

34. COLOMBO STREET (MOORHOUSE AVENUE TO DYERS PASS ROAD) SECURITY AND VANDALISM

Officer responsible City Streets Manager	Author Kevin Roche, DDI 371-1536
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The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee on one of the options the Council might choose to take in respect to the security and vandalism problems caused by young people in cars in the early hours of the morning from Friday to Sunday. This problem most recently surfaced in South Colombo Street. Included is information on the Wellington City Council's experience in using their street cleaning staff as security people.

BACKGROUND

There have been ongoing problems in Colombo Street south of Moorhouse Avenue of vandalism and general anti-social behaviour. This is affecting the businesses and the appearance of the area. For example, windows in some businesses are being broken on a frequent basis to the extent that they can no longer get insurance. This type of activity reflects badly on the area and there is an expectation that the Council should take some responsibility and do something. The Police do not have the resources to patrol to prevent this nuisance type behaviour and it is suggested the Council could co-operate with the affected businesses to fill the gap.

WELLINGTON CITY COUNCIL EXPERIENCE

Wellington City Council recently let a contract for their central city cleaning. The contract allowed for tenderers to offer "value added" innovations. The successful contractor was a company called Streetwise. Streetwise is part of the Armourguard group and they offered a security function as part of the contract. What this means is that while they are out doing their cleaning work they provide assistance to people and watch out for anti social and illegal behaviour and report this to the Council or the Police.

While Streetwise is part of the Armourguard group the cleaning staff are not security staff. They do not wear uniforms, but they do promote themselves as being in the city and available to help.

OPTION FOR THE COUNCIL FOR COLOMBO STREET

The Wellington situation is essentially a cleaning contract with some security side benefits. What is required in Colombo Street is a security function or emphasis with, maybe, a side benefit in cleaning up minor areas of broken glass or other litter.

An option is for the Council, in partnership with the businesses, to engage uniformed security staff to patrol the Colombo Street area on two or three nights a week. They would have a vehicle and communication equipment and capacity to remove small amounts of litter.

Their function would be to provide eyes and ears in the area to assist Police and the Council. They would not have an enforcement function and would not get involved in confrontational situations. They would be there to provide reliable information to the Police and to act as a presence to deter anti social behaviour and vandalism.

It is expected that the business community would take some responsibility and contribute financially.

IMPLEMENTATION AND FUNDING

An option is to carry out a trial this financial year to determine the viability of such an operation and the cost. If successful and approved provision would have to be made in the 2002/03 budget. Negotiations will need to be had with the businesses for a contribution from them.

There is no budget provision this year so extra funding will need to be approved by the Council either from the Contingency Fund or elsewhere.

ISSUES

A number of issues need to be considered, the main one being the expectation that if this area is 'patrolled' then other areas should also be covered. Involving the businesses as a partner and requiring them to contribute financially may control the 'spread' and limit it to areas with a real need only.

Another issue is the Council being involved in what is essentially a Police or private security function.

SUMMARY

There is a vandalism problem in Colombo Street south of Moorhouse Avenue. This is affecting businesses and the Council and community image in the area.

Wellington City Council have engaged a central city street cleaning contractor that offers some security benefits due to its association with Armourguard.

The Colombo Street situation is different in that security is the main priority with cleaning a secondary consideration. Using cleaning staff to perform a security function is not an option because they would not be in the area long enough to be effective.

An option suggested is for the Council, in partnership with the businesses, to engage uniformed security staff to patrol the area on two or three nights a week as required. Their function would be to provide eyes and ears to deter anti social behaviour and vandalism and to report to the Police. They would also be expected to clean up minor litter, broken glass etc.

- Recommendation:**
1. That a trial of the above concept be approved in principle.
 2. That a detailed proposal be developed and costed.
 3. That discussions be held with businesses to determine their involvement and financial contribution.
 4. That the Council identify a source of funds.
 5. That if a trial programme is ready to begin during the inter-regnum the City Manager be authorised to approve it.

Chairman's

Recommendation:

That the above recommendation be adopted on the basis that:

1. The funding be from the corporate contingency fund.
2. The City Manager be instructed to implement the proposal as a matter of urgency.