

## Resolution of Council

**18 September 2023**

### Item 12.6

#### **Promotion of Fee Waiver of Council Community Facilities for Community Groups and Not-For-Profits**

Moved by Councillor Ellsmore, seconded by Councillor Scott –

It is resolved that Council note:

- (A) Council included in the 2022/23 and 2023/24 budgets that venue hire be waived, and public liability insurance coverage be provided for free, for local community groups. This provided free use of community halls, meeting rooms and other community spaces for not-for-profit groups, where a group resides in or provides services largely to communities in the City of Sydney;
- (B) the fee waiver aims to encourage use of Council’s community spaces by community groups as part of the recovery from Covid-19;
- (C) however, the Office of Deputy Lord Mayor has received numerous reports that the fee waiver, along with the coverage of public liability insurance, is not being accessed by some groups, including because:
  - (i) groups are not advised that the fee waiver is available when liaising with City staff over the phone or via email and asking about community venue hire costs; and
  - (ii) the website pages for the community centres and spaces hire do not include information about the fee waiver in the ‘Cost to Hire’ section – that is, the free option is not noted in the section where the fees are listed. The existing format of the pages suggests that a 50 per cent discount (but not a fee waiver) only is available to community groups;
- (D) the City has promoted the fee waiver opportunity through City of Sydney eNews (5,941 subscribers), posters displayed in libraries and community centres, and multiple articles in community newsletters (7,043 subscribers) since October 2022;

- (E) information about the fee waiver is included in the online booking form and has been available on the City's website since it was introduced - it is listed on every single page about community venues for hire directly under the cost to hire section of the webpage; and
- (F) City of Sydney staff will continue to promote the fee waiver to eligible organisations, including in response to email and phone enquiries, and regularly review and update relevant information as required to ensure that it is easy to find.

The motion, as varied by consent, was carried unanimously.

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