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CHRISTCHURCH CITY COUNCIL Draft LTCCP 2009-19

- Received via Web

Submissions close on 16 April 2009

I wish to talk to the main points in my written submission at the hearings to be held between Monday 11 May 2009 and Monday 18 May 2009.

Are you completing this submission:	On behalf of a group or organisation
If you are representing, how many people do you represent?	Project4789 accessed the DIS &TM service in 2008. In addition clients of the 6 other organisations benefit from the co-location of the 8 groups under the DPC umbrella.
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Date:	16 April 2009
Your Submission:	<p>Introduction</p> <p>Mission: "To assist people with disabilities improve their lives"</p> <p>The Disabled Persons Centre (DPC) is unique as an umbrella for multiple disability groups co-located and delivering services from one site " 314 Worcester Street. This is akin to the Christchurch Community House model. Collectively the organisations offer education, disability aids, information, a disability friendly gym, a drop in centre, practical support and advice, assistive technology, personal loan options and on site personal care appointments such as a podiatrist, nurse and physiotherapist. The current tenants are: Alzheimers Canterbury, Disability Information Service, Multiple Sclerosis & Parkinsons Society of Canterbury Inc., NZ Paraplegic & Physically Disabled Foundation, The Neurological Foundation of NZ, Pain Action in New Zealand Inc "PAINZ, Canterbury/West Coast Division, TalkLink Trust, Total Mobility.</p> <p>Request for Council's consideration:</p> <p>The Disabled Persons Centre is seeking to relocate from the current Worcester Street site which is old, professional advisers concede is no longer cost effective to renovate, and does not enable the tenant groups to expand their services to meet the growing demands.</p> <p>The DPC Trust Board has identified new premises and seeks financial assistance from the CCC. The request via the LTCCP is necessary because</p>

the CCC Loan scheme has been frozen for 2009 and a refinancing request in 2010 is not permitted under the loan conditions. In addition there is no Community Facilities funding pool currently available.

In 1982 (approx) the CCC assisted us into our current premises with a \$100,000 suspensory loan which was at that time 28% of the purchase price. The proposed new premises has a purchase and refitting cost of \$2.6m (approx). DPC Trust Board will have a nett equity of \$800-\$900,000 from the sale of the existing site. We have commenced a fund raising programme and are currently in detailed dialogue with the Canterbury Community Trust as to their level of assistance. In February 2008 all of our key funders met to discuss the DP Centre's future and respected the fact that we were forthright in our concerns they were putting "good money after bad" in funding the deteriorating infrastructure of the existing site. They have all pledged their ongoing support.

We seek to have a provision included in the LTCCP for financial assistance for \$250,000.

Rationale for a new site

• The continuation of the ever growing demand for the aforementioned services which effect an improvement in the lives of those with a disability. In doing so they may fulfil their potential actively involved as family members, employees, neighbours, friends and community members in Christchurch and districts.

• The progression of our vision of growing partnerships with existing and other organisations in a shared, quality environment with a cost effective infrastructure. The collectively agreed principles of the what the new site must offer are:

1. Optimal embracing of communal facilities.
2. A model of accessibility.
3. Demonstrated operational efficiencies.
4. Energy efficiencies.
5. Future proofing flexibility eg potential for building extensions.
6. Assistive technology utilisation.
7. Increased opportunity for clients' social interaction eg gym session, book and coffee groups etc.
8. A community resource.

We also envisage the potential for higher quality administration, financial management, fund raising, promotion and publicity with a tenured staff member as opposed to overloaded Trustees on a voluntary basis. Note: other related organisations have registered an interest in becoming tenants in any new premises.

• The meeting of the Trust Board's health and safety obligations to provide a clean, warm and hazard free environment for clients and staff.

Background as additional information

Philosophy:

The Disabled Persons Centre operates as a socially responsible centre which is a disability focussed "destination". We operate in accordance with the NZ Disability Strategy which decrees that disability is socially constructed. That is that those with a disability are not "unwell" or of lesser being" as the historical medical and charity approach has been. The Centre has an ongoing challenge to meet the burgeoning needs. For example such is the growth in the numbers of people diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease that an additional social worker will be required for the next five years.

Operational: The primary activities of the Disabled Persons Centre are:
• -under the auspices of the Disabled Persons Centre Trust Board the provision of low cost permanent accommodation on site to six tenant organisations (all of which work in the area of disability, management of permanent pain, life long illnesses and the every growing needs of the elderly) and two major community services " Disability Information Service and Total Mobility

• -the free confidential information provision from the Disability Information Service (DIS) and the Total Mobility (discount taxi voucher scheme). The former receives approximately 320 queries by telephone, email and visits per month for personal information, study and research. The latter has a client base of 1048 (Jan - Dec 2008).

• -the compilation and sales of the ~Christchurch and Canterbury Services Directory of disability and related health organisations, has contact details for 300 + disability, health, elder care, voluntary, home support, whanau and carers organisations, minority groups and social support groups for the Christchurch and Canterbury region.

• -the housing and maintenance of a library of related books, magazines, videos and brochures as well as information on manufacturers and retailers of aids for people with disabilities.

• -the annual four network meetings hosted by the Centre for those working in the disability sector or allied fields (e.g. Work & Income NZ)

• -the rental of meeting rooms and wheelchairs at very nominal cost to disability and community groups and individuals. The hall is used for 15 -20 events each month by community and disability groups.

• -a volunteer support group assist with gardening and lawn mowing, newsletter folding and Trust Board membership.

• Additionally each of the tenant groups deliver specialised services to their membership.

Successes of the Centre to date

1. The DPC is tenanted to its maximum capacity with ongoing enquiries from other groups.

2. The clients' satisfaction survey endorses the service offered from the Centre.

3. The level of logged enquiries to the centre on an annual basis has never fallen.

4. Total Mobility client numbers and satisfaction remains high with an exponential growth in the past 12 months to a total of 1050.

5. The Network meetings for health, welfare and support professionals maintain a growing commitment to attendance.

6. We rebranded to be called ~The Worcester Centre as part of our resolve to promote the collective endeavours of all the tenants at the DPC.

This fresh approach has elicited support from new funding sources. NB Further development of this brand is on hold as we explore the potential of a new home for the Centre.

7. Delivered on the ~Events scheduled and adopted by the Centre tenants.

Benefits

• Support of the DPC means eight, primarily neurologically focussed, disability groups can collaborate and operate economically from one site.

• Total Mobility discount taxi vouchers for people with an impairment who meet the eligibility criteria. Provides ~mobility for those unable to access personal or public transport otherwise and provides a measure of independence.

• For people with a disability and their whanau free, confidential information specific to their disability, identification of the relevant support groups, access to social opportunities and carer support organisations. The emphasis is on the acquisition of knowledge for self-empowerment and stress reduction plus a degree of self-sufficiency.

• Free disability and health information to the public, beneficiaries, health welfare and support professionals and students. Networking and interchange of current information ensures an accurate and valid service.

• Low cost wheelchair hire enable maximum accessibility to the social, business and citizenship aspects of the community for those dependent on wheelchair usage. This is of significant benefit for those temporarily in need following an accident of operation and for those family members on holiday in the region.

• An informative newsletter four times a year.

• Displays of current small ~daily living disability aids, some of which can be purchased directly.

	<p>Governance: The Centre is governed by a Trust Board with Trustee representatives from the community and tenant groups. The Board meets all its Trust Deed obligations to meet monthly, hold an Annual General meeting and to prepare publically available audited annual accounts. Trustees contribute many voluntary hours to their role to ensure the Centre operates well and their health and safety obligations to staff are met. Regrettably health and mobility limitations preclude a significant contribution from many of the users of the Centre.</p>
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