

Program Contact:

Jennifer Kalionis, Associate
Director City Culture

Approving Officer:

Ilia Houridis, Director City
Shaping

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Between 2005 and 2020 the City of Adelaide operated the Adelaide South West Community Centre (ASWCC), a staffed neighbourhood facility, from a building it leased at 171-173 Sturt Street. The property was sold in early 2019 and Council's lease expired in February 2021. In October 2020, community members brought a petition of 566 signatories to Council in relation to the ASWCC, urging Council to purchase and manage a community centre in the South West of the city as close as possible to 171 Sturt Street.

On [13 October 2020 Council](#) resolved to purchase a new property for the ASWCC based on the Gross Floor Area (GFA) of the current premises and establish this as a staffed facility run by Council. Further, Council resolved that the operating costs (including mortgage repayments but excluding the initial fit-out) vary by no more than 50% of the current operating costs. During the interim period between exiting the current community centre and relocating to the new building, Council resolved that the Minor Works Building could be used as the temporary (staffed) community centre.

Accordingly, a budget of \$1.5 million was allocated for capital investment (\$1.2 million to purchase a property, with \$300,000 allocated for fit-out) and \$142,000 for ongoing operational costs.

Since October 2020, property investigations have yet to identify any suitable options in the precinct for Council investment in a new Adelaide South West Community Centre that met the criteria set by Council.

The Minor Works Building Community Centre (MWBCC) has operated as a staffed neighbourhood facility since January 2021. This facility has provided a Community Centre for residents in the South and inner West of the City and was not intended to replace the ASWCC. On 9 November 2021, Council approved the MWBCC to continue as a location for a staffed Community Centre. The MWBCC is well utilised and since January 2024 a dedicated Coordinator Community Development has been based at the MWBCC to support the people of the South West of the City of Adelaide.

At its meeting on 13 February 2024, Council approved the development of a draft Community Development Strategy and Implementation Plan. These will outline priorities for investment in community facilities and services, informed by the Social Infrastructure Assessment (SIA), and provide advice on scope, location and budget, including ongoing operational costs and implications for the long-term financial plan.

It should be further noted that at the Council meeting on Tuesday 27 February 2024, Council resolved the following:

That Council;

Asks the Administration to include in the 2024/25 Business Plan and Budget discussion papers for deliberation the reinstatement of the City of Adelaide Community Co-ordinator positions to the same level prior to the positions being made redundant and the extension of hours of library staff/creation of such library positions as are necessary to restore to previous levels.

and

That Council asks the Administration to include in the 2024/25 Business Plan and Budget discussion papers for deliberation;

- 1. a possible financial strategy for the purchase of City of Adelaide community centres and libraries or for their inclusion in Council initiated new building projects, rather than the extension of existing leases, and*

2. *a possible timeframe for the purchase of such facilities, together with, and subject to confirmation, the inclusion of any facilities identified as being necessary following the completion of the process begun with the Community Development Strategy discussion paper.*

Both recommendations are seeking investment proposals for consideration and prioritisation as part of the 2024/25 Annual Business Plan and Budget process.

RECOMMENDATION

The following recommendation will be presented to Council on 12 March 2024 for consideration

THAT THE CITY COMMUNITY SERVICES AND CULTURE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS TO COUNCIL THAT COUNCIL

1. Notes the report.
 2. Notes that Council has operated a staffed neighbourhood facility at the Minor Works Building Community Centre since January 2021 for the South West and City South communities and recent investments in staffing, services and facilities will deliver additional community benefits.
 3. Notes that a draft Community Development Strategy and Implementation Plan will be prepared for Council to inform its decision-making about future investment in community facilities and services.
 4. Notes that budget proposals for deliberation and consideration will be prepared for Council as part of the 2024/25 Business Plan and Budget process, that include:
 - 4.1. The reinstatement of the City of Adelaide Community Co-ordinator positions to the same level prior to the positions being made redundant and the extension of hours of library staff/creation of such library positions as are necessary to restore to previous levels.
 - 4.2. A possible financial strategy for the purchase of City of Adelaide community centres and libraries or for their inclusion in Council initiated new building projects, rather than the extension of existing leases, and
 - 4.3. a possible timeframe for the purchase of such facilities, together with, and subject to confirmation, the inclusion of any facilities identified as being necessary following the completion of the process begun with the Community Development Strategy discussion paper.'
-

IMPLICATIONS AND FINANCIALS

City of Adelaide 2024-2028 Strategic Plan	Strategic Alignment – Our Community An interesting and engaging place to live, learn and visit: Review library and community centre service delivery model to better meet the evolving community’s need by 2025
Policy	This report is aligned with the development of a Community Development Strategy and Implementation plan for Council.
Consultation	A consultation plan, including a High-Level Engagement Plan in alignment with the Integrated Community Engagement Framework (due to be presented to Council in early 2024), will be developed to support the development of the proposed Community Development Strategy. The City of Adelaide is required to develop and Implement a Community Needs Analysis in 2024 as part of the Community Neighbourhood Development Program funding received from the Department of Human Services. This funding is for a Community Development Coordinator for Adelaide's South West based at Minor Works Building Community Centre. As part of this engagement, Administration will undertake a community consultation process to determine the demand for a proposed expansion to the existing ‘Library of Things’ available within the City of Adelaide, in accordance with Council’s decision of 5 September 2023. Council Members will be surveyed as part of this consultation process.
Resource	Not as a result of this report
Risk / Legal / Legislative	Not as a result of this report
Opportunities	The draft Community Development Strategy and Implementation Plan will outline priorities for investment in community facilities and services, informed by the Social Infrastructure Assessment (SIA), and provide advice on scope, location and budget, including ongoing operational costs and implications for the long-term financial plan.
23/24 Budget Allocation	\$1.5 million (capital and fit-out costs) and \$142,000 ongoing operational costs
Proposed 24/25 Budget Allocation	Commitment of \$1.5 million (capital and fit-out costs) and \$142,000 ongoing operational costs can be carried over. Capital and operational costs are estimated to fall short of total funding required for the intended purpose, i.e. purchase and operation of a new South West Community Centre.
Life of Project, Service, Initiative or (Expectancy of) Asset	
23/24 Budget Reconsideration (if applicable)	Commitment of \$1.5 million (capital and fit-out costs) and \$142,000 ongoing operational costs can be carried over.
Ongoing Costs (eg maintenance cost)	Current operating cost to adequately service the Minor Works Building Community Centre is \$332,275 annually (Council’s expenditure reduced through external funding). The Coordinator Community Development is a new role for which we have secured external funding from the Department of Human Services for a 3 + 3 + 3 years commitment, nine years in total, with a total funding value of \$900,000 to cover wage and some programming costs.
Other Funding Sources	Not as a result of this report

DISCUSSION

Background

1. In 2004, residents identified the building at 171-173 Sturt Street, the Adelaide South West Community Centre (ASWCC), as their preferred site for a local neighbourhood facility.
2. In July 2005, the ASWCC was officially opened and operated as a staffed community centre.
3. Council leased the building, which was sold in early 2019. Council was offered a temporary lease extension, which expired in February 2021.
4. Council sought feedback from the local community and users of the ASWCC on what community services they value, to help inform Council's decision about the services that will be delivered for the community in the future. The results of this community engagement was presented to Council on 13 October 2020 accompanied by a report that presented options for Council's consideration and decision. Important context was Council's operating deficit of \$36.4 million at that time and its ongoing efforts to support City recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.
5. At that same meeting, community members brought a petition of 566 signatories to Council in relation to the ASWCC, urging Council to purchase and manage a community centre in the South West of the city as close as possible to 171 Sturt Street.
6. Council noted the four options presented to Council for the continued delivery of community services in the South West of the city:
 - 6.1. Option One: Relocate the ASWCC to the Minor Works building (Stamford Court) and establish this as a staffed facility run by Council
 - 6.2. Option Two: Purchase a new property for the ASWCC based on the Gross Floor Area (GFA) of the current premises and establish this as a staffed facility run by Council
 - 6.3. Option Three: Lease a new property for the ASWCC based on the Gross Floor Area (GFA) of the current premises (or slightly increased GFA) and establish this as a staffed facility run by Council
 - 6.4. Option Four: Lease a new property based on the Gross Floor Area (GFA) of the current premises (or slightly increased GFA) and establish this as a facility run by an Incorporated Association operating as the ASWCC.
7. Council approved Option Two: Purchase a new property for the ASWCC based on the Gross Floor Area (GFA) of the current premises and establish this as a staffed facility run by Council, prioritising the following additional parameters:
 - 7.1. The building is located within the area of the Central Business District that is located west of Morphett Street and south of Gouger Street
 - 7.2. The building is the same GFA or larger than the current building
 - 7.3. The operating costs (including mortgage repayments but excluding the initial fit-out) vary by no more than 50% of the current operating costs
 - 7.4. The building is purchased not later than 31 December 2021.
8. During the interim period between exiting the current community centre and relocating to the new building, Council resolved that the Minor Works Building could be used as the temporary (staffed) community centre.
9. Council also resolved that in the event that a suitable building is not found for purchase by 31 December 2021, Option Three is enacted (with the property located being west of Morphett Street and south of Gouger Street) until a suitable building is identified for purchase.
10. As context, the Gross Floor Area of the ASWCC was 243sqm and the operating costs of the ASWCC at that time were \$189,403, consisting of staffing (\$118,463), property (\$71,942) and Programs (\$11,250).
11. Accordingly, Council allocated a budget of \$1.5 million for a capital investment (\$1.2 million to purchase a property, with \$300,000 allocated for fit out) and \$142,000 ongoing operational costs.
12. In January 2021, the Minor Works Building opened as a staffed community centre, to service the communities in the South West and South of the City.

Property Investigations

13. Council's Property Development team prepared a scope of work for Real Estate Agent Services that defined Council's criteria as sought within the resolution.

14. The Commercial Real Estate agent provided several reports to Council throughout 2021 and 2022, which indicated that no properties listed on the market satisfied Council's criteria for the purchase of a new building (scale, cost, and location).
15. In November 2021, following an update report, Council resolved to extend the purchase period for a new ASWCC into the 2022-23 Budget, which was subsequently carried over into the 2023-2024 budget.
16. Council's Property Development Team have been monitoring the market throughout 2023. Few properties have been brought to market and sold within the target area. All were commercial properties, none of which would be suitable for a new community centre. The sale prices ranged from \$685,000 for a showroom with a landsize of 188sqm to \$1.79 million for a commercial office building with a landsize of 220sqm.

Social Infrastructure Assessment (SIA) – Community Facilities Report

17. Administration commissioned a Social Infrastructure Assessment (SIA) – Community Facilities Report from consultants Intermethod in November 2023. This report considers the social infrastructure gaps and needs across the city, now and towards 2041, with population growth predicted to reach 50,000. The SIA Report reviewed existing infrastructure inclusive of community, cultural, education and recreation facilities and public open spaces.
18. The SIA found city-wide benchmark deficits across our Community Centre and Library provision. As a priority, the SIA recommends investigation for the provision of additional facilities in the West and East precincts to better meet the emerging needs of the diverse population they will serve, including young people and new arrivals from multicultural backgrounds.
19. The SIA recommendations for the South West corner precinct include:
 - 19.1. Address shortfall in Community Centre and Library floorspace provision
 - 19.2. Ensure a future community centre satisfies the Design Guidelines
 - 19.3. Retain in the immediate term the Minor Works Building and maintain appropriate servicing to maximise community benefit
 - 19.4. Advocate for the provision of a government-run Urgent Care Clinic within an accessible distance of the Precinct.
20. The SIA report provided Community Facilities Design Guiding Principles and critical needs and opportunities analysis for each precinct. These are designed to inform and guide Council's future decisions around property purchases, leasing and partnerships for community facilities by ensuring that Council provides more physical spaces according to best practice benchmarks linked to population, distance and usage guidelines including floorspace.

Community Development Strategy and Implementation Plan

21. The SIA informed the Community Development Discussion Paper noted by Council, at its meeting of 13 February 2024, as per Attachment A to Item 9.1 on the Agenda for the [City Community Services and Culture Committee meeting held on 6 February 2024](#). At that meeting, Council approved the preparation of a Community Development Strategy and implementation plan to support the delivery of an impactful Community Development approach in this term of Council.
 - 20.1 A consultation plan, including a High-Level Engagement Plan in alignment with the Integrated Community Engagement Framework (due to be presented to Council in early 2024), will be developed to support the development of the proposed strategy.
 - 20.2 Council feedback will guide the development of a draft Community Development Strategy.
 - 20.3 As part of this engagement, Administration will undertake a community consultation process to determine the demand for a proposed expansion to the existing 'Library of Things' available within the City of Adelaide, in accordance with Council's decision of 5 September 2023. Council Members will be surveyed as part of this consultation process.
 - 20.4 The draft Community Development Strategy and Implementation Plan will outline priorities for investment in community facilities and services, informed by the Social Infrastructure Assessment (SIA), and provide advice on scope, location, and budget, including ongoing operational costs and implications for the long-term financial plan.

Minor Works Building Community Centre: Background and Update

22. In the report to Council in October 2020, Administration's recommended option, to relocate the ASWCC to the Council owned Minor Works building in the City's South West and establish this as a staffed facility run by Council, balanced the needs of the community with optimising the utilisation of an existing Council asset.

It acknowledged the Council's operating deficit of \$36.4 million, its ongoing efforts to support City recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, and its commitment to drive public value through the delivery of services.

23. The Minor Works Building Community Centre was developed as part of Council's deed with Hindmarsh Development for the Ergo Development residential project. At this time, residents were invited to share their views on the future adaptive reuse of the Minor Works building, a former Council depot building. Residents requested that it be converted into a community centre with spaces that could be hired by community and businesses. It was renovated at a cost to Council of \$810,000 in 2014/15 to become a fully accessible site which opened in 2015 as a non-staffed venue-for-hire site. The building is owned and operated by Council and since January 2021 has been a staffed community centre.
24. The Gross Floor Area of the MWBCC is 255sqm, over two floors. The City South Tram Stop is 170 metres from the door. It is 350 metres from Whitmore Square / Iparityi, 300 metres from the Adelaide Central Market, and 570 metres from the former ASWCC facility.
25. While not intended as a replacement for the ASWCC, the MWBCC is well utilised. In 2022/2023, the MWBCC welcomed over 4000 community members for casual 'drop-in' conversations, attracted 2726 community members to its programs, and over 7000 people were estimated to make use of the facility through room hire (community and business use).
26. On 9 November 2021, Council approved the MWBCC to continue as a location for a staffed Community Centre.
27. The SIA found that the MWBCC is the closest centre for the South West community and the City South community. While noting that the MWBCC is not located on the main street and is undersized for the forecast population, notwithstanding, it found that the centre provides an excellent local service and has very high utilisation. The SIA recommended retaining the MWBCC, with appropriate servicing to maximise community benefit. Additionally, it recommended that Council take additional action to address the shortfall in community centre and library floorspace provision, and that future community centre/s satisfy the design guidelines.
28. In 2020, the Corporation of the City of Adelaide Administration was restructured in response to a Council decision to identify permanent operating expenditure savings of \$20 million. Community Development services previously delivered by a dedicated team were dispersed across the organisation.
29. Prior to this restructure, there were five FTE allocated to support community development, including three Coordinator Community Development positions, each allocated to one of Council's three community centres (ASWCC, Box Factory, and North Adelaide Community Centre and Library – the Minor Works Building was not a staffed neighbourhood facility at that time). Post the restructure, there were 2.8 FTE allocated to support community development.
30. In December 2023, City Culture recruited for Project Lead Community Connections (1 FTE, an existing, vacant position) and Coordinator Community Development (0.8 FTE, a new role funded through the Department of Human Services). These two employees commenced their roles in January 2024.
 - 28.1 The Coordinator Community Development is a new role for which we have secured external funding from the Department of Human Services for a 3 + 3 + 3 years commitment, 9 years in total with a total funding value of \$900,000 to cover the wage and some programming costs.
 - 28.2 The Coordinator Community Development is based at the Minor Works Building Community Centre to support the people of the South West of the City of Adelaide. This role will deliver on the outcomes and requirements of the Community Neighbourhood Development Funding Program. This includes facilitating services for a broad cross-section of the South Australian community, with priority for those who are vulnerable, socially isolated and disadvantaged, those experiencing family and domestic violence and children and families at risk.
31. The current approximate operating costs for the Minor Works Building Community Centre are \$332,275 per annum (noting external funding has been secured for the Coordinator Community Development position, reducing the total cost to Council). This does not extend to future investment in a Library of Things collection, library services, maker spaces or similar enhanced services to benefit the community.
32. Council is investing \$492,598 to upgrade a passenger lift in the Minor Works Building to meet *Disability Discrimination Act* requirements to accommodate all users. Construction commenced in mid-January 2024 and is scheduled to finish by the end of April 2024. This investment will significantly improve the building's credentials as an accessible and inclusive community centre that supports the South West community and welcomes everyone. Further investment in the layout and functionality of the facility have been identified as priorities to ensure the safety and wellbeing of employees and volunteers and to optimise utilisation of the facility by the community.

33. Additional investments in the Minor Works Building Community Centre in 2024 include installing library collection hold lockers to enable community members to collect and loan library resources. A Reuse and Recycle Hub was installed in late 2023.

Next Steps

34. Administration will prepare a draft Community Development Strategy and Implementation Plan for Council that will outline priorities for investment in community facilities and services, informed by the Social Infrastructure Assessment (SIA), and provide advice on scope, location and budget, including ongoing operational costs and implications for the long-term financial plan.
35. A consultation plan, including a High-Level Engagement Plan in alignment with the Integrated Community Engagement Framework (due to be presented to Council in early 2024), will be developed to support the development of the proposed strategy.
36. The City of Adelaide is required to develop and Implement a Community Needs Analysis in 2024 as part of the Community Neighbourhood Development Program funding received from the Department of Human Services for the Community Development Coordinator for Adelaide's South West based at Minor Works Building Community Centre.
37. Administration will undertake a community consultation process to determine the demand for a proposed expansion to the existing 'Library of Things' available within the City of Adelaide, in accordance with Council's decision of 5 September 2023. Council Members will be surveyed as part of this consultation process.

DATA AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

[Community Development Discussion Paper](#)
[Community Services South West City](#)

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

- END OF REPORT -