



DIRECTOR SHIRE SERVICES REPORT

12th September 2006

**DSS5 YOUTH INFORMATION REFERRAL SERVICE
FILE: 343 GRW**

SUMMARY:

Reporting on the proposed location of the Youth Information Referral Service.



As reported to Council in June 2006, a number of options were being pursued to provide and locate a Youth Information and Referral Service. It was a requirement of the funding body that any proposal be endorsed by the Youth Network. A proposal to establish a Youth Information Referral Service by the PCYC was considered at a Youth Network Meeting held on 23 August 2006.

A decision was made by the Youth Network to endorse the PCYC proposal on the proviso that the service also offer a mobile outreach service to the Aboriginal community at Greenhills. This suggestion was agreed to by the PCYC Manager.

A copy of the PCYC proposal is attached at [Appendix C](#).

The Proposal by the PCYC is that the Youth Information Referral Service operate out of the PCYC complex and the two Department of Housing cottages located in South and West Kempsey. A mobile outreach service would also operate utilising the PCYC bus which would service the CBD, Greenhills and other areas where youth were known to congregate.

The Department of Housing confirmed that no rentals would be charged should the referral centre co-locate in the cottages at South and West Kempsey as they saw this placement as complementing their existing structure. Department of Housing have a community worker employed 2 days per week as a Housing Referral Officer. Both South and West Kempsey have been identified as areas of high need.

Available funds of \$61,000 could be utilised to employ two part time referral centre workers (16 hrs per week) which would enable

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the project to operate for an 18 month period as no capital costs (furniture hardware) and recurrent costs (rentals) would need to be sourced.

The manager of the PCYC advised that they would be interested in developing a partnership with Council, where the PCYC would employ two dedicated youth referral officers if Council funds the positions from existing grant funds (\$61,000).

The Youth Referral Officers would be PCYC employees and would operate from the PCYC complex, South and West Kempsey Community Houses as well as a mobile outreach service. They would report directly to the Manager of the PCYC.

The service would run for approximately 18 months and if sufficient need is proven an application for ongoing recurrent funding would be lodged with the funding body.

During the course of investigations into the above option it became apparent that the two community houses were operating without development consent. Under current zoning conditions consent to operate out of these two dwellings would be permissible if Council owned or leased the community buildings. A DA has been lodged in relation to the above.

The Department of Housing has confirmed that it is prepared to lease the two dwellings to Council at a peppercorn rental of \$1.00 per year. Department of Housing confirmed that they would be responsible for rates/water, structural maintenance, electricity and phone costs up to a mutually agreed amount.

Kempsey Shire Council would be responsible for lawn maintenance, cleaning of the premises and public liability. Lawn maintenance and cleaning of the premises is currently undertaken by Council as part of the Community Renewal Program.

REPORT IMPLICATIONS:

▪ ***Environmental***

There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

▪ ***Social***

It is not envisaged that any objections will be received in relation to the DA and the expanded activities being proposed at the two community houses.

- *Economic (Financial)*

Funds currently held by Council will enable the service to operate for an 18 month period. There are no ongoing financial commitments to Council for the establishment or operation of the centre, apart from those costs already identified such as cleaning, lawn maintenance, and public liability for the two community houses.

- *Policy or Statutory*

There are no policy or statutory implications arising from this report.

- *Directors Review*

Council is urged to support the proposal by the PCYC to establish a Youth Referral Service. The proposal has the support of the Youth Network, utilizes existing infrastructure and has no ongoing financial commitments for Council.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the proposal by the PCYC for the establishment and operation of the Youth Information Referral Service be endorsed.

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A P Vermeulen
DIRECTOR SHIRE SERVICES