

MINUTES

ABORIGINAL REFERENCE GROUP

9.30AM ON WEDNESDAY 12 APRIL 2023



PRESENT	
Cr Gordon Bradbery	Brad Anderson
Cr Cath Blakey	Brendan Newtown
Aunty Shas Robinson	Kathleen Cambourn
Aunty Shelly Moore	Leanne Olive
Adam Towney	

IN ATTENDANCE	
Alison Bradford – Community Development + Engagement Manager	Jen Lysle-Van Dyk – Community Engagement Coordinator (Acting)
Armando Reviglio – Chair	Trudy Costa – Coastal Management Officer
Dale Wright – Community Engagement Officer – Aboriginal Services	Vimala Colless – Multicultural Community Development Officer
	Kristeen Sandercock – Minutes

1 WELCOME & ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

2 APOLOGIES – Apologies were received and accepted on behalf of Errolyn Strang, Aunty Shas Robinson (arriving late)

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – NIL

4 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 8 FEBRUARY 2023

5 BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

Aboriginal Language Group Update – will be discussed further in “Open Discussion” later in the meeting

The Reference Group suggested Aunty Shelly Moore, Aunty Gwen Brown from KEJ, and Richard Campbell as referral points for these discussions.

6 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT UPDATE

Mountain Bike Trails infrastructure for Illawarra Escarpment.

- Feedback on draft Concept Plan
- Have Stakeholders for LGA been informed? NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service (NP&WS) are responsible for contacting the stakeholders.
- NSW NP&WS are coordinating the design and build of the trails.
- Community Engagement partnering with them to investigate and deliver supporting infrastructure for the trail network which will be delivered in stages pending availability of funding. Supporting infrastructure includes parking, toilets/amenities, bubblers, bins, road crossings & transport.
- Seeking input from the **Balgownie community** for their thoughts on preliminary concepts for supporting infrastructure. This is to inform the scope for the concept design. Engagement begins this week and is open until 16 April.
- Draft concept plan for supporting infrastructure proposed in **Kembla Heights** is being shared with their community. Engagement open from 4 April to 8 May 2023.
- The project team would be happy to meet with members of the reference group for a conversation about these plans if desired.

Kembla Community Visioning Project

- Over past 18 months we've held conversations with the community about a range of projects planned in the Mount Kembla and Kembla Heights area. The community want to develop a shared vision and plan for the future of their community. We'd like to work with them to establish this vision and plan.
- First phase of engagement began in late March – focusing on informing the community of the project and how they'd like to be engaged in the visioning activities.
- We will be undertaking targeted Aboriginal engagement and would love to meet with you to provide more background and discuss how you'd like to be engaged and involved.

Safer Cities Her Way

This is a partnership project between Transport for NSW and Wollongong City Council to improve the safety of women and girls in and around public spaces and transport hubs. We are focusing on three areas:

- Wollongong CBD
- Port Kembla Town Centre
- Dapto Town Centre

Throughout April community engagement will be held through consultations and a mapping survey, using an online mapping tool where people can drop comments on specific sites that concern them. In May we will be working with local women and students from Five Islands College, Dapto High school and St Marys Girls High school through co-design workshops to design temporary and permanent solutions together. Conversations have been held with Dapto and Koonawarra High schools.

West Dapto Social Infrastructure Needs Assessment

This outlines what social infrastructure should be planned for residents in this area over the next 50 years including Council owned/managed assets (parks, playgrounds, community centres/libraries). Also transport, buses and State infrastructure and Council is lobbying the State Government about these issues.

- A general community engagement closed last month however the project team is open to continue speaking with the community to provide and seek information ongoing around the planning for West Dapto.
- Is there a way that we can better share this information, hear from Aboriginal families and individuals who live in this area to ensure their ideas/concerns can be included?

Community Engagement Strategy

This has been revised and is currently on public exhibition – closes 15 May 2023.

Council policy enables an informed and consistent approach to involving our community in decision-making. The revised policy outlines Council's principles, commitments, levels and process for engagement to guide Council's elected members, staff and consultants when engaging with our community. It has been updated to align with current Integrated Planning and Reporting requirements.

We're committed to involving our community in the decision-making processes. The [Community Engagement Strategy - Council Policy](#) is a resource to enable a consistent approach to undertaking meaningful and effective community engagement. Through seeking feedback and engaging our community to join the conversation with Council, we will enable better decision-making, strengthen our community and build trust. We'll use community feedback to refine the draft policy. The final Policy will enable Council to continue to deliver engagement activities for our community to the highest standard, reflecting best practice across the state.

To find out more:

- Read the [Council Report - Draft Community Engagement Strategy Policy](#)
- Read the [Draft Community Engagement Strategy - Council Policy](#)
- Read the [Frequently Asked Questions](#)

Share your thoughts by:

- Completing the [feedback form](#)
- Writing to the Engagement Team, Wollongong City Council, Locked Bag 8821 WOLLONGONG DC NSW 2500
- Emailing engagement@wollongong.nsw.gov.au
- Phone 4227 7111

Trudy Costa explained there are different Committees covering Coastal Management. There is a Coastal Management Program and a separate Coastal Management Program specifically for the South Coast.

Lake Illawarra sits under a separate management program jointly managed by Wollongong City Council and Shellharbour Council.

The "Lake Illawarra Coastal Management Plan Implementation" group/committee has been in operation for 12 months. It's a large committee made up of Councillors, Council staff and members of the Community from both Local Government Areas. The Aboriginal Reference Group nominated a member to participate in the group at the end of 2021. Quarterly meetings are held between 5.30 – 7.30pm with light refreshments provided. Meetings are held alternatively between Wollongong City Council and Shellharbour Council offices.

- A Reference Group member expressed their concern that local stakeholders – meaning the Traditional Custodians in both LGA's are not being approached to be on the committee. She raised a concern that the member nominated in 2021 is not a local stakeholder. Trudy suggested the Reference Group put forward someone else.
- Other suggestions for committee members include contacting the Elders Committee, South Coast people's group, different genders as they hold different cultural knowledge and perhaps advertise/publicise.
- Reference Group suggested that the Lord Mayor, Dale Wright, Auntie Shelly and Trudy come together to look at names to be nominated and they'll be presented at the next Reference Group meeting in June.

Some of the items coming up for discussion at the Lake Illawarra Coastal Management Plan Management committee:

- Lake walks proposed to chat and talk
- 50km Bald Hill to Windang project – this includes coastal erosion, Aboriginal significant sites, sea level changes. This is a very large and critical project.
- Aboriginal Cultural Management Plan – promoting and protecting Aboriginal culture. Trudy is happy to be guided on how this can be managed.

Chair thanked Trudy for her work in this area and for updating the Reference group on these matters.

8 OPEN DISCUSSION REFERENCE GROUP MEMERS

- Nandhi Ngara – this project was spoken about at the last meeting. 102 students from schools across our Local Government Area have contributed to the artwork for this project.
- Launch of the art banners is on Thursday 25 May in the Mall. One side of the mall will display Reconciliation week flags, the other side will display NAIDOC week flags. All members of the Reference Group will be invited to attend.

9 MULTICULTURAL ARTS PROGRAM & DIVERSITY PHOTOS

Vimala Colless spoke about her work amongst our multicultural communities, noting that there is a gap with migrants and their understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Families generally don't have cultural learning and she asked the question "how can we bridge that gap". The following suggestions were made:

- Welcome Festival for international students at the University of Wollongong – Aboriginal culture to be shared
- Speaker to talk at multicultural events/group meetings
- The Lord Mayor advised that a restructure of Citizenship ceremony has occurred, and an Elder is now invited to conduct a Welcome to Country, rather than have an Acknowledgement of Country
- 'Guumara' offer Aboriginal experiences, workshops and performances

A new city-wide Multicultural Festival will be held on Saturday 21 October 2023, and another is planned for 2024. This will be held at the Arts precinct and lower Crown Street. Vimala is asking Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to be involved

- Family friendly event involving school's projects
- Workshops at Wollongong Library and Town Hall
- Art Gallery will hold exhibitions
- Multicultural groups will be able to exhibit their culture in different formats
- Funding will be available for development of the program

Suggestions for different events by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people:

- Welcome ceremony

- Dance
- Cultural workshops
- Weavers
- Bush medicine
- Bush tucker
- Story telling

Dale Wright, Aunty Shas, Leanne Olive and Kathleen Cambourne to provide names/contacts to Vimala so she can include Aboriginal groups in the festival.

The Multicultural Festival Project Advisory group will help guide the program for the festival. If a Reference Group member is interested in joining the Project Advisory group, please contact Vimala, 4227 7492. Vimala will come to the next meeting to give an update on progress of the festival.

Council is updating photos for their website and other promotional material – if members would like to be included in the photos, please remain after the meeting and Council's photographer will be along to take photos.

10 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT WORKER UPDATE

- NAIDOC week grants open now and close on the 5 May 2023 – Council has a budget of \$7,000
- Once the applications close, a list will be sent to Reference Group members for their recommendations
- Lord Mayor's Elders luncheon will be held for NAIDOC week
- Council's Draft budget for 2023/2024 is out on exhibition – feedback is invited
- Saltwater Festival to take place at Warrawong on 19 April 2023, 10.00am to 2.00pm
- Koonawarra Reconciliation Walk to be held on Thursday 18 May – commence walking at 11.00am from Koonawarra Bay
- Bellambi Neighbourhood NAIDOC event to be held 7 July 2023
- Koonawarra NAIDOC event to be held 6 July 2023
- Warrawong Community Centre (Greene Street) NAIDOC Family Fun Day at Darcy oval 4th July 2023
- Recruitment for the Aboriginal Community Development officer is being progressed following a review of the position

11 GENERAL BUSINESS

- Beaton Park swim school mascot – Djamalang was agreed upon – no further communication has been received from Beaton Park. Dale will follow up for an update at the next meeting.
- Lord Mayor advised the Council meeting unanimously agreed to "The Voice" as outlined in the Council Meeting Minutes below:

ITEM A - LORD MAYORAL MINUTE - SUPPORT FOR AN ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER VOICE

809 COUNCIL'S RESOLUTION – RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY on the motion of Councillor Bradbery that Wollongong City Council –

1 Support the constitutional amendment and referendum question to recognise the First Peoples of Australia by establishing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice.

2 Progress this by listening respectfully to the views and needs of the local Aboriginal community.

3 That an Information Note or Briefing be delivered to Councillors outlining how Council can complement the proposed Federal Government civics and awareness campaign to support the voice referendum.

Variation The variation moved by Councillor D Brown (the addition of point 3) was accepted by the mover.

- What is Council's view on nuclear submarine base for Wollongong – no Council decision has been made as the Government has not made a decision on where the base will be located
- Members noted that if Wollongong was chosen for the nuclear submarine base, transport/movement coming down the mountain would be an issue. There is only one road in and out of Wollongong, along with rail transport this could be a serious issue. The Community needs to be consulted before a decision is made.
- MAYDAY walk is Saturday 6 May – walking through Port Kembla this year

12 ITEMS TO BE INCLUDED AT THE NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the “Open Discussion” remain on the agenda for future meetings

13 NEXT MEETING – **WEDNESDAY 14 JUNE 2023**

Minutes to be confirmed at the next meeting to be held at 9.30 on Wednesday 12 June 2023.

2023 – Future Meeting Schedule

Wednesday 9 August	Illawarra Aboriginal Medical Service	9.30 – 11.30am
Wednesday 11 October	To be Advised	9.30 – 11.30am
Wednesday 13 December	Level 10 Committee Room 3	9.30 – 11.30am

ACTION SUMMARY

Item	Action	Officer	Status
7	Lake Illawarra Coastal Management Implementation – new members	Trudy	
12	Beaton Park Swim School Mascot name	Dale	