



CUMBERLAND CITY COUNCIL

Council Meeting

Wednesday, 1 April 2020 at 6:30pm

Cumberland City Council Chambers
Merrylands Service Centre, 16 Memorial Avenue, Merrylands

Councillor Contact Details

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Regents Park Ward

Clr Ned Attie	0419 583 254	Ned.Attie@cumberland.nsw.gov.au
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South Granville Ward

Clr Glenn Elmore	0418 459 527	Glenn.Elmore@cumberland.nsw.gov.au
Clr Paul Garrard	0414 504 504	Paul.Garrard@cumberland.nsw.gov.au
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Clr Lisa Lake	0418 669 681	Lisa.Lake@cumberland.nsw.gov.au
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For information on Council services and facilities please visit www.cumberland.nsw.gov.au

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Item No: MM04/20-26

MAYORAL MINUTE - CORONAVIRUS SUPPORT FOR LOCAL BUSINESSES AND COMMUNITY

Author: Mayor Steve Christou
File Number: SC486

SUMMARY

What's happening with the coronavirus emergency is having a devastating effect on our local economy, retailers, restaurants and those who own small businesses. It is incredibly heartbreaking to see what's happening with job losses in the midst of this pandemic.

We know the Federal Government is experiencing a massive demand from job seekers with some economists predicting the unemployment rate could go as high as 20 per cent. These job losses have all kinds of implications for people paying their rent, their mortgage, paying their bills and putting food on the table.

Cumberland City Council is also impacted significantly, with a number of our services not operating at the moment. Regardless of this, our role as a Council is to lead and support our community, and we will do everything within our power to assist our local businesses and residents.

Council is currently offering a number of programs to small businesses including the following:

- Supporting the "Shop Local" initiatives.
- Council's Scheduled Business Workshop and One-on-one Business Advisory Services will continue through webinar and video/phone.
- Crisis Management Webinar is being organised as a collaboration between Cumberland Business Chambers and our Council.
- Promoting funding, resources, training and support available from State and Federal Government, and more.

I want to outline Council's further support measures this evening.

Our Council has 76,000 business and residential ratepayers. What I'm announcing tonight, is that we will be waiving late fees or interest charges for ratepayers who have previously done the right thing and paid their instalments on time.

In addition to this, I know a lot of our local businesses and community organisations are hurting as a result of this health and economic crisis. We want to do as much as we can to help.

As a result, Council will waive all outdoor dining licensing fees for the rest of this calendar year, leaving any businesses who have paid up until the rest of this financial year, in credit for future years.

To assist one of our largest employment sectors being the construction industry, Council will defer all Section 7.11 and 7.12 payments that are normally required at Construction Certificate stage for work to commence, until prior to the issuing of an Occupation Certificate on the completion of relevant works or stage of works without any interest penalty.

Council will also ensure that any of its lessees are able to approach us to discuss rent deferral options, to provide them with some certainty over their businesses and their lease arrangements with Council.

For the sporting groups and hirers of our sporting facilities or sportsgrounds for the winter season, Council will refund any bookings that have been cancelled due to the Coronavirus. For Seasonal sportsground hirers, Council will refund any winter season fees paid. Council has a strong expectation that registration fees paid by families will also be refunded to them by the sporting organisers.

Bookings made for any other council venues or facilities that will not go ahead will also be refunded to the booking parties.

Finally, Council also will be writing to the relevant State and Federal Ministers, seeking their financial support for small businesses operating in the Cumberland City area. Council will also write to all local State and Federal Members of Parliament seeking their advocacy to ensure local government is included in any stimulus measures.

We are here for our residents and our local businesses, and I encourage all affected by the Coronavirus to contact Council or visit our dedicated webpage to see how our services have been affected, what continues to operate and to see what solutions we can put in place.

Therefore Councillors I am recommending the following:

RECOMMENDATION

That Council during the Coronavirus period approve the following:

- 1. Waive all outdoor dining licence fees until 1 January 2021 and from today credit any outdoor dining licence fees paid in advance.**
- 2. Amend Council's *Hardship Policy* to include all business and residential rates assessments impacted. Council will waive any new interest charges for any late rate payments during this period.**
- 3. Implement rent deferral arrangements on a case by case basis for lessees impacted by the Coronavirus who operate out of a Council owned facility.**
- 4. Implement Deferral of Section 7.11 and 7.12 contributions to prior to the issuing of an Occupation Certificate without interest penalty or CPI being charged.**

5. **Refund all cancelled bookings of Council's parks and sporting facilities with the expectation that sports registration fees are refunded to families for applicable winter seasonal hire arrangements.**
6. **Refund all cancelled bookings for all other council venues or facilities whereby the function or event cannot go ahead.**
7. **Write to the relevant State and Federal Ministers seeking financial and other hardship support for local businesses.**
8. **That Council write to all local State and Federal Members of Parliament, requesting their strong support and advocacy on behalf of Council in the provision of any stimulus packages, to assist with the ongoing financial impact borne by Council in its response to Coronavirus.**
9. **Council delegate to the Mayor and General Manager to implement the above and to revoke or amend these changes once the Coronavirus issue has subsided or restrictions are relaxed in accordance with Government directives.**

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

Item No: MM04/20-27

MAYORAL MINUTE - COUNCIL MEETING AND BRIEFING ARRANGEMENTS - CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

Author: Mayor Steve Christou
File Number: SC486

SUMMARY

Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, these are unprecedented times for everyone, and Council needs to put in place prudent measures to be able to continue the essential business of Council.

In order to meet the requirements of Section 365 of the *Local Government Act 1993*, Council is required to hold a minimum of 10 meetings per year, with each meeting occurring in a different month.

Council currently schedules its meetings to occur on the first and third Wednesday of each month, with the exception of January, in accordance with the adopted *Code of Meeting Practice*.

As a matter of safety for our community, Councillors, and staff, it is proposed that for the duration of the Coronavirus pandemic, and until Council is generally able to return to business as usual, that Council alter the schedule of Council meetings to meet once per month subject to the success of electronic meetings and compliance with the relevant Laws. Meetings will be held on the third Wednesday of each month commencing April 2020, with the exception of January where no meetings are usually held. If there is any urgent business, Council still has the ability to conduct Extraordinary meetings in accordance with our *Code of Meeting Practice*.

Given the recent emergency amendments to the *Local Government Act 1993*, Council is now able to rely on the livestreaming or webcasting service of the meeting as its public participation method during the Coronavirus period. In the interests of the safety of our community, this is proposed to be Council's approach for the foreseeable future subject to the practical and legal success of conducting meetings in this manner.

Council understands the importance of the participation of our community in our regular meetings. In addition to the above, local residents will be able to submit any request or public forum matters via email or post prior to the Council meeting. Any submission will be circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting commencing, where possible, and read out by the Mayor during the meeting.

It is also proposed that Councillor Workshops moving forward during this period be undertaken on a voluntary basis by Councillors. Councillors not wanting to attend will have detailed briefing notes on the matters ordinarily presented to Councillors by staff provided to them electronically.

These measures are proposed with the greatest reluctance, however are necessary to maintain the safety of Councillors, staff and the community.

Therefore Councillors, I am recommending the following:

RECOMMENDATION

That:

- 1. Council conduct Ordinary meetings on the third Wednesday of each month subject to their practical and legal success in implementing, other than in January when no meeting is to be held.**
- 2. Public forum addresses be dealt with by way of written/email submissions to council, with submissions circulated to all Councillors prior to the Council meeting commencing, where possible, and read out at the meeting by the Mayor.**
- 3. Council to conduct Councillor Workshops when and if required on a Councillor voluntary basis and also provide detailed briefing notes to Councillors at their discretion electronically.**
- 4. Council delegate to the Mayor and General Manager to revoke or amend these changes once the Coronavirus issue has subsided or restrictions are relaxed in accordance with Government directives.**

ATTACHMENTS

Nil