde at this move, it was felt removing elected representatives like this was an infringement of local democracy, and it was stated that a Government could easily remove a council if it was seen not to be carrying out its policy or agenda.

At the request of the respective Presidents I have attended two Members meetings, namely Temuka and Christchurch.

Miles R Jackson 10th May 2010.

Zone 7 Report

Although the next Zone Meeting will not be held until next month I have attended some of the Association AGM's and it is pleasing to note that it would appear that there is

a real surge of enthusiasm and recognition in promoting the Grey Power activities throughout Communities.

It is quite noticeable that the Politicians are referring to Grey Power more in the Parliamentary debates in Parliament House these days.

Areas of concern that seem to be emerging are >> the ETS Scheme >>>> the Kiwi Bank Float >>>> GST >>>> the Foreshore and Seabed issue >>>> Health Issues >>>> Rest Homes >>>> the lack of "Common Sense" in some Govt. Legislation and the need for more Consumer input into legislation.

Dick Stark Zone 7 Director.

Portfolio Reports

Energy Report Part 1

New Zealand Wide Electricity Discount Scheme

Discussions with Genesis Energy concerning a monthly discounted electricity scheme have failed. The reason Genesis decided not to engage in further discussion was due to the complexity of the industry and the need for systems on hand to be able to deliver this type of solution.

Emissions Trading Scheme

Peter Rutledge prepared two draft letters for Greypower members to send to the Prime Minister and their local National Party Member of Parliament, protesting about the introduction of the Emissions Trading Scheme on 01 July 2010.

Parliamentary Visit

On the 16th March Molly Melhuish, Peter Rutledge Alister Stewart (Age Concern) and myself met in the Leader of the Opposition's Office, with the following spokesperson's Ross Robertson, Senior Citizens, Charles Chauvel Energy, Carol Beaumont Consumer Affairs, Chris Hipkins Assoc, Energy, and Hon Phil Goff.

A 'paper' had been prepared and circulated beforehand to the Labour Members. The following issues were covered:

Price Increases

Model Retail Contract

Transparency of charge components

Advanced Meters

Low Fixed Charge tariff

Consumer Representation

Select Committee Hearing

Peter, Molly and myself on the 17th March appeared before the Finance and Expenditure Select Committee Hearing and presented Greypower's position on the Electricity Bill

Complaint line

Following a luncheon, the Minister of Consumer Affairs and Deputy Leader Act Party, Hon Heather Roy launched "Complaintline" a new gateway website for disputes resolution and investigation agencies.

Molly, Peter and myself attended the function and had time with the Minister to discuss energy issues.

Unexpectedly met Roger Booth at the luncheon, and he informed us he was representing Kapiti.

Consumers are able to search this website either by organization or by category of complaint. They are then directed to the most appropriate service to assist with their issue, which they can then contact via phone or E-mail.

Energy Portfolio

With the circulation of the 2010/11 Board Portfolio List, now is an appropriate time to congratulate the incoming Committee and wish them every success in the year ahead.

The baton is passed to Roger Booth, knowing that in the past nine years the Energy Committee has developed from a one man band to a formidable team capable of fronting both Government and Industry Officials, and with access to expertise and a wide range of contacts within the energy industry.

Terry King Chair

Energy Report Part 2

The new committee is keen to head out of this Board meeting with a clear mandate of what the Board wants the incoming Committee to work on, and in these interests we want to report on three aspects.

Policy, vision and mission statements

The energy world and perspective is constantly changing. We feel that it is important for the Board to adopt vision and mission statements and policy on energy, so that our objectives are clear, and then to try to update these at least annually. Members of the incoming

committee have been working on drafts, these will be discussed by the committee at a meeting while we are in Auckland, and made available to Board members possibly at this meeting or soon after, so that the statements can be adopted at the next Board meeting. There are three parts to these documents

- Policy summary, with an emphasis on being user friendly.
- Policy, detailed particularly for those who will be working with them.
- Vision and mission statements, and paragraphs on background.

Nominations

The committee is keen for the Board to endorse two nominations.

The first is the nomination of Molly Melhuish for an Energy Excellence Award, awards annually made by the *Energy News*. : <http://www.energyawards.co.nz/awards>
The Editor has suggested to the committee that it would be appropriate to nominate Molly for the editor's award for outstanding contribution to the sector. The nomination would be for 'outstanding contribution to the sector, to recognise an individual who has made a long-term contribution, especially with regard to consumer interests and concerns.'

It is believed that a nomination from Grey Power would not only be worthy anyway, but would draw attention to the need to continue to highlight that the energy sector is not limited to the supply industries but must continue to give voice to consumers and citizens. The public nominations and award ceremony will draw attention to our continuing role in this sector.

The second is the nomination of Stephen Lewis for the new Electricity Market Authority Board.

Stephen Lewis has held CEO positions in large transmission companies in the UK and US, and is now a permanent NZ resident (Christchurch) seeking positions on relevant Boards. At present he is on Boards of Youth Hostel Association, Mainpower (the North Canterbury lines company), and chairman of the Board of Community Energy Action, the first of the energy trusts specialising in household energy retrofits and advisory services. Molly has met with Stephen, and confirmed that his greatest interest now is alleviating energy poverty. Steve's position is very similar to that of David Close, a

former Electricity Commission Board member, but David prefers not to be nominated as he is identified with Labour interests and would have no chance at all of being appointed. Steve is prepared to get together with David to discuss strategy for promoting our interests.

Roger Booth 10 May 2010

Grey Power Home Care Policy

With the emphasis being placed on Home Care discussion that is taking place at present I feel it is timely to reiterate the present Grey Power initiative, as the debate so easily could become fragmented, and be inclined to dilute the thrust we need generated for our Grey Power submissions to be activated.

THE FOLLOWING ARE THE SUBMISSIONS GREY POWER HAS PROPOSED.

1. That reductions in Home Care cease immediately. Grey Power believes that it is necessary to monitor the project to eliminate those abusing the benefits, but that all people on receipt of benefit reductions should ask for a re-assessment at which a family member or a trusted Mentor should accompany the Beneficiary. *If a satisfactory decision cannot be decided upon then the Grey Power*

Health Committee should be contacted with all details and be asked to Advocate.

2. That Electorate Members of Parliament observe and report to Government on the disharmony being caused in their Electorate Communities that the Home Care reductions are creating and support that both Government and Health Boards abandon that discipline as a avenue to save funds.
3. That Government investigate the huge wastage of funding that is occurring with Prescription anomalies at Pharmacies where it would seem possible to achieve greater savings than those under the Home Care Benefit reductions without the present unrest and confusion.

Dick Stark Health Convenor.

Remits and Rules

There is not a great deal to report from this committee so early in the year. All Zones can now send in any remits at any time to Head office and the committee while not allowed to alter any wording or anything can check the remit and if any alteration is required it can be returned to

the zone with a covering note advising of any alteration. The zone can then re-submit the remit for acceptance before the AGM Conference.

This is a big advancement on previous procedure whereas all remits had to be kept under lock and key and not opened until the committee met just prior to the conference after closing dates for remits. This did not allow any time for corrections and remits were often rejected by the committee because of this.

Our job as a committee is not to block any remit but to assist in ensuring that any remit is correct for inclusion in the remit paper.

If any zone requires any advice or information on any remit then they only have to email me and I will try and sort it out to your satisfaction

Please when making out any remit you thoroughly check it against ALL parts of the constitution to make sure it does not conflict with anything else. This has been a big bug bear in the past when a remit changes a rule only to find it contravenes with another part of the constitution.

Good luck with your thinking and make our job easier by being early with remits.

Thank you Jack Kerr Chairman

ACC

As all members know the ACC has been undergoing radical changes over the past 12 months [since the change of Government]. The reason given is that the ACC is facing insolvency and the brakes need to be put on their spending. I ask how can you be insolvent with \$11.4 reputedly invested?

A list of changes is set out for all to see.

* Motor vehicle levies increased.

* Physiotherapy subsidies reduced [charges now range from \$15:00 per visit to \$22.50 per visit. Some physiotherapist charge \$22:50 for the first ACC funded visit and then between \$15:00 and \$20:00 each visit thereafter.]. The average visit before the subsidies were reduced was \$10:00.

* A very large increase in the number of refusals of General Practitioners referrals for Injuries that are accident related.

* A reduction in preventative courses such as Tai Chi classes for Elderly persons who are prone to having falls. This was introduced and ACC reported a remarkable reduction in falls but no sooner that it was up and running successfully they eliminated the twice a week free classes and replaced them with a once a week class costing each person \$50:00 for a 16 week class which had to be payable at the commencement of the course. [This course was very successful as my own personal experience was my wife, who is disabled, averaged one fall through balance per fortnight and she completed a Tai Chi course of 20Weeks and since its completion has only had one fall when she tripped over raised board on a floor.]

* The tremendously higher number of patients who have been referred by an audiologist to the ACC being refused because in the idea of ACC they are now older and old age has caused the hearing loss. [In many cases it takes a considerable period of time for a hearing loss to become evident after an accident or exposure to severe noise levels at their place of employment thus it is some time later they are diagnosed.

* The removal of the automatic 6 monthly supply of hearing aid batteries for those persons whose hearing had been loss had been determined to be either as a result of an accident or a work related hearing loss. [Now a person has to complete an application form and forward it to the ACC to obtain batteries which is another hassle' for the patient].

These are just a few of the alterations to services and are by no means the total list. The ACC at the moment is crying poverty hence the raise in levies, however there has been numerous reports and/or rumours that this ACC has got money invested. Some \$11.4 billion is the figure being used.

In writing to the ACC Minister, Dr Nick Smith, requesting confirmation of this there has been complete silence from him with no reply, not even an acknowledgement of the letter. In order to ascertain if these figures are true contact was been made with Mr David Parker, the Labour Party spokesman on ACC and within 3 days I had received a telephone call and also an email confirming this. It can be asked why this money invested is not being used and why the secrecy about it.

If any Associations have members who are having any problems with ACC they are advised to contact Head office for assistance.

I still am of the firm belief that the ACC is being prepared for privatisation by this Government and we have to be one step ahead if we are going to oppose this. I see one remit to be put forward regarding this and I ask you all to support this.

Jack Kerr ACC Spoke Person

Superannuation

No Report submitted

Membership

This is my first report since being appointed to convene the committee and I am really looking forward to 2010-11 as the year we set the ball rolling towards 100,000 members. .

With Judy, Roger and Graham retained, we can really build on what we have started. We realize that it is the Associations at the coal face who are vital to membership and our job it to provide some tools for you to use in retaining and building membership.

The main thrust over the last couple of months has been the membership drive encouraging existing members to introduce a new member to Grey Power.

The 30 April 2010 membership statistics show promising results.

As at 31 December2009 there were 77993 financial members. As at 30 April 2010 there were 81,008 financial and un-financial members on the records. Assuming that all existing un-financial members will renew their subs, we are showing an increase of just over 3000 members since 1 January 2010.

From entries received for the promotion about one third of these have entered the draw.

At the conclusion of the promotion the membership committee will review the project and report to all Associations inviting feedback on how it went.

Next 3 months (Strategy).

The committee will be holding a meeting on Sunday 16th May (conference call) to discuss strategy for the next 3 months. Some possible topics will be:

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Survey all Associations on their activities,

How they involve their members,

The types of activities and how often

Their local methods of attracting members

Discount Books – Any benefit in amalgamating smaller areas to regional books?

From such surveys we will be able to collate the information and circulate a paper on membership issues, ideas and suggestions.

We are also looking at involving Associations more in our strategy by perhaps recommending various activities Associations may like to “try”

Errol Millar Convener Membership Committee

End of Month	Finan Memb	UnFin Memb	Total Memb	Increase Frm Prev	Increase To May
Dec 09	77,993		77,993		
Apr-10	42,446	38,562	81,008	3,015	
May 10	48,464	33,138	81,603	594	3,609
Dec-08	82,233		82,233		
Apr-09	39,444	45,743	85,187	2,954	
May-09	52,154	33,873	86,027	840	3,794
Dec-04	80,892		80,892		
Apr-05	37,877	48,241	86,118	5,226	
May-05	57,803	30,864	88,667	2,549	7,775
Dec-99	74,795		74,795		
Apr-00	28,554	47,064	75,618	853	
May-00	39,712	36,769	76,481	863	1,176
Increase over past 10 years					5,121

Office and Administration

OFFICE ADMINISTRATION

Capitation is steadily flowing in. Attached is a summary of membership over the past 10 years indicating patterns that occur at this time of the year and to assist with the assessment of the membership drive.

Lots of Associations are asking for promotional material for stalls and their meetings which all bide well for increased profile and membership.

PUBLICITY

We have enjoyed much publicity over the past few months with the media taking an active interest in our speakers at the AGM which saw us on TV a number of times and in the newspapers. Also, over the lack of service at service stations, we have had airing on TV 1 Morning report (a 10 minute interview in the studio), TV3 Campbell Live, Radio NZ, Radio Live, and Radio Kapiti to name a few. The media have also sought comments from both Les and Roy on various matters, and all this has resulted in many phone calls to the office from people interested in joining us.

SOCIAL SERVICES

The Social Services portfolio is still working on various matters that have already been presented by way of report to the board.

AIL

Use the AIL free insurance offer as a recruiting tool. Remember you only have to be a Grey Power member to receive this free cover.

MEMBERSHIP STATS

Violet McCowatt

Law, Order and Justice

It is a pleasure to welcome Killian de Lacy and Miles Jackson to this Committee for the coming year and I hope that we can make some progress towards making our Country a safer environment for our Members. My thanks to Ian Anderson, Alan McCulloch and David Holmes who were on this Committee last year for their contributions.

The Law Commission has now presented its long awaited report “Alcohol in our Lives: Curbing the Harm” to the Government. This report contains 153 recommendations for the Government to consider covering the following main topics:

A new Alcohol Harm Reduction ACT to replace the Sale of Liquor act 1989

Increase the Excise Tax to reduce consumption

Regulating promotions that encourage increased consumption or purchase of alcohol

Regulate advertising and sponsorship

Increase the purchase age to 20 years old

Strengthening the responsibility of parents supplying alcohol to minors.

Increase the personal responsibility for both unacceptable and harmful behaviors induced by alcohol

A reduction in opening hours that licensed premises is open.

Streamlining the enforcement of alcohol laws by a new Alcohol Regulatory Authority

Substantially improved and reorganized system for the treatment of those with alcohol problems.

If implemented this report could see a big reduction in the cost of Police time dealing with alcohol related crime as well as huge savings in the Health sector.

The Government has so far not shown a lot of enthusiasm in accepting these recommendations, but I can understand that these changes will need to be introduced slowly and be acceptable to the public. Alcohol has just as many problems as Tobacco so we may expect to see some change in the alcohol laws before too long.

A submission was sent to the Justice Department on "A Focus on Victims of Crime" discussion paper and we now await the release of the proposals that the Government is willing to put in place to support the victims of crime, many of those being Members of Grey Power.

It has been suggested that Grey Power support a move to have anyone who has been granted New Zealand Residency, either permanent or temporary, who is convicted of any crime be deported to the country from where they came from. Your views are requested before the Committee moves on this matter.

On 6 May the Minister of Justice introduced into Parliament a bill titled "The Electoral (Finance Reform and advance Voting) Amendment Bill which hopes to see an electoral system that is fair, workable and enduring in place for the 2011 General Election. Two other bills are to be introduced to cover the establishment of a new Electoral Commission and a bill to provide for a referendum on the MMP voting system. These bills will be referred to the Electoral Legislation Committee which has been set up to consider these bills.

R Reid Chair Law Order Justice and Licensing Committee

Local Bodies and Election Strategy

As is usual with local bodies there is never a dull moment.

In March the Government has sacked the democratically elected Canterbury Regional council called E-Can, this is a real worry as it seems there was a real agenda set that the farmers of Canterbury are thirsting for more water for their Dairy farms, and were concerned that E-Can was going to stand in their way to draw off what they want. After a government inquiry by Wyatt Creech that criticized, E -Cans efforts to have a so called water management strategy, obviously suitable for the Government.

At one of our Associations meetings in the area namely North Canterbury, the members expressed concern at the way the government handled this, and in particular

The sacking of E-can, and a motion was moved and seconded that a letter be sent to the Minister of Local bodies namely Rodney Hyde concerning this, the main point being ,

"That any government which acts in such a way permits economic imperatives to override democracy and environmental concerns"

This type of activity by a government is of concern.

The recent lifting by the government of the weight trucks (from 44 to 53) can carry on our roads, has implications for Councils to lift local body rates, as it is well known that many roads and bridges throughout the country will be unable to carry this sort of weight, hence the council maintenance bills will sky rocket in turn, this will be passed on to ratepayers. It also has safety concerns, as there are a number of roads around New Zealand that the existing weight of trucks is causing a number of accidents , namely around the Kaikoura area. The New Zealand Automobile Association has publicly stated they are concerned the lifting of the tonnage weights as regarding safety, and it maybe we should be in contact with them to look at some sort of joint interest in this situation.

Another concern that has emerged recently has been a bill going through parliament to give councils the permission to contract out water selling rights for 35 years, instead of the present situation of 15 years.

With the Local bodies' elections coming up later this year, your Local bodies portfolio members will be looking at a strategy for associations to question their candidates

for office. Some council are still talking double digit rate increases

which is a concern for many of our members. Associations input would be welcomed.

Magazine Committee

The March publication has been well received with good feedback in particular from AGM Delegates. Comment from various Associations around the country has also been positive.

All material for the June 2010 publication should be with PMP Print Christchurch by 21 May, with distribution of the Magazine commencing the first week in June.

Mike Blake is satisfied with copy he has received to date from Associations, and advises there will be good AGM coverage in the June publication.

Terry King

Lobbying Activities

No Lobbying visits have been initiated to date.

Report of 50 plus Committee

I welcome both Jan Pentecost and Killian de Lacy as Members of the 50+ Committee for the coming year as well as Pam Purdon outside the Board with her wealth of knowledge of this portfolio. I also acknowledge the contributions of the retiring members of last year's committee Roger Henneby and David Holmes.

The challenge in the year ahead will be to monitor the changes to the benefits paid to those under age 65 and the new rules that the Minister of Social Development Hon. Paula Bennett has placed on those unable to find employment while in receipt of a benefit. Although unemployment has fallen by 1.1% to 6% at the end of April, many will still face difficulty finding suitable employment as more seasonal workers look for suitable work as winter approaches.

In the paper Future Focus: a better off in work approach the Minister has stated that all benefits will be increased annually in line with the cost of living increase. This will be written into the Act. The abatement rates threshold will also increase from \$80.00 to \$100.00 for earnings per week.

New criteria for the Unemployed benefit will include work test obligations and beneficiaries will lose 50% of the Benefit if they fail to meet the work requirements.

For those receiving sickness benefits will now be required to provide more medical certificates and if assessed as being able to work part time (15 to 29 hours per week) will be required to look for suitable work. The invalids benefit will also be subject to more scrutiny as if able to some work will be required to and possibly placed on a sickness benefit. As the Minister is looking for big savings in benefit payments in the coming year it is going to be harder to receive benefits.

At the end of March I put a case to MSD to prove that a couple on unqualified spouse Superannuation could be worse off if the unqualified spouse remained on an Invalids Benefit.

In the example given the partner qualified for Superannuation earned \$13000 per year while the partner received an invalid's benefit. The couple is treated as being married and married rates apply.

Option 1 The couple receive non qualified superannuation at the rate of \$180.61 each = \$361.22 per week.

Option 2 The husband elects to receive full superannuation and the wife receives invalids benefit = \$244.71 NS and \$162.70 IB = \$407.41 per week

By receiving option 2 they are better off by \$2400 per year.

Option 1 the abatement rate of 70% applied for income over \$4160pa while in option 2 the abatement rate applies to the IB is 15% for income between \$4160pa and \$9360 and then increases to 35% for income over \$9361.

It is easy to see why Work and income have wanted to put the unqualified spouses from an invalids benefit to unqualified spouse Superannuation when one partner reaches age 65.

R Reid Chair 50 Plus Committee