

SUNBURY

No butts about smoking ban

O'SHANASSY ST TRIAL TO START IN APRIL

Barry Kennedy

SMOKERS will have to butt out their cigarettes when frequenting the restaurants and cafes on the east side of O'Shanassy St from April 4.

As expected, a year-long trial of banning smoking along the precinct was endorsed by Hume City Council last Monday.

The ban applies to all of the eastern side of the street, from Station St to Brook St, and comes after a survey on the subject, which almost unanimously backed the move.

Hume Mayor Helen Patsikatheodorou said the trial made sense on the basis of promoting good health.

"We surveyed more than 150 people along O'Shanassy St, in November and December, and 88.5 per cent of respondents said they wanted a nonsmoking trial," Cr Patsikatheodorou said.

"This ban will help to attract more and more families to what has become a truly premier dining precinct."

Vic's owner Carmel Scerri told the *Leader* she believed the changes would only enhance business.

"I love it. I'm really happy about it," Ms Scerri said.

"We have people who say to us, 'can we have a table inside? We'd love to be outside, but there's people smoking there'.

"We are also putting in a permanent outdoor structure, which we want to be smoke-free anyway."

Signs on footpaths and dining tables will explain the plan on O'Shanassy St, with the ban applying to all of the area between the shopfront and kerb.

Fines of \$200 will apply to those flaunting the rules.

The views of residents and shop owners are being sought by the council.

For more information, phone 9205 2200 or email healthytogether@hume.vic.gov.au

A survey will also be available online from April, at hume.vic.gov.au/smokefreedining



Cr Helen Patsikatheodorou, Cr Ann Potter and Vic's owner Vic Scerri are looking forward to the smoking ban in O'Shanassy St.

Picture: KYLIE ELSE