

Item 12.3

Notices of Motion

Ending Period Poverty in the City of Sydney

By Councillor Ellsmore

It is resolved that:

(A) Council note:

- (i) period poverty refers to the inability to access menstrual products or hygiene facilities, and education about menstruation. There are social, economic, and cultural barriers to menstrual products, sanitation, and education;
- (ii) research about period poverty is limited, however evidence shows that poor menstrual management can affect people's emotional and physical health and influence their behaviour such as school and work attendance, participation in sports and socialising in public places;
- (iii) the cost of living crisis is making it more difficult for many to afford basic items, such as sanitary products;
- (iv) a 2023 YouGov survey reported that over 57 per cent of respondents were finding it more difficult to buy period products such as sanitary pads and tampons;
- (v) Period Pride Report: Bloody Big Survey Findings, Australia's largest survey on attitudes and experiences of periods commissioned by Share the Dignity reported that 22 per cent of respondents had to improvise on period products due to cost. As well as that 48 per cent at least sometimes missed class due to their periods, 65 per cent missed sport due to their periods, 40 per cent at least sometimes called in sick to work due to their periods and 51 per cent missed out on socialising with their friends because of their periods;
- (vi) period poverty disproportionately affects LGBTQIA+ and First Nations peoples;
- (vii) every state and territory government has rolled out free period products to public high schools in order to alleviate period poverty; and
- (viii) Inner West Council and Melbourne City Council have recently installed free period product dispensaries in a number of council facilities. These initiatives have been low cost, and very well received;

(B) Council:

- (i) commits to end period poverty;
- (ii) commits to launch an initial 12-month pilot of free period care product services and dispensaries across no less than ten council locations within the Local Government Area; and

- (iii) as part of the trial, commits to work with relevant community groups and advocates to rollout a public education program aimed at removing stigmas and taboos towards periods; and
- (C) the Chief Executive Officer be requested to:
- (i) provide advice to the Council about suitable locations for the trial and the cost of the trial. This should include locations in Council buildings, public toilets, and near areas of low-income housing, including public housing estates;
 - (ii) consult with relevant community, school, sports, advocates for ending period poverty and or health organisations about developing the pilot; and
 - (iii) include in the advice opportunities to extend the trial, through the development of a rebate scheme to incentivise households to purchase reusable sanitary products.

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