

Grants and Sponsorship - Ad Hoc Grant Redfern Legal Centre

File No:

Summary

At its meeting on 27 June 2022, Council resolved to continue to advocate for the protection of public housing in Glebe, including a request that the Chief Executive Officer investigate the provision of a financial contribution to the Redfern Legal Centre over the next 12 months.

The NSW Land and Housing Corporation has advised the City that there are three NSW Land and Housing Corporation (LAHC) sites subject to current or future redevelopment.

Redfern Legal Centre Ltd has advised the City that demand for their tenancy advice and advocacy services has increased when compared to the same period last year, including an 85 per cent increase in enquiries and 57 per cent increase in client advocacy and other legal services.

This report recommends an ad-hoc cash grant of up to \$50,000 for Redfern Legal Centre Ltd to provide tenancy support, advocacy and legal advice to social housing residents impacted by current and future redevelopments in Glebe and across the local government area over the next twelve months.

Recommendation

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council approve an ad-hoc cash grant up to \$50,000 (excluding GST) for Redfern Legal Centre Ltd to provide social housing residents impacted by current and future redevelopments in Glebe and across the local government area with tenancy support, advocacy and legal services for 12 months from the date of entering into the grant agreement;
- (B) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to negotiate, enter into and administer a grant agreement with Redfern Legal Centre Ltd to give effect to this resolution.

Attachments

Nil.

Background

1. At its meeting on 27 June 2022, Council resolved to continue advocating for the protection of public housing in Glebe. It was requested that the Chief Executive Officer investigate the provision of a financial contribution to the Redfern Legal Centre Ltd over the next 12 months.
2. The purpose of financial contribution would be to support Redfern Legal Centre in its work to provide tenant support, advocacy and legal advice to public housing tenants, and to advocate for and assist public housing tenants with the Land and Housing Corporation during the transition.
3. It was also requested that the Chief Executive Officer report back to Council with a recommendation on a proposed contribution to the Redfern Legal Centre.
4. Redfern Legal Centre advise that demand for their tenancy advice and advocacy services has increased when compared to the same period last year, including an 85% increase in enquiries and 57 per cent increase in client advocacy and other legal services.
5. The NSW Land and Housing Corporation provides regular updates to City staff on the status of projects and investigation of sites. There are three NSW Land and Housing Corporation (LAHC) sites in Glebe subject to current or future redevelopment.
6. Demolition of 17-31 Cowper Street and 2A-2D Wentworth Park Road has been completed. The NSW Land and Housing Corporation has advised that 19 households were impacted by this redevelopment. According to advice from the NSW Land and Housing Corporation, all tenants have been relocated permanently to a range of localities based on their social and property needs.
7. The current residents of 82 Wentworth Park Road received notice on 29 July 2022 confirming the redevelopment of this location. The NSW Department of Communities and Justice Relocations Team will contact residents in the coming weeks to talk through the relocation process which is expected to take place over the next 12 months. Twelve of the 17 units are currently occupied at 82 Wentworth Park Road.
8. The Franklyn Street redevelopment will encompass the buildings bound by Franklyn, Glebe and Bay Streets. Residents of these buildings have been advised by the NSW Land and Housing Corporation that relocations will not commence until 2025.
9. In addition to sites in Glebe and the staged redevelopment of Waterloo, projects are planned for Eveleigh and Redfern.
10. Residents of Explorer Street in Eveleigh were advised in November 2020 that their homes would be subject to redevelopment. This proposal is on hold with current advice from NSW Land and Housing Corporation stating that consideration is being given to feedback from community and the City of Sydney to determine how to best meet the needs of current and future social housing residents across NSW.
11. Information on relocation plans for the Waterloo redevelopment is expected to become available in 2023 with tenancy relocations commencing in 2024. The expressions of interest for a developer and community housing providers to deliver on the objectives of the Waterloo Renewal are open until 26 August 2022.

12. Current City of Sydney grants supporting social housing residents include the Waterloo ABCD Project with Counterpoint Community Services that funds community development activities to build resident capacity to navigate the Waterloo redevelopment process. To date this has included sessions on the planning proposal for Waterloo South and linking planning students with residents to author submissions to the public exhibition process earlier this year.
13. The Redfern Waterloo Aboriginal Community Capacity Building Housing Equity project was endorsed by Council to resource Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents in advocacy for housing equity in the redevelopment of Redfern and Waterloo.
14. The impacts of social housing redevelopments and need for legal support are not limited to residents in Glebe. Redfern Legal Centre has confirmed an increase in demand for legal services for social housing tenants across the local government area.
15. This report recommends an ad-hoc cash grant of up to \$50,000 for Redfern Legal Centre Ltd to provide tenancy support, advocacy and legal advice to social housing residents impacted by current and future redevelopments in Glebe and across the local government area over the next twelve months.

Key Implications

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision

16. Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision renews the communities' vision for the sustainable development of the city to 2050. It includes 10 strategic directions to guide the future of the city, as well as 10 targets against which to measure progress. This report is aligned with the following strategic directions and objectives:
 - (a) Direction 7 - Resilient and diverse communities. Our city and its public places and infrastructure can withstand impacts from a changing climate and emergency situations. We work with communities, businesses and other organisations to strengthen connections and networks, to prepare our city and be able to recover from most situations.
 - (b) Direction 10 - Housing for all. This is a city where everyone has a home. Social, affordable and supported housing is available for those who need it. High-quality housing is available for everyone.

Organisational Impact

17. Relationship management for this grant can be achieved through existing staff resources.

Social / Cultural / Community

18. This strengthens the City's commitment to social housing being available for those who need it by supporting current social housing residents impacted by redevelopment.

Financial Implications

19. Funding for this project will be made available from the Community services grant program budget for 2022/23.

Relevant Legislation

20. Section 356 of the Local Government Act 1993 provides that a council may, in accordance with a resolution of the council, contribute money or otherwise grant financial assistance to persons for the purpose of exercising its functions.
21. Public exhibition of this grant is not required because the funds are being paid to a not-for-profit organisation.

Critical Dates / Time Frames

22. Grant agreement to be executed subject to Council approval from September 2022 for a period of up to 12 months.

Public Consultation

23. Redfern Legal Centre have been consulted to provide advice on their current and anticipated future demand for services.

EMMA RIGNEY

Director City Life

Rebecca Martin, Safe City Manager