

10.2 Notice of Motion 1069 - Cr Cameron

Motion

That Council:

1. Note the Victorian Government has decided to decriminalise sex work in Victoria. The decriminalising of sex work will:
 - a. remove offences and criminal penalties for consensual sex work. This will include decriminalising street-based sex work in most locations and repealing public health offences;
 - b. repeal the Sex Work Act 1994 and regulate the sex work industry through existing regulatory agencies; and
 - c. introduce supporting reforms in areas such as planning, public health and anti-discrimination.
2. Oppose the proposed changes which will directly impact councils and their communities by:
 - a. decriminalising street-based sex work in most locations;
 - b. dismantling the sex work licensing and registration system established by the Sex Work Act 1994 including the separation distance requirements between sex work businesses and particular land uses, including dwellings;
 - c. allowing brothels to apply for a liquor licence subject to the standard liquor licensing framework established under the Liquor Control Reform Act 1998;
 - d. shifting the enforcement of regulations relating to sex work to local councils under the Planning and Environment Act 1987;
 - e. allowing commercial sex work businesses to operate in commercial and residential zones, subject to requirements;
 - f. allowing sex workers to operate home-based businesses under the same planning controls as any other home-based businesses; and
 - g. allowing signage and advertising for sex work businesses to be considered in the same manner as any other business (i.e. sign size, location and lighting) including in residential areas.
3. Voice its concern that councils only received direct advice of this proposed change two days prior to the close of submissions which is grossly inadequate to allow elected representatives to engage with their communities and for meaningful feedback to be provided.
4. Note:
 - a. meaningful consultation with community and with local government on any proposals must occur before any changes are considered or introduced; and
 - b. community consultation must form and integral consideration for any changes to the sex work industry.
5. Urge the Minister for Consumer Affairs to:
 - a. ensure full consultation with councils and the community before any decisions are made;
 - b. ensure appropriate time is provided for feedback, including consideration of councils meeting cycles;
 - c. consider the resource implications to councils to enforce new sex work provisions;
 - d. provide additional evidence including Health Impact Statement, Economic Impact Statement, case studies and criminology assessment in regard to the proposed changes.
6. Urgently write to the Minister for Consumer Affairs and the shadow Minister for Consumer Affairs to advocate Council's position with a copy of that letter sent to all local members of parliament whose electorates covers Cardinia.

7. Use the Council communication channels to inform the community regarding the changes to the sex work businesses and to encourage them to provide feedback to the Victorian Government.
8. Request the CEO or her delegate coordinate with other councils in regard to advocacy.