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For immediate release

Relief in sight as CRL Hardship Fund Announced

A long overdue decision on providing targeted financial relief for businesses impacted by the City Rail Link has been announced today but the devil is in the detail.

Heart of the City Chief Executive Viv Beck says that “While this is long overdue, it is great that a decision has now been made. Financial support is desperately needed for businesses that have been massively impacted by this large scale and long-term project, and we hope this does bring the relief that is needed. The detail will be important, and we stress the importance of the need for an independent panel to determine how the scheme will work. It must be fair, and we need to be confident that enough money has been set aside as it is less than we asked for.”

“The previous Hardship Fund was not fair, and we want to ensure more distress for these businesses is avoided. Speaking with a few this morning there is a degree of caution given their experience to date and I hope this can be alleviated as the detail is developed. There will also be disappointment that the back dating does not go back to the start of the contract as we requested.”

“It is good that there will be interim payments made in advance of the wider scheme being implemented. These people have suffered enough, and they need financial support urgently. We also want to understand more about the call for support from landlords as we know it has also been difficult for those who have lost tenants and been supporting others.”

“This situation can’t be repeated, and it is good that support for future large-scale projects has been confirmed. This is particularly topical with the first phase of engagement on the Auckland Light Rail project concluding this week.”

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