

Item 11

Questions on Notice with Answers

1. Leaf Blowers

By Councillor Scott

Question

1. Please list the contracts in which it is permissible to use a petrol fuelled leaf blower for green space maintenance or construction? Broken down by contract when do they expire?
2. Please detail the emissions annually produced by leaf blowers broken down by contract permitting their use?

X086668

Answer by the Chief Executive Officer

1. Green Space Maintenance Contracts:
 - (a) Parks and Open Space Maintenance Contract – Contract 1851:
 - five petrol driven blowers with 22 battery powered blowers (82% battery powered), to be transitioned to 100% battery powered by 30 June 2022. The initial term ends 31 May 2024, with a two-year extension option, concluding 31 May 2026.
 - (b) Redfern Oval Maintenance Services – Contract 1752:
 - one petrol blower, to be transitioned to battery powered by 30 June 2022. The initial term ends 31 March 2022, with and exercised two-year option, concluding 31 March 2024.

Construction Contracts:

- (a) Contract 1840A – Civil and Sydney Street Infrastructure Works Contract: Expires 26 September 2024
 - (b) Contract 1840B – Civil and Sydney Street Infrastructure Works Contract: Expires 26 September 2024
 - (c) Contract 1933 – Structures Maintenance Contract: Expires 30 January 2026
 - (d) Contract 1641 – Pavement Marking Services: Expires 2 July 2022
2. Green Space Maintenance Contracts:

The City does not report on emission rates per unit (e.g. blower), however using fuel consumption estimates as a percentage of the City's total operational emissions (FY21 - 12,666 Tonnes CO₂e), the petrol blowers emission would be a fraction of one percent.

Construction Contracts:

Hand-held, battery-powered blowers are used by contractors under Contract 1840A, Contract 1840B and Contract 1933 prior to pouring concrete or patching asphalt.

Petrol-fuelled blowers are used by the Pavement Marking contractor under Contract 1641. Emissions data for this equipment is not recorded by the contractor.

2. Pandemic Leave and Stand Downs for City Staff

By Councillor Scott

Question

1. Broken down by year, how many City staff have been stood down under the Splinter Award, and for how long?
2. Broken down by month, how many City staff have had their hours reduced since lockdown began in June 2021?

X086668

Answer by the Chief Executive Officer

1. There have been no changes since the last update was provided to Council on 15 November 2021.
2. No employees had their hours reduced in June 2021. In July 2021, one part time employee had their hours reduced, with the hours not worked being paid as Covid-19 Special Paid Leave as per the 2021 Splinter Award. This employee remained on this arrangement during August and September 2021 and returned to their normal working hours on 11 October 2021.

In August 2021, 70 employees in Infrastructure Maintenance worked on a roster basis which included a portion of their ordinary pay being paid as Covid-19 Special Paid Leave as per the 2021 Splinter Award. This arrangement ceased on 11 October 2021 when employees returned to their substantive rosters.

On 11 October 2021, 131 City Rangers also commenced working a revised roster which included a portion of their ordinary pay being paid as Covid-19 Special Paid Leave as per the 2021 Splinter Award. This arrangement ceased on 20 November 2021 when employees returned to their substantive rosters.

3. Fitness Passports

By Councillor Scott

Question

1. How many members are affected by the City's decision to remove its facilities from the Fitness Passport program?
2. What community consultation was undertaken on the City's decision to remove its facilities from the Fitness Passport program?

3. What compensation financial or other will members receive from this reduction in services?
4. What are the projected savings from cutting the City services from the Fitness Passport program and where will these funds be redirected to? What will the savings be for the City as a result of cutting City services and what are the savings for Belgravia?

X086668

Answer by the Chief Executive Officer

1. Fitness Passport is a private commercial company that sells its health and fitness memberships to corporate businesses and government departments. Individual community members cannot purchase this Fitness Passport memberships.

Fitness Passport will not provide the City with data on the number of members for privacy reasons. Belgravia advise that in Q2 (2021/22) Fitness Passport holders were approximately 4 per cent of all attendances.

Belgravia Leisure entered into a national agreement in 2017 to accept the Fitness Passport 'membership' at all facilities they manage, without the City's knowledge or consent. The membership fee paid by Fitness Passport customers was negotiated with Belgravia Leisure and are not included in the City's advertised and approved fees and charges. This was a breach of process by Belgravia Leisure.

2. Belgravia Leisure provided Fitness Passport holders with 56 days written notice of the withdrawal of the City's facilities from the program.

Fitness Passport is a private commercial company that sells its health and fitness memberships to corporate businesses and government departments. Individual community members cannot purchase this Fitness Passport memberships.

Fitness Passport sells their membership at approximately \$15 per week or 50 per cent of the Council approved 360 membership fee. The City's 360 membership fee is benchmarked with commercial fitness providers like Fitness First, Virgin Active and neighbouring Council facilities. The heavily reduced/subsidised Fitness Passport membership fee is unfair to the 4,900 plus 360 members and undermines the financial sustainability of the City's aquatic facilities service. Since Covid-19 the operation of the aquatic services contract has gone from generating a \$960K guaranteed payment to the City to a forecast cost of \$4.7M in 2021/22.

Belgravia Leisure provided Fitness Passport holders with 56 days written notice of the withdrawal of the City's facilities from the program.

3. This is not a reduction in service. Fitness Passport is a flat weekly fee that allows the member of that program to use any participating facility. Their fee does not change with the addition or removal of facilities participating in the program. If Fitness Passport members choose to take out a 360 Pro membership, they can receive a 30 per cent discount (Council approved corporate rate) equalling \$20.65 per week up until June 2022.
4. The withdrawal from the Fitness Passport product will provide fairness and equity to existing 360 members. Fitness Passport holders, should they make enquiries, will be encouraged by Belgravia Leisure to take out a City of Sydney membership. Any additional revenue will flow through to the City in offsetting the cost of providing aquatic facility services.

4. Community Consultation on proposed changes to Resident Parking in Cross, Foss, Clare and Woolley Streets Glebe/Forest Lodge

By Councillor Weldon

Question

1. Does the City of Sydney Neighbourhood Parking Policy state that “the community will be consulted on proposed changes”.
2. Where changes to parking arrangements are being considered by Council, what process, steps and actions by Council constitute “community consultation”.
3. What community consultation was undertaken by Council on proposed changes to resident parking in Cross, Foss, Clare and Woolley Streets Glebe/Forest Lodge during 2020/2022.
4. In 2020/2021 did Council recommend to Transport for NSW that a number of parking spaces in Cross, Foss, Clare and Woolley Streets be converted from 2 hour parking with resident and visitor exemptions to 15-minute parking, 8am to 10pm, 7 days per week.
5. If the answer to 4 is yes, did Council circumvent its own Neighbourhood Parking policy in relation to community consultation.
6. Are there changes proposed by Council to resident/visitor parking in Cross, Foss, Clare and Woolley Streets Glebe/Forest Lodge to vary the current 2 hour parking limit with resident/visitor exemptions.

X086670

Answer by the Chief Executive Officer

1. Yes. Section 2.8 of the City’s Neighbourhood Parking Policy 2018 states that:

“Given the strong community interest in kerbside parking management, the City will ensure that local residents have an opportunity to comment on proposed changes.

The community will be consulted on proposed changes that modify controls, time limits applying to legal parking spaces or the introduction of parking meters. Where changes to signage are required for safety or regulatory compliance, the City will notify the nearby community of the change.

Proposals for significant parking changes will be assessed for technical compliance by the Pedestrian, Cycling and Traffic Calming Committee, and then reported to Council for a decision.”

2. Where changes to parking arrangements are being considered by the City, staff will send a consultation letter and proposed parking plan via letter box drop to consult with properties that are within 50 metre radius of the subject parking spaces.
3. The Bridge Road pop up cycleway is a NSW Government project on a State Road.

Transport for NSW implemented it in September 2020 as part of the Covid Health Orders. Transport for NSW notified the community before constructing the pop up cycleway.

The City received requests from the community for changes to resident parking as a result of the proposed Transport for NSW pop up cycleway. The City considered these requests and identified potential locations and changes for Transport for NSW to consider.

The City has made no changes to resident parking

4. The City passed on requests from the community for changes to resident parking as a result of the pop up cycleway to Transport for NSW. The City considered these requests and identified potential locations and changes for Transport for NSW to consider.

The City understands that the only modification to parking that Transport for NSW made was in response to a request from a resident to move one mobility parking space from Jarocin Avenue to Clare Street.

5. No.
6. The City has no current plans to implement changes to resident parking in these streets.

5. Initiatives endorsed by City of Sydney for World Pride 2023

By Councillor Weldon

Question

1. What is the current position regarding the incentives unanimously endorsed by the City of Sydney Council to activate the day and night economy in Oxford Street in preparation for an influx of visitors and locals for World Pride 2023?
2. How and when will Councillors be updated regarding the readiness of the City of Sydney for this important global event?

X086670

Answer by the Chief Executive Officer

1. In June 2021, Council resolved to provide a \$500,000 (excluding GST) cash sponsorship to Sydney World Pride Limited. City staff are currently finalising the contractual agreement for execution. Staff are also working with organisers to understand and quantify the City's additional value-in-kind contribution to support the delivery of the event program, including waste and cleansing services, street banners and fee waivers for activation in the public domain, all of which will be tabled for Council's consideration. The City is currently promoting World Pride 2023 to local businesses and creatives along Oxford Street and surrounds, including the opportunity for them to apply to the City's grant programs to fund their own activations in the lead up to, and during the event.
2. The City is working with the NSW Government, business stakeholders and community groups to ensure that Sydney is ready and open to host World Pride 2023 including exploring several street closures in and around Oxford Street. Councillors will be kept informed through CEO Updates as well as the inclusion of the World Pride 2023 events in the key diary dates.

6. Increasing Foot Traffic in the CBD

By Councillor Weldon

Question

1. What is the timetable for Council employees returning to work in Council offices in the CBD?
3. What action is Council proposing to take to encourage businesses in the CBD to require employees to return to work in the CBD?
4. What Council initiatives are currently in effect to increase foot traffic in the CBD?

X086670

Answer by the Chief Executive Officer

1. City employees who have been working from home will return to the office from Monday 28 February 2022.
2. City employees who have been working from home will return to Council's CBD office at least three days a week from 28 February 2022. The City is working with the NSW Government, Property Council of Australia, Business Council of Australia and Business Sydney on a marketing campaign to encourage other businesses to do this from 1 March 2022.
3. The City has been working in collaboration with other government agencies, industry and community groups to increase foot traffic and maximise collective impact as the city economy reopens. Following the second lockdown in October 2021 when vaccination rates increased and restrictions were lifted, the City's programming was aimed at building consumer confidence through the safe activation of public space to bring back vibrancy including Sydney Christmas trees, decorations, lights and choirs, Sydney New Years' Eve fireworks, Sydney Lunar Festival events and art installations, Sydney Summer Streets Program with one off closures along high streets to aid recovery of retail, a \$12 million pipeline of grants to activate the city over several months, continued fee waivers for outdoor dining and a new grant of up to \$4 million for business and creatives to kick-start unique precinct activations in the city centre during 2022/23. The City launched a major marketing campaign "Your City Is Waiting For You" in December 2021 to invite people back into the city and to reframe it as a place of discovery.