

**5. BUSINESS LIAISON PERSON  
UPDATE ON ACTIVITIES IN SPREYDON-HEATHCOTE**

RR 9405

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The purpose of this report is to advise the Board of progress to date in achieving the Business Liaison Officer’s expected outcomes.

The primary responsibility of the Business Liaison Officer is to provide the foundation for improved relationships between the Council, Community Board and the small business sector in Spreydon-Heathcote. Key tasks include the encouragement of participation by businesses and business associations in city governance issues and the provision of assistance to enhance business stability, neighbourhood pride and security in local suburban business areas.

Since commencement of the programme 180 retailers in ten suburban business areas have been visited and a database of all retailers has been compiled.

Major effort has been directed towards:

- Assisting and encouraging businesses to form or strengthen and work collectively through business associations in promoting their areas;
- Develop suburban business areas as community focal points, and developing relationships with the other community organisations (eg residents groups), where appropriate;
- Encouraging businesses to participate in Council processes and events eg
  - *Annual Plan Process* - copies of the draft Community Plan were distributed to all relatives for comment.
  - *Millennium Projects* - Advising/liaising on retailer participation in projects.
  - *Community Art Events* - identifying opportunities for retailer participation and assisting implementation where appropriate.
  - *Community Action Plans* - identifying opportunities for retailers to work with community groups especially in relation to safety/security issues.
  - *Council Business Unit Promotions* - co-ordinating opportunities for Council Unit displays/promotion in partnership with retailers eg recycling and Water Services displays at suburban shops.

While outcomes have yet to be objectively evaluated, in areas where most activity has been focussed there is the perception of greatly improved relationships with the Council

Other outcomes include a good understanding of the issues affecting this sector and particularly issues relating to the most effective ways of enhancing co-operation between retailers, the Board and Council for the purpose of advancing the proposed community strengthening plans.

The following is an outline of activities in each retail area.

### **Cracroft - Hoon Hay/Cashmere/Worsleys Roads**

All retailers visited. This development which has good support from local community, has a mixture of specialists, eg chemist, doctors surgery, wine shop and general retail activity, with good parking facilities.

### **Centaurus Village**

Visits to all retailers were made on a regular basis. Assistance was given to a major promotional event in the area which involved, the Community Board and the Council's Water Services Unit, community organisations and the Soroptomists, who with financial assistance from the Community Board organised the development of Farnley Reserve.

### **Hoon Hay Road/Sparks Road**

Regular visits have been made to all retailers. The main concerns include parking and the need for bike stands.

### **Barrington (*excluding the mall*)**

All retailers have been visited. There were major concerns regarding parking prior to the opening of the new Mall but these have now been resolved.

### **St Martins**

All retailers except those in the mall have been visited. The main concerns were lack of on-street parking, traffic volumes and the effect of roadworks on their businesses. Overall there appeared to be good business confidence - the area is expanding and the Mall is expected to double in size.

### **Selwyn Street**

All retailers in this area were visited at least twice. Concerns included on-street parking, a lack of seating (since supplied), bus stop locations (since been dealt with). The area has a high proportion of second-hand shops and appears to be developing an identity as a 'destination' for this type of business.

### **Colombo/Huxley/Milton Streets**

All retailers in this development have been visited at least twice. Late last year there were considerable concerns arising from road works regarding customer access to businesses but these have now been resolved. This area includes two new retail developments. A development on the western side of Colombo Street where two out of seven new premises are now occupied and a development on the eastern side of Colombo Street which is in the course of construction.

### **Rowley**

Visits are planned as soon as proposals are finalised for a community arts project in the area. It is envisaged that this will involve businesses and community groups.

### **Addington**

Work in this area got off to a good start thanks to property owners willingness to make empty retail space available for Council use. This allowed a close working relationship to develop with retailers resulting in a number of valuable outcomes including the very successful Addington Spring promotion in which 60 businesses participated.

This co-operation has continued and space is now being brokered for use by Council Units and community organisation promotion and display purposes.

A recent meeting, facilitated by Council staff, investigated promotional ideas and provided an introduction of community groups to business operators. It was agreed that there may be opportunities for joint input into the Community Action Plan.

**Beckenham Village**

All retailers are visited on a regular basis. Assistance and encouragement has been given to the implementation by the Business Association on its “Beautification Plan”. This culminated in organisational arrangements for the unveiling of the Beckenham Head sculpture.

An expenditure record is attached.

**Recommendation:** That the information be received.