

Community Services Committee

OPEN MINUTES

Meeting Date: **Wednesday 14 June 2017**
Time: **3pm – 3.59pm**
Venue: **Main Committee Room
3rd floor Civic Building
231 Hastings Street
Napier**

Present: Councillor White (In the Chair), the Mayor, Councillors Boag, Brosnan, Dallimore, Hague, Jeffery, McGrath, Price, Tapine, Taylor, Wise, Wright

In Attendance: Director City Infrastructure (Acting Chief Executive), Director Corporate Services, Manager Community Strategies, Chief Financial Officer, Manager Business Transformation and Excellence, Corporate Planner, Communications Specialist

Secretariat: Governance Team

APOLOGIES

Nil

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Nil

PUBLIC FORUM

Zoe Barnes – Napier Business Inc.

Ms Barnes spoke about concerns that have been raised regarding increased amounts of begging and undesirable behaviours in the vicinity of Clive Square and down Emerson Street into the CBD. Over the last year concerns have moved from retail loss limitation to fears for personal and business safety. It is believed that there is a small core group for whom begging is a primary focus and which may move between Hastings and Napier.

Brendan Hutchinson – St John Ambulance

Mr Hutchinson spoke about the concerns of St John Ambulance at the increased numbers of call outs to Clive Square over the last few months to attend to people for whom synthetic drug use is a problem. The ambulance resources are stretched and there will ultimately be an impact on their ability to respond to the wider public. He also noted that responding to these call outs is now a Health and Safety issue for his staff, as many of the drug users can be volatile and aggressive. St John is working with the Police to try and identify solutions to the problem.

Nigel Hurley and Grant Holder – New Zealand Police

Sgt Hurley spoke about a gap between the Police mandate of addressing criminal behaviours and of removing people from the streets, which is currently unfilled. Of particular concern is a core group of men who are synthetic drug users. The Police are using social media channels to encourage the public to provide funding to organisations working with rough sleepers and those on the streets as there is a concern that providing money directly to drug users only contributes to their habit. The Police believe that there needs to be a cross-sector approach as most of the people in question need to get well, as opposed to being taken to court. It was hoped that “capable guardians” might be established to help address the issues – people who are willing and able to safely look after the community as well as those in need by working with them to address some fundamental needs.

Dallas Knight – business owner, Civic Square West

A number of businesses in the Civic Square West are concerned about their personal and business safety, and have completed a survey outlining their particular issues. The outreach centre is believed to be a magnet for those exhibiting undesirable and unpredictable behaviours, fighting, and drug use. Those in the vicinity feel very threatened. It was requested that the resource consent for the outreach centre be revoked.

Caroline Lampp – WIT (Whatever it takes) Services

The What It Takes (‘WIT’) Trust provides community mental health support services. In the last 18 months WIT has been part of a cross sector group including Police, Council and other government and community agencies to respond to growing homelessness in Napier. Supported by the cross sector group, WIT has been running the Outreach Service based from Clive Square to work with rough sleepers. Ms Lampp remarked that every community is judged and may ultimately be defined by how it treats its most vulnerable – the homeless, rough sleepers and drug users of Napier are arguably some of its most vulnerable people. Napier has a serious shortage of housing with some of the worst statistics in New Zealand, which will inevitable result in a decline in standards of living for many people. WIT is already working with other agencies and church groups to provide the best services they can but resourcing and funding are an issue. They have staff that are already working directly with those synthetic drug addicts and others, and who could step into

the roles of ‘capable guardians’ looked for by the Police. However they are already stretched. The Outreach Service has been operating over the last 9 months, but is only able to open for parts of the day on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays due to a lack of funding. There is scope for a lot more to be done and WIT actively link in with as many other groups as are able and interested in addressing the issues.

In response to questions from Councillors the speakers clarified that:

- It is not always clear whether mental health or drug and alcohol use are the key problem; often they are interwoven.
- The civic services (Police, Ambulance, WIT etc) are all supportive of a cross-agency approach, recognising that the issue has many contributing factors.
- There may be an opportunity for Council to contribute with some form of multi-function role that is focused on community safety. However the existing Community Patrol would not be appropriate as many are older themselves.
- Behaviour has been noticeably disintegrating over the past few weeks which may be due to a particularly bad batch of synthetic drugs having been supplied to the users.
- Offences are treated seriously by the Police but there is much that cannot be addressed as it is not specifically criminal in nature or there is not enough evidential support to make an arrest.
- Synthetic drugs are a particular problem in Napier, as opposed to other drugs. They make the users very, very sick.
- The existing Bylaw is legal but has ‘no real teeth’, and could benefit from a review.
- Not all homeless are beggars and not all beggars are homeless

ACTION

The Regulatory team to advise:

- How the Public Places Bylaw 2014 may be made more robust
- Whether warranting is in place/ required to enforce the Bylaw
- Whether any Council staff are currently warranted

ACTION

Council to investigate the concept of ‘capable guardians’ and any funding options to help contribute towards work underway with this vulnerable section of Napier’s community.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE MAYOR

The Mayor confirmed that he and the Chief Executive are cognisant of the challenges raised by the speakers of the Public Forum, and there is no easy answer and no single answer to the issue. The matter will need a whole of society approach to best address it.

The recent trip to meet with major aquaria in the US as part of the National Aquarium of New Zealand expansion project was extremely successful. Invaluable connections were made with four aquaria very interested in sharing information and building relationship.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE CHAIRPERSON

Nil

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE MANAGEMENT

Recognition was made of the recent passing of Rod Jarvis due to complications from a long standing illness. A number of staff will be attending the funeral to pay their respects.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 3 May 2017 were taken as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

NOTIFICATION AND JUSTIFICATION OF MATTERS OF EXTRAORDINARY BUSINESS

(Strictly for information and/or referral purposes only).

AGENDA ITEMS

1. TARADALE COMMUNITY ROOMS REFURBISHMENT PROPOSAL

<i>Type of Report:</i>	<i>Operational</i>
<i>Legal Reference:</i>	<i>N/A</i>
<i>Document ID:</i>	<i>341015</i>
<i>Reporting Officer/s & Unit:</i>	<i>Natasha Carswell, Manager Community Strategies</i>

1.1 Purpose of Report

To seek Council's approval to continue to use the Taradale Community Rooms, once refurbished, to accommodate community groups, with the building to be used as transitional or permanent accommodation for the Napier Community Hub and to investigate the potential for the rooms becoming a multi-use community centre in the future.

At the Meeting

A significant amount of discussion was had on this item. It was clarified that the decision to refurbish the Taradale Community Rooms has already been made by Council and this report is specifically related to their usage.

In response to questions from Councillors it was clarified that:

- Although typically a refurbishment would be targeted towards the needs of a primary tenant, the Rooms are in need of work now and it is hoped that the renovation will foster greater interest in the space. The proposal is to create a flexible internal space, which will be reconfigurable as required.
- There has been confirmation from four community groups that they are happy to move to the Taradale space and remain there on a longer term basis. These are non-customer facing businesses so the move would not have any negative impacts on their service provision.
- The Citizens Advice Bureau would prefer to remain in the CBD so options would need to be negotiated for this.
- A better fit for the tea Museum had been found at the Plunket Rooms; the proprietor Mr Hadfield was very excited about this space.

It was generally agreed that Napier Community Hub tenants should not be given priority to the Taradale Rooms as there may be other organisations interested in the Taradale space

for longer term occupancies. However it was confirmed that an amendment to this end would not negatively impact on community hub tenants as where there was significant interest in moving to Taradale this could be provided for.

Officer's Recommendation

That Council

- a. Approve that the Taradale Community Rooms continue to accommodate the community groups, with Napier Community Hub tenants given priority, and
- b. Note that further investigation will be undertaken to determine how the rooms could be run as a multi-use community centre in the future.

COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION

Councillors Taylor / Jeffery

That Council

- a. Approve that the Taradale Community Rooms continue to accommodate the community groups, and
- b. Note that further investigation will be undertaken to determine how the rooms could be run as a multi-use community centre in the future.

CARRIED

The meeting closed at 3.59pm.

**APPROVED AND ADOPTED AS A TRUE AND ACCURATE RECORD OF THE
MEETING**

CHAIRPERSON: _____

DATE OF APPROVAL: _____