

5. TE WHARE O NGA WHETU INITIATIVE UPDATE

General Manager responsible:	Group Manager, Community Services
Officer responsible:	Catherine McDonald, Acting Community & Recreation Unit Manager
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PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to update the Board on developments relating to the Te Whare O Nga Whetu initiative, and Board project funds which had been allocated to the Community Development Worker for Maori based there.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. In July 2005 the Board allocated \$15,000 of its Project Fund to Te Whare O Nga Whetu. \$7,500 towards the wages of the Community Development Worker for Maori and \$7,500 for programmes run by this worker.
3. An independent evaluation of Te Whare O Nga Whetu Trust's operation was completed in December 2004 by the Council on behalf of the Council and the Trust. The evaluation highlighted the value of the programmes and activities that took place at the Centre, however, a lack of clarity between governance and management responsibilities, plus a need to develop specific goals and objectives within action and business plans, was also identified.
4. A project manager was contracted to implement the recommendations of the evaluation. The Trust Board acknowledged the difficulties they were experiencing and were more than willing to support this process.
5. Prior to this contract the Trust Board did not meet regularly and other than daily activities in the centre, the organisation was virtually on hold. Monthly Board meetings were reinstated and roles and responsibilities across the whole organisation reviewed.
6. In collaboration with the Trust Board and staff, procedures were developed to bring a more systematic approach to planning, budgeting etc. New Board members were sought and discussions held with key stakeholders regarding the future of the Centre.
7. Over several months it became clear that despite people's individual commitment to the vision of the trust, the organisation's functioning was not markedly improved. It appeared that practices which had developed during times of difficulty had become entrenched and there were personality conflicts which hindered progress.
8. At a meeting in October 2005 the Trust Board was presented with a summary of the situation which they concurred with. After some discussion a motion was passed to close the Trust and legal advice sought to ensure due process. This completed the project manager's contract with the Council, and Te Whare O Nga Whetu recruited a person to take them through the steps involved in closure.
9. The project manager has recently been re-engaged to scope alternative means of providing similar services to the community once Te Whare O Nga Whetu has vacated the buildings. In line with this Te Whare O Nga Whetu have vacated the buildings as of 31 January 2006.
10. The evaluation recommended the continued operation and delivery of programmes and the employment of a Community Development Worker for Maori. The intention is to find an organisation which has a Maori kaupapa and suitable management structure to deliver these outcomes.
11. This process of evaluation and closure has resulted in \$15,000 of Board money being under utilized for this financial year. It is not envisaged that this will be needed this financial year so it is hereby returned to the Board for reallocation.

FINANCIAL AND LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

12. In July 2005 the Board allocated a total of \$15,000 as a top up for a Community Development Worker for Maori position based at Te Whare O Nga Whetu. Due to the closure of this organisation, this sum is not needed this financial year.

BACKGROUND ON TE WHARE O NGA WHETU

13. An evaluation of Te Whare O Nga Whetu Trust's operation was completed in December 2004. While reinforcing the need of such a centre for the local community, a number of issues were raised and these formed the basis of the objectives of a project which commenced in 2005.
14. The Council contracted a project manager to work with Te Whare O Nga Whetu to implement systems to improve the organisation's overall operation and also explore issues of sustainability. The Trust Board acknowledged the difficulties they were experiencing and were more than willing to support this process.
15. Prior to this contract the Trust Board did not meet regularly and other than daily activities in the centre, the organisation was virtually on hold. Monthly board meetings were reinstated and roles and responsibilities across the whole organisation reviewed. In collaboration with the Trust Board and staff, procedures were developed to bring a more systematic approach to planning, budgeting etc. New board members were sought and discussions held with key stakeholders regarding the future of the centre.
16. Over several months it became clear that despite people's individual commitment to the vision of the Trust, the organisation's functioning was not markedly improved. It appeared that practices which had developed during times of difficulty had become entrenched and there were personality conflicts which hindered progress. Community people did not want to become involved in what had come to be known as an organisation in turmoil. Some of the staff and board were obviously distressed by the situation and introducing changes was not possible.
17. At the October board meeting the Trust Board were presented with a summary of the situation which they concurred with. After some discussion a motion was passed to wind the trust up and legal advice sought to ensure due process. A meeting was held with John Shingleton (lawyer), Willie McGregor (Chairman of Trust), Sandy McLean (Project Manager) and Penelope Goldstone (Christchurch City Council). This completed the Project Manager's contract with the Council, and Te Whare O Nga Whetu recruited a person to take them through the steps involved in winding up.
18. The Project Manager has recently been re-engaged to scope alternative means of providing similar services to the community once Te Whare O Nga Whetu has vacated the buildings.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Board receive, for reallocation, the sum of \$15,000 of unspent 2005/06 Project Funds from Te Whare O Nga Whetu into its Community Initiatives Fund.

CHAIRPERSON'S RECOMMENDATION

That the staff recommendation be adopted.