

## 6.1. MM01: New Year's Eve 2021

### Background

Council considered a report on the above matter at an Extraordinary Meeting of Council held on 11 October 2021 and resolved:

**1. THAT given:**

- *The uncertainty of any public health orders or COVIDSafe Plan requirements for New Years Eve,*
- *the lateness of advice to reintroduce a 9:00pm fireworks on New Year's Eve (NYE),*
- *the apparent desire by the State Government to generate a carnival atmosphere with a full NYE fireworks display and prospective early January event, and*
- *the need to prevent congregation at pinch points caused by fencing or controlled access,*

*Council leave its foreshore parks open on NYE and for the proposed early January event.*

**2. THAT** *Council provide additional toilets, bins and cleaning services for New Year's Eve and the proposed follow-on events.*

**3. THAT** *the State Government be advised that Council will continue to service its park/foreshores for NYE but will not be ticketing or fencing.*

**4. THAT** *should the State Government require greater control of Access to meet Public Health Orders or COVIDSafe Plans at the time; the State Government take responsibility and meet the costs of doing so.*

The report to the Extraordinary Meeting identified the challenges in planning for the 2021 NYE event as a result of the changing situation and continued uncertainty with Covid-19, together with the logistical difficulties with the reduced lead time to the event. At the time of considering the report, Council had written to the Minister for Jobs, Investment, Tourism in Western Sydney, the Hon Stuart Ayres MP, but was yet to receive a response.

In the three weeks since the extraordinary meeting, the State Government's Road Map to recovery as the State emerges from the pandemic lockdown has continued to rapidly evolve and further clarity has been provided.

On 4 November, a meeting was held between Council, The Minister, Senior Police officials and officials from The Department of Premier and Cabinet coordinating cross agency arrangements for New Years Eve. Following all parties providing their respective position and outline of challenges faced by their respective organisations, the Minister:

- Provided additional clarity on the anticipated public health orders and the States willingness to initiate a NYE specific public health order, if necessary,
- Outlined the desire of the State to enable NYE 2021 fireworks to proceed as per a business-as-usual approach to the maximum extent possible while ensuring public safety and having regard to Covid safe planning,

- Sought Council's co-operation and assistance to manage public safety during the event,
- Undertook to provide support to Council to enable our involvement, including the prompt consideration of financial support, and
- Acknowledged the value of pursuing a memorandum of understanding (MOU) or similar instrument to identify respective responsibilities and improved communications for future NYE events.

**I therefore recommend:**

**1. THAT** given the additional clarity provided by the Minister/State in respect to Public Health Orders applicable to NYE and request from the Minister and Police for Council support to facilitate public safety on NYE:

- Council, in co-operation with the State Government, Police and Government Agencies, implement a managed access approach to NYE 2021 (i.e., the approach in place prior to ticketing),
- Council endorse managed access including fencing and control points at Bradfield Park/Mary Booth Reserve, Blues Point Reserve, and Clark/Quibaree/Watt Parks, to control alcohol being bought into the event and to manage attendance numbers,

**2. THAT** Council seek to enter an arrangement whereby, cost associated with NYE be met on a 50/50 basis between Council and the State.

**3. THAT** the General Manager be authorised to take any necessary action, including entering a funding agreement with the State, to implement this recommendation.

**COUNCILLOR JILLY GIBSON  
MAYOR**