

News

False hope claim over LIM reports

Outrage over council rejection

■ By Annabelle Dick

CHRISTCHURCH Coastal Residents United say the city council gave them “false hope” when agreeing to collaborate on altering coastal hazard information on land information memorandum.

Mayor Lianne Dalziel met with the group last month and asked them to work with the city council on changing hazard information on the flawed Coastal Hazards Assessment Report.

The group provided the city council with an alternative notation for LIMs after seeking legal advice but city council chief executive Dr Karleen Edwards rejected it.

CCRU spokesman Dr Darrell Latham (right) is outraged that the city council still won't listen to residents' pleas after they agreed to engage with the community.



UN SOUND: More than 18,000 homes along Christchurch's and Banks Peninsula's coastlines have inaccurate coastal hazard information on their property reports.

“It's an abandonment of the democratic process,” he said.

Instead, Ms Dalziel will write to the Minister for Local Government, Peeta Sam Lotu-Iiga, and the Minister for the Environment, Nick Smith, about the difficulties the city council's facing under legal obligations to include hazard information on LIMs.

Ms Dalziel wants a period of “safe harbour” for future LIMs notations nationwide, where

councils and residents could discuss notations before they were put on property records.

Dr Latham believes it was a ploy from the city council to collaborate with residents so media would get off their back.

“We feel we were somewhat set up because things were getting a little hot for the mayor. The collaborative discussion hasn't resulted in the council listening at all. We were excited and we felt it was going to be a sincere, genuine, collaborative

process but that hasn't proved to be the case,” he said.

The original Tonkin & Taylor Coastal Hazards Assessment Report found 18,000 coastal homes were at risk of erosion and flooding and that information has gone on homeowner's LIM reports.

The city council legally must put the information on property records and that has devalued coastal homes, hiked insurance rates and made it difficult to get mortgages.

The report was peer reviewed and the city council was urged to remove the information and undertake more research because it could be legally unsound.

The notations were tweaked, but it still states those homes are at risk from coastal hazards.

“How can Christchurch have faith in a chief executive and a mayor who fail to listen to what is being said in a peer reviewed report?” Dr Latham said.

All city councillors voted to seek a further peer review of the original report in a meeting last week.

LIM notations will be revised as new information is received by the city council, but hazard notations will remain on property reports until then.