

**EXTRAORDINARY MEETING**

**OF**

**WELLINGTON CITY COUNCIL**

**MINUTES**

**Time: 2:00 pm**  
**Date: Thursday, 9 April 2020**  
**Venue: Virtual meeting**

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**PRESENT**

Mayor Foster (via audiovisual link)  
Councillor Calvert (via audiovisual link)  
Councillor Condie (via audiovisual link)  
Councillor Day (via audiovisual link)  
Councillor Fitzsimons (via audiovisual link)  
Councillor Foon (via audiovisual link)  
Deputy Mayor Free (via audiovisual link)  
Councillor Matthews (via audiovisual link)  
Councillor O'Neill (via audiovisual link)  
Councillor Pannett (via audiovisual link)  
Councillor Paul (via audiovisual link)  
Councillor Rush (via audiovisual link)  
Councillor Sparrow (via audiovisual link)  
Councillor Woolf (via audiovisual link)  
Councillor Young (via audiovisual link)



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**TABLE OF CONTENTS**  
**9 APRIL 2020**

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<b>Business</b>	<b>Page No.</b>
<b>1. Meeting Conduct</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1.1 Karakia</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1.2 Apologies</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1.3 Announcements by the Mayor</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1.4 Conflict of Interest Declarations</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1.5 Confirmation of Minutes</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>1.5 Items not on the Agenda</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>1.6 Public Participation</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>2. General Business</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>2.1 Pandemic Response Plan and Annual Plan Next Steps</b>	<b>8</b>

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## **1 Meeting Conduct**

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### **1.1 Karakia**

The chairperson opened the meeting at 2:01 pm with the following karakia:

<b>Whakataka te hau ki te uru,</b>	Cease oh winds of the west
<b>Whakataka te hau ki te tonga.</b>	and of the south
<b>Kia mākinakina ki uta,</b>	Let the bracing breezes flow,
<b>Kia mātaratara ki tai.</b>	over the land and the sea.
<b>E hī ake ana te atākura.</b>	Let the red-tipped dawn come
<b>He tio, he huka, he hauhū.</b>	with a sharpened edge, a touch of frost,
<b>Tihei Mauri Ora!</b>	a promise of a glorious day

### **1.2 Apologies**

No apologies were received.

### **1.3 Announcements by the Mayor**

The Mayor made the following announcement: "We are in circumstances we have never been before and hopefully will never be in again. As a nation I think we are doing incredibly well; we heard today that the number of new people who have been infected by the virus have only gone up by 29. We appear to be on the right track; I think that is a fantastic credit to leadership and to Government, but to everybody, every New Zealander. I think people are doing fantastically. I think if we get through this quickly we will reduce the harm to our people and our economy; and we will obviously get ourselves out of lockdown faster. I want to particularly thank all Council staff and actually all the people in the essential services across the whole of our city, because they are the ones who are keeping us fed and keeping us safe. But I'd also like to thank all Council staff who have worked incredibly hard both in terms of essential services but also in terms of immediate response to COVID-19 situation and the staff who have put an enormous amount of work in a very short period of time to put together the papers we will be considering today. And thank you to all councillors for getting up to speed with the new technology and the new environment"

### **1.4 Conflict of Interest Declarations**

No conflicts of interest were declared.

## **1.5 Confirmation of Minutes**

### **Moved Mayor Foster, seconded Deputy Mayor Free**

#### **Resolved**

That the Council:

1. Approve the minutes of the Emergency Council Meeting held on 23 March 2020, having been circulated, and that they be taken as read and confirmed as an accurate record of that meeting.

A division was required under standing order 27.6, voting on which was as follows:

#### **For:**

Mayor Foster, Councillor Calvert, Councillor Condie, Councillor Day, Councillor Fitzsimons, Councillor Foon, Councillor Free (Deputy Mayor), Councillor Matthews, Councillor O'Neill, Councillor Pannett, Councillor Paul, Councillor Rush, Councillor Sparrow, Councillor Woolf, Councillor Young

#### **Against:**

None

Majority Vote: 15:0

**Carried**

## **1.6 Items not on the Agenda**

There were no items not on the agenda.

## **1.7 Public Participation**

### **1.7.1 Maura Rigby**

Maura Rigby spoke to item 2.1 Pandemic Response Plan and Annual Plan Next Steps.

### **1.7.2 Wade Martelletti**

Wade Martelletti spoke to item 2.1 Pandemic Response Plan and Annual Plan Next Steps.

### **1.7.3 Cycle Wellington**

Mark Johnston, representing Cycle Wellington, spoke to item 2.1 Pandemic Response Plan and Annual Plan Next Steps.

### **1.7.4 Wellington on a Plate**

Sarah Meikle, chief executive of Wellington Culinary Events Trust representing Wellington on a Plate, spoke to item 2.1 Pandemic Response Plan and Annual Plan Next Steps.

### **1.7.5 Matt McLaughlin**

Matt McLaughlin, on behalf of Hospitality New Zealand, spoke to item 2.1 Pandemic Response Plan and Annual Plan Next Steps.

## **Tabled documents at public participation**

### **Attachments**

- 1 Calling for local government support – Maura Rigby

## **Suspension of standing orders**

**Note:** In accordance with standing order 2.5 a motion to suspend standing orders requires a 75% majority in order to be carried.

### **Moved Mayor Foster, seconded Councillor Day**

#### **Resolved**

That the Council:

1. Temporarily suspends the following Standing Order/s:
  - a) Standing Order 16.5 (Members to speak in place and address the chairperson), to allow members to remain seated when speaking at a Council meeting.
  - b) Standing Order 27.7 (Division), to allow divisions be recorded by a show of hands rather than taking down names by the Chief Executive.

A division was required under standing order 27.6, voting on which was as follows:

#### **For:**

Mayor Foster, Councillor Calvert, Councillor Condie, Councillor Day, Councillor Fitzsimons, Councillor Foon, Councillor Free (Deputy Mayor), Councillor Matthews, Councillor O'Neill, Councillor Pannett, Councillor Paul, Councillor Rush, Councillor Sparrow, Councillor Woolf, Councillor Young

#### **Against:**

None

Majority Vote: 15:0

**Carried**

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## 2. General Business

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### 2.1 Pandemic Response Plan and Annual Plan Next Steps

#### Moved Mayor Foster, seconded Deputy Mayor Free

#### Amended Officers' Recommendation/s

That the Council:

1. Receive the information.
2. Note that Covid-19 has had a material impact on households and businesses and Council has developed a Pandemic Response Plan that includes a range of actions to support those facing hardship in the community. Also that the Pandemic Response Plan includes a range of actions that can be delivered immediately, and others are in development and focused on the recovery phase.
3. Agree to the Pandemic Response Plan as outlined in the body of this report and Attachment 1, noting that it is a living plan and more detail and additional actions will be included over time in consultation with the Council and other key stakeholders.
4. Agree to amend the Pandemic Response Plan (attachment 1) as follows:
  - a) *City Recovery Fund* – ensure criteria for allocating funding from the City Recovery Fund (initiative 13) include support for creative and innovative sectors
  - b) *City Recovery Plan* - It is important that the recovery plans encompass the economy but also the cultural and recreational dynamic of the city
5. Agree to the immediate actions from the Pandemic Response Plan (as outlined in attachment 1 and as amended to reflect resolution 4 above) in regard to:
  - a) Rates relief (commercial and residential ratepayers) as amended and outlined in note A tabled at this meeting
  - b) Rent relief
  - c) Parking fees
  - d) Food and liquor fees
  - e) Community sector support/grants
6. Note that there will be regular briefing sessions/workshops to update elected members and seek Councillor input, and make decisions where they are beyond the delegations of officers.
7. Note that Covid-19 has also had a material impact on Council's budget for the current year (2019/20) and is expected to have a significant impact on the budget for 2020/21.
8. Note the LGNZ and SOLGM guidance for the development of 2020/21 Annual Plans, based on independent legal advice from Simpson Grierson, as outlined in attachment 2.
9. Agree that the 2020/21 Annual Plan consultation document be prepared based on

Option 1, which forecasts a 4.8% rates increase for consideration by the Council.

10. Agree that the 2020/21 Annual Plan Consultation Document be prepared and brought back for Council consideration on 30 April to be followed with a four week (online) consultation period commencing early May and concluding early June.
11. Note that any option that requires a Long-term Plan amendment would not provide sufficient time to complete the Annual Plan/ LTP by 30 June 2020 as required in the Local Government Act 2002.
12. Note that the Chief Executive will be conducting a thorough review of all Council costs, supported by elected member input, and that any savings identified will be presented back to Council in time for the adoption of the final Annual Plan

### **Attachments**

Reference to be made to attachments 1 and 2 of item 2.1 on the Extraordinary Council meeting agenda of 9 April 2020.

**Secretarial note:** With the leave of the meeting, clauses 4, 5 and 10 of the original motion were amended, and clause 12 was added. The changes are marked in red.

**Secretarial note:** An explanatory note with regards to clause 5(a) was tabled at the meeting, as outline below:

Note A

### **Rates relief – business and commercial**

To provide support to businesses and commercial ratepayers, they will be able to elect to defer their fourth quarter rates without penalty initially for six months. Interest will be charged on any amounts deferred to provide a disincentive to those businesses that can afford to pay their rates. This mechanism provides immediate cash flow relief to businesses and because anyone taking advantage of the deferral will still be required to repay the amount deferred and interest, there is minimal cost to Council. The draft criteria for commercial ratepayers are:

- The benefits of rates relief must flow through to tenants
- Property owned or occupied by central government agencies, crown entities, state-owned enterprises and utility companies are excluded.
- Commercial ratepayers applications will be able illustrate financial hardship resulting from Covid-19 through either a successful ratepayer or tenant application to either Government Covid-19 Wage Subsidy, Business Finance Guarantee scheme or Mortgage Holiday Scheme.

Deleted text and replaced with the above bullet points

- Commercial ratepayers with central government tenants cannot apply
- Commercial ratepayers with nongovernment tenants can defer up to 75% of their fourth quarter rates for six months

- Commercial ratepayers with accommodation, retail or hospitality tenants can defer up to 100% of their fourth quarter rates for six months.

**Moved Councillor Condie, seconded Councillor Fitzsimons, the following amendment**

**Resolved**

That the Council:

13. Agree to return to full parking fees and enforcement two weeks after a return to Covid-19 alert Level 3, with the equivalent of parking revenue proceeds of up to \$1m (if achieved prior to 30 June) to be allocated to community grants.
14. Agree to fund an additional \$500k from rates for community grant funding in 2020/21, bringing the total additional community grant funding to \$1.5m.
15. Direct officers to investigate temporary P15 parking spaces around the city for pick-ups.
16. Agree to provide a rebate for pavement license holders for the equivalent of the fourth quarter of 2019/20.
- 9A. Agree the 2020/21 Annual Plan consultation document be prepared based on the 4.95.% rates scenario and a 2.15% rates scenario.
17. Direct officers to review the rates postponement policy to ensure it is fit for purpose to support residents who may be unable to afford their rates in 2020/21.
18. Agree that officers provide advice prior to the Annual Plan deliberations on how the Council can best provide targeted support to the Arts, Sport and Recreation sector.

**Carried**

**Secretarial note:** The amendment moved by Councillor Condie and seconded by Councillor Fitzsimons was taken part by part, the divisions for which are as follows:

Clause 13: Agree to return to full parking fees and enforcement two weeks after a return to Covid-19 alert Level 3, with the equivalent of parking revenue proceeds of up to \$1m (if achieved prior to 30 June) to be allocated to community grants.

**For:**

Councillor Condie, Councillor Day, Councillor Fitzsimons, Councillor Foon, Councillor Free (Deputy Mayor), Councillor Matthews, Councillor O'Neill, Councillor Pannett, Councillor Paul, Councillor Rush,

**Against:**

Mayor Foster, Councillor Calvert, Councillor Sparrow, Councillor Woolf, Councillor Young

Majority Vote: 10:5

**Carried**

Clause 14: Agree to fund an additional \$500k from rates for community grant funding in 2020/21, bringing the total additional community grant funding to \$1.5m.

**For:**

Councillor Condie, Councillor Day, Councillor Fitzsimons, Councillor Foon, Councillor Free (Deputy Mayor), Councillor Matthews, Councillor O'Neill, Councillor Pannett, Councillor Paul, Councillor Rush, Councillor Sparrow

**Against:**

Mayor Foster, Councillor Calvert, Councillor Woolf, Councillor Young

Majority Vote: 11:4

**Carried**

Clause 15: Direct officers to investigate temporary P15 parking spaces around the city for pick-ups.

**For:**

Mayor Foster, Councillor Calvert, Councillor Condie, Councillor Day, Councillor Fitzsimons, Councillor Foon, Councillor Free (Deputy Mayor), Councillor Matthews, Councillor O'Neill, Councillor Pannett, Councillor Paul, Councillor Rush, Councillor Sparrow, Councillor Woolf, Councillor Young

**Against:**

None

Majority Vote: 15:0

**Carried**

Clause 16: Agree to provide a rebate for pavement license holders for the equivalent of the fourth quarter of 2019/20.

**For:**

Mayor Foster, Councillor Calvert, Councillor Condie, Councillor Day, Councillor Fitzsimons, Councillor Foon, Councillor Free (Deputy Mayor), Councillor Matthews, Councillor O'Neill, Councillor Pannett, Councillor Paul, Councillor Rush, Councillor Sparrow, Councillor Woolf, Councillor Young

**Against:**

None

Majority Vote: 15:0

**Carried**

Clause 9A: Agree the 2020/21 Annual Plan consultation document be prepared based on the 4.95.% rates scenario and a 2.15% rates scenario.

**For:**

Mayor Foster, Councillor Condie, Councillor Day, Councillor Fitzsimons, Councillor Foon, , Councillor Matthews, Councillor O'Neill, Councillor Pannett, Councillor Paul, Councillor Rush, Councillor Sparrow, Councillor Woolf, Councillor Young

**Against:**

Councillor Calvert, Councillor Free (Deputy Mayor)

Majority Vote: 13:2

**Carried**

Clause 17: Direct officers to review the rates postponement policy to ensure it is fit for purpose to support residents who may be unable to afford their rates in 2020/21.

**For:**

Mayor Foster, Councillor Calvert, Councillor Condie, Councillor Day, Councillor Fitzsimons, Councillor Foon, Councillor Free (Deputy Mayor), Councillor Matthews, Councillor O'Neill, Councillor Pannett, Councillor Paul, Councillor Rush, Councillor Sparrow, Councillor Woolf, Councillor Young

**Against:**

None

Majority Vote: 15:0

**Carried**

Clause 18: Agree that officers provide advice prior to the Annual Plan deliberations on how the Council can best provide targeted support to the Arts, Sport and Recreation sector.

**For:**

Mayor Foster, Councillor Calvert, Councillor Condie, Councillor Day, Councillor Fitzsimons, Councillor Foon, Councillor Free (Deputy Mayor), Councillor Matthews, Councillor O'Neill, Councillor Pannett, Councillor Paul, Councillor Rush, Councillor Sparrow, Councillor Woolf, Councillor Young

**Against:**

None

Majority Vote: 15:0

**Carried**

The meeting temporarily adjourned at 3:55 pm and reconvened at 4:01 pm with all the members present.

**Moved Councillor Paul, seconded Councillor Pannett, the following amendment**

**Resolved**

That the Council:

19. Direct Officers to

- a) Broaden the criteria of the City Recovery Fund to include operating expenses, additional applications to Council funding, start-ups, and funding without a matching applicant investment;
- b) Steer the Fund towards revitalisation and job creation through innovation and technology; and
- c) Bring the criteria and fund plan back to Council for final sign-off.

**Carried**

**Secretarial note:** The amendment moved by Councillor Paul and seconded by Councillor Pannett was taken part by part, the divisions for which are as follows:

Clause 19(a): Direct officers to Broaden the criteria of the City Recovery Fund to include operating expenses, additional applications to Council funding, start-ups, and funding without a matching applicant investment.

**For:**

Mayor Foster, Councillor Condie, Councillor Day, Councillor Fitzsimons, Councillor Foon, Councillor Free (Deputy Mayor), Councillor Matthews, Councillor O'Neill, Councillor Pannett, Councillor Paul, Councillor Rush,

**Against:**

Councillor Calvert, Councillor Sparrow, Councillor Woolf, Councillor Young

Majority Vote: 11:4

**Carried**

Clause 19(b): Direct officers to Steer the Fund towards revitalisation and job creation through innovation and technology.

**For:**

Councillor Condie, Councillor Day, Councillor Fitzsimons, Councillor Foon, Councillor Free (Deputy Mayor), Councillor Matthews, Councillor O'Neill, Councillor Pannett, Councillor Paul, Councillor Rush

**Against:**

Mayor Foster, Councillor Calvert Councillor Sparrow, Councillor Woolf, Councillor Young

Majority Vote: 10:5

**Carried**

Clause 19(c): Direct officers to Bring the criteria and fund plan back to Council for final sign-off.

**For:**

Mayor Foster, Councillor Calvert, Councillor Condie, Councillor Day, Councillor Fitzsimons, Councillor Foon, Councillor Free (Deputy Mayor), Councillor Matthews, Councillor O'Neill, Councillor Pannett, Councillor Paul, Councillor Rush, Councillor Sparrow, Councillor Woolf, Councillor Young

**Against:**

None

Majority Vote: 15:0

**Carried**

**Moved Mayor Foster, seconded Deputy Mayor Free, the following substantive motion**

**Resolved**

That the Council:

1. Receive the information.
2. Note that Covid-19 has had a material impact on households and businesses and Council has developed a Pandemic Response Plan that includes a range of actions to support those facing hardship in the community. Also that the Pandemic Response Plan includes a range of actions that can be delivered immediately, and others are in development and focused on the recovery phase.
3. Agree to the Pandemic Response Plan as outlined in the body of this report and Attachment 1, noting that it is a living plan and more detail and additional actions will be included over time in consultation with the Council and other key stakeholders.
4. Agree to amend the Pandemic Response Plan (attachment 1) as follows:
  - a) City Recovery Fund – ensure criteria for allocating funding from the City Recovery Fund (initiative 13) include support for creative and innovative sectors
  - b) City Recovery Plan – It is important that the recovery plans encompass the economy but also the cultural and recreational dynamic of the city
5. Agree to the immediate actions from the Pandemic Response Plan (as outlined in attachment 1 and as amended to reflect resolution 4 above) in regard to:
  - a) Rates relief (commercial and residential ratepayers) as amended and outlined in note A tabled at this meeting
  - b) Rent relief
  - c) Parking fees
  - d) Food and liquor fees
  - e) Community sector support/grants
6. Note that there will be regular briefing sessions/workshops to update elected members

- and seek Councillor input, and make decisions where they are beyond the delegations of officers.
7. Note that Covid-19 has also had a material impact on Council's budget for the current year (2019/20) and is expected to have a significant impact on the budget for 2020/21.
  8. Note the LGNZ and SOLGM guidance for the development of 2020/21 Annual Plans, based on independent legal advice from Simpson Grierson, as outlined in attachment 2.
  9. Agree the 2020/21 Annual Plan consultation document be prepared based on the 4.95% rates scenario and a 2.15% rates scenario.
  10. Agree that the 2020/21 Annual Plan Consultation Document be prepared and brought back for Council consideration on 30 April to be followed with a four week (online) consultation period commencing early May and concluding early June.
  11. Note that any option that requires a Long-term Plan amendment would not provide sufficient time to complete the Annual Plan/ LTP by 30 June 2020 as required in the Local Government Act 2002.
  12. Note that the Chief Executive will be conducting a thorough review of all Council costs, supported by elected member input, and that any savings identified will be presented back to Council in time for the adoption of the final Annual Plan.
  13. Agree to return to full parking fees and enforcement two weeks after a return to Covid-19 alert Level 3, with the equivalent of parking revenue proceeds of up to \$1m (if achieved prior to 30 June) to be allocated to community grants.
  14. Agree to fund an additional \$500k from rates for community grant funding in 2020/21, bringing the total additional community grant funding to \$1.5m.
  15. Direct officers to investigate temporary P15 parking spaces around the city for pick-ups.
  16. Agree to provide a rebate for pavement license holders for the equivalent of the fourth quarter of 2019/20.
  17. Direct officers to review the rates postponement policy to ensure it is fit for purpose to support residents who may be unable to afford their rates in 2020/21.
  18. Agree that officers provide advice prior to the Annual Plan deliberations on how the Council can best provide targeted support to the Arts, Sport and Recreation sector.
  19. Direct Officers to
    - a) Broaden the criteria of the City Recovery Fund to include operating expenses, additional applications to Council funding, start-ups, and funding without a matching applicant investment;
    - b) Steer the Fund towards revitalisation and job creation through innovation and technology; and
    - c) Bring the criteria and fund plan back to Council for final sign-off.
  20. Direct officers to investigate how the Council may support the food, beverage and hospitality sector for the duration of Covid-19 crisis and thereafter.

## **Attachments**

Reference to be made to attachments 1 and 2 of item 2.1 on the Extraordinary Council meeting agenda of 9 April 2020.

**Carried**

**Secretarial note:** With the leave of the meeting, clause 20 (suggested by Councillor Rush) was added to the substantive motion, as marked in red.

**Secretarial note:** The substantive motion was taken part by part, the divisions for which are as follows:

Clause 13: Agree to return to full parking fees and enforcement two weeks after a return to Covid-19 alert Level 3, with the equivalent of parking revenue proceeds of up to \$1m (if achieved prior to 30 June) to be allocated to community grants.

**For:**

Councillor Condie, Councillor Day, Councillor Fitzsimons, Councillor Foon, Councillor Free (Deputy Mayor), Councillor Matthews, Councillor O'Neill, Councillor Pannett, Councillor Paul, Councillor Rush,

**Against:**

Mayor Foster, Councillor Calvert, Councillor Sparrow, Councillor Woolf, Councillor Young

Majority Vote: 10:5

**Carried**

Clause 14: Agree to fund an additional \$500k from rates for community grant funding in 2020/21, bringing the total additional community grant funding to \$1.5m

**For:**

Councillor Condie, Councillor Day, Councillor Fitzsimons, Councillor Foon, Councillor Free (Deputy Mayor), Councillor Matthews, Councillor O'Neill, Councillor Pannett, Councillor Paul, Councillor Rush,

**Against:**

Mayor Foster, Councillor Calvert, Councillor Sparrow, Councillor Woolf, Councillor Young

Majority Vote: 10:5

**Carried**

Clause 19(a): Direct officers to Broaden the criteria of the City Recovery Fund to include operating expenses, additional applications to Council funding, start-ups, and funding without a matching applicant investment

**For:**

Mayor Foster, Councillor Condie, Councillor Day, Councillor Fitzsimons, Councillor Foon, Councillor Free (Deputy Mayor), Councillor Matthews, Councillor O'Neill, Councillor Pannett, Councillor Paul, Councillor Rush, Councillor Sparrow

**Against:**

Councillor Calvert, Councillor Woolf, Councillor Young

Majority Vote: 12:3

**Carried**

Clause 19(b): Direct officers to Steer the Fund towards revitalisation and job creation through innovation and technology

**For:**

Councillor Condie, Councillor Day, Councillor Fitzsimons, Councillor Foon, Councillor Free (Deputy Mayor), Councillor Matthews, Councillor O'Neill, Councillor Pannett, Councillor Paul, Councillor Rush,

**Against:**

Mayor Foster, Councillor Calvert, Councillor Sparrow, Councillor Woolf, Councillor Young

Majority Vote: 10:5

**Carried**

Clause 19(c): Direct officers to Bring the criteria and fund plan back to Council for final sign-off

**For:**

Mayor Foster, Councillor Calvert, Councillor Condie, Councillor Day, Councillor Fitzsimons, Councillor Foon, Councillor Free (Deputy Mayor), Councillor Matthews, Councillor O'Neill, Councillor Pannett, Councillor Paul, Councillor Rush, Councillor Sparrow, Councillor Woolf, Councillor Young

**Against:**

None

Majority Vote: 15:0

**Carried**

Clauses 1 to 12, 15 to 18 and 20:

**For:**

Mayor Foster, Councillor Calvert, Councillor Condie, Councillor Day, Councillor Fitzsimons, Councillor Foon, Councillor Free (Deputy Mayor), Councillor Matthews, Councillor O'Neill, Councillor Pannett, Councillor Paul, Councillor Rush, Councillor Sparrow, Councillor Woolf, Councillor Young

**Against:**

None

Majority Vote: 15:0

**Carried**

The meeting concluded at 4:59 pm with the reading of the following karakia:

<b>Unuhia, unuhia, unuhia ki te uru tapu nui</b>	Draw on, draw on
<b>Kia wātea, kia māmā, te ngākau, te tinana, te wairua</b>	Draw on the supreme sacredness To clear, to free the heart, the body and the spirit of mankind
<b>I te ara takatū</b>	
<b>Koia rā e Rongo, whakairia ake ki runga</b>	Oh Rongo, above (symbol of peace)
<b>Kia wātea, kia wātea</b>	Let this all be done in unity
<b>Āe rā, kua wātea!</b>	

Authenticated: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chair

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**EXTRAORDINARY MEETING**

**OF**

**WELLINGTON CITY COUNCIL**

**MINUTE ITEM ATTACHMENTS**

**Time:** 2:00 pm  
**Date:** Thursday, 9 April 2020  
**Venue:** Virtual meeting

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**Business**

**Page No.**

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**Tabled documents**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. Calling for local government support | 2 |
|---|---|

# CALLING FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT TO SUPPORT THE HOSPITALITY SECTOR

Maura Rigby  
bar, café and restaurant owner

# The hospitality sector has been greatly affected by Covid-19.

- As a 'non-essential service' we have been completely shutdown at Level 4. The four week lockdown's loss to the hospitality industry is estimated at over 1 billion dollars.<sup>1</sup>
- The Restaurant Association's recent survey estimates that a 5<sup>th</sup> of their members are considering closing their businesses for good or believe this crisis will put them out of business. A 5<sup>th</sup> of Wellington's hospitality businesses would be 374 businesses shutting their doors for good.
- The message coming through strongly from the Minister of Finance is that we all need to use this time to prepare for the 'new normal.' The 'new normal' of Alert Levels 3-1.

1. Restaurant Association Survey

# The Petition for Local Government Support

- The petition has gained more than 2000 supporters and signatories in 4 days.

The petition asks for:

- emergency off-licences to be made available to holders of current on-licences for the duration of Covid-19 crisis
- financial relief for council licence fees for the hospitality industry
- financial relief for property rates and fees for the landlords of the hospitality industry

## **Emergency off-licences to be made available to holders of current on-licences so they can offer the delivery of alcoholic beverage for the duration of Covid-19 crisis.**

- This ensures the licensed establishments can maintain some portion of their regular trade in Levels 2-3 to stay afloat.
- This is inline with the emergency measures taken in states of Australia, much of the Unites States of America and recently by the Dunedin City Council in the form of a special licence.
- A covid-10 'special licence' can be drafted or urgent changes to the Sale & Supply of Liquor Act 2012 can be made under the Epidemic Preparedness Act. The Ministry of Justice is responsible for making changes to this act and in a declared of emergency this can be done quickly.
- The hospitality sector needs this in place before the end of lockdown. The potential economic impact of this is much, much greater than reducing fees and rates.
- This is not just a central government issue. Wellington City Council can take the lead on this and greatly assist its hospitality sector.

## Financial relief for council licence fees for the hospitality industry.

- Your agenda addresses this issue to some extent, with immediate relief for liquor and food licensing fees for quarter 4 proposed as an immediate action.
- This offers a typical licensed restaurant or tavern less than \$100 of financial relief. Non-licensed premises would receive less benefit.
- Our sector would like to see pavement licences, encroachment licences and water rates added to this list.

## Financial relief for property rates for the landlords of the hospitality industry.

- You address this to some extent in your agenda with the 6 month ‘rates holiday’ that is subject to interest.
- Many people in our industry are struggling to negotiate meaningful rent reductions with their landlords.
- We believe a reduction in rates and/or deferred payments without interest is more appropriate for the landlords of the most affected sectors.
- If the purpose of the rates holiday is to offer relief to businesses, this isn’t enough leverage for tenants to negotiate significant rent reductions and enough relief to impel landlords to make greater concessions.
- Inland Revenue and ACC are not charging interest on payments deferred by heavily affected businesses.

## Beyond the petition and looking to the future.

- The hospitality industry needs your support to make it through.
- While well intentioned, the immediate measures outlined within your agenda equate less than \$1000 of direct financial relief to licensed hospitality businesses. Less to non-licensed businesses.
- Plans to making changes to weekend parking fees are a start.
- But is not a time to tinker around the edges, the economic impact of innovative solutions will be much greater than the reduction of fees and rates relief combined.
- We need to look positively to the future and together adapt to the 'new normal'