

1. POTENTIAL SOCIAL HOUSING PARTNERSHIP WITH NGAI TAHU AT REHUA MARAE

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The purpose of this report is to confirm to the Council the status of discussions with Ngai Tahu Property Group Ltd (represented by Tony Sewell) and Rehua Marae custodians (represented by Terry Ryan) with regard to a possible housing partnership at Rehua Marae, Springfield Road.

BACKGROUND

Over a number of years officers have been asked to explore options for a social housing partnership with Maori, on Maori land at Nga Hau E Wha National Marae. These discussions culminated with a meeting with John Bond, Nga Hau E Wha Manager, in late 2003. At that time, John Bond expressed the opinion that the type of housing envisaged would not work at Nga Hau E Wha, and so that conversation came to an end.

At about the same time (late 2003/early 2004) an approach to the Council from Terry Ryan, representing Rehua Marae, was made through Councillor Anderton. An initial meeting was held at the Civic Offices, where Terry Ryan tabled tentative plans for a rebuilding programme at Rehua, including the potential for additional rental housing.

The Housing Subcommittee asked for a site meeting at the Marae and this was followed by a further meeting at the Civic Offices to discuss potential development options and how the Council and Housing New Zealand might assist.

At this point, Ngai Tahu Property Group became involved with Terry Ryan. This involvement has included an offer to engage Alun Wilkie Architects to explore development options/potential costs.

Over this period, the offer of a housing "partnership" with the Council was loosely expressed by the Housing Subcommittee, but never defined.

STAFF DISCUSSION WITH NGAI TAHU PROPERTY GROUP

Once Ngai Tahu Property Group became involved in the conversation, the Facility Assets Manager outlined to Tony Sewell how a partnership with the Council might look, as follows; and on what basis:

1. That the Housing Subcommittee has no delegated powers to act – rather it acts as an advisory body to the Council.
2. That the Council was currently exploring a number of social housing partnership and that any partnership with Rehua would be subject to affordability (in terms of the Council's Housing Asset Management Plan and levels of service) and prioritisation by the Council.
3. That the most likely option for the Council would be subject to a long term peppercorn lease of land being made available, and the Council being granted a 50% suspensory loan from Housing New Zealand, the Council providing the balance 50% from its Housing Development Fund.
4. That the Council would manage the tenancies with some tenant selection input from the Marae administrators.

A similar housing partnership to that outlined in 1 to 4 above exists between the Council and the Beckenham Housing Trust with the exception of Housing New Zealand, which was not offering suspensory loans to local authorities when The Beckenham partnership was established.

There has been some suggestion that Ngai Tahu might consider funding the whole development with probable support from Housing New Zealand, although such a project would hardly constitute a partnership with Council.

THE WAY FORWARD

Officers need to have some direction from the Committee on where to take this partnership opportunity should Ngai Tahu come back with a proposal. Clearly any proposal would need to be considered in terms of cost contribution by the Council particularly against other priorities for use of the Housing Development Funds and other partnerships.

Committee

Recommendation: That the proposal of a housing partnership at Rehua Marae be supported in principle and that staff work with Terry Ryan and Tony Sewell to complete a feasibility study.