

Questions and Answers

Te Kaunihera o Pōneke | Council

28 April 2022

2.1 Draft Statements of Intent for Council Controlled Organisations

Some overall comments on the paper being considered from Officers:

The annual SOE/SOI process is substantively focussed on matters concerning the CCOs on a year-to-year basis, and Council has already stated their expectations for this round through the Statement of Expectations. Larger questions such as ownership of assets and asset planning have implications that by their very nature, require consideration as part of the LTP and Annual Plan processes.

To this end, next month officers have a session with our CCOs around strategic alignment and to explore what changes are needed to make Council's support fit for purpose and address challenges and opportunities. This includes early engagement with our CCOs on the development of the next Long-Term Plan.

I noted many of the CCOs were talking about asset management and renewals both big and small.

What is the process on how we look at these separately and are managed and prioritised as part of the council's asset portfolio?

Asset management is a key issue for our CCOs. For those CCO's who occupy Council buildings or facilities (e.g. Zoo, Venues, Experience Wellington), asset management is our responsibility. Cable Car & Stadium have their own Asset Management Plans and quite detailed knowledge of their renewals profile. Currently, Experience Wellington and Venues Wellington are the most in need of updated asset management plans. The Basin and Zoo have renewal programmes well underway underpinned by sound asset management practices.

We have started work on developing five-year asset management plans for Venues and Experience Wellington. In terms of Experience Wellington, condition assessments of each building to determine what actions will be required is underway. In terms of Venues Wellington – we now have a preliminary plan in place and are starting on the process of costing it up to get ready for the next Annual Plan / LTP rounds.

Prioritisation of relative needs and funding decisions can only be addressed through future Annual Plan/LTP rounds.

Assets

Experience Wellington bought up the Planetarium, please can I understand more about our understanding of the assets and how we are managing the plan for this?

Is there a resilience issue here? Are there any known or possible risks with the current state of the building?

The Planetarium is in need of a new projector (the current project is nearing the end of its life) and renewal of its exhibition (which needs scientific upgrades and a better reflection of matauranga Māori). We're working with Experience Wellington on bringing a funding request to the Annual Plan committee in May/June for consideration. We are not aware of any resilience issue – but the condition assessment process outlined above will identify any issues.

The Bond store date is now being suggested to be moved back- what is the new plan and date for this? What has to happen so that a more firm plan can be made? What is the plan to review the investment to 67% strengthening? What are the risks of prolonging an upgrade and leaving people and staff in the building at 34%?

Further analysis from our structural and geo-technical engineers has confirmed that the ground conditions underneath the Bond Store building will limit the NBS% we could achieve under the current strengthening proposition.

Officers are in discussions with the consultant team with a view to developing up to date market costings across a number of options, including what can be achieved with current funding. All parties are actively working on this at present and plan to present an update to the Experience Wellington board in late June.

Our engineers have advised that the building is currently suitable for occupation.

The stadium - is there a plan for the financial expectations of the council on how the building upgrades?

The Stadium has a loan facility but there is a larger conversation on future financial requirements planned and will be reported back to the Council in due course. GWRC are also looking at this issue.

Insurance

The Cable Car the insurance increases - is there a way the SOI process can help support them with insurance?

Is this something that can be looked at aggregating for all CCOs - is this something that there could be work done from the WCC end to help alleviate costs?

We are currently discussing this internally. It is really a key issue for the Stadium and Cable Car, who own their assets vs. other CCOs who are covered via Council's insurance scheme. This will be considered ahead of next year's Annual Plan/SOI process.

Events

Can you advise on a positive amendment to encourage the WellingtonNZ and Experience Wellington to work together with other stakeholders with a 3 yearly exhibition with the calibre of Hilma Af Klint and advise of the necessary funding to achieve this?

WellingtonNZ and Experience Wellington currently collaborate on major exhibitions. Currently, more work needs to be done by Experience Wellington on their 3 yearly exhibition programme. Once this has progressed sufficiently, we can then understand any funding implications.

Venues

What is the potential scope for a medium-size venue as identified in the Venues report?

What scope or opportunity is there for partnerships to help make this happen? Is there a study we could do to identify opportunities and risks with this?

Where would this sit on the priority list and how much economic benefit could this bring to Wellington?

Two live options/projects will help address the medium venue issue:

- 1) The option of changes to the Opera House (to make it flat floor with removable seating) would help address the medium venue need for music events.
- 2) Tāwhiri's Newtown / Te Whaea facility would also help address the need for both theatre and music events. Council has committed some funding to this.

Work will be ongoing on this issue and substantive decisions will need to be undertaken as part of future LTPs, including appropriate funding requirements.

How is the plan to extend Wellington venue's use to local artists/ community as outlined in Aho Tini progressing?

Planning and action is progressing. We have brokerage for individual organisations underway under our Creative Capital Spaces Advisor programme with a number of requests being handled and more expected. This also involves other parts of Council including PSR and Property. We are also progressing the overall review. We will report back to Council by the end of June.

LGWM / WellingtonNZ

A few councillors would like to see a closer alignment on how we are supporting our local businesses to understand the vision of how LGWM is trying to make a better Wellington? How could WellingtonNZ support or work with LGWM to make sure local businesses retail have a better idea of the outcomes and vision, feel supported through the changes and identify any opportunities to really bring our locals together for success through this transition?

As part of the Council's development response plan, we're looking at how we can mitigate the impact of development on businesses. WellingtonNZ could have a role to play here but it will largely be up to Council and our partners to respond. This Plan will be provided to the Council in due course.