

ITEM **MAYORAL MINUTE: SUPPORT FOR LOCAL
BUSINESS AND OUR COMMUNITY - COVID-19**

Department **Executive Services**

Author Initials: AT

REPORT

The approach to slowing the spread of COVID–19 here in Australia has been very effective and I commend our Federal and State health agencies for their leadership, and our community for following the advice of health authorities. I am extremely proud of the way our community has united in the wake of this global health incident.

Local businesses are the backbone of our community, and I would like to thank our businesses and frontline services who have gone above and beyond to care for our residents throughout the COVID–19 crisis.

From our local supermarkets, pharmacies, petrol stations, convenience stores and fruit shops, medical centres and hospitals, to our schools, childcare centres and emergency services – everyone has pitched in. I would also like to pay tribute to our local chambers of commerce for your service during these difficult times. Your hard work, resilience, agility, and outstanding service to our community is much appreciated and essential to the ongoing health and wellbeing of our residents.

Throughout this crisis the City of Canada Bay will work to support our local economy. A time where we can once again walk through our bustling town centres and spend time with friends and family at our favourite local restaurants will come. It is Council’s responsibility alongside the State and Federal Governments to support our local economy through this crisis so that no local business gets left behind.

The City of Canada Bay has put together a support package for our local businesses and our community to assist through this crisis.

Supporting our community

Council is working to ease the impacts of social distancing and isolation within our community and to ensure everyone has access to important social support services. This includes:

- The launch of the Canada Bay Connects campaign to tackle social isolation
- Purpose built Canada Bay Connects Community Space within collaborate.canadabay.nsw.gov.au offering online programs, services and support during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Extended library loan periods and renewals for existing loans

- Direct phone support and regular follow up on request for our vulnerable residents
- An automatic one-month interest free extension on residents' fourth rates instalment amount.

Supporting local business and sporting clubs

Small businesses and sporting clubs are vital to our our community, and we are working hard to support our local economy during this time, including:

- Waiving ongoing footpath dining fees until the end of July with the possibility of extension should dining restrictions be extended beyond July
- A rental relief policy for impacted tenancies, detail of which is included in a separate report on this Council meeting agenda
- Waiving fees for health inspections for local business
- Deferring parking permits for businesses and parks for 12 months
- The launch of a Love Local campaign to support the local economy by highlighting and promoting local business efforts to transition through COVID-19
- Purpose built Canada Bay Connects Business Hub within collaborate.canadabay.nsw.gov.au, an online platform including support and training resources for local business owners and a platform for local business to promote current services and offerings to our community
- No ground hire charges for local sporting clubs during the period shutdown and a proactive approach to supporting clubs when competitions are able to begin again
- Working with local golf and tennis clubs to ensure ongoing operations can continue in strict adherence with social distancing guidelines.

In addition to these measures we will work alongside our community in the long term to see our local business community thrive again.

As we all work together to stop the spread of COVID–19, I encourage our community to stay home, stay calm and to follow the latest advice from State and Federal health authorities.

This is an historic and trying time, but I know this community and know that we will be at our best if we face these challenges together.

RECOMMENDATION

1. THAT Council support the above COVID-19 business and community support package.
2. THAT the Mayor write to local businesses outlining the support from Council, State and Federal Government available.

3. THAT Council continue to highlight and promote the work of our front line and essential services and that their commitment be recognised and thanked at an appropriate, safe time when restrictions are lifted.

