

CITY CENTRE COORDINATION AND ACTIVATION DEVELOPMENT FOR THE 2024 – 2034 LONG-TERM PLAN

To: Council

Meeting Date: Tuesday 28 February 2023

From: Rhiannon Suter, Manager – Strategy and Policy

Approved: Michael Day - Group Manager - Finance and Assurance

Approved Date: Thursday 23 February 2023

Open Agenda: No

Public Excluded Agenda: Yes

Reason(s) for the Public Excluded

Section of the Act	Subclause and Reason under the Act	“Plain English” Reason	When Report Can Be Released
7(2)	(b) protect information where the making available of the information- (ii) would be likely to unreasonably prejudice the commercial position of the who supplied or is the subject of the information	HWCP Management Limited is providing information that if public may prejudice its position when selling the land	If and when land is sold.
7(2)	(i) enable any local authority holding the information to carry on, without prejudice or disadvantage, negotiations (including commercial and industrial negotiations)	Commercial confidentiality	If and when the land is sold and/or Council has no interest in the land

Purpose and Summary

This report provides Council with an overview of the City Centre coordinator role and provides advice on next steps for development of options for coordination and activation for the Long-term plan.

Recommendations

That Council

1. Receive the report “City centre coordination and activation development for the 2024 – 2034 Long-term plan”

2. Request officers to negotiate extension of the current Great South contract to 30 June 2024, to include updated deliverables aligned to Council's vision and priorities.
3. Request development of options for city centre coordination and activation, to include discussion of:
 - a. Alignment to Council vision and priorities
 - b. Measureable outcomes
 - c. Role of Council and other stakeholders
 - d. Mechanism for delivery
 - e. Investment required.
4. Note that an estimated maximum \$50,000 will be required to complete this work, which can be allocated from existing city centre budgets.
5. Note that engagement with city centre stakeholders and ratepayers through this process is recommended and that formal consultation with the targeted ratepayers will be required as part of the Long-term plan.

Background

One of the primary mechanisms by which the Council supports vibrancy is via the role of the City Centre Coordinator. This role is paid for through a targeted rate on city centre businesses. (See Figure 1 below: Map B: City Centre Coordinator Rating Boundary).

This role has been through a number of evolutions and since 2020 has been delivered on behalf of Council by Great South. It has been an orphan role both while delivered here at Council and in its current form at Great South. There is no area within Council where the responsibility for city centre activation clearly sits.

Over the time of Covid and the rebuild the role inevitably focused more on the relationships between the retailers, other stakeholders, the Council and its contractors rather than on activation events and promotions. The role was providing regular updates to the City Centre Governance Group.

Figure 1 Map B: City Centre Coordinator Rating Boundary

Map B. City Centre Coordinator Rating Boundary



Issues and Options

Analysis

Given Council's priority focus on the city centre and the completion of works within the City Centre it is timely to give attention to the form which support for activation takes in the future. It is recommended that a strategic assessment needs to be made of the best mechanism by which to deliver coordination and activation support.

Council's priorities and the outcomes it is seeking to achieve may be better delivered through another mechanism rather than a Council based coordination function. E.g. the role could be private sector led or it could be replaced with a range of competitive contracts to deliver outcomes focused events and activations.

It will be important through the process to seek the views of a range of stakeholders, including the businesses which pay the targeted rate, which it should be noted, is a much larger and more diverse group than the central city retailers which currently engage directly with the role.

Significance

The immediate next steps proposed in this report – extension of the Great South contract and engagement of a consultant to prepare options for Council consideration – is not significant. Any change in focus of the role proposed through those options are likely to meet significance under the policy and will require consultation with the targeted ratepayers.

Options

It is recommended to extend the existing contract with Great South which expires at the end of the 2022/2023 financial year to the end of the 2023/2024 financial year. Updated outcomes and deliverables which better align with Council priorities can be added to the contract. This approach will enable activation to be supported in the short term while more considered thinking is given to how this area should be supported on an ongoing.

Options will be developed for city centre coordination and activation to be consulted on as part of the Long-term plan. The development of options will include consideration of:

- a. Alignment to Council vision and priorities
- b. Measureable outcomes
- c. Role of Council and other stakeholders
- d. Mechanism for delivery
- e. Investment required.

Due to this type of work being outside of Councils current staffing capability, staff will seek the input of an experienced consultant in order to guide the engagement process and deliver the options report.

Community Views

Those ratepayers paying targeted rates for the City Centre Coordinator were surveyed in 2018 regarding whether they wished the role to continue and the areas of focus they preferred. Priorities included more regular engagement and more events to be held within the city to attract people in to shop. This survey informed the decision to continue the role.

The scoping process should include engagement with retailers, hospitality businesses, other businesses within the targeted rating area and a range of community stakeholders.

The views of all targeted ratepayers will need to be sought through formal consultation in 2024.

Implications and Risks

Strategic Consistency

This proposed approach is intended to improve strategic alignment between the focus of the City Centre Engagement role and the vision and priorities of Council.

Financial Implications

There are reserves available from the provision of the central city coordination activities which can be appropriately used for this scoping work.

It should be noted that the options developed through the scoping work may require a higher level of investment than available currently through the targeted rate. Dependent on the focus of the activities, it may be appropriate that some support for the activity come through general rate, if the public benefit increases. This information will be provided to Council to inform their decision making.

Legal Implications

Council has contracted this work to Great South. It is through the terms of the contract that Council fulfils its responsibility to specify the requirements for this work. It does not have employment responsibilities but as a rate funded activity has a monitoring role.

Climate Change

Climate change implications can be reported on as part of the scoping work.

Risk

Risk	Mitigation
The challenges experienced in previous iterations of the role continue to limit effectiveness.	Seek expert advice in order to best design a response which will achieve Council outcomes.
Relationships with Great South are damaged.	Clear communication of the intention of Council in extending the role and seeking input into development of a role for the future. Great South should also have the opportunity to participate and share their views as part of the development process.
Active stakeholders, particularly the retailer community feel excluded or a lack of sense of ownership in the process.	Clear communications and involvement in engagement at set up stage with the consultant.
The proposed solution does not meet the needs of funders (Targeted ratepayers).	Formal consultation should take place on the options developed

Next Steps

Officers will engage with Great South to seek an extension of the current contract by one year to 30 June 2024.

A procurement process will commence to secure a consultant to commence the scoping work in order to bring options to Council for consideration in August/ September 2023 ahead of consultation in 2024.

Attachments

None.