

MARRICKVILLE council

**SUPPLEMENTARY
BUSINESS PAPER
1**

for

**COUNCIL
MEETING
10/06**

**6.30 PM, TUESDAY,
21 NOVEMBER, 2006**

Distributed 21 November, 2006

SUPPLEMENTARY PRECIS

The following report appears as a late item with Mayoral approval as information required for the preparation of the report was not available at the time of distribution of the Business Paper.

MAYORAL MINUTES

MM 20 - URGENT HELP FOR A LOCAL MOTHERS' GROUP

1

**MM 20 - URGENT HELP FOR A LOCAL MOTHERS' GROUP
For Decision**

File Ref: 1628

Ladies & Gentlemen

Background

Yesterday I met with members of a local mothers' group seeking an appropriate space in which to conduct a weekly 2 hour meeting of 12 mothers with their children.

Whilst the local Area Health Service provides a post birth mothers' group and related services, this continues for only a four week period, after which mothers' groups have to make alternative arrangements to continue to meet. Some mothers' groups are able to use the homes of some of their members but many find this difficult for a variety of reasons and may approach Council, community groups and local businesses to assist with providing an appropriate meeting place.

Discussion

As Councillors will be aware, as a matter arising out of consideration of GM 75 at Council Meeting 08/06 on 19 September 2006, Council resolved that a report be prepared on the viability of a respite and occasional care centre for young mothers at the Illawarra Road Early Childhood Centre building. A report on this is due for presentation to the December Community Services Committee meeting.

Cr Macri and I, along with the Director, Community Services, met with members of the above mentioned local mothers' group yesterday to see if any short term solution could be identified to assist them. The mothers outlined the difficulties of finding suitable places stating that they meet in their homes or in local parks.

During the course of the meeting, it became apparent that anecdotal evidence indicates a significant growth in the numbers of babies and toddlers in the Council area, with the likelihood that more mothers' groups may develop that seek appropriate space to conduct their meetings and activities.

The Director, Community Services then approached the Manager of the local PCYC which currently leases the Debbie and Abbey Borgia Community Recreation Centre ("DABCRC") at Steel Park, to ascertain if any appropriate meeting space may be available for this mothers' group to use.

I can report to Councillors that, as of tomorrow, these 12 local women and their babies will be able to use one of the excellent meeting spaces and associated facilities at the DABCRC, through the assistance of the PCYC, which has provided the space free of charge for this period.

The provision of free space for urgent community needs is a practice which the PCYC uses from time to time at the DABCRC.

Assisting efforts in early childhood development and family support is an objective that Council can pursue with the knowledge that the benefits to families immediately, and to the broader community in the longer term, will be substantial.

Council Meeting - 10/06 - 21 November, 2006

MM 20 - URGENT HELP FOR A LOCAL MOTHERS' GROUP
For Decision

Facilitating new local uses of the DABCRC community facilities, especially at a low usage time during the day is also an important goal.

Conclusion

Whilst the provision of this space at DABCRC is short term at present, it will be important for Council to both add value to its own existing children's and family services and to also help, where possible, self help and community based efforts in our Council area to improve early childhood development and help families manage stress.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the report be received and noted.

Councilor Morris Hanna OAM

Mayor

Council Meeting - 10/06 - 21 November, 2006

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For Decision***