

## 12. CHRISTCHURCH CITY COUNCIL GRAFFITI OFFICE

<b>General Manager responsible:</b>	General Manager Community Services 941-8986
<b>Officer responsible:</b>	Community Support Manager
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### PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval for the establishment of a Christchurch City Council Graffiti Office.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. This report provides information relating to the development of a Christchurch City Council Graffiti Office which will provide a collaborative, structured, city-wide approach to graffiti vandalism.

### Demand (Service Gap - High)

3. The incidence of graffiti around the city has grown significantly in the last two years in particular, and projections for the current year indicate a continuation of this trend. Graffiti removal statistics for the period 2004/05 through to July 2007 indicate a significant increase in the Christchurch City Council contract costs for the removal of graffiti vandalism (fig.1). The increased expenditure number correlates directly to the increase in tagging hits removed by external contractors.

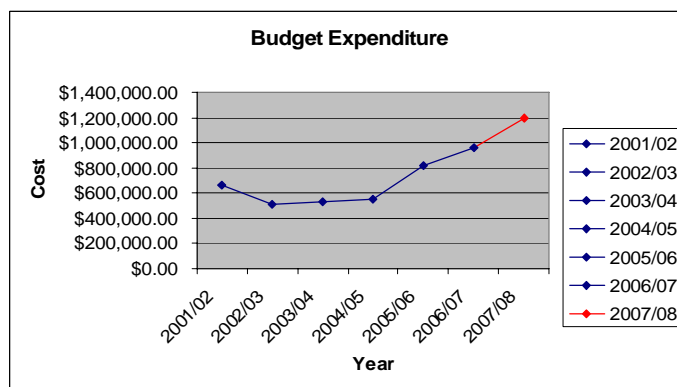


Fig 1.

4. The successful Graffiti Vandalism Pilot Project was initiated in 2005 implemented 2006 by the Phillipstown Strengthening Communities Advisory Team with the support of Council staff, the Hagley/Ferrymead Community Board, and CCC Litter Strategy Implementation team.
5. The initial brief for the project was as follows:

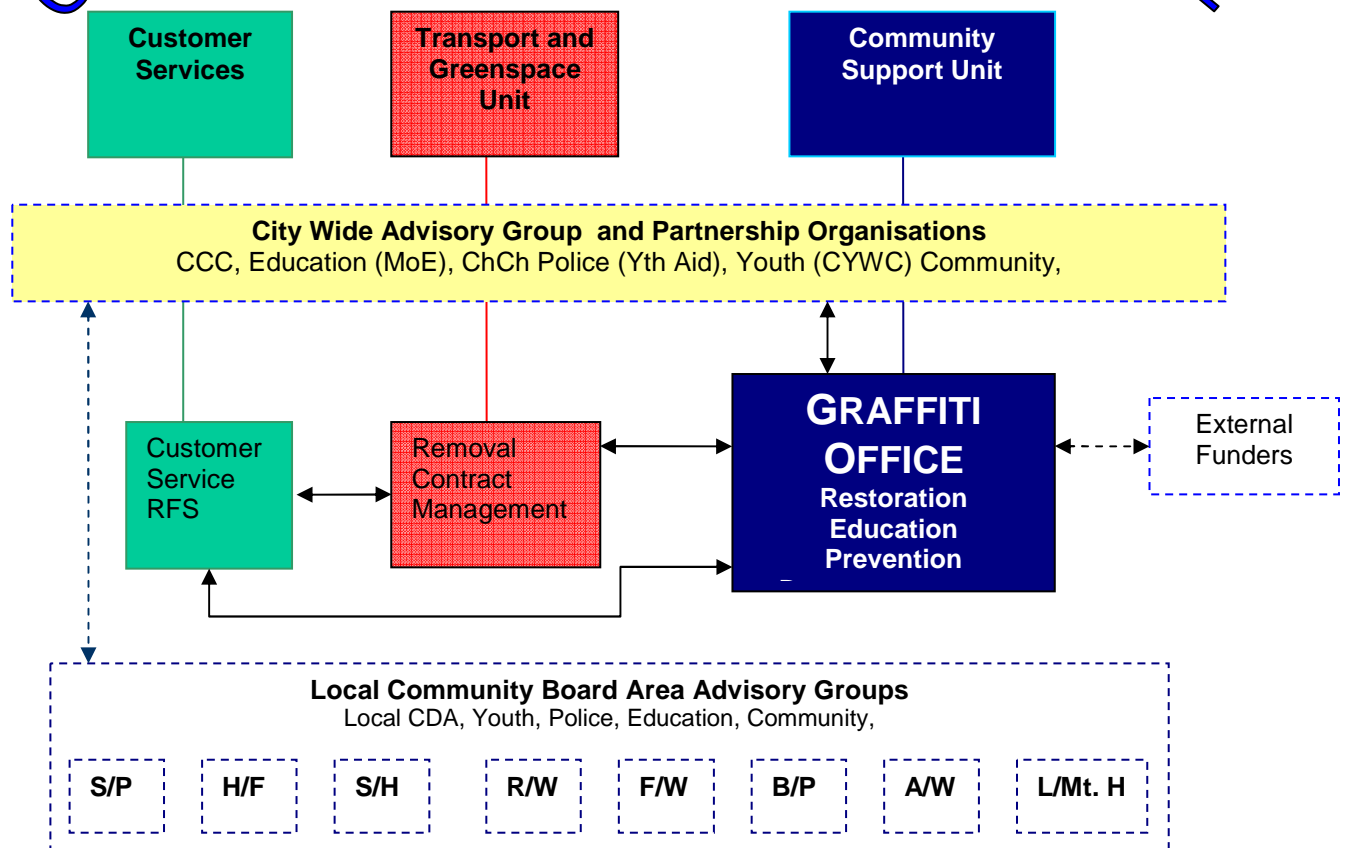
“It is envisaged that using a strengthening communities approach, with the support of an advisory group, will ensure that all aspects relating to graffiti and graffiti vandalism will be addressed, appropriate strategies developed and gaps identified, and provide opportunities for existing services to work together towards positive outcomes. This project will take into account restoration, education and prevention. It will be developed as a long term, sustainable, collaborative and holistic city wide initiative.”

(Phillipstown Strengthening Communities Project Brief 2006)
6. Initial investigation during the planning stages of the project recognised that the role of a lead agent was a key component for achieving the project's success through collaboration between those agencies which are involved in removal, restorative justice and legal art programmes.
7. The Phillipstown Strengthening Communities Team Graffiti Vandalism Reduction Project was presented to the Litter Strategy Implementation Team and Community Development Manager in 2006 and received approval to proceed. Funding for the implementation of the pilot was accessed through the Community Support Unit and Transport and Greenspace Unit.

8. Through development of reduction strategies within the pilot project it was recognised that consistency of removal by volunteers was a key component. The pilot project team with guidance from Council staff, developed Christchurch City Council Volunteer Registration and Removal Guidelines which were subsequently released in May 2007.
9. The release of these guidelines, along with a rise in tagging across the city, prompted a significant increase in the number of communities across the city requesting support to develop localised volunteer removal programmes. Currently there are 15 areas across the city supported by more than 184 community members volunteering their time for graffiti clean up.
10. To date the project has seen some 36 young people referred to the project, completing 1,325 hours of community service. This intervention project has resulted in seven young people being supported into employment/apprenticeships along with three returning to school.
11. As the Phillipstown project neared the end of the pilot phase, it was clear to the project's advisory group that the implementation of the pilot, and coinciding increase in graffiti vandalism across the city, had propelled the project city-wide almost from the outset.
12. The identified need for the Christchurch City Council to take a strategic lead in further developing and implementing the strategies is supported by the Phillipstown Community Centre Trust, the Project Advisory Group, the Hagley/Ferrymead Community Board and Council staff within the Community Support and Transport and Greenspace Units.
13. The proposed Christchurch City Council Graffiti Office Development follows:



# CHRISTCHURCH CITY COUNCIL



14. The primary aim of the proposed Christchurch City Council Graffiti Office will be to reduce the incidence and severity of graffiti
15. The main goals of the Office fall under three main components incorporating:
  - Restoration**  
Including: graffiti clean up along with data collection, collation and management.
  - Education**  
Including: resource information for customers both internal and external.
  - Prevention**  
Including: restorative justice programmes along with a range of other collaborative prevention strategies.
16. Local and city-wide advisory groups will provide direction and support for the project. These advisory groups will incorporate representation from stakeholders (with professional knowledge and expertise) from the following: Community, Education, Youth, Police, Christchurch City Council, Community Board and Business Community.

#### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

17. The total CCC expenditure for contract removal only for the period 1 July 2007 to 30 December 2007 is reported to be \$596,159.89. Remaining at status quo it can be expected that the current trend forward to the end of June 2008, indicates that the total contractor spend to be in the vicinity of \$1.2m. It is important to note that this cost does not include costs associated with volunteer programmes, or costs by the individual residential or commercial customers.
18. In February 2008, the Government set up The Graffiti Vandalism Contestable Fund which is an allocation of three year funding made available by the Ministry of Justice's Crime Prevention Unit to New Zealand territorial authorities. The purpose of the fund is to assist in the reduction and/or eradication of graffiti vandalism including tagging and etching (hereafter referred to as graffiti vandalism) in New Zealand. The value of funding is up to \$200,000 (GST exclusive) each per annum for the three-year period 2008 to 2011. Projects must meet at least one of the following objectives to be eligible:
  - Develop a coordinated proactive approach that raises awareness of the negative effects of graffiti vandalism and the legal alternatives to such vandalism through educational programmes (including graffiti art programmes) and material (such as pamphlets, DVDs and road-shows etc).
  - Develop a strategic regional or cohesive local approach by working with police, local authorities, government agencies, public utilities and community groups to form partnerships to target local or regional graffiti vandalism.
  - Contribute in a significant way to an existing comprehensive, coordinated local approach.
19. Total project expenditure will be \$500,000. Funding will be sought from the following sources to get the graffiti office underway:
  - Transport and Greenspace: \$150,000 (part of T&G 2008/09 graffiti budget) to be transferred to Community Support Unit on the Council's approval in June 2008.
  - Ministry of Justice: \$200,000 per year for three years (pending results of an application due for consideration in May 2008).
  - In addition, staff will approach NZ Rail and Orion and others as further potential funding partners to secure the remaining \$150,000 required.
20. Should these approaches be unsuccessful, this initiative will be submitted for consideration for the 2009/2019 LTCCP budget.

#### **Do the Recommendations of this Report Align with 2006-16 LTCCP budgets?**

21. Yes

## LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

22. No

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

23. Yes

## ALIGNMENT WITH LTCCP AND ACTIVITY MANAGEMENT PLANS

24. The proposed Office aligns with the following LTCCP Outcomes:

- A safe city
- A city of inclusive and diverse communities
- A city of people who value the natural environment
- An attractive and well designed city

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

25. Yes

## ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIES

26. **Strengthening Communities Strategy**

Goal 7

Enhance community and neighbourhood safety

**Safer Christchurch Strategy**

Goal 3 – Enhance safety from crime through preventative and supportive actions

**Policing Strategic Plan to 2010**

Encouraging joint partnerships between police, community boards, councils and wider community

**Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa (2002)**

Promotes the application of a youth development approach as a way of understanding what needs to happen for, around and with young people in New Zealand

- Acknowledging the diversity of young people

**Do the recommendations align with the Council's strategies?**

27. Yes. As above. It also aligns to the New Zealand Policing Strategic Plan and the Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa.

## CONSULTATION FULFILMENT

28. The Phillipstown Community Centre Charitable Trust, the Project Advisory Team and the Hagley/Ferrymead Community Board are in support of the proposed graffiti office.

## STAFF RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Council:

- (a) Approve the establishment of a Christchurch City Council Graffiti Office to be implemented in 2008.
- (b) Approve the transfer of \$150,000 from the Transport and Greenspace budget to the Community Support Unit budget from 1 July 2008.
- (c) Approve staff to submit a funding application requesting \$200,000 for three years from the Ministry of Justice to assist with the establishment of the Graffiti Office.

## BACKGROUND (THE ISSUES)

29. After a significant increase in graffiti vandalism and the threatening nature of graffiti appearing in Phillipstown and the wider community during 2005, the Phillipstown Strengthening Communities working party, after discussion, agreed to investigate the development of a graffiti vandalism clean-up project in the Phillipstown area. The key aim of the project was to develop a process to significantly reduce the implications of graffiti vandalism on the perceptions of safety and well-being of the residents and businesses in Phillipstown and the wider area.
30. It was further recognised that there was a need to establish a project to develop a collaborative process for those agencies involved in removal, restorative justice and legal art programmes. This would potentially enable existing services to work together within a strengthening communities model. It was not the intention of this project to duplicate other existing initiatives, rather to develop and implement a collaborative, structured, city wide approach that compliments existing projects and services to restoration, and social justice programmes. It was envisaged that using a strengthening communities approach, with the support of an advisory group, would ensure that all aspects relating to graffiti and graffiti vandalism would be addressed.
31. The Phillipstown Strengthening Communities Team Graffiti Vandalism Reduction Project brief and implementation plan was presented to the Litter Strategy Implementation Team and Community Development Manager in 2006 and received approval to proceed. Funding for the implementation of the pilot was accessed through the Hagley/Ferrymead Community Board, and the Community Support Unit and Transport and Greenspace Unit.
32. The project responds to '*measures used to counter graffiti vandalism – the importance of an integrated, multi-faceted approach*' as identified in a paper prepared for Christchurch City Council [S. Wiley, (July 1999) Graffiti Vandalism: The current Situation in Christchurch and Potential Counter- Measures]. Wiley argued that 'a carefully developed, comprehensive and planned approach to graffiti vandalism will produce significant cost savings for local government, corporations, and the local business community and property owners. Tackling graffiti vandalism in a positive, permanent, rational manner will help restore community pride and feelings of a safer, health environment for all. Properly implemented, it may direct young people from criminal offending with education developed within the project.'

## Project Goals and Key Achievement Areas

33. The following goals were identified, corresponding objectives developed, and an implementation plan established to reflect the key achievement areas of the project:
  - 5.1 To establish structures for ongoing development and support.
  - 5.2 Development and implementation of a programme that supports a collaborative, structured, city-wide approach to restoration and social justice programmes for the removal and reduction of graffiti vandalism.
  - 5.3 Development and implementation of a prevention programme in consultation and collaboration with other key agencies.
  - 5.4 Development and implementation of an education programme.  
(*Phillipstown Strengthening Communities Project Brief 2006*)
34. The project development was supported by research and analysis undertaken in a local, national and international setting.
35. These findings revealed a common conclusion that taggers need to have their work seen, therefore the best deterrent is 'fast removal within 24 hours'. Research also supports the theory that Community Ownership of projects sees greater success.
36. The increase in graffiti vandalism is a nationwide trend, and the Council is working with the National Crime Prevention Unit which is assisting local authorities and other government agencies to ensure that strategies used address this trend are collaborative and consistent.

37. It is critical to acknowledge that graffiti vandalism trends may peak and trough. The aim of the Christchurch City Council Graffiti Office is to deal with peak times of graffiti vandalism and its impact while also looking to identify the undercurrents of other issues and trends that may affect Christchurch and Banks Peninsula communities.
38. When graffiti vandalism appears to be contained it is often evident that other 'trends' have taken its place. It is the intention that the key strategies and processes used for graffiti vandalism reduction will be used to address other issues as deemed appropriate by the project team.

## THE OPTIONS

39. (a) Adopt the recommendation for the development of a Christchurch City Council Graffiti Office to be implemented in 2008.
- (b) Decline the recommendation for the development of a Christchurch City Council Graffiti Office.

## ASSESSMENT OF OPTIONS

### The Preferred Option

40. To develop a Christchurch City Council Graffiti Office under the management of the Community Support Unit.

	Benefits (current and future)	Costs (current and future)
<b>Social</b>	An improved environment for social interaction for residents and visitors. An increased sense of safety.	
<b>Cultural</b>	n/a	
<b>Environmental</b>	Improved city environment.	
<b>Economic</b>	Potential contribution to increased economic impact from visitor spend if Christchurch has a reputation of a clean city.	
<p><b>Extent to which community outcomes are achieved:</b></p> <p>Primary alignment with community outcomes, a safe city, a city of inclusive and diverse communities, a city of people who value the natural environment, and an attractive and well designed city where our people enjoy and value the environment and take responsibility for protecting and restoring it.</p> <p><b>Impact on the Council's capacity and responsibilities:</b></p> <p><b>Effects on Maori:</b></p> <p>N/A</p> <p><b>Consistency with existing Council policies:</b></p> <p>Environmental policy</p> <p><b>Views and preferences of persons affected or likely to have an interest:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The New Zealand quality of Life report suggest that Christchurch residents rate highly on city pride. Graffiti is identified as being significantly more likely to be rated as a problem by residents in the 12 cities than in the rest of New Zealand.</li> <li>Annual residents survey and central city surveys indicate that residents of Christchurch take pride in their city environment and would support efforts to reduce graffiti vandalism and increase perceptions of safety.</li> </ul> <p><b>Other relevant matters:</b></p>		

**Maintain the Status Quo (if not preferred option)**

## 41. Status quo

	<b>Benefits (current and future)</b>	<b>Costs (current and future)</b>
<b>Social</b>	Potential increase in graffiti vandalism across the city, and subsequent impact on environment and sense of safety.	
<b>Cultural</b>	n/a	
<b>Environmental</b>	No improvement to city environment.	
<b>Economic</b>	Potential cost through missed opportunity to improve the reputation of Christchurch as a clean and safe city.	
<b>Extent to which community outcomes are achieved:</b>  No improvement in primary community outcomes of a safe city, a city of inclusive and diverse communities, a city of people who value the natural environment, and an attractive and well designed city where our people enjoy and value the environment and take responsibility for protecting and restoring it.  <b>Impact on the Council's capacity and responsibilities:</b>  Continuing escalation of contractor spend for the removal of Graffiti Vandalism.  <b>Effects on Maori:</b>  <b>Consistency with existing Council policies:</b>  <b>Views and preferences of persons affected or likely to have an interest:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The New Zealand quality of Life report suggest that Christchurch residents rate highly on city pride. Graffiti is identified as being significantly more likely to be rated as a problem by residents in the 12 cities than in the rest of New Zealand.</li><li>• Annual residents survey and central city surveys indicate that residents of Christchurch take pride in their city environment and would support efforts to reduce graffiti vandalism and increase perceptions of safety.</li></ul> This option would not demonstrate that option.  <b>Other relevant matters:</b>		