



15. NOTICES OF MOTION

I, Councillor Tim Baxter, give notice that I intend to move the Motion outlined below at the Ordinary Meeting of Council on 04 March 2020:

That Council:-

1. Notes that:

- The Victorian Government has launched a Review into Decriminalisation of Sex Work;
- There has not been a significant review of regulation regarding sex work since 1985;
- There have been significant changes to the way sex work is conducted and that existing regulations have not kept pace with these changes;
- While the current laws allow for a minority of sex workers to work legally, the majority of sex work still remains criminalised;
- Criminalisation of sex work continues to pose a significant threat to the health and wellbeing of people engaged in sex work, including those who are most marginalised.

2. Reaffirms Council's commitment to decriminalisation of sex work as the best means of ensuring health and safety of people engaged in sex work and of providing the best public health outcomes for the community.

3. Request that officers prepare a submission to the Review into Decriminalisation of Sex Work on behalf of Council and this submission be brought to Council for endorsement

Supporting Information

Council has advocated for decriminalisation of sex work for a number of years. In March 2002, council supported the decriminalisation of street sex work accompanied by regulation of where this might occur. These laws were not changed.

Since that time there have been a number of sex workers in the City of Port Phillip murdered with many others being raped and assaulted.

Decriminalisation of sex work and reduction in stigma for those engaged in sex work, were key principles that underpinned Australia's highly successful strategy in HIV/AIDS. This was because criminalisation of sex workers forced sex workers to operate covertly, as sex workers fear detection will result in stigma and discrimination, prosecution or fines and created disincentives for all sex workers to test monitor their health status.

In the same way, continued criminalisation means that sex workers who are victims of rape, assaults and other crimes may be reluctant to report crimes.

Other states and territories in Australia have decriminalised sex work. In New Zealand, sex work has been decriminalised and its scheme allows local governments to make by-laws for zoning of brothels and sex work signage.

Global health and development bodies, including Amnesty International and the UN Development Program support full decriminalisation of sex work.