

5. ELDER CARE CANTERBURY “WINTER WARM PROJECT”

General Manager responsible:	General Manager Community Services
Officer responsible:	Lesley Symington, Community and Recreation Unit Manager
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PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. At its meeting of 19 July 2005 the Spreydon/Heathcote Community Board requested that an officer's report be prepared on the Eldercare Canterbury's "Winter Warmth" Project and the application for \$10,000 from each community board to cover emergency assistance for 200 people city wide.
2. The report will discuss and clarify the following:
 - (a) The reasons behind the "Winter Warmth Project", with particular reference to the needs of older people living in different wards.
 - (b) Options for Council funding, including the option of interest-free loans to individuals for home modification, etc.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

3. Lesley Keast, Community Board member – Riccarton/Wigram and Bill Chudleigh, Project Manager of the "Winter Warmth Project", presented an overview of this initiative to the Board on 19 July 2005, with an application to this Board's discretionary fund for \$10,000. Every community board has been asked for the same amount of funding, the total being the sum of \$60,000. The monies are to fund emergency assistance for 200 older people experiencing chronic illness across the city.
4. This report aims to include perspectives from the major stakeholders and outlines the history and context of the project.
5. The "Winter Warmth Project" has actively worked from May 2005, though was meeting prior to this time (first mooted in February of this year). It arose from concerns expressed by the Community Stakeholders Group. This group is part of Eldercare Canterbury, an initiative of the Canterbury District Health Board, and was established in 1997 to integrate and improve health services for older people in the region.
6. The group is made up of representations from the medical profession, community providers, community care providers, residential care and key stakeholders from the older person's community. The focus of Eldercare Canterbury is twofold. The first was to create positive change for older people's health by the use of projects, and the second was and is to establish and maintain strong working relationships between the providers themselves and then between the providers and the community.
7. Eldercare Canterbury also has several sub groups that meet and feed back to the main forum regarding the specific issue they advocate and promote on. They include the Transfer of Care (Discharge Planning) and a Working Together for Winter Group. A project already completed is the preparation and promotion of postcards for people over 65 years of age as a reminder to take flu vaccinations and to stay warm over winter.
8. The "Winter Warmth" Project was given \$5,000 Metropolitan Funding in September 2004 to pay for a project manager for a three month period this year. Bill Chudleigh was employed in this role and set up a steering group to oversee its activities.
9. The committee has three main goals:
 - (a) To identify and support 200 older people this winter who have immediate need identified due to their age, chronic illness and living alone, to achieve a warmer home environment.
 - (b) Over the next 12 months to have 300 older people achieve with support a warmer energy efficient home.

who are 70 years and over, live alone and experiencing chronic illness. There are an additional 12,180 people living in partnerships aged 70 years and over where at least one partner experiences chronic illness.

**These figures were obtained from the Planning and Funding Unit at the Canterbury District Health Board.*

FINANCIAL AND LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

18. There are no legal considerations.
19. Financially the Christchurch City Council has already contributed \$5,000 to the Winter Warmth Project to finance a co-ordinator from the Metropolitan Community Development Fund.
20. There is a current request for \$10,000 from each community board – the total being \$60,000.
21. The above figures obtained from the Canterbury District Health Board clearly indicate that those older people who are identified needing significant support from the Winter Warmth Project are located fairly evenly across the city. It therefore is appropriate for this project to seek Council funding at a metropolitan level. This is a city-wide issue that implies a city-wide response.
22. The option of the Council making a funding contribution by way of an interest free loan to individuals also is not tenable for two reasons. This would mean that the Christchurch City Council was providing public money for private/individual benefit. After discussions with Age Concern and Community Energy Action, the group of people identified are not in a position to repay any sort of loan due to their poverty levels and crisis situation. Community Energy Action reported that even with significant subsidies there were a significant number of people, again in the same category, who could with assistance budget day to day but due to major financial constraints were not able to make financial arrangements in any long term capacity.
23. The Community Board has delegated authority to spend funds with an “absolute discretion over the implementation of the discretionary funding allocation of \$60,000 (**subject to being consistent with any policies or standards adopted by the Council**). Given that application is being made to the six Community Boards this project is clearly a metropolitan wide initiative. It is inappropriate that it be considered by each Community Board as it is outside their delegated authority to spend their discretionary funds on this project because it is not consistent with Council policy. It is recommended that it be referred to the Metropolitan Community Discretionary Fund in the new funding round closing on 31 August 2005. If this is unsuccessful then the Winter Warmth Project makes application to Council in 2006 under the Annual Major Grants Funding Scheme.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Community Board:

- (a) Decline the \$10,000 application as it is outside the Board's financial delegations.
- (b) Advise the Winter Warmth Project to seek Metropolitan Community Discretionary Funding in the new funding round closing on 31 August 2005.
- (c) Note that if this is unsuccessful then they be advised to apply in 2006 under the Annual Major Grants Funding Scheme.

CHAIRPERSON'S COMMENT AND RECOMMENDATION

This is a new initiative for a vulnerable group in our community. The Board has not had any previous opportunity to support such a significant initiative for the elderly. Despite the reasons for the application to be referred to the Metropolitan Community Funding, there is good reason to treat this application as an exception. The timing for the funds is urgent as we are now approaching the end of Winter. Also, it is one of the agreed Spreydon/Heathcote Community Board's roles (no. 2.6 from the Boards "Outcomes, Measures and Roles 2004/07" to "support child, youth and elderly based initiatives using current research". The relevant outcome is "to ensure local people's needs are being represented especially . . . the elderly".

For discussion.