



City of
Whittlesea

Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan **July 2017 - September 2020**





Original cover artwork piece, created by Mandy Nicholson Wurundjeri artist, contains traditional Wurundjeri motifs and represents how we are connected to the Earth, just like our fingerprints.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS

The City of Whittlesea recognises the rich Aboriginal heritage of this country and acknowledges the Wurundjeri Willum Clan as the Traditional Owners of this place.

About 50,000 years before colonisation, a diversity of Wurundjeri people, families and communities managed the land that the City of Whittlesea now occupies. Throughout this time the Plenty River and other local natural features provided an abundance of flora and fauna as both a source of food and shelter.

The Wurundjeri Willum clan is part of the Wurundjeri tribe and Woi Wurrung language group: one of the many language groups that make-up the Kulin Nation. The people of the Kulin Nation were both Waang

(the Australian Raven) and Bunjil (wedge-tail eagle – the creator) people who shared the same religion and language, and lived in what is now metropolitan and greater Melbourne.

The pre-colonial legacy of the Wurundjeri people can still be seen today as the Whittlesea area is home to a number of protected and sacred ‘scarred’ trees. These trees were used for making bark canoes or as boundary markers for distinct tribal groups. Today the scarred river-red gum trees serve as a reminder that Aboriginal people have always been, and will always be, central to the social, economic and cultural prosperity of the City of Whittlesea.

Throughout this document, the term ‘Aboriginal’ is taken to include people of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent. ‘Aboriginal’ is used in preference to ‘Indigenous’, ‘First Nations’, and ‘Koori’.

MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR



As the Mayor of the City of Whittlesea I am very proud to present Council's Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan (2017-2020). When Council adopted our first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) in 2012 it was noted as a significant milestone for Council and the local Aboriginal community. The RAP provided a structure to guide and build on Council's existing efforts; such as the Whittlesea Reconciliation Group and annual events program. Through the adoption of a Stretch RAP, Council will continue the reconciliation journey to enhance opportunities and outcomes for local Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities. A Stretch RAP is specifically tailored for organisations that are ready to challenge or 'stretch' themselves and set clear measurable targets, therefore deepening reconciliation impacts. The City of Whittlesea is truly ready for the challenges associated with delivering a Stretch RAP.

I am particularly proud of a number of the actions we achieved in our first RAP that will be furthered throughout the delivery of Council's Stretch RAP. These include:

- Council's 2015 adoption of an updated Aboriginal Reconciliation Policy that was built on the inaugural policy of 2001.
- The City of Whittlesea's Aboriginal Inclusion Charter - that acknowledges the rights local communities can expect to have put into practice across all of Council.
- More than 250 staff members from across every level of our organisation have undertaken Cultural Competency Training. This not only increases knowledge and respect for Aboriginal people and culture but enhances the cultural responsiveness and safety of our workplaces for Aboriginal people.
- During the life of our first RAP the number of Aboriginal people employed in our organisation has more than doubled (increasing from 4 to 11 employees).

- In partnership with the community, the establishment of — and our ongoing commitment to — the Bubup Wilam for Early Learning Aboriginal Child and Family Centre.
- Establishing biannual meetings where the CEO and the Mayor of the day meet with Aboriginal community members to discuss pressing community issues and inform the community of Council developments.

This RAP builds on Council's strong commitment to reconciliation that now stretches over 15 years. In developing the RAP 2017-20, the Council has consulted widely with the community and listened to what we have been told. The result is an innovative and contemporary plan that consolidates the position of the City of Whittlesea as a local government that is leading the process of reconciliation in partnership with local communities. Specifically, the RAP has 27 key actions under the three pillars of Relationships, Respect and Opportunities, that will guide our reconciliation process over the next four years. Central to this process will be the Whittlesea Reconciliation Group — our highly skilled and dedicated group of individuals who will continue to hold us accountable to our commitments.

I would like to thank everyone who has been involved in the development of the RAP and look forward to reporting the positive outcomes it will surely deliver.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ricky Kirkham', written over a horizontal line.

Cr Ricky Kirkham

Mayor



MESSAGE FROM THE CEO OF RECONCILIATION AUSTRALIA

Reconciliation Australia congratulates the City of Whittlesea on its deep commitment to reconciliation as it implements its second Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

The implementation of a Stretch RAP signifies that the City of Whittlesea is a leading advocate for reconciliation, and is demonstrating a deep dedication to making progress across the key pillars of the RAP program - respect, relationships and opportunities.

The City of Whittlesea understands the importance of building and maintaining respectful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in order to produce mutually beneficial outcomes. It champions these relationships by committing to deliver direct-participation programs aimed at increasing positive attitudes and behaviours in its local community, such as hosting National Sorry Day and NAIDOC Week events.

Respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, histories and cultures is key to the City of Whittlesea's core values and vision for reconciliation. This is exemplified by its aim to deliver pro-diversity messaging on behalf of its Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander local community members, as well as to lobby to State and Federal governments in partnership with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and agencies.

The City of Whittlesea is dedicated to driving reconciliation through employment and training opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, as demonstrated by its actionable goal to support local-level agencies, such as schools and sports clubs, to further the process of reconciliation.

On behalf of Reconciliation Australia, I commend the City of Whittlesea on its Stretch RAP, and look forward to following its ongoing reconciliation journey.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Justin Mohamed'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'J' and 'M'.

Justin Mohamed
Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia



INTRODUCTION

The City of Whittlesea is an interface municipality located 20km north of Melbourne's CBD. Covering 490 square kilometers, it is a large municipality containing established urban and rapidly developing new (growth) and rural areas. In 2017 the resident population is just over 209,100 people and is expected to grow by an average of 7,500 people per year for the next 15 years with an anticipated population of 353,910 residents by 2037.


The City of Whittlesea is also a diverse community with migrants from more than 140 countries, and almost half of our residents speak a language other than English at home, and 35 per cent of residents speak English 'not well' or 'not at all'. In 2016 it was estimated that over 900 asylum seekers also reside within the municipality. Our local Aboriginal and culturally diverse community make a range of valuable contributions to our local community and economy. However, a review of recent research indicates that the process of reconciliation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities still has progress to make.

Research conducted at a Victorian level indicates that:

- 47 per cent of Aboriginal people have a relative who was forcibly removed from their family due to Stolen Generations policies in Victoria. Trans-generational trauma continues to affect Aboriginal people in Victoria.
- Over 1 in 5 Aboriginal adults report 'high or very high' levels of psychological distress; this is double the non-Aboriginal rate.
- Aboriginal people in Victoria are twice as likely to be admitted to hospital with a potentially preventable condition.
- Diabetes is three times more prevalent among the Aboriginal population than the non-Aboriginal population.

Despite these negative outcomes, Victorians strongly support the local Aboriginal communities.

- 83 per cent of Victorians believe that Aboriginal Australians 'hold a special place as the first Australians'.
- 84 per cent of people surveyed across the City of Whittlesea agreed that something should be done to reduce discrimination experienced by people from racial or ethnic minority groups in Australia.



Building on Council's foundational reconciliation achievements, the RAP 2017-20 has been developed in response to this reality; knowing the local Aboriginal communities contribute greatly to our local economy and the social wellbeing of the municipality.

To deliver the RAP, Council will implement three key pillars that were developed by Reconciliation Australia in consultation with the broader Aboriginal community and are grounded in evidence-based practice. These are:

- **Relationships**
- **Respect**
- **Opportunities**

In delivering the Relationship, Respect and Opportunities pillars, Council will have three defined roles:

- **Provider:** Deliver direct-participation programs aimed at increasing positive attitudes and behaviours in the community; such as National Sorry Day and NAIDOC week events
- **Advocate:** Deliver pro-diversity messages on behalf of our Aboriginal communities and local agencies, or lobby State and Federal governments in partnership with local communities and agencies

- **Facilitator:** Support local-level agencies, such as schools and sports clubs, to further the process of reconciliation.

This RAP has two parts:

Section One provides an introduction to:

- the City of Whittlesea
- the local Aboriginal population
- Council's Reconciliation Policy
- achievements to date
- case Studies and Council's business
- Reconciliation 'champions'
- development of the Stretch RAP and policy linkages.

Section Two of the RAP defines the specific actions to be completed over the next four years and a detailed Action Plan stipulating all deliverables.

THE LOCAL ABORIGINAL POPULATION

Council knows that the Aboriginal community is one of the fastest growing communities within the City of Whittlesea. However, obtaining specific population data is difficult for a range of reasons:

- some people choose to abstain from completing the ABS Census
- some community members do not identify as Aboriginal for the purpose of the census
- and like all Whittlesea communities, some individuals/families are temporarily located within the municipality or newly arrived.

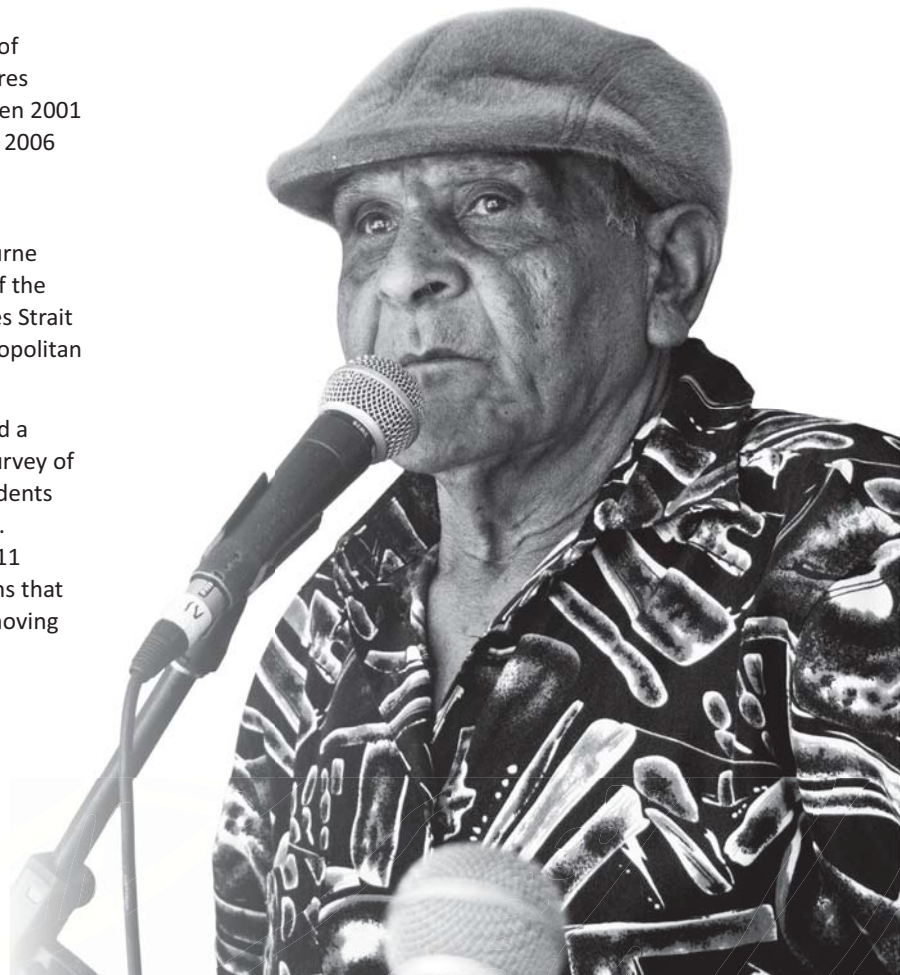
According to the 2011 Census:

- the number of residents living within the City of Whittlesea who identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander increased by 24 per cent between 2001 and 2006; and increased 35 per cent between 2006 and 2011
- the City of Whittlesea has the fourth largest Aboriginal population in Metropolitan Melbourne with 1,128 people; this means 0.73 per cent of the total population identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander - the third highest proportion in metropolitan Melbourne.

Council's 2016 Annual Household Survey involved a sample size of 2,877 individuals. Based on this survey of a random selection of households, 1% of respondents identified as Aboriginal (or Torres Strait Islander). Compared to the 0.7% identified through the 2011 Census, this data supports anecdotal observations that an increasing number of Aboriginal people are moving into the municipality.

If we cautiously assume that 1.2% of the population is representative of the demographic profile of the broader City of Whittlesea residential population, the current estimated local Aboriginal population in 2016 could potentially be close to 2,023 people.

The Koori Maternity Service at the Northern Hospital can also report that between 2001 and the end of 2015, 467 Aboriginal babies were born at the Hospital. The data from these multiple sources regarding the City of Whittlesea population suggests that local Aboriginal communities are younger in age profile and are growing in number.



Uncle Herb Patten

COUNCIL'S RECONCILIATION POLICY

Council's vision for reconciliation is driven by Council's Reconciliation Policy that stipulates; 'reconciliation is about building better relationships between the wider Australian community and Aboriginal peoples for the benefit of all Australians'. The City of Whittlesea's current Reconciliation Policy builds on the inaugural reconciliation policy adopted by Council almost 15 years ago. Both policies have been, and continue to be, an affirmation of Council's ongoing commitment to reconciliation for the benefit of our whole community.

The policy statement stipulates;

The City of Whittlesea values local Aboriginal communities and cultures; Council recognises they hold a special place as the First Peoples of Australia. Council is committed to inclusivity, equity and engagement with local Aboriginal people and communities.

Council's reconciliation policy is based on five key principles that were developed in consultation with local Aboriginal communities and are designed to underpin the Reconciliation Policy and guide all RAP actions.

- **RESPECT:** We will be respectful of Aboriginal communities, acknowledging and embracing their history, culture, heritage and the talents Aboriginal people bring to our community and our business.
- **SELF – DETERMINATION:** We understand and support the right of Aboriginal communities to determine their future and we will play our part.
- **EQUITY:** We strive to ensure Aboriginal communities participate and achieve to a level equal to all City of Whittlesea residents.
- **JUSTICE:** We acknowledge the wrongs of the past as a means to ensuring a better future for Aboriginal communities.
- **PARTNERSHIPS:** We will partner with Aboriginal communities in ways that are meaningful and deliver mutually-beneficial outcomes.

ACHIEVEMENTS-TO-DATE

- 2001** – Council establishes the Whittlesea Reconciliation Group.
- 2002** – Council adopts Indigenous Reconciliation Policy, the Australian Declaration towards Reconciliation and the Statement of Commitment to Reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- 2005** – Koori Christmas BBQ established.
- 2007** – The Reconciliation Dinner and National Sorry Day activities established.
Aboriginal Liaison Officer position is established
- 2008** – Council facilitates a meeting between the Aboriginal community and the then-Deputy Premier, where the community presented six key priorities.
- 2009** – Aboriginal Project Officer for Bubup Wilam is established as a fixed-term position.
Council is awarded the Localities Embracing and Accepting Diversity (LEAD) Project to trial a new approach to reducing race-based discrimination against Aboriginal people and people from migrant and refugee backgrounds.
- 2010** – Youth Services Officer (Aboriginal portfolio) is established as a full-time permanent position.
The first Aboriginal community-controlled organisation in Whittlesea was incorporated – Bubup Wilam for Early Learning Centre Inc.
- 2011** – The Traditional Owner Acknowledgement Statement is translated into eight languages.
The Whittlesea Reconciliation Group develops the Annual Reconciliation Awards Program to recognise local contributions to Reconciliation.
A local Aboriginal Elders group – Elders Making a Difference – is established in Epping.
- 2012** – The Bubup Wilam for Early Learning Centre is officially opened.
First Aboriginal Planned Activity Group (PAG) in the City of Whittlesea receives funding to provide activities for Aboriginal Elders.
Aboriginal Employment Pathways Strategy is adopted by Council.
The first City of Whittlesea Reconciliation Action Plan is adopted by Council.
- 2013** – 146 senior Council staff attend Cultural Awareness training.
- 2014** – Construction of Council’s Sorry Space (dedicated to the Stolen Generations) is completed.
- 2014** – Inaugural Aboriginal community yarning circle with the CEO and Mayor.
- 2015** – The Executive Leadership Team adopts Staff Guidelines for arranging a Welcome to Country or Acknowledging Traditional Owners.
- 2015** – Council adopts an updated Aboriginal Reconciliation Policy & Aboriginal Inclusion Charter.
Council adopts Building Respect: *Whittlesea’s Anti-racism Strategy 2015 -2019*.



James at Koori Barbecue

CASE STUDY: THE WHITTLESEA RECONCILIATION GROUP

At the Council meeting on 28 August 2001, Council resolved to establish the Whittlesea Reconciliation Group (WRG). The Group commenced in November 2001 as a community-based committee to be a key reference group for Council on the continuing reconciliation process and to foster understanding of historical, cultural and contemporary issues.

The WRG's overall vision for reconciliation is "a connected community respecting Aboriginal people as the first peoples of Australia, their history and culture through actions supporting reconciliation".

To meet this vision, the WRG has developed eight key aims;

- provide an avenue for Aboriginal people to have their voice heard
- promote and strengthen Aboriginal peoples' sense of belonging and connectedness
- build networks and relationships within and across communities
- enhance historical and cultural education in local communities
- foster awareness of reconciliation initiatives
- provide opportunities for community cultural celebrations
- support and acknowledge local individuals and organisations in their reconciliation initiatives
- review and provide feedback on Council policies, programs and strategic plans.

The group comprises 10 Aboriginal members, eight non-Aboriginal members, two nominated Councillors and three supporting Council Officers. To be eligible for membership you must work in, live in or have a strong connection to the City of Whittlesea. Under this model the group has been effective in progressing reconciliation as they hold a unique position of authority as an interface role between community and Council.

Over more than a decade the WRG has made significant achievements in supporting reconciliation. The group has assisted Council to gain a greater understanding of the issues facing local Aboriginal communities, provided feedback and commented on council plans and strategic documents and delivered a range of key events and programs. Some of the WRG's key achievements include the development of Council's annual National Sorry Day event, Reconciliation Awards night and Koori BBQ; these events engage over 400 people annually.

To ensure that the work of the WRG is adequately supported across all Council departments, an internal Reconciliation Governance Committee was established in 2017. This committee is chaired by the CEO and supported by a Reconciliation sub-committee that consists of interdepartmental officer representation from across Council.



WRG members at the 2015 Koori BBQ

CASE STUDY: SORRY SPACE

National Sorry Day is recognised each year on 26 May. The event commemorates the release of the Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission's 1997 'Bringing Them Home' report and honours the Stolen Generation.

In May 2011 Connecting Home donated a plaque to the City of Whittlesea to commemorate National Sorry Day and Council's efforts in acknowledging the mistreatment of Aboriginal people and children and the wrongs of the past. Upon receiving the plaque Council commenced a journey to design and construct a commemorative space where the plaque would be on permanent display.

Council engaged highly-respected Aboriginal artist Glenn Romanis to undertake the artistic design and construction of the reflective space in collaboration with Wurundjeri Elder Ian Hunter, the Whittlesea Reconciliation Group, local Aboriginal Elders, community members and Council staff.

During consultation with the community, Council became aware of the community's desire for the design to incorporate a 'meeting place', therefore creating a space for reflection on the meaning and significance of the plaque and Sorry Day.

In June 2013 the WRG and the City of Whittlesea Chief Executive Officer approved Glenn Romanis' final design concept and authorised construction to start in early 2014. The result is a Sorry Space that provides an opportunity for reflection and a symbolic acknowledgment of past wrongs and injustices inflicted upon Aboriginal people, in particular the Stolen Generations. The Sorry Space includes a paved area in the shape of a teardrop, symbolising the tears of pain and loss but also the tears of joy when members of the Stolen Generation were reunited with their family members. Further, the Sorry Space is paved with ochre-coloured Castlemaine slate, surrounded by a band of bluestone. Topographical lines are carved into the stone, representing the Darebin Creek and the Plenty River. The design also incorporates two large, leaf-shaped red gum seats and a plinth to hold a carved wooden bowl used for smoking ceremonies.

Council's Sorry Space, was officially unveiled on National Sorry Day in 2014 in a ceremony where a local Traditional Owner performed a smoking ceremony in partnership with Council's CEO, and members of the Stolen Generations. This ceremony was a powerful message of reconciliation, recognition and healing.



The Sorry Space

OUR BUSINESS

Like all Victorian Councils, the City of Whittlesea has responsibilities under the Local Government Act. Our responsibility covers key areas such as:

- providing a range of community services
- supporting the health and safety of our community
- preventing pollution, noise and disease
- delivery of key community infrastructure
- planning the services the community will need in the future
- representing our area to other governments, to tourists and overseas visitors.

In meeting these responsibilities Council has one central vision; to create a vibrant, self-sustaining community together. This RAP will further enhance Council's capacity to achieve this vision and ensure there are quality opportunities for Aboriginal communities to fully participate and achieve the same levels of outcomes as all residents within the City.

To ensure the WRG is adequately supported and RAP actions are implemented, actively monitored and evaluated, Council has established an internal reconciliation governance committee. This committee is chaired by the CEO and supported by a Reconciliation Advisory sub-committee that consists of interdepartmental officer representation from across Council.

Council is also the biggest employer within the municipality with a workforce of 1134 people in December 2015. Council currently employs 11 Aboriginal staff, 1% of our workforce. Our target is to increase the proportion of Aboriginal people employed at Council to 1.5% by October 2017, with 70% of these positions being permanent and with a retention rate above 80%. Based on current numbers of staff, this target equates to 15 staff members. Setting a target, and monitoring against this target, is important. However, we will be focussed on achieving positive outcomes for individuals, rather than being solely numbers driven.



Brent at Koori Barbecue

DEVELOPMENT OF THE STRETCH RAP

The RAP 2017-2020 augments the actions undertaken in Council's inaugural RAP. The development of the RAP involved detailed consultations with the local Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Communities and service providers, as well as the review of Council's existing policies, legislation and plans, and recent research such as the 2014 Reconciliation Australia RAP Workplace Barometer. All this work was centrally approved by the Whittlesea Reconciliation Group and RAP Advisory Group.

The RAP Advisory Group provided advice on the development of Council's RAP that included:

- providing comment on drafts
- providing ideas and suggestions for inclusion in the action plan
- supporting community consultation processes and Council connections to the local Aboriginal community
- reviewing actions and evaluating processes and priorities

The City of Whittlesea's Reconciliation Action Plan 2012-15 contained 19 'high level' actions and a number of sub-actions. A total of 16 actions were completed with the three outstanding actions carried over to the new RAP. Some completed actions will continue their development and enhancement over the life of our second Reconciliation Action Plan.

Council's results from Reconciliation Australia's RAP Barometer survey provide pleasing insights such as;

- 96 per cent of our staff have participated in at least one reconciliation activity – compared to 73 per cent as a national average in other organisations
- perceptions of trust between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal staff were significantly higher for the City of Whittlesea than other organisations.



COUNCIL POLICY LINKAGES

The RAP is linked to a range of existing Council Plans and Policies, most notably, *Shaping Our Future: Whittlesea 2030 Strategic Community Plan*. The Community Plan details our community's vision for the City of Whittlesea to the year 2030. It provides direction for the provision of key projects and services that enable us to meet the needs of our community and deliver quality services and facilities that are culturally-appropriate. The RAP is also intentionally interdependent to *Building Respect: Whittlesea's Anti-racism Strategy 2015-2019* and Council's Community Building Strategy; *Better Together*. Together these three strategies and associated action plans provide a range of co-ordinated activities aimed at preventing race-based discrimination, building community cohesion and connectivity whilst supporting local Aboriginal communities and further reconciliation.

Community Building Strategy

The City of Whittlesea's Community Building strategy is guided by seven policy principles that are congruent with Council RAP and reconciliation efforts, these principles are;

- 1) equity, access and inclusion
- 2) a place-based approach
- 3) community and civic participation
- 4) collaboration and participation
- 5) shared advocacy
- 6) community leadership
- 7) community outcomes.

Council's RAP, Anti-Racism Strategy and Community Building Strategy should be viewed as a coherent, whole-of-Council commitment to effectively further the process of reconciliation for the benefit of the whole of community.

Matthew Weeberg
National Sorry Day



POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE LINKAGES

There are also a number of International, Commonwealth or Victorian policies, Acts and other signatory conventions that guided the development of the Strategy, most notably the Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (RDA) and Australia’s National Anti-Racism Strategy.

At the local level the City of Whittlesea Aboriginal Reconciliation Policy and Aboriginal Inclusion Charter provide a central foundation for the RAP and all

reconciliation efforts. The Aboriginal Inclusion Charter is a rights-based document that stipulates 13 rights all Aboriginal people with the municipality can expect to have upheld. The City of Whittlesea Aboriginal Inclusion Charter is built on the principle that Aboriginal people should have the protection of a Charter as a supplement to, rather than a substitute for, their collective rights to self-determination and cultural identity.

Broader policy linkages

International	International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1965)	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966)	United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (2007)
Australian Government	<i>Racial Discrimination Act 1975</i>	Australian’s Human Rights Framework	National Anti-Racism Strategy
Victorian Government	<i>Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001</i>	<i>Equal Opportunity Act 2010</i>	<i>Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006</i>
	Victorian Government Aboriginal Inclusion Framework	Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework	
City of Whittlesea Policy Links	City of Whittlesea Aboriginal Reconciliation Policy	City of Whittlesea Aboriginal Inclusion Charter	Building Respect: Whittlesea’s Anti-Racism Strategy (2015-19)
	City of Whittlesea Council Plan 2013-17	Connect: Children, young people and families 2013-18	Aboriginal Employment Pathways Strategy & Action Plan 2012-17
	Municipal Public Health and Well Being Plan	Family Violence Strategy 2014-18	Recreation Strategy 2012-17

ACTION PLAN



RELATIONSHIPS: Council believes that building strong sustainable and respectful relationships are foundational to a healthy participatory local government. That’s why for almost 20 years Council has worked collaboratively with the Whittlesea Reconciliation Group and throughout this RAP we will continue to leverage mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal people, communities and organisations to support positive outcomes.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1.1 RAP governance RAP governance committees (internal and external) actively monitor RAP development, including implementation of actions and tracking progress.	Ensure the WRG meet at least four times per year to monitor the RAP implementation and tracking progress	February, May, July, September 2018, 2019, 2020	Aboriginal Liaison Officer (ALO)
	Ensure the WRG continues as a community-based committee with Aboriginal, Councillor and non-Aboriginal representation	February, May, July, September 2018, 2019, 2020	
	Ensure the (internal) RAP governance committees will meet at least four times per year to monitor and report on RAP implementation	March, June, September, December, 2018, 2019, 2020	
	Ensure the (internal) RAP governance committee has Aboriginal and director level representation	Reviewed in March 2018, 2019, 2020	
	Encourage all WRG members to attend governance training	June 2018	
	Ensure both the RAP governance committees and WRG have ToR endorsed and reviewed annually	December 2017	
1.2 Annual National Reconciliation Week event Celebrate National Reconciliation Week to strengthen and maintain relationships between Aboriginal staff and other staff.	City of Whittlesea will hold two local Reconciliation Week Events for key staff and local Aboriginal community members	June, 2018, 2019, 2020	ALO
	Encourage staff and residents to participate in at least one event during National Reconciliation Week	June, 2018, 2019, 2020	
	Ensure a City of Whittlesea Reconciliation Week event is held in June each year in partnership with the WRG and celebrate the local Aboriginal community	June, 2018, 2019, 2020	
	Register Council’s National Reconciliation Week Events via Reconciliation Australia’s website	May, 2018, 2019, 2020	
	Encourage Councillors and Senior Managers to attend at least one event during National Reconciliation Week	May, 2018, 2019, 2020	

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1.3 Traditional Owners Council will work collaboratively with Wurundjeri Elders and Traditional Owners.	Ensure Council consults with Wurundjeri Elders and Traditional Owners regarding matters of cultural significance a minimum of two times annually	May, September 2018, 2018, 2020	ALO
	Ensure Council consults with Traditional Owners regarding policy matters that affect the local Aboriginal community	May, September 2018, 2018, 2020	
1.4 Bubup Wilam Early Learning Centre Council will continue to partner with and advocate for Bubup Wilam Early Learning Centre, to build mutual capacity and promote their unique service delivery model.	Ensure Council support Bubup Wilam Early Learning Centre through the provision of a 50-year peppercorn lease (until 2065)	Reviewed in December 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020	Manager Family, Children and Young People
	The Director of Community Services and/or the Mayor of the day will meet with the CEO of Bubup Willam twice annually to ensure any strategic, advocacy and media opportunities are mutually beneficial to both organisations	April, September, 2018, 2019, 2020	
	Ensure Council fund a Maternal and Child Health nurse to outreach at Bubup Willam	Reviewed in December 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020	
	Encourage Council's officers to explore opportunities for Aboriginal-specific programs to be delivered in partnership with Bubup Wilam (such as New Mums Program)	Reviewed in December 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020	
1.5 Local Aboriginal Network (LAN) Council will maintain its support and collaborative partnership with the Local Aboriginal Network.	Council Aboriginal Liaison Officer will attend four Local Aboriginal Network meetings annually	March, June, September, December 2018, 2019, 2020	ALO
	Ensure Council supports the LAN in the planning and delivery of an annual event	Reviewed in December 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020	
1.6 Schools Promote reconciliation to our school stakeholders.	Raise awareness of Reconciliation Australia's Narragunnawali: Reconciliation in Schools program within two local schools annually	Reviewed in September 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020	Team Leader Youth Services

ACTION PLAN

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1.7 Maintaining relationships Maintain and leverage mutually beneficial relationships with local Aboriginal organisations, groups and individuals.	Review and update Council’s guiding principles for Aboriginal consultation and Aboriginal engagement framework	November 2019	Aboriginal Strategic Planner
	Council to continue building its own capacity and that of the Victorian Aboriginal Health Service and Aboriginal Housing Victoria through maintaining mutually beneficial relationships	September 2017	Team Leader Aboriginal & Cultural Diversity
	Promote specific cultural programs with regard to men’s / women’s, children’s and Elder’s business through the WRG, Whittlesea Local Aboriginal network and Epping Community Service Hub	Reviewed in September 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020	ALO
	Social connection opportunities are provided to local Elders through the delivery and evaluation of Council’s Aged Services PAG Group; Elders Motivated and Deadly (EMAD)	Reviewed in September 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020	Manager Aged and Disability
	Strengthen relationship with Reconciliation Australia	Reviewed in September 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020	Team Leader Aboriginal & Cultural Diversity
1.8 Strengthening Communities Council to support the development of mutually beneficial and reciprocal relationships between local Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities	Council to provide opportunities for 40 local residents to complete cross cultural awareness training focusing on Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal education Council to raise awareness of reconciliation Australia’s Share our Pride website	Reviewed in September 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020	Aboriginal Strategic Planner

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1.9 Communications Council will raise internal and external awareness of our reconciliation efforts, projects and achievements.	Ensure Council communicates the RAP to all internal and external stakeholders and promotes reconciliation through ongoing active engagement with local stakeholders	Reviewed in September 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020	Team Leader Advocacy & Communications
	Ensure a minimum of four articles highlighting reconciliation efforts are showcased in staff matters (Council's internal communications newsletter) per year	Reviewed in September 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020	Team Leader Advocacy & Communications
	Ensure a minimum of three articles per year showcasing the achievements and contributions of our local Aboriginal communities are pitched to local media	Reviewed in September 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020	Team Leader Advocacy & Communications
	Ensure the RAP 2017-20 is available to all staff and stakeholders via the Council website	July 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020	Team Leader Advocacy & Communications
	Ensure all members of Council's Executive Leadership Team (ELT) act as reconciliation communication 'Champions' and attend at least one Council event annually	Reviewed in September 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020	CEO
	Ensure the Aboriginal Resource Information Kit is readily available to residents and encourage Aboriginal community members, and non-Aboriginal services and Council staff to access the kit	Reviewed in September 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020	ALO
	Ensure the broader non-Aboriginal Community has access and up-to-date information regarding Council's reconciliation events	Reviewed in September 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020	Team Leader Advocacy & Communications
1.10 Conversation with Mayor and CEO Council will host bi-annual Mayor and CEO-community Conversations.	Ensure the Mayor of the day and CEO bi-annually hosts community conversations with local Aboriginal community leaders	April, October 2018, 2019, 2020	Governance Officer
	Encourage Community leaders to directly inform the CEO and Mayor of any matters affecting their community	April, October 2018, 2019, 2020	
1.11 Gathering Place Undertake a feasibility study regarding the establishing of an Aboriginal Gathering Place.	Complete a feasibility study; including recommendations regarding potential sites, models of delivery and management, benefits including health impacts, community outcomes and budget	May 2018	Team Leader Aboriginal and Cultural Diversity

ACTION PLAN



RESPECT: Council employees will be encouraged to improve their understanding of, and respect for, Aboriginal cultures through a range of educative opportunities such as cultural awareness (competency) training. We will also create opportunities for local community members and staff to acknowledge Aboriginal people as the First Nations Peoples of Australia and acknowledge the histories, cultures and heritages of Aboriginal communities through events such as NAIDOC week.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
2.1 Aboriginal Community Inclusion Charter Council will continue to implement and showcase the Aboriginal Inclusion Charter.	Ensure Council disseminate the Aboriginal Inclusion Charter throughout all Community Centers, local Libraries and Council Offices and to local Aboriginal networks and organisations	December 2017	Cultural Diversity Project Officer
	Encourage all Council departments to implement the Aboriginal Inclusion Charter within the various aspects of their departmental work	Reviewed in September 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020	ALO
	Council will continue community conversations pertaining to Inclusion, Self-determination and Treaty for local Aboriginal communities	Reviewed in September 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020	ALO
2.2 Treaty Increase understanding of Treaty within community.	Form the City of Whittlesea Treaty Advocacy Group	June 2018	ALO
	Facilitate community conversations with local Aboriginal community members about the purpose and role of a Treaty – particularly development at the State Government level	June 2018	ALO
	Recommendation(s) made to Council regarding active participation in State, Federal and local developments with regards to the development of a Treaty or Treaties	Reviewed in September 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020	ALO
2.3 Aboriginal community profile Council will develop a baseline Aboriginal community profile.	Ensure the profile is presented bi-annually	March, July, 2018, 2019, 2020	Senior Research Officer

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<p>2.4 Aboriginal cultural competency training and professional development for staff</p> <p>Increase knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements.</p>	Regularly review the cultural competency training program and ensure the continuous cultural learning needs of employees in all areas of our Council are met	December 2017	Aboriginal Strategic Planner
	Provide a mix of face-to-face and online and experiential learning opportunities	Reviewed in September 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020	
	Council will ensure a minimum of 20 staff successfully complete on-line Aboriginal Cultural Competency Training per year	Reviewed in September 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020	
	Council will ensure a minimum of 60 staff successfully complete face-to face Aboriginal Cultural Competency Training per year	Reviewed in September 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020	
	Target Aboriginal Cross Cultural Training for selected Infrastructure Maintenance Unit supervisory staff	Reviewed in September 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020	
	Council will maintain a benchmark figure of not less than 90 per cent of senior executive staff and staff directly supervising Aboriginal staff having completed Cultural Awareness Training	Reviewed in September 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020	
	Develop a process for measuring and reporting the impacts and long-term outcomes associated to the trainings	Reviewed in September 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020	

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Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
2.5 Aboriginal cultural protocols Demonstrate respect for Aboriginal peoples and communities by embedding cultural protocols in our organisation's processes and operations.	Review and communicate Council's protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country to all staff	June 2019	Aboriginal Strategic Planner
	Ensure employees use established protocols around Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country	Reviewed in September 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020	Team Leader Aboriginal & Cultural Diversity
	Ensure an Acknowledgement of Country is delivered at all major community and corporate events such as before monthly Council meetings and Whittlesea Community Futures Full Partnership meeting	Reviewed in September 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020	Festival and Events Coordinator
	Arrange a Traditional Owner to give a Welcome to Country address at a minimum of six significant community events per year including, National Sorry Day, ministerial launches, annual community festival and formal civic events	Reviewed in September 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020	Governance Officer
	Maintain an up-to-date list of key contacts for organising Welcomes to Country	December 2018, 2020	ALO
	Include Acknowledgement of Country at the commencement of Council meetings	Monthly for 2018, 2019, 2020	Governance Officer
2.6 Celebrate NAIDOC Week Celebrate NAIDOC Week and provide opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to engage with culture and community during NAIDOC Week.	Council will host an annual NAIDOC Week event for Aboriginal employees to engage with their culture and community and support all staff to participate in a Council NAIDOC Week event	July 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020	Cultural Heritage Officer
	Ensure Traditional Owners are consulted and provide input into the programmatic aspects of the Council's NAIDOC annual event	May, 2018, 2019, 2020	Cultural Heritage Officer
	Ensure Council's NAIDOC Week event is evaluated and improved annually	July 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020	Cultural Heritage Officer
	Review HR policies and procedures to ensure there are no barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week	December 2018	Aboriginal Employment Officer
	Provide opportunities for all Aboriginal staff to participate in community NAIDOC Week events	July 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020	Aboriginal Employment Officer
	Support all staff to participate in NAIDOC Week events in the local community		

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
2.7 Oral History and local Aboriginal Culture Work with local Traditional Owners and the Wurundjeri Land Council and local Aboriginal community members to document local histories.	Explore with local Traditional Owners, the Elders Motivated and Deadly group and others the opportunity to preserve, promote and teach local Aboriginal language(s) and stories	March 2018	ALO
	Develop stories celebrating people, places and country that will inform Council staff, Aboriginal people moving into the area and the wider community	December 2018	
	Develop stories in a range of mediums and formats and to be presented or told to local audiences	December 2018	
	Distribute information about local stories via Council website and local networks	December 2018	
2.8 Acknowledgement and recognition Increase the recognition and acknowledgement Council gives to Traditional Owners and local Aboriginal people and communities in our LGA.	Develop a City of Whittlesea Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Strategy	September 2020	Team Leader Aboriginal & Cultural Diversity
	Install Acknowledgement of Traditional Owner plaques at the entrance to all (six) Council's public facilities without them	Reviewed in September 2018, 2020	ALO
	Incorporate a Traditional Owner Acknowledgment statement into standard signage across the municipality, including municipal boundary signage and community buildings	November 2017	Major Projects Project Officer
	Install a large Aboriginal art piece (mural) within the municipality	January 2019	Cultural Collections Officer
	Develop a Council naming policy which incorporates Woiwurrung language names for Council buildings, streets and land use purpose	September 2019	Governance Officer

ACTION PLAN



OPPORTUNITIES: Council acknowledges the inherent rights of local Aboriginal communities to self-determination. In making this understanding core business; Council will create social, cultural and economic opportunities, therefore promoting well-being and community cohesion. Through maintaining a range of mutually beneficial networks and partnerships Council is also committed to the creation of employment opportunities that will contribute to building positive outcomes for local Aboriginal communities and the community as a whole.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
3.1 Aboriginal employment Increase the recruitment and retention of Aboriginal employees within the City of Whittlesea.	Council's short-term target is to increase the proportion of Aboriginal people employed at Council to 1.5% (15 staff) by October 2017, with 70% of these positions being permanent and with a retention rate above 80%	Oct 2017	Aboriginal Employment Officer
	Council's long-term target is to increase the proportion of Aboriginal people employed at Council to 2% (20 staff) by October 2020, with 70% of these positions being permanent and with a retention rate above 80%	Oct 2020	
	Increase understanding among supervisors of the Clause within the <i>Equal Opportunity Act 2010</i> that enables the direct employment of Aboriginal staff (re. 'Identified' and 'Designated' positions)	Reviewed in Sept 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020	
	Continue to implement and review the Aboriginal Employment Pathways Strategy & Action Plan 2012-17	Oct 2017	
	In consultation with the Koori Staff Network Group, continue the process of reviewing and updating recruitment processes to increase opportunities for Aboriginal people	Dec 2017	
	Continued employment of Aboriginal specific officers within Community Cultural Development, Human resources, Youth Service and Aged/Disability Services	Reviewed in Sept 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020	
	Establishment of a long-term engagement of an Aboriginal labour hire program within the City Transport and Presentation Directorate	Nov 2018	
	Ensure a 'buddy system' for new Aboriginal staff/recruits is established	Dec 2017	
	Provide assistance and career development for all 'temporary' Aboriginal staff (such as moving into permanent positions)	Reviewed in Sept 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020	
	Support and encouragement is provided to Council officers wishing to employ local Aboriginal staff	Reviewed in Sept 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020	
	Ensure a minimum of two trainees per year are placed through the Aboriginal trainees program	Reviewed in Dec 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020	
	Development and implementation of Council's Aboriginal Work-Ready program	Nov 2018	
Opportunities for employment are disseminated through Aboriginal community networks	Reviewed in Mar 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020		

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<p>3.2 Support for Aboriginal staff</p> <p>Internal programs are delivered for new and existing Aboriginal employees.</p>	<p>Ensure Council's Koori Staff Network Group (KSNG) meet quarterly and provide social support to all Aboriginal staff</p> <p>Scope the establishment of a mentoring program for Aboriginal employees with a focus on career development and capacity building</p>	<p>March, June, September, December 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020</p> <p>November 2017</p>	<p>Aboriginal Employment Officer</p>
<p>3.3 Gambling-related harm</p> <p>Develop partnerships and programs to gambling related harm.</p>	<p>Ensure Council works in partnership with the Victorian Aboriginal Health Service Cooperative Limited (VAHS), Victorian Aboriginal Community Services Association Limited (VACSAL), to raise awareness of gambling related harm in the Aboriginal community</p>	<p>Reviewed in December 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020</p>	<p>Social Planner</p>
<p>3.4 Disability and inclusion</p> <p>Support Aboriginal residents in accessing the National Disability Insurance Scheme roll out.</p>	<p>Ensure eligible Aboriginal people are adequately supported in transitioning to the National Disability Insurance Scheme</p>	<p>June 2018</p>	<p>Manager Aged and Disability</p>
<p>3.5 Aboriginal supplier diversity</p> <p>Increase opportunities for businesses owned by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to supply their goods and services to the City of Whittlesea.</p>	<p>Identify and establish a database of Aboriginal businesses operating within the LGA</p> <p>Review Council's procurement policy to include procurement targets for goods and services from Aboriginal-owned businesses</p> <p>Develop at least two commercial relationships with Aboriginal-owned businesses over the course of the RAP</p> <p>Explore the opportunity to preferentially procure services from agencies that have a current RAP and or Aboriginal targets</p>	<p>December 2018</p> <p>June 2018</p> <p>July 2019</p> <p>June 2018</p>	<p>Manager Economic Development</p> <p>Team Leader Procurement</p> <p>Manager Economic Development</p> <p>Team Leader Procurement</p>

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Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
3.6 Aboriginal housing Establish a partnership with Aboriginal Housing Victoria (AHV) to increase housing outcomes for Aboriginal people.	Support Aboriginal Housing Victoria in their advocacy efforts to improve the appropriateness, affordability and adaptability of housing for local Aboriginal people	Reviewed in December 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020	Social Planner
	Contribute to the AHV and State government “Living Well” project through sharing resources, data and contributions to the project governance	Reviewed in December 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020	CCD Team Leader
	Ensure that Council’s updated Family Violence Strategy and research is inclusive of and addresses the needs of local Aboriginal communities	Reviewed in December 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020	Community Safety Officer
3.7 Aboriginal Youth programs Increase opportunities for young Aboriginal people to access Council’s youth services.	Deliver youth specific programs for young Koori people that ensure young people have a voice and promote healing and resilience	Reviewed in December 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020	Team Leader Youth Services
	Ensure 100 young people participant in Traditional Games annually	Reviewed in December 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020	

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
3.8 Maternal and Child Health Service Support an Aboriginal Maternal and Child Health nurse to gain formal qualifications.	An Aboriginal MCH student is supported through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing a student placement • providing a student scholarship • identifying opportunities for employment on graduation 	Reviewed in December 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020	Team Leader MCH
3.9 Report RAP achievements, challenges and learnings to Reconciliation Australia for inclusion in the RAP Impact Measurement Report	Complete and submit the RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia Investigate participation in the RAP Barometer Develop and implement the internal systems and capability needs to track, measure and report on RAP activities	Completed by 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 May 2018, 2020 August 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020	Aboriginal and Cultural Diversity Team Leader
3.10 Report RAP achievements, challenges and learnings internally and externally	Publically report our RAP achievements, challenges and findings	October 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020	Aboriginal and Cultural Diversity Team Leader
3.11 Review, refresh and update RAP	Liaise with Reconciliation Australia to develop a new RAP, based on the findings, challenges and achievements of the Stretch RAP Send draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for formal feedback and endorsement	February 2020 August 2020	Aboriginal and Cultural Diversity Team Leader



CONTACT DETAILS

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