

Item 14.12**Notices of Motion****Supporting Busking in the City**

By Councillor Weldon

It is resolved that:

(A) Council note:

- (i) the City of Sydney is fortunate to have a high calibre of professional buskers performing on our streets on our regular basis;
- (ii) busking is a vital component of the city's cultural life, providing accessible and diverse entertainment that brings vibrancy and excitement to our streets and promotes the activation of key precincts;
- (iii) the work of street performers is challenging. They are underappreciated, prone to harassment and must contend with other street activities like street preachers and protestors;
- (iv) Pitt Street Mall and parts of George Street are among the premier locations for street performance in Sydney, with a high volume of pedestrians and visitors achieving significant audience engagement;
- (v) the City of Sydney's previous busking policy maintained strong support because it effectively balanced issues of accessibility, safety, amenity and sound management, fostering a cooperative environment among performers and promoting sustained cultural activity;
- (vi) the City of Sydney's new busking policy imposes significant restrictions, threatening the viability of busking on our streets, including:
 - (a) the loss of one of 2 prized pitches in Pitt Street Mall for both Low and High Impact acts;
 - (b) limiting busking to just a handful of locations along George Street, prohibiting busking in many popular and long-standing pitches and failing to provide sufficient all-weather performance pitches (sites protected from rain or offering adequate shade);
 - (c) the reclassification of any act using amplification as High Impact reducing their performance time to a maximum of one hour (previously this classification was reserved for circus-style performers and certain instruments like drums and bagpipes);
 - (d) reducing performance time for Low Impact acts on George Street to a maximum of one hour; and

- (vii) consultation for the new busking policy was insufficient. Only a very small number of submissions were received during the public exhibition period and not enough effort was made to engage buskers, the primary stakeholders.
- (B) the Chief Executive Officer be requested to immediately review and amend the busking policy to:
 - (i) reinstate the previous busker classification categories to distinguish between genuinely High Impact acts and Low Impact amplified acts;
 - (ii) revert Pitt Street Mall to the previous number and location of designated pitches;
 - (iii) designate additional pitches along George Street in consultation with buskers (including some undercover and shaded areas); and
 - (iv) allow Low Impact acts to busk for a maximum duration of 2 hours along George Street.

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