

MINUTES OF MEETING OF CHILD WELFARE COUNCIL
 HELD ON WEDNESDAY 23RD MARCH, 1966
 AT THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND PARISH HALL,
 ALICE SPRINGS.

Meeting Opened 9.10 a.m.

PRESENT: Bishop J. P. O'Loughlin - Chairman
 Archdeacon A. H. Bott
 Mr. M. Taylor
 Rev. A. E. Shepherd
 Dr. H. M. Phillipps
 Mrs. C. Pedersen
 Mrs. S. O'Reilly
 Mr. C. G. Le Cornu
 Sgt. R. I. Textor
 Rev. G. J. Symons - Secretary
 Mr. L. Penhall - Asst. Director Welfare
 Southern Division

APOLOGIES: Director of Child Welfare - Mr H. C. Giese
 Mr. B. Sutherland

NEW MEMBERS: A welcome was extended to two new members Mrs. S. O'Reilly and Mr. M. Taylor by the Chairman, and also to Mr. L. Penhall who attended as an observer.

PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE: Dr. H. M. Phillipps
 Mr. M. Taylor
 Rev. G. J. Symons

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: The Minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES:

1. It was resolved that discussion on paper by Miss M. Keller take place at the next meeting.
2. It was reported that a teacher had been appointed for the Occupation Centre, but had not yet arrived in Darwin; there had been some difficulties regarding arrangements.

CORRESPONDENCE:
Inward

1. Superintendent of Stores
2. Director of Child Welfare
3. Mrs. M. G. Moyell
4. Mrs. C. Pedersen (2)
5. Archdeacon A. H. Bott (2)

Outwards

1. Superintendent of Stores
2. Members re meeting.
3. Archdeacon A. H. Bott (2)
4. Mrs. C. Pedersen (2)

2.

It was moved that Inward Correspondence be received and Outwards endorsed.

Carried

REPORTS:

Director of Child Welfare

(See separate report)

Police

A woman Police Officer is now stationed in Alice Springs and is finding a good deal of work among women and children.

One man in Darwin charged with indecent assault on a boy of 16 years - not yet sentenced and undergoing psychiatric treatment.

A 45 year old man in Darwin, a Cottage Father at a Childrens' Home in Darwin, charged with indecent assault on several boys up to 13 years of age - awaiting hearing in the Supreme Court.

Education

(See separate report)

Health

A Schools Medical Officer, Dr. A. Evans has been appointed to the Southern Area and is now resident in Alice Springs. Dr. Evans was previously working in Schools' Medical work in New South Wales. Later Dr. Evans will move out to visit Settlement and Mission Schools.

Mr. Burn of the Acoustics Laboratory has paid a recent visit to Darwin and is at present working in Alice Springs. Many children have been examined.

An additional Survey Sister has been stationed in Alice Springs for work in outback areas.

DISTRICT REPORTS: Katherine

1 Boy charged with being unlawfully in premises and sent to Essington House, Darwin.

1 Aboriginal boy convicted on 2 charges of break, enter and stealing.

Some R.A.A.F. houses erected and should be occupied shortly.

The headmaster of the school has expressed some concern at children from other areas

3.

staying in Katherine being irregular in school attendance.

Playground equipment is not yet available.

The housing situation is a little improved but a number of caravans and tents still in use.

A woman Welfare Officer is now resident in Katherine.

Scouts, Cubs and Guides have recommenced activities.

Tennant Creek

1 case in Childrens' Court - a boy had run away from home - the matter was settled without a conviction.

Alice Springs

Drunken parties near St. Mary's Hostel have now ceased. Some prowlers have been around St. Mary's and there was one who attempted to break into a girl's bedroom - a man was later convicted of being unlawfully on the premises.

Lately there has been less difficulty with High School students in the streets in the lunch hour.

MR. L. PENHALL:

Affairs in Alice Springs are reasonably quiet, at present. Some difficulties are expected in the tourist season (40,000 tourists are already booked in for this year.)

There were several cases of neglected children during January.

There have been some cases of breaking entering and stealing among Aboriginal children - those concerned have been returned to respective settlements and missions.

Youth Organisations in Alice Springs are all in operation - the fortnightly Youth Centre Dance held under adult supervision is working well. A watch has been kept on the presence of children in hotels - and the situation has improved.

The arrival of the woman Police Officer has brought about many improvements in Alice Springs. She is co-operating well with Welfare Officers. There appears to have been a reduction in the amount of venereal disease.

Truancy in Tennant Creek has been reduced.

4.

AGENDA ITEMS:

1. Employment of Aboriginal young people from the "Centre".

Following discussion and advice on various activities regarding employment including various groups which have moved "South" for seasonal employment, it was resolved that: Whilst the Council appreciates the efforts of the Welfare Branch at present being made to gain employment for Aboriginal young people, it must express concern and suggest that greater efforts are needed among a wider range of people, both Government and private employers, to provide greater employment opportunities for "school leavers" among Aborigines in the "Centre".

Carried

2. Plans for Remand and Training Centre

Mr. Taylor gave an outline of proposals for a hostel block, a security section and administrative block. Suggested plans for staffing were stated.

Queries raised by members and suggested to the Director of Child Welfare.

(a) Consideration of inclusion of a sick bay in security section of institution.

(b) Need for inclusion of a Chapel, Library-Reading Room, and a Swimming Pool in plans.

(c) Wide workroom and craft facilities desirable.

In connection with suggestion of possible inclusion of provision for Childrens' Court with this institution it was resolved that:

In view of the fact that the Remand and Training Centre will eventually replace Essington House, it is recommended that when plans are being made for a place for the Childrens' Court, consideration be given to it being held at a central place in Darwin, other than the Court House, rather than attached to the Remand and Training Centre.

Carried

3. Effects of 1965 Amendment to Child Welfare Ordinance (No. 27 of 1965).

* (a) Reduction in deferred age of a "child" .

* (i) Reduction in number of cases in Childrens' Court.

* (ii) Increase in amount of attention possible by Welfare Officers to younger children.

(b) Changes in composition of Childrens' Courts.

(c) Child Minding Centres.

* Regulations not yet promulgated, but are in course of preparation.

5.

4. Family Service Units and Welfare Activity Among Families.
- (a) A need for "voluntary welfare workers", in matter of home assistance, especially as there is a
 - (b) shortage of Social Workers.
 - (b) Considerable tact and discretion needed in carrying out duties.
 - (c) The question was raised of possible Government financial assistance to approved "welfare workers" in this matter, especially with regard to cost of transport.
5. Accommodation for convalescent mothers and babies.
- (a) Left until discussion of paper by Miss Keller, to be undertaken at the next meeting.

GENERAL BUSINESS: Attention was drawn to apparent lack in Child Welfare Ordinance of provision for prosecution of adults other than parents, who contribute towards "neglect" of children. It was agreed that this matter should be further discussed at the next meeting.

NEXT MEETING: Suggested date and place: Wednesday
22nd June, 1966 at Darwin.

THANKS: Thanks were expressed to Archdeacon Bott and officers of the Parish for use of facilities for meeting.

Meeting Closed 3.15 p.m.