

15. THORRINGTON SCHOOL FUNDING REQUEST

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The purpose of this report is to summarise Thorrington School’s previous funding application (Community Affairs Committee, Tuesday 17 October), and through examining links to Council policies and strategies and Board objectives, make an officer’s recommendation in relation to Board Discretionary funding for this project.

Background

Board members may recall a deputation from Lisa Press and Karen Loveday from Thorrington School Parent Teachers Association requesting funding assistance for building a new school hall. The initial details and further information, as the Community Affairs Committee requested, have been circulated to members.

Policies, Strategies and Board Objectives

The Social Well-Being Policy outcome of “people participating in community life and having a sense of belonging and identity” and the priority of enhancing community participation would be met in a limited way through supporting this current application.

Two of the goals of the Community Policy relate to this funding application and are as follows:

- supplementing the capabilities and resources of community groups and structures and
- advocating on issues impacting on Christchurch communities.

However, the Board should keep in mind the over-reaching policy statement which maintains that the first priority is “empowering and enabling those who are deprived of power and resources”.

Board objectives that would be addressed include promoting community education.

Community Facilities Guidelines

The “Management Guidelines for Community Facilities” (Christchurch City Council) provides guidelines for establishing community facilities. The steps are as follows:

1. Perceived need for a community facility
2. Request to Community Board
3. Needs assessment
4. Establishment of a facility supported/not supported
5. Decision actioned.

A further explanation of each of these steps has been included.

A past example of the Board supporting Addington School/Community Hall was the result of an approach to the Board from Addington Neighbourhood Association and Manuka Cottage in relation to the need for a community facility. From there the Board commissioned a needs analysis which established a wider community need for such a facility, and a partnership with Addington Primary School resulted. The above process followed the “Management Guidelines for Community Facilities”.

Officer’s Recommendations

It is recommended that the Board support, in principle, Thorrington School in its efforts of fundraising for a new school hall, but it is not recommend at this stage that the Board allocate funding from its Discretionary Fund for the following reasons:

- Avoiding setting a funding precedent in relation to establishing a community facility
- A wider community need has not been demonstrated at this point in time
- The Board has other identified areas of community need which have higher priority given that the Community Policy states that “our first priority is empowering and enabling those who are deprived of power and resources” (Christchurch City Council Community Policy, 2000).

Should the Board consider the request justifies a needs analysis this would be the next appropriate step.

One of the Community Policy Goals is to “advocate on issues impacting on Christchurch Communities”, and it is therefore recommended that the Board continue to advocate strongly to the Ministry of Education for facilities within schools to adequately reflect the schools needs in terms of size and health and safety concerns. It is further recommended the Board write a letter of support for Thorrington School that could be used in future funding applications the school may make and a letter of commendation in terms of the continuing fundraising efforts of the School.

Conclusion

Although there are links with Board objectives and to a certain degree Council policies, adhering to the guidelines of establishing a community facility is crucial to the Board in terms of not setting a precedent.

- Recommendation:**
1. The Board consider whether the request justifies a needs analysis.
 2. The Board continue to advocate to the Ministry of Education for facilities within schools to adequately reflect schools needs in terms of size and health and safety concerns.
 3. The Board write a letter of support for the school to be used with future funding applications.
 4. The Board write a letter of commendation in terms of the continued fundraising efforts of the school.