

Item 12.14**Notices of Motion****Leptospirosis and Rat Eradication in the Sydney LGA**

By Councillor Phelps

It is resolved that:

(A) Council note:

- (i) public health relies on the provision of safe and clean public spaces by Council, and is one of the City's core responsibilities;
- (ii) the presence of rats and other vermin pose a threat to public health by acting as reservoir hosts for Leptospira bacteria, passing to other organisms in their urine;
 - (a) it is known that Leptospirosis, a bacterial infection which causes a systemic inflammatory response and organ failure, can prove lethal to dogs and humans and is transmitted via rat urine;
 - (b) the increasing number of rats in the City of Sydney LGA has resulted in an outbreak of Leptospirosis in Sydney;
 - (c) Leptospirosis has never before been seen in the Sydney area, but as of July 2019, five dogs have been reported to have died from the disease;
 - (d) the bacteria can survive for long periods in moist environments, with environmental flooding (such as occurred in Surry Hills following extensive ground disturbance due to light rail construction) prolonging the survival of these organisms in surface water;
 - (e) Questions and Motions have previously been submitted by multiple Councillors asking the City for details or reviews on the City's vermin control program including:
 - Question on Notice by Cr Scott on 14 September 2015;
 - Notices of Motion by Cr Forster on 29 June 2015 and 26 June 2017; and
 - Question of Notice by Cr Vithoukas on 13 August 2018; and
- (iii) the recent reported significant increase of rodents and subsequent heightened risks to public health require a more extreme course of action for pest control; and

- (B) the Chief Executive Officer be requested to:
- (i) benchmark the City of Sydney against other cities' actions and best practice vermin control such as fitting drains with interceptor traps according to risk and requiring a 2-3m clear 'no-grow' zone or 0.5m clear zone from the bottom of vegetation around external walls;
 - (ii) intensify efforts on rat control in an attempt to control the outbreak of Leptospirosis;
 - (iii) increase the City's current budget and actions on rat and other vermin control; and
 - (iv) develop a new, intensified vermin control and eradication plan and report back to Council.

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