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RECONCILIATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

held on 21 September 2021 at 6.00pm on Microsoft Teams

Present:

Cr Ashleigh Vandenberg	Councillor
Cr Bob Turner	Councillor (<i>left at 7.01pm</i>)
Aunty Julianne Axford	Council Member, Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Corporation
Stephanie Skinner	Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Corporation delegate for CEO, Paul Davies
Sharon Sowter	Chairperson, KIRRIP
Skye Gooch	Melton Aboriginal Community Member
Peter Webster	Melton Aboriginal Community Member
Karen Jones	Melton Aboriginal Community Member
John Bentley	Melton Community Member
Dayane Mardesich	Coordinator, Community Capacity
Annette Vickery	Aboriginal Community Engagement Officer

In Attendance:

Nicole Misurelli	Manager People and Culture
Elyse Rider	Manager Community Planning
Elissa Hayley	Communications Coordinator

Quorum: *Quorum will consist of one (1) Councillor, one (1) Council Officer and four (4) Melton Aboriginal Community Members.*

Chairperson: Cr Ashleigh Vandenberg

1. Welcome and introductions

E Rider opened the meeting. Aunty J Axford, from Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung provided a Welcome to Country.

All meeting participants present introduced themselves.

Stephanie Skinner advised that she has been designated the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Corporation representative for this Reconciliation Advisory Committee.

2. Apologies

Jo Layton	Melton Aboriginal Community Member
Paul Davis	CEO, Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Corporation

3. Declaration of interests and/or conflict of interests

Nil

4. Confirmation of minutes of previous meeting

Nil. This is the first meeting of this committee.

5. Business Arising

Nil. This is the first meeting of this committee.

6. General Business**6.1 Selection of the Chair**

E Rider explained the selection of Chair process - under article 5.1.3 *Method of Appointment* of the Terms of Reference which reads:

The Mayor of the City of Melton is automatically appointed as the Chairperson. In the event that the Mayor is absent or not an appointment to this committee, a Councillor will be selected as chairperson by the Councillor delegates on the committee.

E Rider asked for nominations for Chair. Cr Turner nominated Cr Vandenberg to be Chair. Cr Vandenberg accepted the nomination to Chair.

Recommendation

Cr Vandenberg was selected as the Chair.

Moved by Cr Turner. Seconded by Cr Vandenberg.

6.2 Introduction of the Reconciliation Advisory Committee

Cr Vandenberg commenced chairing the meeting.

Cr Vandenberg reminded members that the Terms of Reference for the Reconciliation Advisory Committee adopted by Council have been circulated to all appointed committee members.

It was noted that

- the Bunurong Land Aboriginal Corporation has been removed as permanent member of this Committee, following the recent determination of Registered Aboriginal Parties boundaries in the City of Melton.
- there is 1 vacant position for Local Community Member that was not able to be filled through the Expression of Interest (EOI) process. Another EOI will open to fill this position prior to the next RAC meeting.

Cr Vandenberg read Section 3 of the Terms of Reference that outlines the responsibility of this Committee, with items 3.1 to 3.4 of the Terms of Reference put in the meeting chat:

The Reconciliation Advisory Committee (RAC) has been established to work in partnership together with the City of Melton community to progress the Reconciliation process between Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Australian's for the benefit of all.



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Noted

That the Terms of Reference have been noted by the committee.

6.3 What constitutes safety at the table for members: discussion.

Cr Vandenberg asked the committee to share 'What constitutes safety at the table?'

This is a safe environment for everyone.

Committee member proposed commitments were as follows:

- Cultural safety is respect for each other, listen and understand we all have different opinions.
- We need to respect Traditional Owner business at the table.
- We should all be able to come to the meetings and confidently feel safe. Cultural safety is about being listened to and regarded as making valuable contributions.
- If a committee member is being disruptive, the Chair will first remind members of the agreed behaviours and then consider asking a committee member to absent themselves from the meeting for 10 minutes.

E Rider can distribute some of the governance rules of Council on respectful behavior. E Rider also asked if the rules that the committee is agreeing to should also apply to how we work together outside of this committee? Members agreed it should.

Actions:

Cultural Safety commitments to be available at each meeting with the ToR.

Officers to forward any relevant information on respectful behaviours at Council meetings.

6.4 Reconciliation Action Plan Brief

A Vickery presented a brief overview of the Reconciliation Action Plan Project.

- This RAP will be a 'stretch' RAP, meaning actions and initiatives will be embedded into core business at Melton Council.
- The Project Sponsor is the Manager, Community Planning and the Project Manager is the Co-ordinator, Community Capacity. Internal Governance will be provided by an Internal Project Reference Group and External Governance will be provided by the Reconciliation Advisory Committee and Reconciliation Australia.
- Community Engagement will include a Melton wide survey, Aboriginal community meetings and internally led meetings.
- The development of the RAP will start in September 2021 and finalise in August 2022.

Committee feedback was that the presentation was clear.

6.5 Acknowledgement of Country – proposed wording alignment across Council.

A Vickery presented the proposed alignment of wording and requested committee member feedback.

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Committee members asked about whether Acknowledgement of Country could be required of community groups who are running events where Councillors are speaking and gave an example of where this had been an issue in the past.

Cr Turner advised that Council sets the standard for Councillors and Council staff at community events. E Haley said Acknowledgement of Country is part of all Council speeches.

Cr Turner left the meeting at 7.01pm.

K Jones said from a Traditional Owner perspective she has thinks we need to move away from Kulin Nations as Kulin means man. The Kulin Nations were set up by Aboriginal Traditional Owners in the Year 2000. Council should possibly consider First Peoples, as we now have the First Peoples Assembly. S Skinner supported K Jones comments saying Traditional Owners can be referred to by their specific names.

E Rider said the use of Kulin Nations pre-dates the alignment of RAP status in the Melton LGA, so we could move to using the Traditional Owner names only if advised by the RAC.

J Bentley asked if social media should be included, and Council buildings as well. J Bentley also said it would be good for Council to encourage community groups using Council assets to do Acknowledgement of Country. E Haley advised Council could update Acknowledgement of Country on social media. E Rider advised that the development of the new RAP will include working with a range of departments across Council and this could be further considered as a part of that process.

K Jones suggested Council check ACHRIS and ensure that Bunurong is in fact not in the Melton LGA.

J Bentley suggested that Melton LGA develop a map for community members that shows where the boundaries of TO groups are.

Actions:

A Vickery to receive feedback from members on the proposed alignment of Acknowledgement of Country and present an updated version at the December RAC.

A Vickery to check ACHRIS regarding Registered Aboriginal Parties boundaries.

6.6 Proposed training for Councillors and Executive

Cr Vandenberg asked for a Training Plan for Councillors. N Misurelli said she intended to contact Wurundjeri and Wadawurrung to explore training options. Best timing for delivery is on Monday nights and split up sessions to have a few. Wurundjeri Council contact is Uncle Bill Nicholson to run that training. N Misurelli intends to work with Councillors on their timing and schedule as Uncle Bill does not operate on a Monday. He delivers the training in three 2 hour blocks and he can work on weekends.

J Axelford supported the Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung training saying general feedback from participants has been very positive.

Action: A Vickery to follow up with S Skinner regarding Wadawurrung training.

6.7 Updates from Members



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Cr Vandenberg invited committee members to provide any updates on any upcoming community projects or activities they would like to share.

- KIRRIP – There have been a lot of changes. KIRRIP has changed what they do. KIRRIP now runs a FoodBank and delivers to community in need. We are delivering up to 40 packs per week. We also provide financial and crisis support for community. KIRRIP employed a part time programs co-ordinator. We have been running programs on line, as well as doing welfare checks. We now have a staff of eight. The KIRRIP Board has done an amazing job supporting community through COVID.
- Cr Vandenberg raised that the Friends of the Melton Botanic Garden are seeking to rename the lake, and asked about the process for this. E Rider responded this is a decision by Council following a renaming process and policy. This Committee could request that officers seek further information on how to progress this. J Bentley said that the Friends of the Melton Botanic Garden have felt a name change to a language name would be appropriate for some time now. Aunty J Axelford was supportive of this.

7. Next Meeting

The next meeting is to be held on 7 December 2021 commencing at 6.00pm at a location to be advised.

8. Close of Business

The meeting closed at 7.30 pm.