

9. NEW BRIGHTON COMMUNITY GARDENS FUNDING REQUEST

General Manager responsible:	General Manager Community Services, DDI 941-8534
Officer responsible:	Community Support Manager
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PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to request the Board to allocate funding from its 2006/07 Discretionary fund to assist the New Brighton Community Room and Gardens with their operating costs to the end of this financial year.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. Community demand for, and use of, the New Brighton Community Room and Gardens (NBCRG) has led to the need to employ another worker for the garden. This was done using an ACE (WINZ subsidised) worker. Unfortunately the expense of this extra worker along with smaller than anticipated grants from funders resulted in the rapid depletion of funds for the organisation.
3. While the ACE worker is no longer employed, the coordinator's hours have been split between the coordinator's position and a garden supervisor position to better meet community needs. Funds have been secured to keep operations going until the end of March/beginning of April 2007. This group is now seeking financial support from the Board to cover operational expenses from April to June 2007. This funding will provide time and space to apply for and source further funding avenues and will enable the organisation to progress to the next financial year and subsequent funding rounds.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4. The Board allocated \$15,000 from its 2006/07 Project funding to the New Brighton Community Room and Gardens.
5. The Board has a balance of \$20,603 in its 2006/07 Discretionary fund.

Do the recommendations of this report align with 2006-16 LTCCP budgets?

6. Yes.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

7. The Board has delegated authority to make this decision.

Have you considered the legal implications of the issue under consideration?

8. As above.

ALIGNMENT WITH LTCCP AND ACTIVITY MANAGEMENT PLANS

9. Links to LTCCP Outcome of a City of Inclusive and Diverse Communities, page 100 of the LTCCP, level of service under Community Support.
10. The project assists in contributing to several of the Board's Objectives.

Do the recommendations of this report support a level of service or project in the 2006-16 LTCCP?

11. As above.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIES

12. Social Wellbeing Policy.

Do the recommendations align with the Council's strategies?

13. Social Wellbeing Policy.

CONSULTATION FULFILMENT

14. Not applicable.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. The Board allocate \$7,400 from its 2006/07 Discretionary fund to the New Brighton Community Room and Gardens.
2. Council staff continue to work with the organisation's committee to source further funding options.

BACKGROUND

15. The New Brighton Community Room and Gardens (NBCRG) have been operating for two years since November 2004. Based in Rawhiti Domain, the NBCRG was established to provide a safe, supportive, welcoming and inclusive environment for the community to work together with gardening as the focus. Originally set up under the umbrella of the New Brighton Project, NBCRG became incorporated on 9 September 2005.
16. The NBCRG initially employed one staff member, the coordinator, for 25 hours per week and worked on building up their volunteer pool. Over the last year the NBCRG have been developing their financial systems and actively seeking funding from a variety of funding sources.
17. As community use and demand for the gardens has taken off, an ACE (WINZ subsidised) worker was employed in June 2006 to help cover this. Currently they have around 30 volunteers contributing approximately 40 hours per week. Securing of the necessary funding unfortunately has not kept pace with the growth of the gardens due to unsuccessful funding applications. The extra drain of the additional worker and lower level of income has seen funds depleted and considerable stress placed upon the committee and staff to both keep the gardens open for the community and manage its operation. The majority of the workload has fallen on the coordinator and the committee treasurer who has subsequently resigned.
18. In an attempt to address these issues, the coordinator's 25 hours were split between the coordinator's position and a garden supervisor position to keep the gardens open to the community for 13 hours per week. However, the community continue to pop in outside of these hours and the coordinator still requires more hours to complete their position, particularly in the interim absence of a treasurer. Ideally the garden supervisor would be employed a minimum of 18 hours per week and the coordinator 25 hours per week. Both workers have been voluntarily working over their paid hours already. Hours of employment and opening will continue to be addressed by staff and committee alike with Council staff support.
19. Funds currently on hand would see the gardens able to remain open until the end of March 2007. Funding is now being sought from the Board's Discretionary fund to keep the gardens open a further three months to the end of the financial year in June 2007. This would allow the coordinator time to source further funding and would get the organisation through to the new financial year's funding. The estimated cost of keeping the project operational for this time is \$7,395.
20. The New Brighton Community Gardens have been a successful Board supported initiative to date and are at an important stage of their development as they formalise and stabilise their staffing and management to better meet community needs. The gardens offer a unique place and space for the community to gather as individuals and groups providing social, recreational, therapeutic and educational opportunities through their workshops, music and movement, gentle exercise, produce stall, cups of tea and gardens. Partnerships exist with many other groups including PEEEPS and the premises are also used by the Residents' Association, the New Brighton Gallery and the New Brighton Project. Should the New Brighton Community Garden project not be funded the consequence may be the untimely closure of the project.