

7. BELFAST COMMUNITY CO-ORDINATOR

Officer responsible Community Advocate	Author Jo Maraki, DDI 941 5410
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The purpose of this report is to update the Community Board of the activities and progress in the Belfast Community since the employment of a Community Coordinator.

The Community Coordinator was employed by the Belfast Community Network Incorporated and started work in January 2002. The vision of the Belfast Community Network Incorporated is to assist to facilitate greater community cohesion. This is pertinent in light of the continued urban growth and land redevelopment ensuring that community social services will meet the needs of the increasing population of the area. The Belfast Community Network Incorporated is made up of several groups in Belfast including the Residents Association, sports groups, Plunket, and churches.

The Belfast Network operates in a different way to that of other networks. For example, the Shirley Community Agency Network exists as a forum for the exchange of information and ideas, whereas the Belfast Network has as one of its functions the establishment and promotion of programmes and services in the Belfast area.

The purpose of the position was to facilitate and enhance existing programmes within Belfast by helping to co-ordinate and strengthen community organisations and identify opportunities for new initiatives.

The employment of a Community Coordinator has proven in a short timeframe to be a positive initiative and is becoming integral to the continued development and cohesion of social services in the Belfast Community. The activities achieved include:

- Working alongside the Belfast Residents Association in establishing a bi-monthly community newsletter. Lobbying for funding to assist with printing and delivery expenses. The newsletter is delivered to every home in Belfast.
- Managing an After School programme, which currently provides activities for thirty children two days per week. Assessing the need for an Oscar programme.
- Networked with CPIT Youth Workers Certificate Course to plan and staff a Youth holiday programme.
- Assist community groups and individuals to access available funding and resources e.g. Play centre and Community Pool.
- Until recently were able to offer space for Community groups to meet and also provided appropriate facilities for CYFS social workers to hold family group conferences. This is not possible at present due to current accommodation problems, but will continue when the network finds appropriate accommodation to work from.
- Organised Parenting Week meeting for IRD staff.
- Assisted with the setting up of the Older Adults Leisure Group.
- Worked alongside City Council Staff and the Belfast School to hold a Community Day – 23 November.
- Pivotal Point of contact for Government Departments and agencies who want to run clinics and programmes and need assistance in the Belfast area e.g. Breast Screen South to set up a mobile unit in a suitable location early in the New year and also Youth Aid Officers to find work for youth offenders in the community.
- Link information sources and resources with the wider Christchurch community.
- Continued and ongoing networking with the Youth workers collective, Whakawhanaungatanga (a support group for Maori women who work in isolation in the community), local schools and pre-schools, the Belfast Residents Association, churches, sports groups and service providers.

This is not an exhaustive list, however it gives an indication of the value of the employment of a Community Coordinator. The success of this position has been dependant on resources and financial assistance from the Shirley/Papanui Community Board, The Community Trust, COGS, J R McKenzie, The Lion Foundation, the New Zealand Community Trust, The Lottery Foundation, and Pub Charities.

Staff

Recommendation: That the information be received.

Chairperson's

Recommendation: That the staff recommendation be adopted.