

CLAISE BROOK CATCHMENT GROUP INC.

MEDIA RELEASE: Further Information regarding funding applications for project with Town of Vincent

Sent to Guardian Express 28 June 2007

The CEO's Report to Council on 12 June 2007 regarding the funding proposals submitted by the Claise Brook Catchment group (Item 10.4.6) stated "*An assessment of these projects was carried out by the Town's Administration and this revealed that the majority of the funding was for the Co-ordinator's wages. (The current Co-ordinator is Ms Sally Lake, who is also a Councillor at the Town of Vincent).*" No further details regarding our seven funding applications were included in the report to Council hence our request for a deferral of the decision so the group could be given opportunity to present to Council in detail.

The report to council implies that the majority of the funding would be paid to Cr Sally Lake, the group's Coordinator. When preparing the proposals our current Catchment Co-ordinator Sally Lake indicated that she would be unable to increase the hours that she works to undertake the number of projects proposed. As the group did not know which, if any, projects would be approved, it was decided that once it was known which, if any, projects would be approved, the group would look at employing another person or organisation to deliver the project if required. In addition the two largest projects submitted were to be delivered entirely or primarily by the North Metro Conservation Group as shown clearly in the applications. ("Vincent Habitat Community Fauna Monitoring" and "Stormwater - Raising Awareness in the Hyde Park Catchment"). The funding application for Vincent Habitat Community Fauna Monitoring Program, the budget for which made up almost half (\$13,400) of the \$27,895 requested, clearly states that it was to be delivered entirely by the North Metropolitan Conservation Group not the Claise Brook Catchment Group.

Our catchment group sought to be completely open in the seven funding applications submitted to the Town of Vincent by our group and included the complete costs of each project including the cost of employing someone to deliver the project. All of the projects included a substantial volunteer contribution which would be facilitated by a project Coordinator. We noted that the application form stated "*the Town of Vincent generally does not provide funding for wages and salary*", however the Budget Sheet on page 4 included "Salaries, wages and fees" in the Costs column. It would not be possible to deliver the projects proposed on volunteer contribution alone, and therefore our group submitted the projects in good faith. We also noted that the Town's policy for Community and Welfare Grants Policy 1.1.6 allows for "*Payment for the coordination of the funded program*". The wages component was purely for the delivery of the proposed project and was not for the payment of general wages or salary or any recurrent costs.

It was implied at the Council meeting that the funding would be used to top up the Catchment Coordinator's salary. This is not possible as the Coordinator's part time salary is not adjusted according to level of funding and set against the Department of Environment and Conservation payscale for the equivalent position. There is not potential for top-up.

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