



City of **HOBART**

**Memorandum:** Lord Mayor  
Deputy Lord Mayor  
Elected Members

## **Response to Question Without Notice**

### **SEASONAL GARDENS AND PLANTER BOXES**

**Meeting:** Parks and Recreation Committee      **Meeting date:** 10 December 2020

**Raised by:** Councillor Ewin

#### **Question:**

The gardens and planter boxes are a colourful feature around the city, and are changed seasonally.

I'm interested in how this fits in with our sustainability and climate action strategies, as well as the community vision document.

Could the Director please provide a response as to:

- a) The rationale behind changing the gardens and planters seasonally;
- b) How we could design our city garden spaces to better support native flora and fauna biodiversity;
- c) The financial implications of continuing as we are, as opposed to switching to permanently installed garden beds and/or planter boxes?

#### **Response:**

The provision of colourful garden annual plants in planter boxes has been an element of the streetscape of the CBD for many years with a degree of rationalisation based on the experience with alternative plantings.

The Hobart City Vision Pillar 1 recognises the unique nature of the City and Pillar 6 the need to thread greenways through the City.

Annual plants are grown at the City's production nursery and are timed to be placed in the City to achieve maximum impact that provides a changing feature to the City especially during the short winter days and allows a greater burst of colour during spring and summer to break the constructed nature of a city landscape at street level.

The use of annuals establishes a link between the gardens in the formal urban parks of the inner City to the formal streetscape in the CBD by bring colour and greenery into these built spaces.

Perennial plants have been found to be unsuitable as they do not withstand the City environment and the level of disturbance that occurs in these CBD street locations quickly damages the displays.

The use of annuals is limited to inner city locations where the encouragement of wildlife is not appropriate.

Plantings in our parks and reserves are used to encourage native fauna residency in locations where both food resources, roosting, nesting habitat and shelter is available.

There are implications for establishing permanent beds within the city which include:

- Continual replacement of expensive plants due to damage;
- Watering and moisture impacts on street and road infrastructure;
- Costs associated with removing such beds for underground works;
- Trip hazards with ground level beds and surrounds;
- Rubbish accumulation; and
- The loss of vibrant colour in the City during winter days.

Costs of maintaining annual beds is not greatly different to maintaining a permanent bed in a high use area if the same standard of display is required.

Replacing displays in planter boxes is cost effective as individual plants are in pots and can be replaced in one event seasonally or individuals replaced if they are damaged.

Carbon capture in annual plants is achieved when the potted plants are recycled through composting which is consistent with a responsible climate change action strategy.

*As signatory to this report, I certify that, pursuant to Section 55(1) of the Local Government Act 1993, I hold no interest, as referred to in Section 49 of the Local Government Act 1993, in matters contained in this report.*



John Fisher  
**MANAGER BUSHLAND / MANAGER  
PARKS & RECREATION**



Glenn Doyle  
**DIRECTOR CITY AMENITY**

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