

Item 12.9

Notices of Motion

Ending Period Poverty in the City of Sydney

By Councillor Scott

It is resolved that:

(A) Council note:

- (i) period poverty refers to a lack of access to menstrual products, education, hygiene facilities, waste management, or a combination of these;
- (ii) more than one in five Australians can't access sanitary products, resulting in the use of make-shift products made of toilet paper, socks and other alternatives;
- (iii) close to half of Australians report having missed at least one day of school due to their period;
- (iv) a recent survey found that 57 per cent of people reported that it was more difficult to pay for sanitary products compared to previous years;
- (v) one in five said they also changed single-use products less frequently than recommended due to the cost, making them more vulnerable to health complications;
- (vi) as inflation and Australia's cost-of-living crisis continue, women are increasingly forced to choose between meals and medication or sanitary products;
- (vii) the inaccessibility of sanitary products puts women at disproportionate risk of poverty;
- (viii) period poverty particularly affects victims of domestic violence, those suffering homelessness and Indigenous peoples;
- (ix) the stigma surrounding menstruation and period poverty denies women equal access to education, participation in society and dignity;
- (x) the City has recently established Food Support Grants which are targeted at increasing access and improving the supply of healthy food for our communities;
- (xi) the City plays an important role in increasing community access to basic necessities, which includes menstruation products;
- (xii) as part of the response for vulnerable communities during Covid-19, the City provided flexibility in grant programs and donations for essential products including funding voucher programs and funding low cost and free supermarkets in the local area who provide sanitary products;

- (xiii) outreach services, mobile voluntary services and homelessness drop in centres working with vulnerable communities in the City of Sydney Local Government Area all have period products available which they provide to communities as needed;
 - (xiv) drop in centres such as Wayside Chapel also have period products available and provide these as needed;
 - (xv) many of these organisations acquire these products through funding, donations or via brokerage;
 - (xvi) NSW Health and St Vincent Homeless Health have period products available during clinics and assertive outreach on a needs basis. Clinics and outreach occur daily across the City of Sydney Local Government Area;
 - (xvii) Kirketon Road Centre in Kings Cross (NSW Health) also have information and products available as needed;
 - (xviii) the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) funded women only crisis services will also have them available;
 - (xix) DCJ Homelessness Services provide information and period products as required on outreach; and
 - (xx) the NSW Department of Education, earlier this year, installed 4,600 units in NSW public schools (including schools in the City of Sydney Local Government Area) providing access to free sanitary products to students; and
- (B) the Chief Executive Officer be requested to:
- (i) undertake community consultation with community members and organisations to understand how the City can best address period poverty;
 - (ii) establish a free period care product service for a 12-month trial period that services Council-run facilities such as libraries, pools, community centres, sporting ground change rooms, and highly utilised public toilets; and
 - (iii) commence work on this program in September 2023, with a report back at the December 2023 Council meeting.

X086655