

11. NEW BRIGHTON RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION ACCOMMODATION

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The purpose of this report is to update the Board on options and needs for accommodation for the New Brighton Residents' Association since the loss of use of Collingwood House.

BACKGROUND

In May 2000 the New Brighton Residents' Association, with financial support from the Board, established a community room at Collingwood house. This space provided an opportunity for local people to become involved in the wellbeing of the community with coffee mornings serving as a base from which ideas and actions were formed.

In 2001 Collingwood House became unavailable for community group use because the property was put on the market. The Board and staff explored the possible lease or purchase of the premises and alternative accommodation options.

Eight accommodation options were explored for the Association and other community groups using Collingwood House. These options were presented in February 2002 and most groups were relocated to alternative locations by mid-2002.

Up until October 2002, the Association was still using the room at Collingwood House. Since then meetings have been held in residents' homes while the Association has continued to look for premises. The Association has approached other community groups to join together in sharing and resourcing premises (for example, the Pier and Foreshore Society and the New Brighton Project).

Of the eight initial accommodation options explored, the most preferred and viable option, as defined by the Association, was the former Shaw Avenue bowling club where the Association could additionally set up a community garden. The tender for the lease of the former Shaw Avenue bowling club premises closed in October 2002 with the Association placing the sole tender.

Subsequent meetings and discussions around leasing the premises brought forward possible lease options that would be financially out of the resources presently available to the Association (a suggested amount was between \$8,000 - \$15,000 per year for the lease while the annual income of the Association is around \$1,500). This being the case the Association would more than likely apply to the Council for funding support towards this cost. It is understood that a report on the Shaw Avenue premises is being prepared by the Parks and Waterways Unit.

OPTION OF SHARED ACCOMMODATION WITH BOARD

On 19 December 2002 the Council approved negotiations to be undertaken for the lease of the former post office building on the corner of Union and Beresford Streets for Board premises. Being aware of the Board's interest in premises to hold board meetings in New Brighton, the Association had previously expressed interest in sharing accommodation if the opportunity arose.

On 10 January 2003 representatives of the Association had a look through the premises at the corner of Union and Beresford Streets. The representatives indicated that, should the lease be obtained, they would welcome an invitation to base the Association on the premises, alongside the Board and other community use.

The Association's needs are:

- A secure and permanently set up space that would accommodate a desk, computer, filing cabinet and shelves.
- Enough space for pamphlets and information and a communal "lounge" type area.

The Association has the required furniture in storage. The Association also has a double wardrobe for storage but it is not essential to have this on the premises if there is no available space or if alternative storage exists.

It is considered that the Association could be accommodated in the new premises in the area separate from the main boardroom. The Association considers this space to be sufficient. The boardroom would remain set up permanently.

The Association would like to begin initially by once again offering a Friday coffee morning but envisage opening at least a couple of times during the week to offer information and support to the community. It is hoped that if a phone line is in place the Association could connect a computer to the Internet meaning the members would be on the premises more often, maintaining the website, checking e-mails, etc., and being accessible to the community.

Additionally if the Board were to make the premises available to other community groups/users for meetings, the Association is prepared to manage these bookings of the facility. The Association has also identified the following community groups that may have an interest in using any additional available space in the premises: the Pier and Foreshore Society, the New Brighton Project, horticultural society, and historical society.

The main considerations the Association has had in finding suitable premises to date have been accessibility, location, and limited financial resources. This inability to secure premises has meant the hold up of any development and progression of community ideas that may have been envisaged within their community.

To offer the Association space in the new Board premises would:

- Meet all of the Association's needs and the preference of being based right in New Brighton.
- Provide security for their organisation for the term of the lease to enable them to be productive.
- Give time for further future accommodation options to be explored/secured.
- Defer any requests for financial support towards alternative accommodation rental or lease during this time by the Association. (Given further improved alternative accommodation is not found).
- Provide all people in the community with the opportunity to participate in community life and create a sense of belonging.
- Provide visible Council support of the community and enable the Association to plan, organise and carry out initiatives that reflect the community's needs and aspirations.

Staff

- Recommendations:**
1. That should lease negotiations for the premises at the corner of Beresford Street and Union Street be successful officers enter into negotiations on behalf of the Board offering space in the premises for the term of the lease to the New Brighton Residents' Association.
 2. That, given the understanding that Board needs have precedence over other use of the premises, any remaining spaces/times available be offered for community use with staff exploring the possibility of the New Brighton Residents' Association managing the bookings of said community use.

Chairperson's

- Recommendations:**
1. That the abovementioned recommendations be adopted.
 2. That changes to the furnishings, displays and signage are to be made only with the consent of the Advocacy Team.