

Item 3.2

Resignation of Councillor Jess Scully

File No: S051491

Minute by the Lord Mayor

To Council:

I wish to inform Council that Councillor Jess Scully is intending to resign as a Councillor on 4 April 2023. Wonderfully, Councillor Scully is pregnant with her second child. She is happy and healthy, and her husband Patrick and daughter Elinor are also excited to welcome a new member of the family.

Councillor Scully was elected on 10 September 2016 as a member of the Clover Moore Independent Team and re-elected on 4 December 2021.

During her six years on Council, Councillor Scully served as Deputy Lord Mayor for three years. She has been an effective Deputy Chair of the Corporate, Finance, Properties and Tenders Committee; a member of the Central Sydney Planning Committee and Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee; and Co-Chair of the City of Sydney's Nightlife and Creative Sector Advisory Panel, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Panel and Housing For All Working Group.

I first came to know about Jess as a creative talent who had been a founding director of Vivid Ideas. I approached her and asked her to join our independent team for the 2016 Local Government Election and contribute to our great work at the City, and I was delighted she agreed.

Under the leadership of our Independent Team, Council has worked to address some of the important challenges facing our city and Jess has played an important role in that work – whether it be to find new ways to revitalise our high streets and strengthen our night-time economy; to explore new models to address the housing crisis or take effective action to reduce our emissions and the impact of climate change.

Specifically, Councillor Scully:

- Helped to establish Abbie House transitional housing in collaboration with Women's Community Shelters (WCS), SCAPE student housing and City West in 2021 which delivers affordable housing, with wraparound support and an exit pathway for women escaping violence.
- Worked with former Councillor Philip Thalys to initiate the City's Alternative Housing Ideas Challenge. That resulted in entries from around the world for new housing models to increase affordable housing supply across our city and reduce housing stress.
- Secured free access to early childhood care and education for families seeking asylum from July 2022.

- Advocated for the “map of fun” approach to rebuilding a thriving nightlife and creative ecosystem across the City and together with former Councillor Jess Miller supported:
 - streamlining and extending our Late Night Trading Development Control Plan to include the establishment of the North Alexandria Entertainment Precinct.
 - new Open and Creative Planning Reforms
- Requested the Chief Executive Officer to investigate the principles of community wealth building and establishing a local preference policy. This resulted in a draft discussion paper on Community Wealth Building (CWB) which will guide thinking as the City develops a new Economic Development Strategy.
- Championed the Laneway Commons and community-led greening of our city by asking the City to develop a dedicated laneway gardens guideline to enable more citizen-led greening initiatives, turning grey laneways into green oases – this was a key idea included in Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050: Continuing the Vision.
- Advocated for a “Cities for Play” framework to be incorporated into our long-term strategic work, to make the City more welcoming to families with kids, to create more opportunities for play and to build dwellings which accommodate family life.
- Requested the City to work with key government agencies to investigate a process for simplified street closures for community events.
- Facilitated a meeting between the Australian Parents for Climate Action (AP4CA) network and the Minister for Education to work through the obstacles that schools face in getting support for renewable energy initiatives, which has the potential to significantly reduce energy costs and their carbon footprints.
- Launched a parliamentary petition garnering over 12,000 signatures which resulted in Service NSW creating the Micro-Business Support Covid-19 Support Grant, to ensure that small business operators and sole traders would receive the same support as their larger counterparts, and to ensure they would survive the lockdown period.
- Enabled sustainable and energy efficient infrastructure in Heritage Conservation Areas through a motion which asked the City to remove planning control restrictions on solar panels, water tanks and other house-level modifications for sustainability.
- Proposed a motion for the Local Government NSW conference that called on the NSW Government to fund Aerial Bundled Cabling for councils across NSW, that would reduce the over-pruning of trees around powerlines, make our streets cooler and our electricity infrastructure more resilient against fires and storms.

Councillor Scully supported:

- a Covid-19 response package and community recovery plan;
- the Alfresco Dining program;
- the Oxford Street creative and cultural precinct planning controls;
- the Bathurst Street Creative Spaces;

- the City using participatory democracy models to draw in a more diverse range of voices in the development of Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050. The City worked with the Democracy Foundation to establish a Citizens Jury of 50 people who live, work and play in the City;
- Sydney becoming a fossil fuel ad free zone;
- state-wide standards for pedestrian and child safety around childcare centres, in keeping with the City of Sydney's policy of 40km/h across our local government area to save lives on our streets;
- the establishment of an AIDS Memorial in Green Park, supported by a community campaign which generated over 1200 signatures calling for a lasting memorial to a tragic period in Sydney's history; and
- age-appropriate housing and priority social housing for older people in support of the Housing for the Aged Action Group.

In 2020, Councillor Scully published *Glimpses of Utopia: Real Ideas for a Fairer World*, which was shortlisted in the Australian Book Industry Awards in 2021.

Described by the Canberra Times as bristling and bustling with ideas, the book draws on the experience of people across the globe who reimagine work and care, finance and government, urban planning and communication, to make a better and fairer world for all. The international diplomat, Christiana Figueres, described *Glimpses of Utopia* as "the kind of compelling vision we need."

I think that in 2023, it is appalling that Councillors aren't eligible for parental leave, sick leave, compassionate leave, or carer's leave, or even payment beyond a minor stipend when they have to make important decisions for their communities and spend serious time on their council responsibilities. Because of that, there are fundamental barriers to public service for many in our community, because it's necessary to earn a living and contribute to family needs.

If we want diverse representation in local government -- to have younger people, people in caring stages of their lives, parents, people from diverse backgrounds, people with disabilities -- we have to ensure that structures are in place to support people like Councillor Scully with caring responsibilities.

I invite you to join me in commending Councillor Scully on her significant contribution to the City of Sydney and to wish her well in her future endeavours.

Following Councillor Scully's resignation, the Electoral Commission will complete a "countback election" to select her replacement, which is expected will be the next person on the Clover Moore Independent Team ticket. At the last election, we ran with a strong independent ticket of talented candidates – and Adam Worling was next on our ticket.

Adam has been a resident of the City for 35 years, training as a chef before moving into public relations, where he has worked for Sydney retail and fashion brands, and he has played a key role in arts and charity organisations. I'm delighted Adam will nominate for the countback election as he will be great advocate for City communities.

Recommendation

It is resolved that Council:

- (A) commend Councillor Jess Scully on her significant contribution to the City of Sydney communities and to Council and wish her well in her future endeavours; and
- (B) note that a countback election will be held by the NSW Electoral Commission in accordance with the Resolution of Council adopted on 23 December 2021.

COUNCILLOR CLOVER MOORE

Lord Mayor