Item No: **C0920(2) Item 3**

Subject: **PRIDE CENTRE EXPRESSION OF INTEREST**

Prepared By: Michael Daly - Acting Director CIty Living

Authorised By: Michael Deegan - Chief Executive Officer

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council:

1. **Undertakes an Expression of Interest from LGBTIQ or LGBTIQ friendly organisations to manage a Pride Centre to operate out of Newtown Town Hall; and**

2. **Convene a representative panel consisting of suitable individuals from the community to provide input and feedback into the Expression of Interest criteria and Pride Centre model to ensure it meets the community's needs.**

DISCUSSION

Council resolved to establish a Pride Centre and recommends the Newtown Town Hall as a suitable location. This proposal aligns with the recently completed Land & Property Strategy and Council's LGBTIQ Working Group have been consulted and endorse this proposal. Newtown Town Hall is a suitable location as the local community and businesses identify as LGBTIQ and / or LGBTIQ friendly. Newtown Town Hall requires significant, complex remedial work that cannot take place without a vacant site. Newtown Neighbourhood Centre (NNC) currently occupies this site. A move to the Tom Foster Community Centre (TFCC) as a permanent home, has been discussed and agreed to by NNC. TFCC will also be undergoing remedial work in the first half of 2021 with NNC moving in after this.

The Pride Centre concept is intended to create a dedicated space in the Inner West to:

- Provide a safe, welcoming and inclusive space for the LGBTIQ community
- Address social isolation of all risk groups within the LGTBIQ community by providing a safe, accessible space to connect, gather and support where appropriate
- Provide access to services and programs responsive to the Inner West LGBTIQ community
- Support capacity building within the community

The Expression of Interest (EOI) would offer the opportunity to lease all or part of the newly refurbished site as a Pride Centre; inviting LGBTIQ or LGBTIQ friendly organisations to submit a proposal for management and delivery. This would allow Council to:

- Gauge community interest and determine potential participation;
- Provide a range of suitable Pride Centre operational models for consideration;
- Tap into the creativity and vision of the LGBTIQ community and ensure access for all LGBTIQ and LGBTIQ friendly organisations; and
- Ensure the project is fit for purpose.

Council would create a panel consisting of suitable individuals to provide input into developing a criteria for the EOI and to ensure any model proposed meets the community's needs. EOI Submissions would be assessed against a criteria that would include viability of any proposal, experience in organising a multipurpose venue, access for various organisations to use the space, willingness to work in coalition and funding models. The EOI would also include

provisions to ensure access for the community through the ability to book the hall facilities within the venue. Running the EOI ahead of remedial work, allows participating organisations to contribute to the planning / construction phase, ensuring that the venue is built for purpose.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Funds have been allocated to the refurbishment of the Newtown Town Hall and Tom Foster Community Centre. No funding has currently been identified for the ongoing operations of a Pride Centre. Funding opportunities can be investigated as per the Council resolution.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil.