

6. FORMER NEW BRIGHTON LIBRARY: SITE SHAW AVENUE - ALTERNATIVE ACCOMMODATION FOR BURWOOD/PEGASUS ADVOCACY TEAM

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Corporate Plan Output: Burwood/Pegasus Advocacy	

The purpose of this report is to submit a proposal for the relocation of the Burwood/Pegasus Advocacy Team from the Shirley Library and Service Centre to the former New Brighton Library site at Shaw Avenue, New Brighton.

BACKGROUND

Members of the Burwood/Pegasus Advocacy Team are currently located at the Shirley Library and Service Centre at 36 Marshland Road.

Following a review of suburban services delivery in 1996 and subsequent to the fire at the Shirley Library and Service Centre a decision was made that only limited staff resources be provided for advocacy at Shirley. Provision was made for two persons at this site.

As an outcome of the CLAS review and community board and community requests there are currently five full time positions located at Shirley. A further desk is shared by two Leisure Unit staff and an administrative assistant in community development. The closer working relationship between staff of the Leisure Unit and community development staff has seen many benefits already.

In September last year the Council resolved to dispose of the old New Brighton Library in Shaw Avenue. The Property Unit has been marketing the building but to date has not receive a proposal or offer which meets the Council's expectations at the September 1999 meeting.

In considering options for the provision of accommodation for staff, the Shaw Avenue site emerged as an option and some advantages of relocating the advocacy team to New Brighton are now identified.

THE OPTION TO RELOCATE TO NEW BRIGHTON

1. Location

The New Brighton Commercial Area is considered more central to the Burwood/Pegasus Community. Commonly, the Shirley site is identified with the Shirley/Papanui Community Board. Whilst this does not have a bearing on the response of the advocacy team to the community, the Community Advocacy staff working with the Shirley/Papanui Community Board are based at Papanui. Residents' associations in the New Brighton/South New Brighton area have commented on the difficulty of travelling across to the Shirley Library and Service Centre. These unprompted comments have been made during community meetings.

The site at New Brighton would more clearly identify with the Burwood/Pegasus Community.

2. Accommodation

The site at Shirley provides very cramped working conditions. Whilst the boardroom is in use for board, community, or staff meetings there is no other space available on site for informal meetings or discussions with residents' or community groups. The building at Shaw Avenue, approximately 330 square metres, would accommodate a boardroom and a small meeting room to meet the community board and staff needs. A draft floor plan is attached.

3. Advocacy Team Role

The provision of more office space provides opportunities for closer liaison between staff working in the Burwood/Pegasus Community. In addition staff working on major projects could be temporarily located with others working on the projects, eg New Brighton Mall redevelopment and foreshore development.

4. Community Support

The Council/Board presence in the New Brighton area would give a strong signal to the community of the Council's commitment to the current and future community and economic development of New Brighton.

5. Enhanced Community Services

In addition to providing a better Community Advocacy Team service to the Burwood/Pegasus community, the space currently occupied by the team at the Shirley Library and Service Centre would be available for other library/community use. The existing boardroom could be still available for community use and would be an alternative meeting site for both the Burwood/Pegasus Community Board and the Shirley/Papanui Community Board.

Other options for this site will be the subject of a report from the Libraries Manager.

RELOCATION COST

A preliminary estimate for the conversion of the Shaw Avenue site as shown on the attached plan prepared by City Design has been sought. The total fit out cost (estimated excluding GST) is \$87,000. This includes reuse of existing carpet, floor coverings and reusing screens.

An additional estimated cost of \$40,000 would be required to provide a telecommunications system to the Council's standard.

There is no provision in the capital budget for this work.

OTHER ISSUES

An issue raised in discussion with the Libraries Manager is the question of a public expectation that service centre counter services would be available at the Shaw Avenue site. It is not the intention to provide an additional service centre at the New Brighton Shaw Avenue site.

The rent and associated costs for the vacated space will either be carried by the Property Unit or Libraries and Information Unit if they were to utilise the space. There is no budget for this.

CONCLUSION

This report has been prepared to seek the Committee's and Council's support for further investigation of the relocation option and to defer further marketing of the Shaw Avenue site until a more indepth investigation may be made. This would include the flow-on effects to other units of the Council (including service delivery).

The Council's recently issued change proposals may also result in the relocation of staff to advocacy teams raising further accommodation issues. The disposal of the former New Brighton Library may be premature in the interim.

The proposal has been discussed with the Burwood/Pegasus Community Board which supports further investigation.

Recommendation: That the Projects and Property Committee recommend to the Council that the former New Brighton Library building and site at Shaw Avenue be retained by the Council whilst an indepth investigation is undertaken of the accommodation requirement of the Burwood/Pegasus Advocacy Team.

Chairman's Recommendation: For discussion, in conjunction with the further report on this building to be considered with the public excluded.