

#### 4. BELFAST COMMUNITY NETWORK OFFICE

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Corporate Plan Output: Community Activities	

The purpose of this report is to seek funding to assist the Belfast Community Network to take up a lease on a building for the purpose of an office space for the Community Co-ordinator and other projects.

##### BACKGROUND

The Belfast Community Network began early in 2000 with a small network of groups involved in youth issues. As the network expanded it became obvious that lack of co-ordination was hindering the growth of initiatives within the Belfast community. A decision was made to legally incorporate and to employ a Belfast Community Co-ordinator. Funding for this position was sought for and obtained from a number of sources, including the Community Board.

The Co-ordinator began working in late January using her home as a temporary office space. This has not been satisfactory and attempts were made to obtain other premises.

##### CURRENT SITUATION

As opportunity has recently arisen for the Belfast Community Network Incorporated to be able to lease the old medical centre in Main North Road. This is a very useful site as it has a reception area, office spaces, storage and parking space. The Trust that owns the building is offering the Network the use of these premises at \$100 per week for six months, with a right of purchase after this time, or right of renewal. Meanwhile the premises will remain on the market as the owners are wanting to sell the building.

##### USAGE

Initially the premises would be used as an office space for the Belfast Community Co-ordinator. However, other options for future use include: a toy library, itinerant agency workers (eg Housing, Health etc) and office space for other workers in the area.

##### POSSIBLE FUTURE PURCHASE

The Executive committee of the Network is keen to investigate the option of purchasing the building. Consequently a rental period of six months would allow the executive committee to explore this option.

##### CONCLUSION

The Belfast Network is very strong and with the employment of a Co-ordinator there are high expectations for the development of programmes and projects in the community. The establishment of an office for this work will be of enormous benefit.

**Recommendation:** That an allocation from 2001/2002 SCAP funds of \$5,200 be granted to the Belfast Community Network Incorporated for a full years rental on the building.

**Chairperson's Recommendation:** That \$2,700 be allocated from 2001/2002 SCAP Funds to the Belfast Community Network, and that the rental be reviewed after five months with a view to funding the remainder of the years rental, if required.