

16. COMBINED LIBRARY AND COUNCIL SERVICES IN SOUTH CHRISTCHURCH

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| Corporate Plan Output: 8.2.24 Spreydon Library and 8.2.25 St Martins Library | |

The purpose of this report is to inform the Community Board of the findings of the officer project team charged with investigating an alternative strategy for the provision library and council services in the south of Christchurch and to report on costs, benefits and achievability of the strategy. This summary report needs to be read in conjunction with the full report, which has been circulated separately.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At the Council meeting on 25 November 1999, Council resolved that:

“a report be sought on the provision of a combined service centre/library for the South Christchurch area, which would obviate the need for major upgrading of the St Martins and Spreydon Libraries”.

An officer Project Team, liaising with Councillors Wells and Anderton has:

- Determined the area to be served and researched demographics, traffic patterns and shopping and public transport provisions.
- Specified the required floor space to accommodate library, Community Board and Advocacy Team facilities, designed to complement existing library services in the south to meet the community's needs for the next 20 years.
- Investigated property options.
- Commissioned market research with users and non users of libraries and service centre services.
- Undertaken community liaison with a Reference Group of representatives of community groups.
- Developed an innovative concept for a new facility, based on the “village concept”. Such a concept to include library, civic and community facilities and a learning centre, which would be managed and funded operationally in partnership with the education sector. The integration of library and learning centre facilities would be a New Zealand first.
- Assessed the current criteria for siting community libraries against the proposed strategy.
- Briefed the Community Board and Community Services Committee on two occasions and outlined the concept at a seminar on 20 October 2000.
- Developed a budget for the facility, including operational costs and cost of start-up collections and compared that against available funds.

PROPOSAL

Based on this work the team is proposing that a 2504 square meter library, learning centre, Community Board and Advocacy Team facility be built on the Council owned land at Beckenham. The site requirement for parking and landscaping of 3500 square meters is available by using the existing site and a part of the adjacent 3 hectare site currently used by Water Services. The facility would serve a population of 45-50,000 with a starting collection for the library of 60,000 items. The Project Team believes this to be the most economical and effective option for meeting the Council's intent with its 25 November resolution.

The facility would build on a "village concept" with spaces for small scale entertainment, learning, meeting and browsing, taking coffee, information and collections, library studying and sitting, listening to music and liaising with the community. A "drive by" drop off and pick up service would be a new feature of the proposed library. It would build on the best features of the New Brighton and Fendalton Libraries and create a new concept for learning in partnership with the education sector, which would be a first in New Zealand and a model for others to follow. The Council has the opportunity to again be at the forefront in delivering innovative information, recreation and learning facilities which support the Councils social, economic and community objectives.

COSTS

The cost of \$1650 per square meter for building the facility covers the cost for construction, landscaping, fit out and is \$4,581,600. The current project budget, which was for library only, is \$3,980,942, leaving a short fall of \$600,658. The new proposal includes a new facility for the Board and Advocacy Team and has provision for additional staff from Leisure and Parks to be accommodated in the community to meet Council's objectives for closer working within the community.

| Facility | Capital Cost | Available funds | Shortfall |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| Library 1943 sqm | \$3,205,950 | \$3,205,950 | \$0 |
| Learning Centre 200 sqm | \$330,000 | \$330,00 | \$0 |
| Community Board & Advocacy 361sqm | \$595,650 | \$94,992 | \$500,658 |
| Library fitout | \$350,000 | \$350,000 | \$0 |
| Community Board etc fitout | \$100,000 | \$0 | \$100,000 |
| Total | \$4,581,600 | \$3,980,942 | \$600,658 |

Because this facility is a totally new library, it will require a set up collection. Whilst two thirds of the 60,000 items will be sourced from existing collections, 20,000 new items will need to be purchased.

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| Stock ex Spreydon | 10,000 items |
| Stock ex Community Libraries (5% per library) | 20,000 items |
| Children's stock ex St Martins library | 10,000 items |
| New stock | 20,000 items |
| Total stock at opening | 60,000 items |

The cost of 20,000 items is \$850,000. Existing funds in the forward plan for St Martins, plus diversion of funds from the current book vote and the special book fund will account for \$500,000 of this total. A shortfall of \$350,000 requires funding.

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| New stock for St Martins | \$81,600 |
| Ex special funds (Book sale money) | \$100,000 |
| Funds diverted from current book vote (over two years) | \$318,400 |
| Shortfall – requiring additional capital | \$350,000 |
| Total funding required | \$850,000 |

Total additional capital requirement for building and collections is \$950,658

Ten-year projections for library operational costs are insufficient by \$150,000 per annum to cover the estimated operational costs of the library. In addition Property Unit advises that rent, which is not part of the library's ten-year projections, would be \$500,000 of which \$385,000 would be assigned to library. The lease to an outsourced coffee retailer would offset a proportion of this cost. The Community Board, Advocacy Team and other Unit's share of the rent would be \$74,000, which would be offset by the current rental of \$46,800. Operational costs of the Learning Centre, including a share of the rent, will be met by funds from the education sector for a period of 3-5 years.

BENEFITS

Whilst there are increased costs both capital and operational in building this facility, there are real benefits to both the Council and the community in building such a facility in the South.

- It is achievable – Council owns the site which is suitable and available for the purpose
- It will provide new purpose built Community Board and Advocacy Team facilities with sufficient room to house additional community based leisure and parks staff.
- There is an opportunity to work more closely with schools and other educational organisations in a partnership which could be a model for others to follow.
- It overcomes the difficulties of extending Spreydon and finding land for St Martins and provides a solution which will enhance library and information services to a greater extent than what was possible in two smaller facilities.
- The community will benefit from a purpose built, architecturally designed facility providing state of the art library facilities and modern service centre accommodation.

The Project Team is seeking the Board's endorsement in principle for the new facility as an alternate and viable strategy to extending Spreydon Library and building a new library at St Martins. This requires a further capital provision of \$950,658 in the 2001/02 annual plan. It is proposed to consult with the community so that when the Annual Plan Working Party meets in February 2001 Council will be able to make a commitment with the community's views in mind. The majority of the funds are available now, and planning and design could commence in this financial year with a completion date in 2001/02.

The partnership with the education sector can be completed once Council has made a commitment to the project. The Learning Centre as it is proposed in the project is subject to securing the funding and agreeing the terms of the partnership.

Chairman's

Recommendation: That the proposed Library and Council facility be the Board's preferred strategy for providing library and information services in the South of the city and that the Board endorse the provision of the additional capital subject to satisfactory consultation with the community.