

**9.2 LORD MAYORAL MINUTE - CORONAVIRUS (COVID - 19) - COUNCIL RESPONSE
#2****Author: Lord Mayor**

Pursuant to By-law 152 of the Council's By-laws, I submit the following minute for consideration by the Council:

INTRODUCTION

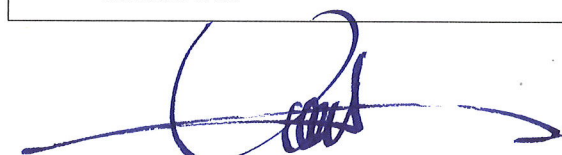
The Darwin Community is currently facing an Economic, Social and Health Crisis, the likes of which have not occurred for more than 100 years.

Over the past week, I have received phone calls and correspondence from some of the City's largest businesses and our most vulnerable ratepayers. They are all scared, they are anxious and they are appealing to myself as Lord Mayor and our Council to act quickly and decisively in providing Financial and Social Support. At our last ordinary meeting as a Council we approved the freezing of interest charged on outstanding rates, effectively deferring rate payments, however to help our community through the current crisis, I would like to see Council formalise a position and go further.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To deliver a clear position of support to our Community as Lord Mayor I will move the following support measures valued up to a \$55M for discussion and debate as an initial response:

1. THAT the current due date for rates be deferred from 31 March 2020 to 30 June 2020, with a review to occur prior to 30 June 2020
2. THAT the current rate hardship policy be revised and amended to include criteria specifically relating to ratepayers affected by COVID-19, furthermore that a report be provided to Council at the next ordinary meeting to discuss and debate the amended policy
3. THAT all permit charges, fees and levy's – inclusive of the CBD Parking Levy, with the exception of waste associated charges be waived until 30 June 2020, with a review to occur prior to 30 June 2020
4. THAT the Chief Executive Officer, review and provide a report to Council in relation to loan borrowing options and a working capital facility in providing Council with options leading into the 2020/21 Financial Year Budget preparation for extraordinary measures to support the business community and provide employment during the recovery for the Darwin community
5. THAT the Chief Executive Officer, discuss with the Department of Local Government, Housing and Community Development, dispensation for the use of restricted reserves in the recovery effort and report the outcome to Council
6. THAT the Chief Executive Officer, review and report to Council the pooling of all current debt accrued by Council into a single debt facility taking advantage of historically low interest rates
7. THAT the Chief Executive Officer, finalise Council's Strategic Projects and Economic Development Plan for final briefing and adoption by Council prior to 30 April 2020
8. THAT the Chief Executive Officer, provide a list of large scale infrastructure projects for Council's consideration to jointly fund with the Northern Territory and Australian Government on the basis of creating construction jobs in the recovery
9. THAT the Chief Executive Officer, continue to enhance and provide as many services as possible to the community on an online basis, including the broadcast community and social based programs via social media
10. THAT Council move a vote of thanks to Council Staff that are serving our community during this difficult time

**THE HON. KON VATSKALIS****LORD MAYOR**