

Councillor Question Time

Question from Cr Pearl on behalf of the Dig in Community Garden in Port

Melbourne: Can officers provide clarification about their ability to operate and can members still have access to the site under stage 4 COVID-19 restrictions on the basis of shopping/food provisions?

Response

I am following up on your request for guidance regarding whether the community garden can continue to operate. It is a very challenging time for everyone and I can understand the desire of the members of the club to access to the gardens to maintain and harvest vegetables and I know these are important activities to support wellbeing.

We can provide advice but as an organisation you must make the determination yourselves about whether the group can continue to operate during these six weeks, as your organisation and each individual who leaves the house, is responsible, and liable, for any activity that is undertaken that is not allowed under the new restrictions. There are quite significant penalties for organisations and individuals found not to comply with the regulations.

Each organisation must work through the same process of determining whether the activities that they undertake fall within the definition of permitted activities, and as such that the person would be eligible for a permit.

Our advice is that it is unlikely that someone undertaking a community gardening activity would be deemed to be essential worker and as such, eligible for a permit to attend the site and undertake gardening activities. However, you as a community group, as with every organisation, will ultimately need to make this determination. I suggest you liaise with SPCC to help with your understanding of these restrictions.

**Please note: answers to any questions in Public Question Time which were answered at the meeting are included in the minutes of that meeting.*