Attachment B

Belgravia Leisure Communication – Inverell Aquatic Centre Incident 21 March 2025

21 March 2025

Monica Barone
Chief Executive Officer
City of Sydney

Via Email: mbarone@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au

Dear Monica,

I am writing to you as a valued contract partner of Belgravia Leisure who may be aware of a situation that occurred at one of our recently opened venues that Belgravia manages on behalf of Inverell Shire Council.

First and foremost, we want to reaffirm our commitment to fostering a safe, inclusive and welcoming environment – evidenced by our Innovation RAP – for all patrons. We have been bitterly disappointed in how certain individuals and some media have portrayed a recent incident at Inverell Aquatic Centre.

We take allegations of discrimination very seriously and want to clarify that at no stage were any patrons asked to leave the Inverell Aquatic Centre unless they were directly involved in anti-social behaviour. We are concerned about the inaccuracies in a live video posted on social media, which falsely suggests otherwise. We strongly refute claims that all Aboriginal patrons were asked to leave, and NSW Police have also reinforced the inaccuracies of these reports in their own statement.

The individuals asked to leave were engaging in dangerous behaviour that posed a safety risk to other patrons, such as bombing, back-flipping in shallow water and running into others, despite repeated requests from our team members to cease this behaviour. After several hours of non-compliance, our team made the difficult decision to call the police. Additionally, some adult patrons were asked to leave due to the use of vulgar language and verbal abuse directed at our staff.

Our lifeguards and team members are trained to uphold a safe and respectful environment, and any decision to remove patrons is based solely on behaviour that jeopardises safety. We have a zero-tolerance policy for anti-social, discriminatory or abusive behaviour and remain dedicated to providing an inclusive space for all community members.

The NSW Police have been strong in their support of the Belgravia staff and our contract partner in Inverell Shire Council has been fully supportive of the actions taken to date and we remain in constant contact with them.

Many Aboriginal families have since contacted the Venue Manager expressing their support for Inverell Aquatic Centre staff, confirming that the children's behaviour was dangerous and unacceptable and that they needed to follow the rules.

We continue to strive for a workforce that is reflective of its community. Our workforce at Inverell Aquatic Centre is made up of 10% of people who identify as Indigenous.

We can also confirm that we will have an additional 3 team members from an Indigenous background to help the team at Inverell over the coming weeks.

Further efforts to train and qualify members of the local Aboriginal community will be made through additional Lifeguard and Swim Teacher training courses being conducted in Inverell over the coming months.

This week we have consulted with council partners and local Elders to ensure we understand local perspectives and lead with our actions and our words and putting in place strategies that are reflective of all voices in the community.

We appreciate any concerns that you may have and understand the importance of transparency in these matters. If you have any further questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out to myself or our National Disability and Diversity Manager, Dr Jeff Walkley.

Yours sincerely,

Nick Cox
Chief Executive Officer

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