

Leichhardt Municipal Council



ORDINARY MEETING

SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT  
ITEM 10A  
FRIENDS OF HEBRON LIBRARY EXHIBITION

**27 MAY 2008**

**LEICHHARDT MUNICIPAL COUNCIL**

**ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN OF THE FOLLOWING **SUPPLEMENTARY ITEM** FOR THE **ORDINARY MEETING** OF THE LEICHHARDT MUNICIPAL COUNCIL TO BE HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, LEICHHARDT TOWN HALL, 107 NORTON STREET, LEICHHARDT, ON **TUESDAY, 27 MAY 2008**.

Peter Head  
GENERAL MANAGER

**22 MAY 2008**

**BUSINESS:**

ITEM 10A FRIENDS OF HEBRON LIBRARY EXHIBITION

**LEICHHARDT MUNICIPAL COUNCIL**

**REPORT**

**DIVISION:** MAYOR & GENERAL MANAGER  
**SUBJECT:** FRIENDS OF HEBRON LIBRARY EXHIBITION  
**AUTHOR & TITLE:** DIRECTOR CORPORATE & INFORMATION SERVICES  
**FILE REF:** F08/  
**DATE:** 3 August 2018  
**WORD PROCESSING REF:** G:\BP\REPORTS\FINAL\270508\HEBRONEXHIBIT.DOC

**DIRECTOR'S SUMMARY - ORGANISATIONAL IMPLICATIONS**

**Financial Implications:** NIL  
**Policy Implications:** Mayoral Minute September 2007  
**Strategic Plan Objective:** Community Well-being  
**Staffing Implications:** NIL  
**Notifications:** NIL  
**Other Implications:** NIL

**1. Purpose of Report**

To report to Council on the Friends of Hebron exhibition at the Leichhardt Library.

**2. Recommendations**

That Council receive and note the report.

**3. Background**

On 25 September 2007 Council adopted the following Mayoral Minute:

**MAYORAL MINUTE 25 SEPTEMBER 2007  
ITEM 1 UPDATE ON FRIENDS OF HEBRON PROPOSAL**

Councillors will remember at the April 2007 Council meeting, I put forward a Mayoral minute regarding a request for support from the newly established Friends of Hebron Group.

The initial Mayoral Minute generated significant interest in the community with reports appearing in a number of media publications and Council receiving dozens of submissions regarding the proposal.

Since that time I have had a number of meetings with the Friends of Hebron Group and the Inner West Chavurah representing the Jewish community to try and find a way of moving forward on the issue. These meetings have been very constructive in discussing ways which the 2 groups can work together in helping the community on the ground in Hebron.

As a result, it is agreed by everyone that the following steps should be pursued as a way to move forward with this proposal:

- Projects to be supported by Leichhardt Council will need to meet the following criteria:
  - have widespread community support;
  - include people from both sides;
  - be genuinely humanitarian;
  - not be able to be diverted for divisive use;
  - make sure that any funding is managed by a reputable neutral agency;
  - be transparent; and
  - have a fixed timeframe for review.
- That groups work with reputable well known NGO's or charities (e.g. Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA, Austcare, Red Cross/Crescent, B'TSELEM etc) in developing the projects;
- That the groups call for submissions from other community groups or individuals to identify possible projects to pursue;
- That a selection panel of 4 Councillors (being Councillors Murphy, Hannaford, Sheehan, & Parker) be established to recommend preferred projects.

That Council facilities be made available (in line with council policy) to publicise the projects and to support fundraising activities.

**C322/07 RESOLVED MURPHY/COBLEY-FINCH**

That Council progress with the steps outlined above.  
**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

#### **4. Report**

The Leichhardt Library was approached in late 2007 to display an exhibition by the Friends of Hebron. The Library agreed to display the exhibition but at that time was unaware of the Council policy as adopted in the Mayoral Minute. The Mayor and General Manager's Office became aware of the exhibition in the week leading up to the planned opening date of Friday 9 May 2008. It was apparent that the planned exhibition was not in accordance with the Mayoral Minute as the project did not "include people from both sides" and had not involved the panel of four Councillors.

In an effort to find a constructive way forward, and after discussions with the Inner West Chavurah, it was agreed that they would also be offered the opportunity to exhibit a display, at the same time as the Friends of Hebron exhibition. The Inner West Chavurah's display was planned to commence on Saturday 10 May 2008.

Prior to the exhibition being displayed, on the afternoon of Thursday 8 May 2008 two police officers attended the Library and advised that they were there to look at the Friends of Hebron exhibition, which they expected to already be on public display. The Police were from the Counter Terrorism & Special Tactics: Operations Group and the Operations Group: Community Contact Unit. They asked to speak to the Library Manager to ascertain what had happened to the exhibition, and were advised that the exhibition was to be mounted on the walls that evening, and that there was also going to be an exhibition by the Inner West Chavurah. The police advised that they had seen the exhibition advertised on a website, and asked for the contact details of both the Friends of Hebron and the Inner West Chavurah as they wished to make contact with them. They said that there were also to be events held at the NSW Parliament House involving both groups. At no time did they request the removal of the Leichhardt exhibitions, and advised that they would come back on Monday to view them.

On the evening of Thursday 8 May 2008, the Friends of Hebron attended the Library and mounted their exhibition on the display walls. The exhibition included approximately 20 boards with text and images. The exhibition was described on one of the display boards as "*an information and education display about Hebron, Palestinian refugees and the Palestinian Nakba (catastrophe) which occurred in 1948*".

Prior to this point in time the final exhibition material had not been viewed by Council officers or Councillors. Only a small sample of photos and captions had been seen, and the Library Manager had some concerns about the final exhibition material but considered the matter required a decision at a higher

level. As such, the Library Manager allowed the exhibition to be mounted on the display walls.

The following morning the Director Corporate & Information Services attended the Library. After calling the General Manager and Mayor to discuss the contents, a joint decision was taken to postpone both the exhibition by the Friends of Hebron as well as the exhibition planned for display by the Inner West Chavurah, until the groups could meet with the panel of Councillors. There was concern that the exhibition material, particularly the text around the photos, could be divisive, and therefore not in accordance with the Council policy.

There was also some concern as to whether a public library was the appropriate place for the exhibitions, as opposed to a hall or gallery where people could make a choice as to whether they wished to view them.

The Friends of Hebron and the Inner West Chavurah were contacted and informed of the decision and the need for a combined meeting of the two groups with the panel of Councillors. A meeting has been organised for Tuesday 27 May 2008.