

CoA COVID Response

ITEM 4.1 17/01/2022
Council

Council Member
Councillor Martin

2018/04053
Public

Contact Officer:
Tom McCready, Director City
Services

MOTION ON NOTICE

Councillor Martin will move a motion and seek a seconder for the matter shown below to facilitate consideration by the Council:

'That Council asks the Administration to:

1. Allow businesses to apply for a refund of already paid January to March, 2022 rates and withdraw any notices for rates not yet paid for the same period and to make appropriate adjustments to the 2021/22 budget and to the Long Term Financial Plan.
2. Establish a team with legal and property expertise to assist business ratepayers who require assistance negotiating rent and/or lease reductions/waivers.
3. Establish an immunisation/booster clinic at Town Hall to assist City businesses and visitors subject to the agreement of and negotiations with SA Health.
4. Conduct an audit of all traffic light pedestrian crossings to ensure the "walk" function is automated and, as happened in Sydney almost two years ago, affix signs to crossing buttons advising they do not need to be touched to help to eliminate the spread of COVID.
5. Increase cleansing of surfaces in public places which could be a source of infection, including seating, flat and other designated surfaces in Rundle Mall and to provide signage in potential high traffic areas, including Precincts, reminding visitors of mask requirements and suggesting the wearing of masks, even though not required in all outdoor settings, can provide protection against COVID.
6. Implement through the Community Development program an assistance program for the aged and the vulnerable isolating to connect them with service providers or directly provide assistance with shopping, medical consultations and any other reasonable form of assistance.'

ADMINISTRATION COMMENT

1. Should part 1 of the motion be carried, the negative financial impact on Council's budget (\$19.8m) will diminish our ability to fully implement Council's business plan for the 2021/22 financial year and will compound the shrinking of the local economy by reduced Council expenditure. It is recommended that business ratepayers who require assistance access the provisions available through Council's current Rates Hardship Policy and the State Government's \$40m grant package and other initiatives available through Council's City Business Support programs, including Reignite Adelaide, where applicable.
2. With respect to part 2 of the motion, Business SA provide this type of service and Council's City Business Support programs included a strategic partnership with (and funding) to Business SA for this purpose. In addition, the office of the Small Business Commissioner has the requisite skills to provide this type of support to assist city businesses, notwithstanding that the relationship is between the tenants and the landlord.

3. There are already a number of vaccination sites in the City, from a supersite in Park 22 to pharmacies and doctor's clinics providing the service. The advice from SA Health is that availability of sites is not a current impediment to vaccination uptake. Should the motion be carried, discussions with SA Health will continue.
4. Should the motion be carried, we will implement in partnership with DIT the reactivation of touchless traffic light pedestrian crossing on sites that were previously active and explore other high-density crossings. In addition, we will affix signs that informs pedestrians of the current arrangements.
5. Our current cleaning regime provides a high level of sanitation, and we are constantly assessing the need for additional cleansing (extent and frequency) particularly in high traffic areas. We have been collaborating with SA Health to promote and share messaging regarding COVID safe practices, including wearing of masks.
6. We currently provide the following services to the aged and vulnerable in our community:
 - 6.1. Wellbeing check-ins for our most vulnerable clients (15-20 residents)
 - 6.2. Shopping support service continuing
 - 6.3. Doctor appointment support continuing (access to Cab Charges)
 - 6.4. Our Healthy Ageing Team are supporting client queries and requests and all services are being managed efficiently
 - 6.5. The Central Market Bus Service resumed 13 January 2022 and complies with health and safety requirements

Should the motion be carried, the following implications of this motion should be considered. Note any costs provided are estimates only – no quotes or prices have been obtained:	
Public consultation	Not Applicable
External consultant advice	Not Applicable
Legal advice / litigation (eg contract breach)	Not Applicable
Impacts on existing projects	In order to assist with significant financial impacts and dedication of resourcing to this program of work it may risk delivery of strategic projects budgeted at \$5.4m.
Budget reallocation	Rates waive for January to March 2022 for businesses only would equate to approximately \$20m in lost revenue. Given the current financial position this would not be able to be recovered for the year and would result in a significant deficit to Council. Other financial impacts of remaining parts of the motion would need further investigation with regards to costs of establishment and operation. While all effort would be given to utilise as many existing resources there is a high probability that additional resources would be required and this would incur additional costs. Additional cleansing would costs a minimum of \$2,000 a week based on cost comparisons from prior lockdowns.
Capital investment	Not Applicable
Staff time in preparing the workshop / report requested in the motion	Not Applicable
Other	Not Applicable
Staff time in receiving and preparing this administration comment	To prepare this administration comment in response to the motion on notice took approximately 5.5 hours.