

**13. PROPOSAL FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION  
– ST MARTINS LIBRARY BUILDING PROJECT**

RR 10297

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Corporate Plan Output: 8.2.24	

The purpose of this report is to brief the Board on a process for consulting with the community on the services to be delivered from the proposed St Martins Community Library.

**BACKGROUND**

St Martins Voluntary Library has provided a library service for the local community for the past 72 years from its opening on 5 February 1927 until the present.

The Library has operated as an adult library from the corner of Wilson's Road and Wades Avenue for 47 years until 1974 when the professional library service for children managed by Canterbury Public Library opened in the front of the building.

Today the adults' library is the most successful of the network of voluntary libraries in Christchurch. The issue figure is expected to reach 30,500 items for this past year 1 July 1998 to 30 June 1999. The children's library issue figures reached 55,883 over the same period.

St Martins Library was first identified as a development in the Stringleman report of 1968 and has been on the Council's forward plan agenda since 1992 when the enhancement programme, which included plans to develop some other suburban libraries, was put together.

The original enhancement plan allowed for the building of a full community library at St Martins over the years 2000 and 2001. During the last budget round the Council extended the project out one year. Completion should now be mid 2002.

As part of the planning process it is proposed that we seek the views of the local community on services and facilities they may like to see included in their new community library.

**PURPOSE OF THE CONSULTATION**

A library is a community facility, funded by the ratepayers, and it is considered important that the views of the local people are sought when considering new buildings and improved services.

Customers of St Martins Children's Library are already aware of services available through the Canterbury Public Library network. It is anticipated that residents will want to see these, and also some of the unique services enjoyed now by members of the St Martins Voluntary Library, in the new community facility.

The purpose of the consultation is:

- To involve members of the community in the shaping of the new service
- To ensure there is an opportunity for input from a wide range of local people and community groups
- To capture and acknowledge their views
- To acknowledge the long standing contribution of the St Martins Voluntary Library Committee by involving them in the planning process

#### **OUTLINE OF THE PROJECT**

Community groups who could be expected to have a view on the library have been identified (see attached) in consultation with the Community Advocate, Nick Chapman, Jane Parrett, from Beckenham Service Centre, and Glenda Fulton, the Libraries Marketing and Development Manager.

Consultation should ideally begin in February/ March 2000 using the following methods:

- Attendance at relevant meetings
- Focus groups
- Questionnaires
- Door knocking
- Informal talks to classes at local schools

Data will be collated and actions resulting from this will be communicated to participants.

#### **PROPOSED APPROACH**

- **Attendance at meetings** – The St Martins Voluntary Library Committee is vitally concerned with the project and it is proposed to attend one of their meetings at the beginning of the process. The purpose will be to brief members on the project and the proposed consultation, and to hear their concerns. They will be consulted and updated regularly on progress throughout the project.

The views of the Spreydon Heathcote Community Board will be sought through attendance at one of their meetings and they will be updated regularly.

- **Focus Groups** – it will be necessary to run 2 focus groups because of the number of community groups in the area. The optimum number of participants is 10.

The first one should include representatives from all the local residents' associations and businesses in the area.(see attached)

The second should involve members of special interest groups like Kura Kaupapa at Waltham, the Waltham Community Cottage, Risingholme Community Centre, the Landsdowne Terrace Community Centre, local schools and Churches (see attached).

An invitation will be sent to these groups followed by a reminder phone call on the preceding day. The venue will be decided later. As the ideal focus group is 10 participants it may be necessary to organise another. This will be dependent on interest.

- **Questionnaires** – these will be available at St Martins Library and the Beckenham Service Centre. It is envisaged that they will be kept as simple as possible and will contain no more than five questions. The forms will be completed by ticking boxes.

Availability of questionnaires will be advertised at the library, the Beckenham Service Centre, the St Martins shopping mall and in the January 2000 issue of the Spreydon-Heathcote Newsletter.

- **Door knocking** – immediate neighbours will be directly affected by close proximity to the library and it is proposed to approach these people personally, both to build good relationships with them, and to begin this relationship on a good footing. It will be especially advantageous to talk to residents of the elderly people's complex opposite the present library site to gain an insight into the needs and views of our older customers.
- **Informal consultation with local schools** – local children have been regular customers at St Martins Children's Library since the opening of the children's library in 1974. To solicit their ideas, it is proposed to visit 3 classes of varying age groups from schools in the area, to talk informally to the children. Other local schools will be approached to talk to teachers at staff meetings.

## COMMUNICATION

All participants in the planned communication process will be sent notes from their meetings and will be informed of any proposed actions resulting from their input.

Other members of the community will be kept informed of progress through noticeboards at St Martins Library, the Beckenham Service Centre and the local shopping mall, and through the Spreydon-Heathcote Newsletter.

**Recommendation:** That consultation on the St Martins Library Building Project be undertaken on the following basis:

1. The St Martins community be consulted on the shaping of the library service to be delivered from the new St Martins Community Library.
2. The consultation process be conducted using focus groups, questionnaires, talking to people individually and formal and informal meetings.
3. The St Martins Voluntary Library Committee be involved in the planning process from the beginning.
4. The consultation process be commenced in February 2000.
5. The community be regularly updated on progress.