

## **6.2. MM02: Extension of Outdoor Dining License Waivers and Use of Open Spaces**

Council would be aware the COVID-19 pandemic has meant that cafés and small businesses in the LGA have been struggling. Talking to owners, a concern raised is how they will reimagine their businesses when the lockdown ends, and we return to the new normal.

During a Press Conference held on Sunday 12 September, Dr Kerry Chant, NSW Chief Health Officer stated, “in reality, outdoor environments, if people are keeping away from each other, are probably the safest environments”.

Dr Chant went on to provide positive messaging around outside areas including parks and beaches, highlighting that these are much safer, less risky and provide a positive impact on mental wellbeing.

This has led to owners thinking about how they can provide outside areas to service their customers, they are concerned that businesses without access to outdoor areas will be further impacted. Cafes that do not have outdoor seating arrangements to position themselves for the end of the lockdown period may find it difficult to move forward positively.

The question then raises itself as to what the Council can do to support this approach. Council is currently in the process of finishing the temporary pop-up plaza in Miller Street and temporary outdoor shared spaces in Fitzroy and Bligh Streets, Kirribilli. It should be possible to utilise these spaces and other public spaces adjacent to existing businesses to provide outdoor service areas thereby assisting small business, the community to return to normal in a safer manner and enhancing the vibrancy of the local area through spring and summer.

### **I therefore recommend:**

- 1.THAT** the current waiver of outdoor license fees continues until 30 January 2022 (the end of the school holidays).
- 2.THAT** small businesses be invited to submit expressions of interest proposing use of adjacent public spaces while ensuring pedestrian thoroughfares and public safety are maintained.
- 3.THAT** a mechanism be put in place to expedite assessment and response to the expressions of interest on a case-by-case basis.

**COUNCILLOR JILLY GIBSON  
MAYOR**