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Corporate Plan Output: New Brighton Foreshore	

The purpose of this report is to inform the Council of problems associated with the behaviour of groups of youth in the vicinity of the new New Brighton Library and to seek its support for proposed initiatives to alleviate the problem.

The New Brighton Library opened in the Pier Terminal Building on 24 July 1999. Response to the library has been overwhelming, during the first five and half weeks the library had 100,000 visitors, issued 51,000 items and enrolled 859 new members.

The library is extremely happy with the initial response. However, we have identified some problems which are/will have a detrimental effect on other customer groups and the amount of patronage the library receives.

### **Identified Problems**

- Skateboarding outside the front of the building. This is causing damage to the tiles and raised gardens and the skateboarders are intimidating some customers (young and old) and being a general nuisance.
- Hand rails are being used as bike stands and a 'hang out' zone for pre teens.
- Tagging.
- Unruly and inappropriate behaviour within the library including damage to furniture and headphones etc.

### **Interim Solutions**

- A security guard is patrolling the library in the weekends and for the school holidays
- Short term banning: 5 young people have been banned in the past week
- Contact with the Community Constable, Gary Bombay
- A meeting with Paul McOscar (Community Development Adviser) and Mary Devonport from the Pegasus Project to discuss the issues

### **Possible Solutions**

The solutions listed below are suggestions only and need investigating fully to decide whether or not they are appropriate:

- Visits to schools to promote the library service and its relationship in the community.
- Focus groups to ascertain what kids want from the library, what they like about the library, whether skateboarding areas/chess would be used, establishment of a code of ethics. Paul McOscar and Mary Davenport have offered to train library staff to facilitate groups and be involved
- Staff training to cope with inappropriate behaviour
- Build relationship with young people including the code of ethics (long term)

- After school programme (monthly)
  - a community wage worker would need to be involved
  - a range of games dependent on focus group response
- Holiday programme which meets the needs of these young people
  - needs to be in place by Christmas
  - include skateboarding workshops
- Skateboarding workshop
- Setting up large chess board outside
- Interim skateboarding equipment for use at certain times in the basketball area.

The last three activities would need a person to co-ordinate them. A community wage worker is a possible solution. Some of the activities are outside the library's objectives, however, we believe that a good solution needs to be implemented for the benefit of all our customers.

### **Council Support**

The library is seeking the Council's support to resolve these problems which are impacting on other users of the library. In the short term we are requesting funds for more regular use of a security guard than has been funded through the library's normal operational budget. The cost for this for the period from October to June is \$20,000. This cost is calculated on the basis of having a security guard after school, during the school holidays and in the afternoons on the weekend.

Medium and longer term solutions will need to be found. Three possible solutions are:

- Investigate permanent skateboarding in the vicinity
- Provide interim skateboarding equipment
- Provide outside chess game

The library is seeking the Council's support and funding to help resolve the problem. Alternative solutions are welcome.

- Recommendations:**
1. That the Council address the special security and management issues affecting the new New Brighton Library.
  2. That the attention of all affected Unit Managers be drawn to the need for furniture in public open spaces to be designed to deter graffiti and other inappropriate activities.