

9. OTAUTAH MAORI WARDEN INNER CITY PATROLS

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The purpose of this report is to advise on the finalisation of the above activity as requested by the Chairman.

BACKGROUND

The Council at its meeting on the 12 December 2001 undertook to enter into a contract with He Oranga Pounamu for the provision of Maori warden services to undertake patrols in the inner city area. This was originally on the basis of a three-month trial to examine how the proposal would operate and to enable He Oranga Pounamu to investigate the possibility of other stakeholder support for continuation of the service over a longer period. Due to delays in arranging the contract and in arranging sufficient numbers of Maori wardens to undertake the contracted work the trial commenced in March 2002. It was possible to continue the trial period for a further month and a report on the activities was presented to the Committee in July 2002.

The report, which was accompanied by a report from He Oranga Pounamu on the activities, came to the following conclusion.

The trial has been useful in determining what kinds of activities occur in the inner city during the night hours and it appears that the presence of the Maori wardens has been received favourably by local businesses. To a large degree it has been a learning process for the Maori wardens but, from the reports, they have provided a useful service in dealing with some of the problems that have occurred in this period. Again, from the reports, it appears that there are continuing problems in the inner city, which need to be addressed, and the presence of the Maori wardens may be useful in providing support for both the Police and Youth Workers for at least some of these. As noted above, however, the continuation of this service for the whole year would require additional funds to that allowed for currently in the budget.

The Committee resolved that up to \$30,000 be provided to extend the Maori wardens inner city trial, and that future funding be considered in the community funding review. They also recommended that the Council give support to He Oranga Pounamu and the Maori wardens in their approach for financial support from iwi katoa and other organisations including inner city retailers. The Committee's recommendation was adopted by the Council at its meeting on 25 July 2002.

A new contract was entered into covering the provision of wardens for inner city patrols on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights for up to five hours between 8pm and 6am on each night. In general the hours were between 10pm and 3am but the extended hours were included to enable some flexibility if needed by the circumstances. Otherwise the services to be provided were similar to those of the first contract. The services included undertaking patrols of the inner city in conjunction with Police and Youth Workers and keeping in touch with security officers employed at the bus exchange. They undertook the transport of youth to their homes in acute need situations if that was required and appropriate. They maintained a presence at particular locations such as the bus exchange and the public toilets in Cathedral Square as required and dealt with behavioural problems, as may be required under the provisions of the Maori Community Development Act 1962. A further report was received on activities of the Otautahi Maori wardens, covering the period since the commencement of the trial to the end of October 2002. That report also covered some indication of the additional voluntary activities to the community that were provided, and also showed that the contract had led to both employment and training benefits.

DISCUSSION

The contract, which it is understood to be one of the first in the country, commenced in March 2002 and continued to the end of March 2003. The Committee, when agreeing to the extension, considered that this was a worthwhile activity, as the presence of uniformed personnel tended to have an effect on perceptions of safety in these areas during the night hours.

Due to the type of operation, obtaining objective measures of the success of activities providing a presence in public areas largely operating in a preventative role was difficult. That this applied to the Police as well as other security personnel was noted. In the case of the Maori wardens they do have legal powers under the Maori Community Development Act 1962 and as such can provide these in regard to dealing with Maori. However, as has been pointed out, the mere presence of uniformed personnel tends to have an effect on perceptions of safety in these areas during the night hours. Inspector Dave Lawry, Central City Controller, New Zealand Police, at a meeting of the Regulatory and Consents Committee, mentioned this as an important factor in inner city safety. He also stated that the revitalisation of Maori wardens patrols, together with other projects, was assisting in the reduction in real and perceived risk of crime in the central business area. The local business community had previously advised it welcomed the involvement of the Otautahi Maori wardens as a positive initiative. Regrettably they, however, appear not to be prepared to support financial contributions towards the service some saying that rates should *cover this sort of thing*.

At the time of the renewal of the contract He Oranga Pounamu had advised that they were seeking to source support from the Ministry of Social Development due to the employment it has provided for a number of persons previously without sustainable employment, but stated this was unlikely to occur until early in 2003. It was the intention of He Oranga Pounamu to work towards the establishment of a collaborative framework of stakeholder support for the longer term. Such collaboration would have fitted well into the objectives of facilitating collaboration between public, private and community agencies and supporting crime reduction and public safety.

Some changes occurred in the management of the Otautahi Maori wardens organisation in 2003 and support for undertaking a contract through He Oranga Pounamu was not continued. Hence no further contract, nor extension of the previous one, was undertaken after the completion of the contracted period. Attached is a final report from He Oranga Pounamu regarding the contract.

CONCLUSION

The concept of employing Maori wardens under contract for inner city safety patrols was innovative and to a large degree successful. It certainly indicated that the lower key approach improved some perceptions of safety in the area, despite there being initial criticisms of the concept. Some other services within the central city area, increased Police activities together with the central city liquor ban, possibly has had some effect on perceptions of safety and lessened the need for additional services at this time. Funding for the "Joint Venture Partnership for Security Patrols with Police" ceases in the 2003/04 year and no provision has been made for any such funding in the 2004/05 budget.

Chairman's

Recommendation: That the information be received.