

Item 9

Questions on Notice with Answers

1. Clover Moore Independent Team Tent at Alexandria Sunday Funday

By Councillor Jarrett

Question

The Alexandria Sunday Funday was held on 30 April 2023 at Alexandria Park Community School. At this event, there was a Clover Moore Independent Team tent set up in conjunction with the City of Sydney tent.

1. Who provided the funding for the Clover Moore Independent Team tent?
2. What was the City of Sydney's involvement in the running of the Clover Moore Independent team tent?

X086666

Answer by the Chief Executive Officer

The City of Sydney did not have any involvement in, nor provide any funding to, a Clover Moore Independent Team tent at the Alexandria Sunday Funday held on 30 April 2023 at Alexandria Park Community School.

2. City Owned Property Vacancies

By Councillor Scott

Question

In response to a Question on Notice on 29 March 2021, the City advised that the City reports on properties owned, rent collected and value in kind support provided each year in the annual report.

However, there is not an accessible list of City-owned properties publicly available.

The City holds data on the property vacancy rates of City-owned properties from 2009 to present with the average vacancy rate circa 3 per cent annually.

1. List the number of City-owned properties in the last five years that were:
 - (a) vacant for less than a month?
 - (b) vacant between a month and six months?
 - (c) vacant for six months to a year?
 - (d) vacant for longer than a year?

2. Of these, where were the properties located that were vacant for over a year? Please list their:
 - (a) address; and
 - (b) zoning.
3. Has the City of Sydney sold the property on the corner of Fig and Wattle Street, Pyrmont?
4. How many separate spaces for rent does the City own?
5. Of those properties, how many are being used and for what purpose?

X086668

Answer by the Chief Executive Officer

1. The City holds data on the property vacancy rates of city owned properties from 2018 to present.

The City's current commercial vacancy rate is 7.13 per cent. which compares favourably to the Property Council average market vacancy rate for B grade property of 12.6 per cent.

The vacancy rate has varied over the last five-year period with additional pressure on occupancy from the Covid pandemic.

2. All vacant space has a leasing agent appointed and a specific leasing strategy.

Vacant investment properties are not activated by community tenants so the leasing activity is not delayed or obstructed.

All vacant community space is taken to the market through an expression of interest.

3. Yes. Contracts exchanged and yet to settle.

4. The City owns 55 commercial buildings with 266 tenants. Some tenants have multiple floors and other tenants have part floors.

The City owns 190 Community buildings of which the leased spaces are 75 Accommodation Grants Program tenancies and seven Live/ Work spaces.

5. The commercial tenants whilst mainly office based users cover a multitude of commercial, industrial and retail uses.

The community tenancies support the Accommodation Grants Program primarily. The uses within the program are varied, however by way of example there are childcare centres, emergency services, community support groups, legal support groups along with various artistic and cultural bodies.

In addition to this there are several residential spaces that cater for the City's Creative Live Work Space Program.

3. City Properties Sold Under Market Value

By Councillor Scott

Question

1. Since 2004, what property has the City given to the NSW Government for less than market value? For each property, detail the property's:
 - (a) address;
 - (b) market value;
 - (c) price sold;
 - (d) proposed use;
 - (e) date sold; and
 - (f) how long it was vacant for before selling.

2. Since 2004, what other properties has the City sold for less than market value? For these properties, include their:
 - (a) address;
 - (b) market value;
 - (c) price sold;
 - (d) buyer;
 - (e) proposed use; and
 - (f) how long it was vacant for before selling.

X086668

Answer by the Chief Executive Officer

1. Since 2004 there have been no properties transferred or sold at below market value to the NSW Government.

Since 2004 no interest in property has been gifted to NSW Government.

2. The following properties were endorsed by Council to be divested at below market value for affordable rental housing in perpetuity.

All transaction are subject to the City's covenant registered on title that requires the land to be used as affordable rental housing in perpetuity. Should a purchaser/owner wish to sell the property at some future point the City will negotiate a market value to release the covenant.

Transaction 1

In June 2012, the City sold a portion of the former South Sydney Hospital site at 97-105 Portman Avenue within the Green Square Town Centre to City West Housing for \$6,500,000 following an Expression of Interest against a market value of \$7,600,000.

The existing properties were dilapidated and unable to be leased prior to sale.

75 affordable dwellings were delivered.

Transaction 2

In September 2015 the City sold 110 Ross Street, Harold Park to City West Housing for \$10.3 million against a market value of \$12,100,000.

The cleared land was vacant for 6 months prior to sale.

104 affordable dwellings were delivered.

Transaction 3

In April 2018 the City's surplus depot at 9-11 Gibbons Street and 5-7 Marian Street, Redfern was sold to St George Community Housing for \$15,200,000 against a market value of \$25,500,000.

The property was licenced to a local artist up until the construction commencement.

122 affordable and 40 social dwellings were delivered.

Transactions 4 and 5

The City sold part of 338-330 Botany Road and 20 O'Riordan Street being land surplus to the City's infrastructure needs, Green Square to Ashmore Connector (GSAC).

The total market value land of the surplus land was assessed at \$31,000,000.

The residue land north of the Green Square to Ashmore Connector, 330 Botany Rd, Alexandria was sold in July 2021 to City West Housing for \$18,000,000 following a discount of \$2,261,437 from an apportioned market value of \$20,261,437.

275 affordable dwellings are in the pipeline for delivery.

The residue land south of the Green Square to Ashmore Connector, 338 Botany Road, Alexandria contracted in August 2018 to St George Community Housing for \$8,080,000 against an apportioned market value of \$10,738,562.

Following demolition of the dilapidated improvements the cleared vacant land was licenced intermittently by the City and most recently occupied by the City as a staging area for the Green Square to Ashmore Connector construction.

106 affordable dwellings are in the pipeline for delivery.

4. Gambling Signage Outside Pubs

By Councillor Scott

Question

In a letter to resident Steve Pate, the City acknowledged that the 'VIP Lounge' signs (denoting a pokies room) outside the Oxford Hotel, the Courthouse Hotel and the Colombian Hotel were "unlikely" to have been approved by Council. Additionally stating that the City is "further investigating the signs' compliance in accordance with our development controls and will take action as required."

1. Did the City approve the signs at the three specified hotels?
2. What actions will the City be taking in response to the inspections of the three hotels?
3. What has the review of gambling signage uncovered?
4. How many gambling signs were there in the City of Sydney?
 - (a) How many were compliant?
 - (b) How many were not compliant?
5. What actions has the City taken against the non-compliant locations?
6. What actions will the City take in response to the review of the gambling signage, including prevention of future signage?

X086668

Answer by the Chief Executive Officer

1. The City did not provide approval for 'VIP lounge' content of the signs at the three hotels.
2. City staff are investigating the 'VIP lounge' content of the signs, as well as compliance status and impact of all signs at the hotels. Once the investigation is complete, City staff will determine an appropriate course of action.
3. Assessing the compliance status of signs associated with hotels is complex due to the number of signs and historical nature of the signage. For example, many of the sign structures have been in place prior to the City's planning records.
4. The City is investigating the VIP lounge signs in response to complaints. The City does not have records of gambling signs.
5. In relation to the three hotels, City staff will determine an appropriate course of action upon completion of the investigation in accordance with the City's Compliance Policy.
6. The City will continue to investigate complaints in accordance with the City's Compliance Policy.

5. International Student Leadership and Ambassador (ISLA) Program 2023/24

By Councillor Scott

Question

The ISLA program is a City of Sydney program that aims to increase the positive experience of all international students through training international student ambassadors to actively participate in city life and build Sydney's reputation as a preferred destination to study. The program offers free training, work integrated learning and volunteering opportunities to enhance international student leadership skills and experience, which become transferable to their future careers. Participants also have an opportunity to make new friends, build a local support network and develop a sense of belonging while getting involved in local events and activities.

It is an award-winning program – it received the NSW Government International Student Community Engagement Award – Business/Government category in 2014 and NSW Youth Work Award in 2018.

1. How long has this program been running?
2. How many students have graduated from the program?
3. What has the program achieved?
4. What is the annual cost of running the program?
5. Has the program been cancelled?
6. If so:
 - (a) Why was it cancelled?
 - (b) Who was consulted in the process?
 - (c) Will there be a similar program created to continue to support international students?

X086668

Answer by the Chief Executive Officer

1. The International Student Leadership and Ambassador (ISLA) program has been running since 2013.
2. Over 270 students have participated in the program as ambassadors since its inception.
3. The City and Ambassadors work in partnership with Study NSW, local education providers and other stakeholders, to deliver events for community including training and networking events. During the Covid-19 pandemic, the Ambassadors played an important role in supporting the wellbeing and connections of international students. In the recovery phase they were instrumental in linking the broader international student communities to support services.

4. Funding for this program is included within the Social City operational budget as reported to Council. The current financial year amount is approximately \$40,000.
5. The program has not been cancelled.
6. The program continues to support international students, with the next cohort intake planned for early 2024.

6. Redfern Community Centre Staffing

By Councillor Scott

Question

1. How many staff members have worked work at Redfern Community Centre, broken down by year?
2. What is the average number of staff employed at Redfern Community Centre, broken down by year, for the last five years?
3. How long have the current staff members worked there?
4. What are the City's plans for resourcing the Community Centre in the future?

X086668

Answer by the Chief Executive Officer

1. Redfern Community Centre has a total of six full-time equivalent positions (FTE). This is an increase of 0.5 FTE since 2018.
2. The centre has had six staff members at any one time since 2018.
3. Community centre staff members can be asked to work across all community centres as required. Redfern Community Centre staff have worked at the centre between two to 20 years.
4. The City is advertising for a Centre Manager Identified for an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person in the coming weeks. This will not impact current centre FTE.

7. Waste Collection Complaints

By Councillor Scott

Question

On 14 April 2023 Councillors received correspondence from the Transport Workers Union with an update on the industrial action. Within this correspondence, the Transport Workers Union also detailed important information about the failings of Cleanaway and the conditions that led to the strike.

However, on 9 March 2023, the Chief Executive Officer advised Councillors and staff that there was no further industrial action anticipated.

1. Broken down by year since 2004 to date, detail staffing levels for in house Waste Collection Services.
2. Broken down by year since 2004 to date, detail staffing levels for Cleanaway City of Sydney Waste Collection Services.
3. Broken down by year since 2004, detail the number of complaints received for the following reasons:
 - (a) illegally dumped rubbish;
 - (b) overdue domestic waste collection service; and
 - (c) overdue street cleaning services.
4. Broken down by year, for the last five years, detail the average response time to:
 - (a) illegally dumped rubbish;
 - (b) overdue domestic waste collection service; and
 - (c) overdue street cleaning services.
5. When will the briefing on the waste contract review be?
6. What are the different sized trucks currently operated by Cleanaway? Are they able to service Thompson Street and Shorter Lane in Darlinghurst?
7. Has the Lord Mayor met with the Transport Workers Union?
8. Is there further industrial action currently anticipated?
9. Has the City or the Lord Mayor agreed to a public meeting to address the industrial action and the related waste collection issues happening in the city?
10. What communication services is the City using to the inform residents about the waste collection service and its interruptions?
11. How many depots did the city own before November 2019, where were they located?
12. How many of these depots has the City sold since? If so, how much for?

13. For the City to insource waste again, what are the depot requirements and what is the estimated budget required?
14. Has the City of Sydney investigated the following Cleanaway issues occurring as outlined in the TWU letter to council? If so, what information was found and what action was taken?
 - (a) water pollution events;
 - (b) environment breaches;
 - (c) license condition breaches which posed a high risk of damage to the environment;
 - (d) no pay increase for over a year;
 - (e) worker's right to vote to take protected industrial action;
 - (f) engaging with individual workers instead of their nominated bargaining representative;
 - (g) failure to follow directions/orders of the Fair Work Commission relating to the conduct of a protected action ballot at City of Sydney and Cleanaway's Erskine Park Commercial site, which resulted in a delay in the ability for some workers to take protected industrial action.
15. Has the City of Sydney investigated the following outstanding matters that are preventing the industrial dispute being resolved? If so, what information has been found and what action has been taken?
 - (a) Base wage rates for waste workers under the City of Sydney Contract are 13- 14 per cent lower than the same workers performing identical work for other Councils throughout metropolitan Sydney.
 - (b) Variance in ordinary hour and rostering arrangements across Australia, with arrangements that are drastically below Award conditions and could result in unsafe working conditions, such as:
 - (i) eliminating the 8-hour working day by introducing the requirement for workers to work 9.5-hour ordinary days, reducing overtime penalties awarded for over 8 hours of work;
 - (ii) the ability to "average 38-hour ordinary hour weeks" over extended periods (3 - 12-month periods), meaning worker's hours could be sporadic, insecure and unsafe, with the ultimate goal to manipulate workers' rosters to reduce Cleanaway's requirement to pay overtime; and
 - (iii) forcing workers to work weekends regularly without existing overtime penalties applying.
 - (c) Cleanaway have refused to increase Award based allowances in line with minimum increases ordered by the Fair Work Commission over the life of the agreement, resulting in allowance being paid less than the Modern Award.

- (d) Cleanaway refuse to allow workers access to fair and reasonable representation by the TWU by:
- (i) limiting workers' access to the Fair Work Commission to resolve industrial disputes; and
 - (ii) refusing to allow the TWU the opportunity to train and advise workers of their industrial rights during an induction process.

X086668

Answer by the Chief Executive Officer

1. From 2004 to 2020 the City employed 28 staff in the garbage services team. This team serviced the south of the City, collecting red bins and kerbside bookings. They also collected three days per week in the seven-day collection areas in Kings Cross.

In 2020, the Cleanaway contract was varied to provide collection services to the south of the City.

There are currently four to six City employees working on food scraps collection, depending on the day of the week.

2. The contract requires Cleanaway to ensure adequate staffing levels to service the contract.
3. This response covers questions 3 and 4 – it is not possible to provide reports dating back to 2004 due to the volume and structure of that data.

(a)

***NOTE - Reports of illegal dumps were separated into four separate categories in late 2019. This resulted in what was previously one request potentially being recorded as up to four separate requests. This means the total number of requests received appears to have increased, but the requests have actually just been recorded differently and more accurately since 2019. The increase does not reflect service delivery issues or a mass increase in dumping.

***NOTE - Soft Landing has never held a formal systems integration with the City, meaning a delay in closing customer requests.

Year/Provider	Count of Request Number	Average of Days to close
2018		
City Cleansing	15247	1.3
2019		
City Cleansing	10559	1.2
Cleanaway	7741	2.2
Soft Landing	1287	7.3
2020		
City Cleansing	2707	2.5

Year/Provider	Count of Request Number	Average of Days to close
Cleanaway	19331	1.9
Soft Landing	3821	8.5
2021		
City		
Cleansing	1858	1.8
Cleanaway	19211	2.2
Soft Landing	4091	5.2
2022		
City		
Cleansing	2227	2.7
Cleanaway	17087	4.9
Soft Landing	3737	8.8
2023		
City		
Cleansing	849	3.1
Cleanaway	4132	4.6
Soft Landing	1080	5.9

(b)

***NOTE – The below is ALL missed services for ALL streams.

***NOTE - Soft Landing has never held a formal systems integration with the City, meaning a delay in closing customer requests.

Year/Provider	Count of Request Number	Average of Days to close
2018		
City Cleansing	1852	3.7
Cleanaway	1	3.0
URM	12940	2.6
Waste - Soft Landing	829	17.8
2019		
City Cleansing	4613	1.6
Cleanaway	9860	5.5
URM	6433	5.6
Waste - Soft Landing	943	7.5
2020		
City Cleansing	1054	5.0
Cleanaway	15157	4.9
Waste - Soft Landing	966	8.8
2021		
City Cleansing	46	1.8
Cleanaway	17955	4.4
Waste - Soft Landing	1212	4.3
2022		

Year/Provider	Count of Request Number	Average of Days to close
City Cleansing	38	1.3
Cleanaway	23684	4.6
Waste - Soft Landing	1551	6.7
2023		
City Cleansing	12	1.1
Cleanaway	12564	2.8
Waste - Soft Landing	441	7.4

***NOTE - Street cleansing is not always scheduled in the same way that other services are, streets and service types/frequency change. These requests are reactionary to customer reports of unclean streets:

(c)

	No. of complaints	Average of Days to close
2018	3147	2.6
2019	3890	2.0
2020	2928	2.3
2021	2572	3.1
2022	2924	3.0
2023	1195	3.4

4. See response to 3 above.
5. A briefing to Councillors on the Cleanaway contract was held on 27 February 2023. On 14 April 2023, City staff provided a briefing to the City's Audit Risk and Compliance Committee (ARCC) on the management of waste contracts
6. Large Rigid, Medium Rigid and Small Rigid trucks. Yes
7. No.
8. The City is not aware of any future industrial action.
9. No.
10. The City used the following communication services to advise the community of waste collection interruptions (refer 20 February City of Sydney Waste Management and Operating Environment - Attachment C - Summary of City of Sydney Communications with Local Community regarding Cleanaway Industrial Action):
 - Regular updates of a City of Sydney news article which is included in City of Sydney News digest
 - Alert in City of Sydney news digest
 - Web alerts on related corporate webpages and online forms including Missed services, illegal dumping, book a pick-up, find my bin collection day, bins left on the street, Waster services and services.

- A short global web alert on all pages on the website
 - Banner on website homepage
 - Posts on City of Sydney social media channels
 - Customer service on-hold message.
 - Emails to building managers.
 - Letterbox drops.
 - Responding to media and social media enquiries.
11. Over the years, the City has consolidated its depot operations and invested in modern facilities to meet future needs.

The Alexandra Canal Depot was completed in 2018 and the City consolidated various operations at the depot. The City invested \$55.5M in the Alexandria Canal Depot, which included land, development and consolidation costs.

The City is now starting work to upgrade and consolidate operations at the Bay Street Depot. \$42.5M has been included in the City's Long Term Financial Plan to undertake this work.

At November 2019 the City had five operational depots at the following locations:

- (a) Alexandra Canal Depot - 67C Bourke Road, ALEXANDRIA, NSW, 2015
- (b) Bay Street Depot, Ultimo - 10-16 Bay Street ULTIMO NSW 2007
- (c) Bourke Street Depot - 75 Bourke Street WOOLLOOMOOLOO NSW 2011
- (d) Parks Maintenance Depot - 38 Barwon Park Road ALEXANDRIA NSW 2015
- (e) Former Gerard Street Depot - 14 Gerard Street ALEXANDIA NSW

In addition the City owned two small buildings which provide facilities for depot staff in the field these are located at:

- (f) Arthur McElhone Reserve - 1A Billyard Avenue ELIZABETH BAY NSW 2010
- (g) Cumberland Street - 9 Cumberland Street THE ROCKS NSW 2000

At November 2019 the following depot sites were decommissioned and became surplus to City operations:

Location	Date De-commissioned	Reason De-commissioned
Former Fig and Wattle Depot 14-26 Wattle Street , PYRMONT NSW 2009	20+ Years Ago	Operations consolidated at the Bay Street Depot
Former Redfern (Marion Street) Depot 11 Gibbons Street REDFERN NSW 2016	2018	Operations consolidated at the Alexandra Canal Depot
Former Epsom Road Depot 94-104 Epsom Road ZETLAND NSW 2016	2018	Operations consolidated at the Alexandra Canal Depot

12. The City has not sold any of its operational depot sites since November 2019 – all operational sites listed above remain in operation. The following de-commissioned depot sites have been sold:

Location	Date Sold
Former Fig and Wattle Depot 14-26 Wattle Street , PYRMONT NSW 2009	Contracted
Former Redfern (Marion Street) Depot 11 Gibbons Street REDFERN NSW 2016	2020 to St George Community Housing for 122 affordable and 40 social dwellings.
Former Epsom Road Depot 94-104 Epsom Road ZETLAND NSW 2016	2021

13. The City has run a combined internal and outsourced cleansing and waste service for more than 20 years. This enables us to provide a range of services, respond to the community's needs, and adapt when short-term issues arise. The City cannot provide estimated depot requirements and estimated budget without developing a business case.
14. No.
15. No.

7. 'Yes' Campaign for a Voice to Parliament Campaign Plan

By Councillor Scott

Questions

1. When is the plan to progress the 'Yes' vote for the Voice campaign due to Council?
2. Will the plan involve allowing organisations holding events supporting the 'yes' vote to use Sydney Town Hall for free?
 - (a) What will be the conditions to hold a free or subsidised event?
 - (b) Will the Lord Mayor or a Councillor be required to be invited to speak as a condition?
3. How and when will the City update Councillors on the progress of their investigations and plans for supporting the Voice campaign?
4. Will the plan involve making informative resources on the 'yes' vote available on the following City of Sydney communication platforms?
 - (a) website;
 - (b) banner poles;
 - (c) electronic billboards;
 - (d) newsletter;
 - (e) print communications;
 - (f) city email communications;
 - (g) community centres;
 - (h) social media.

X086668

Answer by the Chief Executive Officer

1. Refer to 15 May 2023 CEO Memo - City of Sydney Campaign to Support the Voice to Parliament.
2. Yes, pending Council approval of three value in kind sponsorships at the 15 May 2023. Refer to 15 May 2023 CEO Memo - City of Sydney Campaign to Support the Voice to Parliament.
 - (a) The sponsorships will be issued in accordance with the City's Grants and Sponsorship Policy and events will be held in accordance with the City's standard term and conditions for venue hire.
 - (b) Invitations will not be a condition of the sponsorships.

3. A CEO Update will be provided once the specific elements of the campaign are determined.
4. Yes. Refer to 15 May 2023 CEO Memo - City of Sydney Campaign to Support the Voice to Parliament.