



Central Coast Council

Aboriginal Advisory Committee

Held in the Committee Room
2 Hely Street, Wyong

09 April 2024

MINUTES

Attendance

Members

Shahni Wellington
Jake MacDonald
Vickie Parry
Phillip Bligh
Barry Duncan
Monica McKenzie
Colleen Fuller
Stephen Ella (remotely)

Status

Present
Present
Present
Present
Present
Present
Apology
Present

Staff

Administrator Rik Hart
Melanie Smith
Glenn Cannard
Belinda McRobie
Lisa Martin
Briony Stiles

Status

Present
Apology
Present
Present
Present
Present

The Chairperson, Jake MacDonald declared the meeting open at 11:04am

PROCEDURAL ITEMS

1.1 Introduction: Welcome, Acknowledgement of Country, Apologies, Disclosure of Interest

The Chair welcomed and delivered an Acknowledgement of Country.

Apologies were noted.

No disclosures of interest were declared.

1.2 Previous business: Confirmation of Minutes, Review Action Log

The group confirmed the minutes from the previous meeting as noted below, which were distributed to members via email and uploaded to Council's website:

[Aboriginal Advisory Meeting Minutes 13 December 2023](#)

REPORTS

2.1 General Business

Barry Duncan advised his current email address for noting – Civic support holds this information for distribution to Committee as required.

The committee discussed at length what the purpose of these meetings were and what was hoping to be achieved through this committee.

The priorities of the Committee were identified as;

- Social justice and equity for Aboriginal people.
- Self-determination regarding decisions impacting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people including Senior Council Management consultation with the AAC to determine projects and operational programming linked to project planning and budgeting.
- Bring lived experiences, collective voices, unheard voices and help to overcome barriers to be a more inclusive Council and Community.
- Align Council and Community priorities to achieve outcomes around employment, health and education.
- Support the embracing of culture within Council – through cultural awareness training, formalities and events.
- Understanding the history and impacts of colonisation, and the process of negotiating Aboriginal People's place in modern society.
- Shape the narrative of Aboriginal people on the Central Coast.
- Support better governance – assist Councillors in governing for residents.

Council gaps were identified as:

- Structured understanding of what is appropriate and when e.g. Welcome to Country, raising profile and understanding of AAC, proper remuneration for time and expertise of Aboriginal people associated with council projects and programs.
- Cultural understanding within the organisation – more immersion in culture for Councillors and Senior staff.
- Events and activities – better support for events, programs and activities in the Community – what Council should pursue/support should be informed by the AAC e.g. NAIDOC Week Family Day.
- Storytelling, narrative and cultural expression - what is appropriate and what should happen e.g. Gosford Regional Gallery 25th Anniversary – Garden and artworks.

1. Recommendation 1

Increase cultural knowledge and understanding within Central Coast Council through the development and roll-out of a foundational educational piece for Executive Leadership Team, incoming Councillors. Senior Managers and relevant staff through onboarding/ induction.

Monica McKenzie has offered to assist with the education piece and it was acknowledged organisations such as Barang Regional Alliance and University of Newcastle already have relevant programs in place that could be utilised.

2. Recommendation 2

Identify short term funding to contract an Indigenous person or organisation on a temporary basis to assist in the development and delivery of the Cultural Awareness training.

3. Recommendation 3

Investigate opportunities to resource a permanent Indigenous position to support Council and the AAC implementation priorities/actions and improve cultural connection, knowledge and relationships within Council. This could include the concept of an "Elder in Residence" project which has proven effective in similar circumstances elsewhere.

4. Recommendation 4

The Executive Leadership Team attend the Aboriginal Advisory Committee meetings on a rotating basis to stay up to date on cultural discussions.

The Meeting concluded at 12:59pm.

Action Number	Meeting Date	Action	Responsibility	Action Update	Status
001	03/10/23	Bring the results of the proposed signage at Norah Head Surfing Reserve back to the Committee in the December meeting.	Committee		Complete
002	03/10/23	Amend the wording and bring back to the Committee regarding the Gwandalan Lions Club signage. It is to be amended to reflect shared Country along with amending past tense to present tense.	Unit Manager, Community and Culture		Complete
003	03/10/23	Bring back to the Committee presentations around Council's Aboriginal employment strategy and approach to community information and engagement.	Director, Community and Recreation Services		Ongoing
004	03/10/23	Arrange an Extraordinary Aboriginal Advisory Committee on Friday, 20 October 2023 – 2:30pm to 4:30pm.	Civic Support		Complete
005	09/04/24	Invite an ELT member to each Aboriginal Advisory Committee meeting	Unit Manager, Community and Culture		Ongoing

