



## **ABORIGINAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**11 March 2025**



# COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2028

**ONE – CENTRAL COAST IS THE COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN (CSP) FOR THE CENTRAL COAST LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA**

**ONE – CENTRAL COAST DEFINES THE COMMUNITY'S VISION AND IS OUR ROADMAP FOR THE FUTURE**

**ONE – CENTRAL COAST BRINGS TOGETHER EXTENSIVE COMMUNITY FEEDBACK TO SET KEY DIRECTIONS AND PRIORITIES**

One - Central Coast will shape and inform Council's business activities, future plans, services and expenditure. Where actions are the responsibility of other organisations, sectors and groups to deliver, Council will work with key partners to advocate on behalf of our community.

Ultimately, every one of us who live on the Central Coast has an opportunity and responsibility to create a sustainable future from which we can all benefit. Working together we can make a difference.

## RESPONSIBLE

**WE'RE A RESPONSIBLE COUNCIL AND COMMUNITY, COMMITTED TO BUILDING STRONG RELATIONSHIPS AND DELIVERING A GREAT CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE IN ALL OUR INTERACTIONS.**

We value transparent and meaningful communication and use community feedback to drive strategic decision making and expenditure, particularly around the delivery of essential infrastructure projects that increase the safety, liveability and sustainability of our region. We're taking a strategic approach to ensure our planning and development processes are sustainable and accessible and are designed to preserve the unique character of the coast.

 **Good governance and great partnerships**

**G2** Engage and communicate openly and honestly with the community to build a relationship based on trust, transparency, respect and use community participation and feedback to inform decision making

There are 5 themes, 12 focus areas and 48 objectives

### COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2028 FRAMEWORK

All council reports contained within the Business Paper are now aligned to the Community Strategic Plan. Each report will contain a cross reference to a Theme, Focus Area and Objective within the framework of the Plan.



# Meeting Notice

**The Aboriginal Advisory Committee  
of Central Coast Council  
will be held in the Function Room 3,  
2 Hely Street, Wyong and Online,  
on Tuesday 11 March 2025 at 12.00pm,  
for the transaction of the business listed below:**

## **1 Procedural Items**

- 1.1 Introduction: Welcome, Acknowledgement of Country, Apologies, Disclosure of Interest.....4
- 1.2 Previous business: Confirmation of Minutes, Review Action Log.....4

## **2 Reports**

- 2.1 Gosford Regional Gallery – First Nations exhibition programs and cultural engagement projects.....11
- 2.2 Priorities Identified from Workshop in April 2024 .....15
- 2.3 Aboriginal Employment Strategy.....18
- 2.4 Gosford Regional Library Naming Convention .....20
- 2.5 Cultural Immersion Program .....20
- 2.6 The Uncle Bob Public Lecture.....20
- 2.7 5 Lands Walk.....20
- 2.8 Mannering Park Historic Walk Signage- Review Wording .....20
- 2.9 General Business.....20

Jake MacDonald  
**Chairperson**

**ITEM 1.1  
WELCOME**

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we live, work and play.

We pay our respects to Darkinjung Country, and Elders past and present.

We recognise the continued connection to these lands and waterways and extend this acknowledgement to the homelands and stories of those who also call this place home.

We recognise our future leaders and the shared responsibility to care for and protect our place and people.

**RECEIPT OF APOLOGIES**

**ITEM 1.2  
PREVIOUS BUSINESS: CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

- 1 MINUTES - Aboriginal Advisory Committee - 17 September 2024      D16409311

**REVIEW ACTION LOG**



Central Coast Council  
Aboriginal Advisory Committee  
Held in  
Sports Room, Level 1  
2 Hely Street, Wyong  
17 September 2024

---

## MINUTES

---

### Attendance

#### Members

Shahni Wellington  
Jake MacDonald  
Vicki Parry  
Phillip Blight  
Barry Duncan  
Monica McKenzie  
Colleen Fuller  
Wayne Merritt  
Stephen Ella (remotely)

#### Status

Apologies  
Present  
Present  
Present  
Present  
Present  
Present  
Not required  
Present via Teams

#### Staff

Rik Hart  
Glenn Cannard  
Melanie Smith  
Beth Burgess  
Kathleen Whelan  
Lisa Martin  
Tess McGown

#### Status

Present  
Absent  
Present  
Present  
Present  
Present  
Present

The Chairperson, Jake McDonald, declared the meeting open at 10:07am

**Minutes of the Aboriginal Advisory Committee Meeting (cont'd)**

---

**PROCEDURAL ITEMS**

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

---

10:06 am

The Chair welcomed everyone.

Barry Duncan delivered an Acknowledgement of Country.

The Chair acknowledged the time and dedication of the Administrator, particularly to ensuring the First Nations Accord was adopted, that he has put into the Committee as this is the final Aboriginal Advisory Committee meeting of the Administrators term.

Apologies were noted.

No disclosures of interest were declared.

**1.2 Previous business: Confirmation of Minutes, Review Action Log**

---

10:13am

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-committee-minutes-9\\_april\\_2024.pdf \(nsw.gov.au\)](https://www.nsw.gov.au/aboriginal-advisory-committee-minutes-9-april-2024.pdf)

**REPORTS**

**2.1 Uncle Bob Morgan – Inaugural Oration**

---

10:13 am

The Committee discussed:-

- A proposal of a public forum to allow people to attend so they can hear stories around specific topics to launch the gallery.
- Name sake for the forum "Uncle Bob", after Uncle Bob Morgan.
- Crown Plaza – Ballroom was mentioned as an alternative option to the Gosford Regional Library.

**2.2 Cultural Capabilities Training for new Councillors**

---

10:26 am

The Committee discussed:-

**Minutes of the Aboriginal Advisory Committee Meeting (cont'd)**

---

- Delivering training to the Councillors on the social and political aspects of the aboriginal people and who the key agencies are on the Central Coast.
- Council's current relationship with the Land Council.
- There is a higher than NSW average aboriginal population on the Coast.
- It is not mandatory for Councillors to attend this training, however it is a requirement of the issued POI to report on who attends training.
- The proposal of a workshop to be scheduled on either a Tuesday or Saturday. Committee members to discuss what is to be included in the training for Councillors which may include site visits.

**2.3 Naming Conventions - Gosford Regional Library**

---

10:51 am

The Unit Manager of Libraries and Education and Section Manager of Libraries shared a presentation showcasing:-

- The proposed engagement with the Aboriginal Community, and requesting suggestions from the AAC.
- It was suggested to start a sub-committee.
- Prioritising local aboriginal businesses to use the start up space.
- Use Darkinjung language group to assist with naming convention for parts of the library.

**2.4 Terms of Reference (ToR) review – allowance for proxy to attend in members absence**

---

10:48 am

The Committee discussed:-

- That they are agreeable to continue with the apologies and absenteeism as per the current Terms of Reference.
- To vote bi-annually for Chair and Deputy Chair.
- The Agenda is to be distributed 5 working days prior to meeting.
- Include in the ToR that it is acceptable for the Committee to meet remotely when required.
- Urgently called meetings can be recorded and transcribed in Teams.
- Circulate via email the draft Committee meeting minutes to Committee members within 2 weeks of the meeting.
- The Committee is to respond via email with changes or confirm approval within a further 7 days.

Minutes of the Aboriginal Advisory Committee Meeting (cont'd)

**2.5 Aboriginal Community Input into Gosford Regional Library**

---

10:13am

The Committee discussed:-

- Shared maker space in library – proposed University partnership with Council.
- In the future invite guest speakers to talk about economic development/community organisations and the local community etc to assist in getting information and knowledge out to the Community.

The committee were all in favour to proceed and move forward.

**Resolved**

***To engage with the Aboriginal Advisory Committee regarding the nature of an Indigenous presence in the new Gosford Regional Library.***

**General Business**

Cultural Centre

The Committee discussed that Darkinjung is currently looking at options for the location. This is an ongoing process.

Development application 35 – 45 McPhersons Road, Mardi

Committee Member read an email he had received and was advised by the Administrator to email and submit a complaint to the CEO and request a face to face meeting.

Committee Member to provide Director of Community and Recreation Services (DoCaRS) a copy of the notes, DoCaRS and Administrator will speak with CEO. Either CEO or DoCaRS will report back.

It was agreed by the Committee to shorten the next meetings to 3 hours.

It was agreed the Director of Community and Recreation Services raise the parking options for disabled and elderly at 2 Hely Street, Wyong at the next meeting.

**The Meeting** concluded at 12:31pm.



<b>Action Number</b>	<b>Meeting Date</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Action Update</b>	<b>Status</b>
001	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	With Annual review	Complete
002	09/04/24	Invite an ELT member to each Aboriginal Advisory Committee meeting	Unit Manager, Community and Culture	Director, Community and Recreation Services will action	Ongoing
003	18/09/24	Gosford Regional Library – any strategies, naming conventions and engagement be brought back to the Committee for review.	Director, Community and Recreation Services		Ongoing
004	18/09/24	Every 6 months a Council representative will report on the First Nations Accord Actions and Review	Director, Community and Recreation Services		Ongoing
005	18/09/24	The Section Manager of Community Development to attend and present the findings of the Committee meeting (workshop) – Priorities of the Committee, held on 9 April 2024.	Section Manager, Community Development		
006	18/09/24	Draft scope and sequence of objectives for the training for Councillors – circulate outside of session – due in 10 days	Director, Community and Recreation Services and V. Parry		
007	18/09/24	Attend Barang Regional Alliance – 11 October 2024 @ 2pm.	Director, Community and Recreation Services		
008	18/09/24	Council staff working with Barang Regional Alliance to arrange an onboarding day for	Director, Community and		

**Minutes of the Aboriginal Advisory Committee Meeting of Council (cont'd)**

		Councillors – full day if possible	Recreation Services		
009	18/09/24	Distribute new ToR to Committee members	Civic Support Officer	Emailed out to all committee members on 18/09/2024	Complete
010	18/09/24	Pass on J. MacDonald and M. McKenzie's details to Unit Manager of Libraries and Education to organise a tour of the Library around December 2024.	The Director of Community and Recreation Services		
011	18/09/24	Upload new ToR to website ASAP	Civic Support Officer	Uploaded 18/09/2024	Complete



**Item No:** 2.1  
**Title:** Gosford Regional Gallery – First Nations exhibition programs and cultural engagement projects  
**Department:** Connected Communities

---

11 March 2025 Aboriginal Advisory Committee

Reference: F2024/01617 - D16657220  
Author: Tim Braham, Team Leader Art Galleries  
Manager: Beth Burgess, Unit Manager Community and Culture  
Executive: Melanie Smith, Director Community and Recreation Services

## **Recommendation**

### ***That the Aboriginal Advisory Committee:***

- 1 Consider and provide feedback on the proposed Cultural Space at Gosford Regional Gallery and make recommendations on future consultation.***
- 2 Note the First Nations exhibitions and education programs being delivered through the Gosford Regional Gallery.***

## **Report purpose**

To ensure that the community is fully engaged in the development of a First Nations Cultural Space at the Gallery.

To provide information on the planned First Nations exhibitions and educational activities at Gosford Regional Gallery for 2025.

## **Executive Summary**

- The Gallery is commencing consultation and design of an outdoors First Nations Cultural space in the land approaching the Gallery.
- In April 2025 the Gallery will install a series of banners created by First Nations students working with local artist Ethan-james Kotiau
- During 2025 The Gosford Regional Gallery will present several exhibitions with considerable First Nations content involving both local artists and significant artists from across Australia.

## **2.1 Gosford Regional Gallery – First Nations exhibition programs and cultural engagement projects (cont'd)**

---

### **Background**

The Gosford Regional Gallery has a significant history of including First Nations content in its exhibitions and education programs. Throughout its 25 years the Gallery has become a space that the local Aboriginal community is strongly connected to. It has long been discussed with the local community that the facility requires a significant, permanent First Nations presence and that this is best suited to the grounds leading to the entry of the facility.

Consultation on developing a permanent First Nations presence commenced in 2019 with the Gallery's Aboriginal Advisory Group. Community led consultation run by Kate Kelleher formulated a plan to create a Yarning circle and welcome statement. Unfortunately, due to financial factors and COVID this project was not able to proceed.

Recent consultation with the local First Nations community has made the decision to revisit and expand the concept. This consultation has occurred both within the Gallery's focus group and with direct conversations with members of the community. In August 2024 a healing and cleansing ceremony took place with around 30 First Nations peoples in attendance.

### **Report**

#### **1. Proposed First Nations cultural space**

Council is seeking input into the proposed development of a First Nations cultural space in the land in front of Gosford Regional Gallery. Early discussions with some members of the community have taken place and some of the suggested elements include:

A Yarning circle

A medicinal and ceremonial Bush Tuka Garden

A dance circle

A workshop area

Council is preparing to engage a First Nations consultant to run further community consultation and develop detailed designs and manage construction. There has already been interest expressed by some community groups to be involved with and assist in the construction. It is anticipated this project will commence in May and run for approximately 12 months.

#### **2. Installation of new banners**

Gosford Regional Gallery has engaged local artist Ethan-james Kotiau to run workshops with local First Nations students in February and March 2025. The artworks created by the students will be printed on to banners lining the driveway to the Gallery. The project will run alongside Ethan's exhibition '*Dandhi - Grounded*' and invites local First Nation students to contribute towards the banner designs. The Artmaking and Cultural Day has been developed in reference to the 8 Ways of learning, a traditional First Nations pedagogy. The workshop aims to foster an opportunity for students to express their communities, link connection to place and share stories through images, symbols and non-verbal knowledge. The opportunity

## 2.1 Gosford Regional Gallery – First Nations exhibition programs and cultural engagement projects (cont'd)

---

intends to nurture First Nations students personal expression and community connection. These free workshops are open to First Nations High School students with currently over 60 students booked in across 5 workshops.

This is a pilot program with the hope of making it an annual artist in residence project.

### 3. First Nations content in exhibitions and education programs

- **Art In Conflict** 15 February – 23 March. This is touring exhibition from the Australian War Memorial. A Major theme of the exhibition is the First Nations perspective on Australia's involvement in recent conflicts.
- **Dandhi – Grounded**, 15 February – 23 March. This exhibition by Ethan-james Kotiau is about being connected to the land, the waterways, and culture. It's about remembering where we come from - our roots, our language - and how that gives us strength. When we stay grounded in those things, it's like building on a solid foundation. We can look ahead, but it's always with our past in mind. These works reflect that balance between holding onto traditions and growing from them, showing the positive impact it has on us and the generations to come.
- **25 Moments Exhibition** 12 April – 15 June. Celebrating the Gallery's 25 Anniversary, this exhibition includes 25 highlights chosen from almost 500 exhibitions. There is a significant First Nations presence including local artists Madeline Anderson and a sculpture of Baiyami by the Murring Weavers group. Other First Nations artists include Tracey Moffat, Gloria Petyarre, Richard Bell and the Tjampit Desert Weavers.
- **Darkinjung Colours of Country** 23 May – 28 May, Run by Darkinjung Local Aboriginal Land Council in the Community Gallery, this exhibition is held to coincide with Reconciliation week. The Gallery will help provide art materials for workshops conducted by the exhibiting artists from Colours of Country to run activities with pre-school, primary and high school groups.
- **Now and Then** –4 July- 6 August – a solo exhibition run by local artist Marcia Staples in the Community Gallery to coincide with NAIDOC week. The 2025 NAIDOC Week theme is *The Next Generation: Strength, vision and legacy*. Marcia is presenting a series of workshops to engage with First Nations peoples and students, the gallery closer to the date will support Marcia in establishing these workshops through the gallery team and Education and Engagement Officer.
  - **Gosford Art Prize 2025**, 6 September – 9 November. In 2025 the First Nations Artist Prize has increased from \$2,500 to \$10,000. This annual award attracts entries from across Australia.

### Stakeholder Engagement

The proposed First Nations Cultural Space will require considerable consultation with the community and advice is sought from the Aboriginal Advisory Committee to ensure that the engagement is fruitful and meets community expectations so that the project can be realised with the full support of the Community.

## 2.1 Gosford Regional Gallery – First Nations exhibition programs and cultural engagement projects (cont'd)

---

### Financial Considerations

Financial Year (FY) Implications.

**The proposal has cost financial implications for the current FY and outer years in the LTFP.**

Budget and Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP) Impact.

**The FY adopted budget includes funding for this proposal and the LTFP includes funding for the ongoing impact.**

### Link to Community Strategic Plan

Theme 5: Liveable

### Goal B: Creativity, connection and local identity

B-B1: Support reconciliation through the celebration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

### Risk Management

The major risks associated with this are reputational risks if Council does not manage the community consultation and stakeholder engagement well.

### Critical Dates or Timeframes

The development of the cultural space is anticipated to commence in May and run for approximately 12 months, consultation for the project is planned from March to May and throughout the project delivery.

### Attachments

*Nil.*

**Item No:** 2.2  
**Title:** Priorities Identified from Workshop in April 2024  
**Department:** Community and Recreation Services

---



11 March 2025 Aboriginal Advisory Committee

Reference: F2023/01359 - D16657407  
Author: Belinda McRobie, Manager Community Development  
Manager: Beth Burgess, Unit Manager Community and Culture  
Executive: Melanie Smith, Director Community and Recreation Services

## **Recommendation**

***That the Aboriginal Advisory Committee note the update provided within this report.***

## **Report purpose**

The purpose of this report is to provide an update to the Aboriginal Advisory Committee on the priorities identified in the workshop on 24 April 2024.

## **Executive Summary**

Four key recommendations were identified at the workshop conducted on 24 April 2024, which responded to the identified priorities of the Aboriginal Advisory Committee.

## **Background**

In April 2024, a workshop was held with members of the Aboriginal Advisory Committee to determine community priorities, understand Council gaps and make recommendations to move forward.

## **Report**

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.

## 2.2 **Priorities Identified from Workshop in April 2024 (cont'd)**

---

- 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.

Recommendations were made by the Committee as follows:

### **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.

### **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.



**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.

**Recommendation 4**

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

**Stakeholder Engagement**

Nil

**Financial Considerations**

Financial Year (FY) Implications.

**The proposal has cost financial implications for the current FY and outer years in the LTFP.**

Budget and Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP) Impact.

**The FY adopted budget does not include funding for this proposal and the amount will need to be included in a future Quarterly Budget Review.**

**Link to Community Strategic Plan**

Theme 1: Belonging

**Goal A: Our community spirit is our strength**

B-B1: Support reconciliation through the celebration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

**Risk Management**

Nil

**Critical Dates or Timeframes**

Nil

**Attachments**

*Nil.*



**Item No:** 2.3  
**Title:** Aboriginal Employment Strategy  
**Department:** Community and Recreation Services

---

11 March 2025 Aboriginal Advisory Committee

Reference: F2023/01359 - D16662836  
Author: Belinda McRobie, Manager Community Development  
Manager: Beth Burgess, Unit Manager Community and Culture  
Executive: Melanie Smith, Director Community and Recreation Services

## **Recommendation**

***That the Aboriginal Advisory Committee note the information provided in the report.***

## **Report purpose**

The purpose of this report is to provide an update to the Aboriginal Advisory Committee on Central Coast Council's Aboriginal Employment Strategy.

## **Executive Summary**

This report provides an update on Aboriginal Employment at Central Coast Council and actions to date from the strategy.

## **Background**

In December 2023 Sara Jane Hill from Central Coast Council's People and Culture team presented the Aboriginal Employment Strategy to the Committee.

## **Report**

People and Culture have provided the following update for the progress to date from the Strategy:

- Currently Council has 68 people who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander which is 2.84% of our overall Central Coast Council staff cohort.
- Council employs 5 indigenous apprentices/trainees which is 9% of the employed apprentice/trainee cohort.

## 2.3 Aboriginal Employment Strategy (cont'd)

---

- The People and Culture Business Partnering team participated in cultural awareness training with Bara Barang in October 2024 and is currently identifying additional staff members to participate in the training to extend the offering to the broader staff cohort.

### Stakeholder Engagement

Council's Organisational Development team liaises regularly with Bara Barang to seek mentorship for indigenous apprentices/trainees and to share any recruitment activity.

### Financial Considerations

Financial Year (FY) Implications.

**The proposal does not have financial implications for the current year or outer years in the LTFP.**

Budget and Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP) Impact.

**The FY adopted budget includes the impact for this proposal.**

### Link to Community Strategic Plan

Theme 1: Belonging

### Goal D: A place of opportunity for people

B-A2: Celebrate and continue to create opportunities for inclusion where all people feel welcome and participate in community life.

### Risk Management

Nil

### Critical Dates or Timeframes

Nil

### Attachments

*Nil.*

**ITEM 2.4 GOSFORD REGIONAL LIBRARY NAMING CONVENTION**

Kathleen Whelan

**ITEM 2.5 CULTURAL IMMERSION PROGRAM**

Melanie Smith, Director Community and Recreation Services

**ITEM 2.6 THE UNCLE BOB PUBLIC LECTURE**

Jake MacDonald, Chairperson

**ITEM 2.7 5 LANDS WALK**

Phil Bligh

**ITEM 2.8 MANNERING PARK HISTORIC WALK SIGNAGE- REVIEW WORDING**

Belinda McRobie, Section Manager, Community Development

**ITEM 2.9 GENERAL BUSINESS**

Jake MacDonald, Chairperson

**Memorandum of Understanding with Darkinjung**