



City of
Norwood
Payneham
& St Peters

NAME OF POLICY: Reconciliation

POLICY MANUAL: Governance

BACKGROUND

Reconciliation is commonly expressed as a vision of *“a united Australia which respects this land of ours, values the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage and provides justice and equity for all”*. Reconciliation is seen as a process of “working together” therefore it is an issue involving all Australians.

As the sphere of government in closest contact with its community, local government has an important role to play in promoting Reconciliation. Local councils have a leadership role in setting local agendas and creating a “sense of place” and cultural identity. In particular, local councils are ideally placed to demonstrate leadership in creating a sense of tolerance and increased awareness and an understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues in general.

DISCUSSION

It is the Council’s intention to develop a Reconciliation Statement and Policy, as stated in a report which was considered by the Council at its meeting held on 6 February 2006. That report outlined a number of actions that a Reconciliation Policy could identify, including:

- recognition of the Kurna People in the cultural heritage of the City, by the acknowledgment of sites of importance, symbols and cultural practices;
- preparation of an agreement between the Council and the Kurna People, regarding key issues, including:
 - active cultural awareness and sensitivity;
 - rules of engagement with the Kurna People concerning protection and recognition of assets; and
 - procedural protocols with relevant agencies (including the Council) in the delivery of services to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population.
- (iii) identification of opportunities for enhancing the economic capacity of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community (eg. promoting employment opportunities and through the encouragement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enterprises (both local and broader); and
- (iv) provision of advocacy support to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, when requested and relevant, in their interactions with other spheres of government.

KEY PRINCIPLES

Recognition and acknowledgement:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the first peoples of Australia
- There is loss and grief held by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples caused by alienation from traditional lands, loss of lives and freedom, the suppression of culture and the forced removal of children
- The Kurna People, the traditional owners, custodians and caretakers of the land of the Adelaide Plains, have a spiritual relationship with their country.

Diversity:

- The City of Norwood Payneham & St Peters values diversity. It accepts and values the right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to the practice of their cultural traditions, consistent with Australian law and democratic freedoms.

Participation:

- The Council is committed to encouraging participation and improving access to services, facilities and programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents.

Partnership:

- The development of appropriate partnerships between the Council and agencies and organisations which have been established with and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to identify the ways in which the City of Norwood Payneham & St Peters can promote the recognition and acknowledgement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, their culture and heritage and thereby to bring about progress towards Reconciliation, that is , “ *a united Australia which respects this land of ours, values the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage and provides justice and equity for all*”.

This will be achieved by:

- recognition of the Kurna People in the cultural heritage of the City, by the acknowledgement of sites of importance, symbols and cultural practices through commemorative and/or interpretive artworks or signage, where appropriate, and through relevant programs and services;
- the adoption of the Kurna Greeting as an agreed protocol at formal civic events. The greeting statement has been endorsed by Kurna Elders for use in metropolitan Adelaide where an Elder is not available and will be used at all formal civic events. Where possible, the greeting will be delivered by a Kurna Elder. When a Kurna Elder is not available, the Council will endeavour to engage another member of the Kurna community as recommended by Kurna Elders. If those individuals who are recommended are also unavailable, the following statement will be delivered:

“We would like to acknowledge this land that we meet on today is the traditional land of the Kurna People and that we respect their spiritual relationship with their country. We also acknowledge the Kurna People as the custodians and caretakers of Kurna country which incorporates the Adelaide Plains. We honour and respect their ongoing cultural and spiritual connections to this country.”

- the development of appropriate partnerships between the Council and agencies and organisations which have been established with and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

- the encouragement of participation and the improvement of access to services, facilities and programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents.
- that the Council be involved in the Indigenous Land Use Agreement process as appropriate for the area and to subsequently develop protocols for a heritage agreement if required.

REVIEW PROCESS

The Council will review this Policy within 12 months of the adoption date of the Policy.

INFORMATION

The contact officer for further information at the City of Norwood Payneham & St Peters is Council's Manager, Community Development, telephone 8366 4610.

ADOPTION OF THE POLICY

This Policy was adopted by Council on 5 May 2008.

TO BE REVIEWED

To be advised.