

## 6. TE HEKENGA 2002: FUNDING REQUEST

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The purpose of this report is to present the Committee with a request for Metropolitan (City Wide) Community Development Discretionary Funding. Applications to the Metropolitan Discretionary Fund for emergency grants of less than \$20,000 are considered by staff. Emergency applications of more than \$20,000 or where the funding is for a new project are decided by the Community and Leisure Committee. This request is being brought to the Committee because it is a new project. The Total Metropolitan Discretionary Fund is \$150,000 and the balance at this date is \$66,000.

The total projected expenditure for Te Hekenga 2002 is \$84,114.95 and the contribution being sought from the Council is \$12,646.

### BACKGROUND

Te Whare O Nga Whetu Charitable Trust is working with young Maori from throughout Christchurch on a project called Te Kakano I Ruia Mai – Touching the Lives of Our Future Leaders. Young Maori with leadership potential are being brought together on a regular basis. These are usually young people who are doing well at school and who may be the only senior Maori student in their school, or part of a very small number of young Maori who have progressed to the senior classes within their school. Educational researchers have long been concerned about retention rates for Maori in secondary and tertiary education and often comment that those who do achieve well at a young age too often leave school before their educational potential is reached. In a submission to the New Zealand tertiary education advisory commission in 2000, Dr Margaret Mutu, Associate Dean (Arts Faculty) Auckland University stated that “In the last four years the number of students entering university from low-decile schools has dropped by 49%”. Dr Mutu strongly suggested mentoring and pastoral care for young Maori to ensure that those that do enter senior high school and tertiary education are retained and gain the education they seek.

“Touching the Lives of Our Future Leaders” gives these young people the opportunity to develop positive relationships with others who are in a similar situation. They are supported in their stance to stay at school and to seek tertiary qualifications. Homework classes are currently being set up to ensure that the desire these students have to succeed in the educational environment, can be supported with quality assistance outside the school. Young Maori students already in tertiary education are involved in setting up this support system and in mentoring the secondary students.

The trust has a comprehensive programme mapped out for 2002 and this includes Te Hekenga in March 2002, which has the stated goals of:

- Celebrating senior Maori students.
- Offering an experience that will have quality lasting effects for continual education.
- Establishing and promoting an Otautahi Rangatahi Support Network.

### TE HEKENGA 2002

The aim is to have 120 young Maori from the Christchurch area travel overland to the Auckland ASB Secondary Schools Maori and Polynesian Festival where they will perform. On route they will be exposed to New Zealand’s Maori boarding schools and Kura Kaupapa and at designated points on the journey they will be involved in events which include sports competitions, public speaking, and kapa haka.

Each young person will contribute \$150 towards their costs and the balance of \$702.56 per person is being sought through sponsorship and fundraising. The organisers have been very tenacious in their approach to securing funding and have approached several traditional and non-traditional funding sources. At the time of writing this report some positive responses had been received and many more were still being considered.

Additional information provided by the Trust is attached.

### THE PROPOSAL TO COUNCIL

The trust has requested that the Council consider funding the equivalent of three students per ward area. Originally they intended to approach each Community Board, but under the advice of Council staff have applied through the metropolitan channel to avoid six separate applications and six separate presentations.

The cost of providing funding to ensure the participation of 18 students is \$12,646.

## **DISCUSSION**

It is important to view Te Hekenga in the wider context of the "Touching the Lives of Our Future Leaders" project. The hikoi will provide an opportunity for young Maori who are performing well in schools throughout Christchurch, to get to know each other well, thus providing a strong and supportive Rangatahi network which should operate well beyond Te Hekenga 2002.

Long term this Maori youth network should provide a support system for young people who may feel isolated and tempted to exit the educational system before reaching their potential. It will also provide a mechanism for them to get to know young mentors who have themselves achieved (or are still achieving) well within the education system and are contributing significantly to the wider community. The mechanisms being set up will hopefully reduce the level of senior Maori students exiting the system early, help them realise full learning potential and encourage post-secondary school study. In addition to the educational impact, this programme provides Rangatahi with the opportunity to participate and be coached in public speaking, a range of sporting activities and kapa haka. For students who rarely have the opportunity to mix with other Maori during their own school day, this is a wonderful opportunity to develop a sense of cultural belonging and pride. Although some of the students attend schools where Maori cultural activities flourish, others are totally isolated.

The aims and objectives of Te Hekenga 2002 and the wider programme it is part of, are in line with the Christchurch City Council's Youth Policy, Community Policy, and Social Well-being Policy. Although Council metropolitan funding is not generally available for the support of individuals or for travel, Te Whau O Nga Whetu have provided a clear description of the wider benefits this experience will bring these young Maori students, the wider Maori community and Christchurch city.

### **Comment from the Maori Liaison Officer:**

"Projects such as Te Hekenga 2000 are fundamentally critical to a positive and healthy future for our rangatahi, which in turn contributes to a strong vibrant city."

## **CONCLUSION**

Te Hekenga 2002 is an ambitious but achievable launch of the comprehensive programme planned for this year within the "Touching the Lives of Our Future Leaders" project. Council staff who have met with the project team have been impressed with their philosophy, energy, and commitment and are convinced that the programme is in line with the goals set down in the Council's Community Policy and Youth Policy. Staff who have communicated with the project team include the Youth Advocate, the Community Development Adviser based at Sockburn Service Centre and the Maori Liaison Officer.

**Recommendation:** That the Committee support this initiative by contributing \$8,424 toward the total cost of the project.

**Chairman's Recommendation:** That the above recommendation be adopted.