

Resolution of Council

27 July 2020

Item 11.4

Metro Theatre Kings Cross

Moved by Councillor Phelps, seconded by Councillor Forster -

It is resolved that:

(A) Council note:

- (i) the Metro Theatre (formerly the Minerva Theatre) remains an architectural and cultural icon of the Sydney LGA and has been afforded heritage protection under Clause 5.10 (Heritage conservation) of the Sydney Local Environment Plan 2012. Its listing notes its social, historical and aesthetic significance and rarity values. Its interiors and design have high levels of intactness;
- (ii) the theatre is currently not for sale, following its purchase by the Abacus Property Group for \$19.8 million in March 2019;
- (iii) despite this purchase taking the theatre off the market, the local residential and cultural communities continue to advocate for the building being restored as a live theatre, community arts centre or community cultural facility due to:
 - (a) the shortage of theatres and other cultural facilities which meet the needs of independent, professional non-profit and commercial theatre producers;
 - (b) the organic growth of the eastern edge of the city as a theatre precinct comprising several small performance spaces; and
 - (c) its potential to drive economic growth and bring investment into the Kings Cross / Potts Point areas and help undo some of the economic damage done by the Lockout Laws and Covid-19;
- (iv) the City of Sydney has long played a major role in providing and increasing performance spaces and live theatre through:
 - (a) the restoration of the Capitol Theatre in the early 1990s;

- (b) provision and ongoing support of the City Recital Hall in Angel Place;
 - (d) transformation of the former Baptist Tabernacle in Darlinghurst into the Eternity Playhouse, a 200-seat state of the art theatre;
 - (e) retention of the Reg Murphy Hall as the Hayes Theatre, now Australia's leading home of independent music theatre and cabaret;
 - (f) provision of the PACT Theatre for Emerging Artists in Erskineville; and
- (B) the Chief Executive Officer be requested to:
- (i) conduct a thorough consultation with the key stakeholders on the future of the Metro Theatre, including the local residential and business community;
 - (ii) thoroughly investigate the business case for future use of the Metro Theatre as an entertainment and/or cultural facility including discussions with the NSW Government and relevant private interests regarding the purchase of the Metro Theatre by the NSW Government and/or City of Sydney and the option of a public private partnership; and
 - (iii) report findings back to Council.

A show of hands on the motion resulted in an equality of voting as follows -

Ayes (5) Councillors Chung, Forster, Phelps, Scott, and Vithoukias

Noes (5) The Chair (the Lord Mayor), Councillors Kok, Miller, Scully, and Thalys

The Chair (the Lord Mayor) exercised her casting vote against the motion.

Motion lost.

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