

### 3. PROGRESS REPORT ON PROJECTS WITHIN THE YOUTH ADVOCACY PORTFOLIO

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The purpose of this report is to update the Committee regarding the following youth activities and programmes, all of which receive funding support from the Council:

- Youth and Cultural Development
- The Youth Night Safety Centre
- Youth Participation
- Police/City Council Youth Work Project
- Canterbury Youth Worker's Collective

Please note that an update regarding Council's graffiti reduction strategy (including the Legal Art Programme) will be covered by a separate report.

#### YOUTH AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Late last year a comprehensive evaluation of the Youth and Cultural Development Society Inc (YCD) was completed by the Creative Consultancy Network. The purpose was to review the services and activities provided by YCD, the relevance and effectiveness of these services to the client group, areas for improvement and the accountability of the project and services. It was important for the Council to know whether or not the funding the Council was providing was indeed meeting outcomes of the Council's Youth Policy and addressing current needs. Following are the concluding remarks from what is a very comprehensive report:

*"Feedback from both Christchurch youth and YCD stakeholders was favourable and supportive of the work YCD undertakes. Most stakeholder respondents identified that the youth sector YCD work with are "challenging". They also acknowledged that YCD are "filling a gap in Christchurch youth service delivery" and stretching a "limited budget" as far as they can to meet the needs of the youth.*

*Management systems and structures within YCD are basically sound, with many policies and procedures in place. Some areas for development have been noted and the organisation would benefit from their implementation. The organisational performance and the delivery of outcomes by YCD for the contracted services are recognised by the funders as meeting and, in some cases, exceeding the expected outcomes. Staff and management demonstrate a high level of enthusiasm, commitment and energy in working to develop YCD as a safe environment for youth to attend, grow and develop.*

*YCD is providing an important service to a particular sector of youth. There is great potential to deliver more but it is hindered by its resourcing which impacts not only on its physical environment but its capacity to provide a desirable workplace environment and therefore recruit staff. Certainly the nature of the funding cycle YCD operates under promotes the hand-to-mouth mentality.*

*Overall, then it can be concluded that YCD is currently providing a relevant, effective service that has the potential to develop further provided the funding levels and organisational standards and systems are maintained and developed."*

#### THE YOUTH NIGHT SAFETY CENTRE

The Youth Night Safety Centre pilot operated on Friday and Saturday nights 9 pm to 5 am from 15 February to 7 April 2002. The Youth Night Safety initiative was developed by the Police, the Department of Child, Youth and Family and Christchurch City Council. Young people at risk on the streets, in terms of section 48 of the Child, Young Persons and their Families Act 1989 (see attachment), were brought into the centre by Police. Staff at the centre assessed those brought in and then endeavoured to contact the young person's parent, caregiver or guardian to request that they collect them from the centre. In cases where no-one was able to collect the young person, he/she would be delivered home by centre staff and the opportunity would be taken to discuss the situation with whoever had the responsibility of caring for that young person.

A full evaluation of the project was completed by the Social Policy Team of the Council and the contracting group of the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services in June 2002. This evaluation recommended that "Police, CY&F and the Council establish an intermittent programme involving joint agency teams, which can run for short periods, targeting hot spots".

In response to this recommendation the three partners agreed to operate the Night Safety Centre for 16 weeks per calendar year (32 nights). However, one of the partners was unable to secure sufficient funding for this project to run for more than six weeks (12 nights). Whilst lobbying has continued in the background to have this extended, those organising the centre at grass-roots level proceeded and have had it operating intermittently over the current summer. Sergeant Peter Hegarty of Christchurch Police will prepare a full report regarding this current phase of the project. However, briefings given by Police to the Youth Advocate have indicated that on most weekends numbers have been light.

## **YOUTH PARTICIPATION**

Two meetings have been held between the Library Unit, Leisure Unit, Youth Advocacy and E-Council to discuss synergies regarding the establishment of a Youth Website. It is likely that Leisure and Advocacy will work together (with guidance from E-Council) to establish a website concentrating on youth activities and events and which also has the facility to provide young people with the opportunity to:

- register their interests on a youth database
- provide online submissions on council activities
- participate in relevant polls

Although we still have detail to sort out, it is expected that work on the website will be underway this financial year.

Another youth participation initiative involves the setting up of a youth advisory group (or groups). An initial meeting was held with a wide range of interested people from the community last year, and a youth forum is planned for April. Information collected by the Youth Advocate indicates that such groups are more effective when they sit outside the Council structure but with clear linkages to relevant Council staff and/or committees. It is expected that the April forum will progress this further. Work on this issue has been frustratingly slow and this is primarily because new people are continually being introduced to the process who may be enthusiastic but do not necessarily have much background knowledge regarding participatory processes involving youth and/or Council structures. This has meant traversing the same ground over and over with little real progress being made. It is important that even if full agreement is not reached at the April forum, we still move ahead with a format to trial. It is unlikely that full agreement will ever be reached, and this must not hold back a channel for youth participation any longer.

With regard to the Council's seeking community views processes, it is pleasing to note a significant increase in project team's willingness to consult with youth. Of particular help has been the "Have Your Say" website which is regularly checked by the Advocacy Office. When new projects are listed, Advocacy staff contact the project team to find out whether or not they need assistance to ensure that young people have the opportunity to have input.

## **POLICE/COUNCIL YOUTH WORK PROJECT**

A progress report on the Police/Council Youth Work Project was completed by Sarah Wylie (Social Research Consultant) in May 2002. The summary from Sarah Wylie's report reads:

*"The Christchurch Youth Work Project is now a well-established project, operating from a sound management base, clear roles, a strong team focus and with good support systems for staff in place. The project appears to be making a real difference for youth at risk in Christchurch, and working well towards achievement of its objectives. With the addition of a competent Maori male youth worker to the team it seems likely that the project could do even better in its performance, although its performance at present is sound given the current levels of resourcing.*

*The project is a rare example of what can be achieved through a true partnership between a government agency and a local authority. The greatest challenge facing the project in the near future is the impending relocation of the youth worker office base. The new base needs to be one which facilitates good communication between the youth workers and the Police Youth Liaison Officer, while retaining the accessibility of the youth workers for their clients."*

Recently discussions have been held between the project's managers and a Pacific Island organisation which is looking to employ at least one youth worker to work specifically with Pacific youth involved in criminal behaviour. The work outputs expected are in line with those of the workers on the Council/Police project. As a result of these discussions the Police and the Pacific group have jointly applied to the Crime Prevention Unit for funding to have two additional workers on the project. These workers would not be Council staff, but would work alongside our staff with the same police supervisor. Whether or not the funding application has been successful should be known by the end of March 2003.

#### **YOUTH WORKER'S COLLECTIVE**

Funding has been set aside to evaluate the impact of the Council's funding of the salary of the Youth Worker's Collective Co-ordinator. The Collective has been informed of this and is very accepting of the need for this to be reviewed as part of the Council's random auditing process.

#### **Chairman's**

**Recommendation:** That the information be received.