

Item 11

Questions on Notice

Capital Works Project Forecast Fees

1. By Councillor Forster

Question

In the documentation for many City of Sydney capital works projects a line item is noted for 'Other' costs, comprising 'salaries, authority fees, etc.' Please provide a detailed explanation and breakdown for these 'Other' costs.

S129269

Answer by the Chief Executive Officer

Other costs include the salaries of City of Sydney project managers responsible for the overall project management of the project, the payment of relevant consent authority charges, and the cost of a range of minor miscellaneous costs incurred in order to deliver an individual project. The quantum of each of these cost elements vary on a project by project basis.

Grants and Sponsorships Budgets

2. By Councillor Forster

Question

The City of Sydney offers a wide range of grants and sponsorships to various local organisations and businesses each year.

1. What are the total yearly budgets for each grant and sponsorship category?
2. How many rounds of funding are available for each grant and sponsorship category?

S129269

Answer by the Chief Executive Officer

Below is advice on the budgets and rounds for the grants and sponsorship program:

- Quick Response Grant Program - Open all year - \$25,000
- Matching Grants Program - Open over three rounds - \$360,000
- Environmental Grants Program - Open over three rounds - \$910,000
- Community Services Grants Program - Open over one round - \$1.16M

- Cultural and Creative Grants and Sponsorships - Open over one round - \$1.06M
- Festivals and Events Sponsorship Program - Open over two rounds - \$4.47M
- Business Support Grants – Open over two rounds - \$805,000
- Commercial Creative and Business Events Sponsorship Program - Open all year - \$705,000
- Knowledge Exchange Grants - Open all year - \$772,000
- Accommodation Grants - Open as properties become available- \$4.48M (estimated rent forgone)
- Venue Hire Support Sponsorship Program - Open all year - \$930,000 (value in kind)
- Street Banner Sponsorship Program - Open all year - \$480,000 (value in kind)

Grants - Unsuccessful Applicants

3. By Councillor Forster

Question

1. From the 2016/17 financial year to date, how many unsuccessful applications have been lodged in all City of Sydney grant rounds?
2. How many of these unsuccessful applicants have re-submitted applications for the same grants in subsequent rounds?
3. Of these re-submitted applications, how many were successful?

S129269

Answer by the Chief Executive Officer

Since 1 July 2016, the City has received approximately 1,100 applications through the following funding programs presented to Council:

- Business Support Grant
- Commercial Creative and Business Events Sponsorship
- Community Services Grant
- Cultural and Creative Grants and Sponsorship
- Environmental Performance Grants
- Festivals and Events Sponsorship
- Knowledge Exchange Sponsorship
- Matching Grant

- Quick Response Grant
- Village Business Grant (discontinued)

The success rate across these programs for this time period is approximately 62 per cent. Details of individual applications are submitted to Council and contained on the City's website.

Applications that are re-submitted in subsequent rounds are generally substantially altered or the organisation will prepare a new application, therefore it is not possible to determine the number of successful re-submitted applications.

Redfern Legal Centre - Grants

4. By Councillor Forster

Question

Since September 2012, how much funding has the Redfern Legal Centre received from the City of Sydney, broken down by year and identified by grant type?

S129269

Answer by the Chief Executive Officer

The City provides grants and sponsorships to a range of organisations to deliver upon its strategic outcomes.

Since the 2012/13 financial year, Redfern Legal Centre has received approximately 26 grants from the City to a value of \$390,079 cash and \$125,310 in value-in-kind. The organisation has also been a tenant of the Accommodation Grants program through this period and received reduced rate rent.

Lord Mayor's Budget

5. By Councillor Chung

Question

In the 2019/20 Operating Budget it was reported that the Office of Lord Mayor budget totalled \$3.7 million.

1. Could the Chief Executive Officer please provide a line-by-line item breakdown of where the \$3.7 million is allocated within the Office of the Lord Mayor?
2. How many staff in the Office of the Lord Mayor are allocated to communications and what is the total cost component for communications staff?
3. How many staff in the Office of the Lord Mayor are allocated to policy and what is the total cost component for policy staff?

4. How many staff in the Office of the Lord Mayor are allocated to administration and what is the total cost component for administrative staff?
5. How many staff in the Office of the Lord Mayor are allocated to protocol and what is the total cost component for protocol staff?
6. What is the total number of vehicle staff for the Office of the Lord Mayor and the total cost component of driver salary and car entitlement?
7. Could the Chief Executive Officer please provide a detailed line item report of the number of staff (total and full-time equivalent) and their positions employed in the Office of the Lord Mayor each year from 2004 to 2019?

S129268

Answer by the Chief Executive Officer

The Councillors' Expenses and Facilities Policy approved by Council outlines the support provided by the City to the Lord Mayor, Deputy Lord Mayor and Councillors. It notes that in 2017 the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal observed the "the role of Lord Mayor of the City of Sydney has significant prominent reflecting the CBD's importance as home to the country's major business centres and public facilities of state and national importance. The Lord Mayor's responsibilities in developing and maintaining relationships with stakeholders, including other councils, state and federal governments, community and business groups, and the media are considered greater than other mayoral roles in NSW."

Accordingly, under the Policy there is provision for an Office of the Lord Mayor to provide support and related services to the Lord Mayor for the purposes of: policy development and advocacy; strategic planning and research; communications and media; community, government and industry liaison; exercise of civic and ceremonial functions; and administrative support. The Policy also provides for a dedicated vehicle and driver made available to the Lord Mayor to assist with carrying out the duties of civic office. The vehicle and driver are to be available for other duties when not utilised by the Lord Mayor.

Under Council's adopted delegations the Lord Mayor has authority to determine the structure of the Office of the Lord Mayor in consultation with the Chief Executive Officer, subject to the costs being within the annual budget allocated and providing the staffing of the unit does not exceed the equivalent of 22 full time staff (FTE).

The 2019/20 Budget for the Office of the Lord Mayor is allocated as follows:

- Salaries and Wages: \$3,255,005 (including employee on costs, superannuation and Workers Compensation Insurance)
- Non Salaries and Wages Related Expenditure: \$441,870 (including event related expenditure for citizenship ceremonies, Christmas events and other civic functions)

Currently, the Office of the Lord Mayor employs the equivalent of 21 full time staff:

- Chief of Staff and 4 Managers (Policy, Executive Support, Communications and Protocol)
- 5 FTE staff in Protocol
- 4 FTE staff in Policy
- 4 FTE staff in Administration
- 3 FTE staff in Communications

Prior to the 2016 Council Election, the Office of the Lord Mayor and staffing arrangements were not included in the Councillor's Expenses and Facilities Policy (therefore staffing numbers were not fixed at 22 FTE) and staffing numbers and arrangements varied over time. However, the Office of the Lord Mayor's budget has remained largely stable in real terms over the past decade despite the growth in population, visitors and economic activity in the Local Government Area – the operating result budget has, on average over the last decade, grown in line with CPI.

Police Parking Spaces in Surry Hills

6. By Councillor Phelps

Question

It is understood that in recent years the City has approved an increasing number of parking spots for Surry Hills police that were previously civilian car spaces.

Additionally, GoGet car spaces have further reduced local residents' ability to park, and police have been seen parked in GoGet car spaces.

Could the Chief Executive Officer please advise on the following:

1. How many public car spaces has the City now allocated to police in or around the Surry Hills police station?
2. On what dates did Council allocate original and additional spaces to the Surry Hills Police station and how many spaces were given on each date?
3. What consultation is done with the community prior to allocating these spots?
4. What efforts are made to contact businesses likely to be affected when those businesses are tenants rather than landlords?
5. How does the City understand and address residents' and local business' concerns about the lack of parking in Surry Hills?
6. What actions are being undertaken to address local residents concerns about reductions in available parking in Surry Hills?

S129272

Answer by the Chief Executive Officer

1. A total of 35 parking spaces have been allocated for police vehicles on Goulburn and Riley Street adjacent to the Sydney Police Centre (SPC) and the Surry Hills Police Station (SHPS).
2. 27 of the above parking spaces were installed pre-2007. Note: pre-2007, the Police also had an additional large off-street car-park on land which has subsequently been used to build Harmony Park for the benefit of the residents of Surry Hills.

In July 2017, the City changed 2P/4P Ticket parking spaces to eight Police parking spaces on Riley Street, along the eastern side of the Police Station. The change was in response to a request from NSW Police Service for additional eight parking spaces for “first response” police vehicles to facilitate quicker emergency response times for the increased number of operational vehicles at the SPC and SHPS.

In February 2018, the City changed parking restrictions on Riley, Goulburn and Campbell Streets to consolidate existing police parking from the surrounding area to be closer to the SPC and SHPS. There was no increase to police parking, however two additional ticket parking spaces were changed to 2P/4P permit parking on the western side of Riley Street north of Goulburn Street all endorsed by the Local Pedestrian Cycling, Traffic Calming Committee (LPCTCC)

3. The City consults the local community in accordance with Section 8A (3) of the Local Government Act 1993 and the City’s Community Engagement Strategy 2017. General parking and traffic changes are notified by mailed letters (via Australia Post) to properties within a 50 metre radius of the proposal. Major projects are additionally exhibited on the Sydney Your Say section of the City’s website for feedback and shared through digital channels. Traffic changes in accordance with Section 116 of the Roads Act 1993, must be notified in a local newspaper for at least 28 days.

Letters are sent to the registered addresses of the property and addressed to “The Occupant”. Letters also advise to “please pass this information onto any tenants or lessees in your building who may not have received this letter”.

Notification processes are currently being reviewed in response to changes to the Environmental Assessment and Planning Act 1979, new technologies and available communication channels.

The City currently notifies of general parking and traffic changes by mailed letters (via Australia Post) only, however the Chief Executive Officer has recently requested that traffic changes also be notified to businesses in the vicinity via letterbox drops as well as via Australia Post.

All parking and traffic proposals have been notified via mailed letters since prior to 2011.

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5. The City considers the needs of all residents and business, and their visitors. This is undertaken in the regular review of the Neighbourhood Parking Policy and Car Sharing Policy; the consideration of proposed changes to on-street parking; and the assessment of new development.

The major approaches include:

- reducing parking pressure by increasing alternative transport options - improved walking and cycling facilities; car sharing; and lobbying NSW Government for improvements to buses;
 - managing on-street parking to reflect land use and development;
 - providing new permits (e.g. Tradespersons Parking Permit) and increasing Visitor Parking Permit allocations;
 - paid parking where appropriate;
 - enforcement to ensure compliance and turnover; and
 - using development controls so parking needs of new developments are met off-street.
6. City staff are implementing the measures outlined at Part 5.

New Year's Eve Party Fund Allocation

7. By Councillor Scott

Question

In May 2017, the City of Sydney cancelled The Lord Mayor's New Year's Eve Party, due to be held at the Sydney Opera House. It was promised that the funding for the party would be reallocated to non-specific projects aligned with the Environmental Action Strategy 2016-2021. Can the Chief Executive Officer please provide the following:

1. An update on the progress of any projects currently being funded by the budget reallocation.
2. A complete account of how the money has been reallocated in the period since the first cancelled New Year's Eve Party.

S129275

Answer by the Chief Executive Officer

When the Lord Mayor returned from the C40 Conference in Mexico, she presented a Lord Mayoral Minute noting the Deadline 2020 report by C40 which highlighted the desperate urgency of action on climate change. In response, Council requested that the Chief Executive Officer accelerate the implementation of the 2016-2021 Environment Action Strategy. Projects funded since then are progressing and are reported biannually in the Green Report.

The latest green report for December 2018 can be found here:

https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0011/311222/Green-Report-July-to-December-2018.pdf

Cancelling the Lord Mayor's New Year's Eve event saved \$463,500 from the budget. Saving those funds was one of the budget savings that allowed the City to increase funding for climate related initiatives by \$2.4M.

Light Rail Safety Concerns

8. By Councillor Scott

Question

Residents have raised concerns about the safety of the South East Light Rail, particularly in Wimbo Park, where current signage indicates a 40km/h speed limit despite high levels of pedestrian traffic, including children at the nearby school.

1. Does the City of Sydney have a plan to ensure pedestrian safety along the rail corridor, particularly in the highlighted areas?
2. Has the City received briefings concerning the future of the South East Light Rail project? If so, what is the estimated date of opening and have those briefings substantially addressed resident concerns about safety?

S129275

Answer by the Chief Executive Officer

1. City staff have had discussions with concerned residents about safety in Wimbo Park. The shared path and park is physically separated from the light rail corridor with a planting strip and a fence. It is also unlikely that a tram will reach 40km/h as Wimbo Park sits between two signalised intersections which the light rail vehicle must stop at.
2. The planned date for operation of the light rail is still March 2020.

Altrac has undertaken a significant risk assessment with all stakeholders (including the City) using an Independent Safety Assessor (ISA). The ISA's sign off on the process and risk mitigation measures allows the Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator (ONSR) to decide if the light rail is safe to operate. ONSR is responsible for the ongoing regulation of the light rail operations under the applicable rail safety laws.