

Item 12.6

Notices of Motion

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

By Councillor Ellsmore

It is resolved that:

(A) Council note:

- (i) 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;
- (ii) the fee waiver aims to encourage use of Council's community spaces by community groups together when the costs would otherwise have been prohibitive;
- (iii) there have been some promotions of the fee waiver including in some of the City's newsletters. The City of Sydney's website has recently been updated to include some information about the fee waiver;
- (iv) 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:
 - (a) 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
 - (b) 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; and

(B) the Chief Executive Officer be requested to:

- (i) add the information about the fee waiver to all parts of the City's website where the 50 per cent discount for community groups is listed;
- (ii) update community venue hire forms to note an option for a fee waiver for local community groups as per the Council decision, including online forms;

- (iii) review current procedures and training for staff tasked with assisting with community bookings, to ensure they are informing groups of the fee waiver; and
- (iv) report back to Council.

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