

ITEM 10. CHANGE OF GRANT RECIPIENT SAFE SPACE AND TAKE KARE AMBASSADOR PROGRAM**FILE NO: S127271****SUMMARY**

The Safe Space and Take Kare Ambassador program was established in December 2014 with the objective of getting young people home safely. Since the program commenced in December 2014 (until March 2016), there have been 292 volunteers trained, assisting 18,185 people from the year-round program and an additional 2,111 people assisted on New Year's Eve. More than 820 interventions have taken place including:

- (a) 257 people vulnerable to assault (de-escalation of conflict);
- (b) 161 people vulnerable to sexual assault;
- (c) 175 people vulnerable to theft; and
- (d) 233 people vulnerable to traffic injury.

On 15 September 2014, Council approved a cash grant of up to \$40,000 (excluding GST) that, along with \$30,000 provided by the Department of Justice, jointly funded the Safe Space and Take Kare Ambassador pilot program. The pilot commenced in December 2014 and was initially scheduled to conclude on 21 February 2015.

Additional funding was provided in February 2015 (by the City and NSW Department of Justice) to extend the pilot to 30 May 2015. This extension allowed for the service to continue to operate while an evaluation of the initial three-month pilot program was completed.

Based on the successful outcomes of the evaluation, on 27 April 2015, Council approved a cash grant of \$320,000 (excluding GST) to The Salvation Army to continue to operate the Safe Space and Take Kare Ambassador program. The funding included \$20,000 to operate the service in June 2015, and \$100,000 per year for three years (from 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2018).

The program has operated for the last 12 months under an agreement between the Thomas Kelly Youth Foundation and The Salvation Army (as the service provider). In May 2016, the Foundation and The Salvation Army mutually agreed that The Salvation Army would cease operating the service from 30 June 2016.

On 16 May 2016, Council resolved to terminate the City's funding agreement with The Salvation Army, and enter into a new agreement with the Foundation from 1 July 2016 while they finalised negotiations with St Johns Ambulance (the new service provider of the program). The negotiations between the Foundation and St Johns Ambulance are now finalised, and the focus of all parties has been to ensure that there is no disruption to the service and to provide continuity and surety for staff and volunteers during this period of transition. The City and Foundation have not yet executed the funding agreement and we recognise that the Foundation itself is also undergoing a period of transition.

It is therefore recommended that the City's previously approved funding is provided to St Johns Ambulance as the service provider, rather than the Foundation, from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2018.

No additional funding is requested or recommended in this report.

RECOMMENDATION

It is resolved that:

- (A) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to negotiate, execute and administer a new grant agreement with St Johns Ambulance for the previously approved funding of \$100,000 per year for 2016/17 and 2017/18 for the Safe Space and Take Kare Ambassador program; and
- (B) Council note that this recommendation supersedes the Resolution of 16 May 2016 to enter into an agreement with the Thomas Kelly Youth Foundation for this funding.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil.

BACKGROUND

1. On 15 September 2014, Council approved a cash grant of up to \$40,000 (excluding GST) that, along with \$30,000 provided by the NSW Department of Justice, jointly funded the Safe Space and Take Kare Ambassador pilot program. The pilot commenced in December 2014 and was initially scheduled to conclude on 21 February 2015.
2. A further Resolution of Council on 23 February 2015 approved an additional grant of \$37,500 to The Salvation Army. The City's grant funding was matched by the NSW Department of Justice and enabled the pilot program to be extended until 30 May 2015. This extension allowed for the service to continue to operate while an evaluation of the initial three-month pilot program was completed.
2. Based on the successful outcomes of the evaluation, on 27 April 2015, Council approved a cash grant of \$320,000 (excluding GST) to The Salvation Army to continue to operate the Safe Space and Take Kare Ambassador program. The funding included \$20,000 to operate the program in June 2015, and \$100,000 per year for three years (from 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2018).
3. Funding partners include the NSW Government, Macquarie Group Foundation and the Packer Family Foundation & Crown Resorts Foundation (\$100,000 per annum each) to support the delivery of the program in the CBD, the program's expansion (from 1 July 2015) into Kings Cross, and during special occasions, including New Year's Eve and significant public holidays.
4. The program operates on Friday and Saturday nights with static 'safe space' sites in Sydney Square and Kings Cross and roaming teams covering Martin Place to Haymarket and King Street Wharf, and the Darlinghurst and Kings Cross areas.
5. The safe space provides a place for people to take time out from drinking with access to a phone charging service, telephone, water and basic first aid. Referrals to the Safe Space are made by Take Kare Ambassadors, NSW Police, licensed premises, the City's CCTV control room and friends of vulnerable people.
6. Take Kare Ambassadors proactively assist people by escorting them to transport, accommodation and /or their friends and family; providing basic first aid, including band aids, thongs, bottled water and vomit bags; mobile telephone charging service; and intervening in situations where a person is vulnerable to becoming a victim of crime, such as de-escalating potential conflict situations.
7. The pilot and ongoing program are overseen by a steering group comprising representatives from NSW Police, NSW Health, St Vincent's and RPA Hospitals, NSW Department of Justice, Liquor and Gaming NSW, Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority, Transport for NSW, Thomas Kelly Youth Foundation and the City. The group meets quarterly to discuss progress and outcomes of the program and address issues as they arise.
8. The Salvation Army recently completed an internal territorial restructure that will now be followed by a national review and restructure. While the delivery of the current program has not been disrupted by these changes, it has prevented the expansion of the program and has resulted in continuity concerns.

9. In addition, The Salvation Army undertakes an annual review of all programs (nationally) with the right to cancel programs at this time. This has led to uncertainty and the possibility of mid-funding cycle change to partners, operational stakeholders, staff and volunteers.
10. Within this context, the Foundation and The Salvation Army jointly agreed that The Salvation Army will cease operating the Safe Space and Take Kare Ambassador Program on 30 June 2016.
11. On 16 May 2016, Council approved the termination of the City's funding agreement with The Salvation Army from 30 June 2016, and delegated authority to the Chief Executive Officer to enter into an agreement with the Foundation as the new recipient of the previously approved grant funds for the program (for the remaining two year period, from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2018).
12. The Foundation has undertaken due diligence on alternative service providers and has now finalised negotiations with St Johns Ambulance Australia (NSW) to become the service provider for the remaining two year funded period (1 July 2016 to 30 June 2018).
13. St Johns Ambulance Australia (NSW) is well equipped to deliver the service, with significant existing infrastructure, volunteer base and extensive, high level experience with programs and services similar to those delivered under the Safe Space and Take Kare Ambassador program. In addition, St Johns Ambulance Australia (NSW) can offer the program's existing volunteers additional first aid and related training, increasing their level of skill and engagement with the program and the community.
14. To ensure there is no disruption to the provision of the service during this transition, the Foundation, St Johns Ambulance and partners have been focused on operational requirements; however, the City recognises that the Foundation is also in a period of transition, reviewing its governance structures, staffing, board and operations.
15. While the City is confident that, over time, the Foundation's capacity will grow, to ensure a smooth transition to a new service provider and seamless administration of the City's support for the program, it is recommended that the grant agreement is made between St Johns Ambulance and the City (which will be in line with two of the four other partners), rather than with the Foundation, for the remaining two years of this grant agreement.
16. No additional funding has been requested or recommended.
17. A new agreement had not yet been finalised between the City and Foundation, therefore, no termination is required.

KEY IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030 Vision

18. *Sustainable Sydney 2030* is a vision for the sustainable development of the city to 2030 and beyond. It includes 10 strategic directions to guide the future of the city, as well as 10 targets against which to measure progress. The Safe Space and Take Kare Ambassador program is aligned with the following strategic directions:

- (a) Direction 1 - A Globally Competitive and Innovative City; and
- (b) Direction 6 - Vibrant Local Communities and Economies.

Organisational Impacts

- 19. City staff will continue to work closely with the Foundation, St Johns Ambulance, NSW Police Force and other partners to deliver the ongoing program. This work is business as usual now for the City Business and Safety Business Unit, and no additional resources are required.

Social / Cultural / Community

- 20. The Safe Space and Take Kare Ambassador program provides a benefit for visitors to the City of Sydney at night. The Take Kare Ambassadors act as additional 'capable guardians' in the night time economy and provide an extra set of 'eyes' on the streets late at night. The Safe Space provides a harm reduction service where vulnerable young people can access support and a 'safe place' to take a break from drinking and potential risky behaviour.
- 21. The service provides a tangible focal point around which the community can come together and make our city safer at night and to build a more resilient and economically sustainable city.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

- 22. Provision for the previously approved funding for the program of \$100,000 for 2016/17 is made in the draft Grants and Sponsorships 2016/17 budget (Community Services Grants Program), and provision of \$100,000 will be made in the 2017/18 budget.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

- 23. Section 356 of the Local Government Act 1993.

CRITICAL DATES / TIME FRAMES

- 24. To provide sufficient time to execute a new funding agreement with St Johns Ambulance by 1 July 2016, and ensure there is no disruption to the service, a decision to amend the funding arrangement is requested as soon as possible.

ANN HOBAN

Director City Life

Kate Murray, Manager City Business and Safety