

10. COMMUNITY SERVICES TEAM

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BACKGROUND

This report is to inform the Community and Leisure Committee on some of the main activities that this team has been working on for the eight months since I have been Team Leader. As a reminder, the Community Services Team (CST) consists of Mayor's Welfare staff, the Early Learning Centre staff of Tuam, Pioneer and QEII, management of community facilities, the Children's and Youth Advocacy Team, the Community Development Advisers (situated out in the Service Centres), and the metropolitan based staff of Michael McNabb, Sally Latham, Penelope Goldstone, Jenni Marr, and Andrew Donaldson (Akomahi project).

INTERNAL RESTRUCTURING

The internal restructuring has split this team away from the secretariat and service centre staff and placed it in with the Recreation, Leisure, and Housing Services.

An internal restructuring of the CST recently saw Penelope Goldstone take on a new role of Team Leader of the Community Development Advisers (CDAs) which has meant a higher level of professional support to the CDAs and a reasonable number of direct reports to me.

KEY TASK

One of my key tasks is to integrate the work that this team does and to ensure that there is sound rationale for the services we provide, whether it be by way of funding grants or staff time in supporting a community agency. To this end we have been working on the following:-

1. We have had four CST workshops to build the CST. As part of this we have examined roles, looked at how we work together and co-ordinate our work, research, training, and overall professional development.
2. Participated fully in the consultation processes around developing the social stream of the LTCCP.
3. This team, primarily Michael McNabb, has been heavily involved in the Funding Review. This Review is not about who the Christchurch City Council should fund. It is primarily about restructuring the Funding systems the Council has so that they are far simpler and transparent. This working group has made good progress and as a result is in a better state to deliver on the social priorities that are identified.
4. As a result of the LTCCP consultation work, and the Community Mapping work, which will be printed this month, work can finally begin on pulling this together into a document that gives us a clear steer on how to operationalise the information the Council has collected. This document, which for now can be called "Social Development Priorities and Action Plan" (SDPAP), will provide all decision makers in the Council, whether staff or elected members, a template to help prioritise and rationalise the decisions that are made.

Whilst an enormous amount of consultation has already occurred, a limited amount of further consultation will take place with staff and elected members, including Community Boards. The SDPAP document needs to have 'buy in' by elected members so that they feel this document is worthwhile. It should also provide the steer for what focus our external collaborative partnerships should have.

SDPAP should be a document that is developed and updated yearly. Therefore, it is expected that the third year production will be significantly more sophisticated than this first production.

A diagram on how SDPAP will look like is attached to this report.

The aim of this exercise is for the Council to use its resources primarily on high priority social issues in a way that is monitored for effectiveness. This process should simplify decision making and should provide a more transparent and consistent process for decision making. The first draft should be complete by January 2004.

OTHER WORK/PROJECTS WITH CST

Aranui Renewal

CST is putting in significant resources to help Aranui Community Trust complete tasks so as to build the capacity of the Trust.

Disabilities

Sally Latham has used existing work done by Mary Richardson to advance the issues of Disability within the Council. In consultation with Disabled Persons Assembly, a Disabilities reference group is being formed and staff within the Council will be worked with as to how they access and use this group to ensure the Council is doing all it can to meet the needs of the disabled.

Pacific Island Peoples

Sally Latham is now working with other Council staff on ensuring that the milestones that were agreed between the Council and the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs are being worked on.

Early Learning Centres

Are going well and QEII has just had an excellent Education Review Office report. There have been several staff vacancies that took several attempts to fill due to a lack of experienced childcare workers.

Mayor's Welfare

Has been consistently busy and its work reflects the national trend that the poorest amongst us are struggling even more. Considerable work has gone on in its advocacy role especially with power companies and how it manages clients who are in debt.

Akomahi

This has been staffed by Andrew Donaldson throughout this year and an evaluation of Akomahi has been commissioned to consider its effectiveness, sustainability, and future.

Multi-Cultural Adviser

Has been working inside and outside of the Council to raise the profile of ethnic groups within the City. Jenni Marr has co-ordinated the Intercultural Assembly meetings and has been working with different ethnic staffing groups on celebrating their culture within the Council. Two other tasks have been networking and building up contacts within the ethnic communities, and with the Policy Unit beginning to develop a strategy on cultural diversity.

He Oranga Pounamu

Have been working with Gilbert Tauroa, Business Development Manager, on how to work collaboratively on Maori social issues. One project we are exploring at the moment is a joint effort to employ two Maori Community Development workers. This project is in its infancy and I will report on this further as the idea is progressed.

Children's and Youth Advocacy

Have reported to this Committee this year. However over the last month Robyn Moore has been negotiating the re-establishment of Legal Art. This is in the process of being negotiated now and will be fully operating again early next year.

Toolbox was a successful development by the team which is a complete kit any Council staff can use to help them consult with children.

Another new initiative is that a group of young people, NZ Association for Adolescent Health & Development and Children & Youth Advocacy are working on developing a youth lobby group to help the Council and other organisations access youth issues, views, and concerns.

There are many other projects this team is involved in, but a significant one is the Collaborative Plan for Christchurch Youth 2003-2006, which is a major collaborative effort across eight state agencies and the Council. This is a model of what we will be trying to achieve around other key social needs indicators as we try and work in a more focussed and integrated way.

SUMMARY

This report as stated at the beginning was intended to give you a brief summary of the range of activities that are going on within this team. I have not included the myriad of projects that are going on through the Service Centres and Community Boards with the Community Development Advisers. These are as important and these staff provide valuable connections with local networks.

I look forward to a seminar with this Committee in the New Year where we go through the draft Social Development Priorities and Action Plan.

Chairman's

Recommendation: That the information be received.