

## 5.4 The Right to Peaceful Assembly

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### Recommendation

That the information be noted.

Due to unfortunate circumstances around the globe, there has been growing pressures and angst from residents of various backgrounds and communities who feel they have a right to be heard and share with others the pressures of their homeland and their people, or other issues they believe are essential to their self-realisation.

Everyone has the right to utilise the city's public space to articulate their concerns in a peaceful manner. The right to be heard is an essential pillar of our democratic freedom, which we should always cherish and defend.

Professor David Harvey has said:

*"We live in an era when ideals of human rights have moved centre stage both politically and ethically. A great deal of energy is expended in promoting their significance for the construction of a better world... We live, after all, in a world in which the rights of private property and the profit rate trump all other notions of rights."*

I here want to explore another type of human right, that of the right to the city. I believe that people's "right to the city" extends to utilising public space for self-expression and to meet for a common purpose without being hindered by undue cost.

It is our responsibility as a Council to ensure that people in our city are free to express themselves, so long as they are complying with laws and regulations, in a peaceful manner.

It has come to my attention that under our current fees and charges, there is no provision to allow people to exercise their right to freedom of assembly and association without having to pay for the use of public space. I believe that this is an oversight on our behalf as it is a common practice within other councils to enable such activities and I also believe that should be the case in Campbelltown. We must uphold our obligation to enable people to exercise their right to peaceful assembly without undue restriction.

As such, with the support of this Chamber, I have asked the General Manager to immediately treat all requests for gathering and assembly in this regard, to not be treated as an "event" rather as a "protest", separate to our standard fees and charges. I have also asked the General Manager to introduce a policy to enable people of all race, creed or ideology to exercise their right to protest under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights without cost.

### Attachments

Nil