City of Stonnington
Reconciliation Action Plan 2017 – 19
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Statement of Commitment

A Statement of Commitment to Indigenous Australians has been published on the City of Stonnington website since 2001.

The Website includes a written acknowledgement of Aboriginal cultural heritage and traditional land ownership in official documents including the City of Stonnington’s Annual Report 2009–2010.

This Statement of Commitment has now been updated:

“The Council of the City of Stonnington acknowledges that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were the first people of this land and have strived to retain their identity and cultures through more than two hundred years of dispossession and colonisation.

Council recognises that present collective disadvantage faced by Aboriginal people stems from past and present injustices.

As part of the process to redress these disadvantages, Council recognises and accepts its responsibility to learn from, and promote the intrinsic value of Aboriginal cultures, heritage and contemporary aspirations to the wider community, understanding that this enriches Australia’s heritage and our community.

Council acknowledges the right of Aboriginal Australians to live according to their own values and customs in our diverse community, subject to Australian law.

Council respects Aboriginal Australians’ special relationship to the land and recognises Aboriginal sacred sites and significant places.

Council recognises the valuable contribution to Victoria made by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and will work together towards a future of mutual respect and harmony.”

Reconciliation Acknowledgement Statement

Council adopted a Reconciliation Acknowledgement Statement in 2005 to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land now known as Stonnington. In September 2007 the Statement was revised to include acknowledgement of the Boon Wurrung and the Wurungeri peoples.

Council's Reconciliation Acknowledgement Statement is read at formal Council meetings, Citizenship ceremonies, Mayoral and Civic receptions, official openings of Council buildings and official occasions at which the Mayor is present.

The Reconciliation Acknowledgement Statement reads:

“We acknowledge that we are meeting on the traditional land of the Boon Wurrung and Wurundjeri people and offer our respects to the elders past and present. We recognise and respect the cultural heritage of this land.”
Introduction

The City of Stonnington’s 2017 to 2019 Reconciliation Action Plan will provide a focus for our entire community. It advocates for a City in which connections are forged and maintained with our Aboriginal community, cultural awareness is raised, history is respected and contributions are honoured.

Our Vision for Reconciliation

We are committed to building a city in which relationships are forged and maintained between Aboriginal and other community members. Our vision includes a community in which Traditional Owners connections to the land are respected, where history is taught, and where the diverse cultural backgrounds, experiences and needs of Aboriginal people living within the City of Stonnington are understood and valued. As our knowledge and relationships become stronger, we will experience a City that is highly inclusive and supportive of the interests and well-being of Aboriginal people and the broader community.

Through the initiatives we have described in our Reconciliation Action Plan, we will share the path to meaningful reconciliation with Aboriginal community members and Traditional Owners. We aim to demonstrate our commitment to reconciliation and its mutually beneficial outcomes for all people living in and associated with the City Of Stonnington.

Our Business and People

The City of Stonnington was formed in June 1994 through the amalgamation of the Cities of Malvern and Prahran. It is located in Melbourne’s inner south-eastern suburbs, a short distance from the centre of Melbourne and alongside the Yarra River on the traditional lands of the Boon Wurrung and Wurrundjeri People.

Stonnington covers an area of 25.62 square kilometres. The City takes in the suburbs of Prahran, Windsor (part), South Yarra (part), Toorak, Armadale, Malvern, Malvern East, Kooyong and Glen Iris (part). The City is primarily a residential area, with some commercial, industrial, office and institutional land uses. It is well known for its shopping and lifestyle precincts, parks and gardens, leafy streets and historical architecture.

Council’s core business activities encompass all citizens and the range of services and needs this diversity implies including adherence to Council strategic objectives and legislative requirements for Council’s four key pillars of the 2017-21 Council Plan are:

**Community** - An inclusive City that enhances the health and wellbeing of all residents, where people can feel safe, socially connected and engaged.

**Liveability** - The most desirable place to live, work and visit.
Environment - A cleaner, safer and better environment for current and future generations to enjoy.

Economy - A City that will grow its premier status as a vibrant, innovative and creative business community.

Our strategies, plans, services and ongoing activities support the Council Plan, including:

- 0–25yrs Strategy (in progress)
- Access and Inclusion Plan 2014–17
- Arts and Culture Strategy (in progress)
- Community Facilities Leasing and Licensing Policy 2011
- Cultural Diversity Policy 2015–2019
- Engagement Policy 2015–2018
- Human Rights Policy 2008
- Municipal Early Years Plan 2011
- Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2013–17
- Older Person Strategy (in review)
- Recreation Strategy 2014–2024

Recent Aboriginal History

During Melbourne’s expansion in the mid to late 1830s, the Boon Wurrung and Woiwurrung people regularly camped along the south bank of the Yarra River in what is now known as Stonnington.

Known collectively as the clans of the Kulin nation, an approximate boundary between the Boon Wurrung and the neighbouring Woiwurrung people existed along the northern boundary of Stonnington, the Yarra River and Gardiners Creek. Before the colonial era the area was richly resourced and varied, consisting of reed filled swamps, aquatic flora and fauna and large trees which provided bark for huts.

The effects of colonial expansion including introduced disease and European objection to Aboriginal people hunting in the area meant that life in the areas around Melbourne was not easy for Aboriginal people. In 1852 Assistant Protector of Aborigines William Thomas established a reserve for the Boon Wurrung at Mordialloc and a reserve for the Woiwurrung at Warrandyte. “The Boon Wurrung continued to visit Melbourne, camping at Fawkner Park and sites in the western end of Stonnington”.

The Boon Wurrung and Wurundjeri people camped regularly along the banks of the Yarra River and Gardiners Creek, where they could access the rich resource of aquatic foods and a diverse range of flora and fauna.

Prior to white settlement Prahran’s terrain was a combination of large trees, wattle scrub and many reed filled swamps. During the 1830s the Prahran area was a frequent camping place for Aboriginal people from the local clans and those visiting from the Gippsland area and a common corroboree site.

Gatherings for social, ceremonial and trading purposes occurred regularly between the Boon Wurrung and Wurundjeri people, while marriages were arranged between these groups and the Taungurong, Wathaurong and Djadjawurung people.

In 1837, Governor of New South Wales, Richard Bourke, approved the use of an 895 acre site south of the Yarra River for an Aboriginal Mission. Towards the end of the 1838 food shortages led to trouble between Aboriginal people and settlers and by the end of 1839 the mission was closed and sold.

In 1852 William Thomas, Protector of Aboriginies, secured a reserve at Mordialloc for the Boon Wurrung and a reserve at Warrandyte for the Wurundjeri. The Boon Wurrung, however, continued to visit Melbourne, camping in Fawkner Park and sites in the western end of Stonnington.

**RAP Artwork**

To be updated
Reconciliation at Stonnington

Reconciliation Action Plan 2017 - 2019 (RAP)

This RAP 2017-2019 is built on the achievements of our previous RAP 2012-2016.

Achievements to date include:

- Welcome to Country occurs at all major Council events
- Acknowledgement statement delivered by Mayor, Councillors and relevant others at major events
- Flags displayed permanently on all key sites
- Engagement with Traditional Owners
- Reconciliation awareness induction sessions are delivered for all new staff
- Indigenous History of Stonnington Curriculum Package has been published distributed for primary classes
- Annual Council celebrations during Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC
- Council has invested in increasing the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Collection which is now displayed in Stonnington Council key buildings.
- Council provides support to Reconciliation Stonnington Community Group
- Appointment of an Indigenous Art Ready traineeship in 2016/2017
- Increased awareness in Council to creating employment opportunities for people with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds
- Creation of a Cultural Diversity – Aboriginal Reconciliation Liaison Officer position in 2017

Actions to be carried forward include, including lessons learned:

- Formal protocols to be established for engagement with all Traditional Owners

Internal and External Champions

Stonnington has supported RAP development and implementation through the establishment of a RAP Engagement Group, and an internal RAP Working Group. The RAP Engagement Group is co-chaired by the Chief Executive Officer (or their delegate) and an Aboriginal community leader. The Terms of Reference are focused on the provision of guidance and advocacy for RAP objectives and implementation within Council, with community members, and relevant stakeholders such as the Victorian Government, neighbouring Councils and peak bodies. The RAP Working Group is comprised of a range of department managers and coordinators and the Cultural Diversity – Aboriginal Reconciliation Liaison Officer.
### Relationships

The City of Stonnington recognises that reconciliation is achieved through strong and mutually respectful relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People and other Australians. Through strong relationships we can improve access and participation in our services, programs, events and Council decision-making. Council understands that strong relationships require opportunities to meet, listen and learn from each other, and to share what is working and what needs to be improved. Council will meet with relevant stakeholders including Aboriginal community members, Traditional Owners, Aboriginal community-controlled organisations, the Local Aboriginal Network (LAN) and Stonnington Citizens for Reconciliation, to gain strategic advice as Council builds strong relationships with Indigenous Communities.

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| A RAP Working Group actively monitors RAP development and implementation of actions, tracking progress and reporting. | • The organisation will meet with Traditional Owners and other relevant Stakeholders at least two times per year.  
• A RAP Working Group will be established to drive practical implementation. | December 2018              | Manager Aged, Diversity, Health and Animal Management    |
| Celebrate and participate in significant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander events such as National Reconciliation Week (NRW) and NAIDOC by providing opportunities to build and maintain relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians | • Deliver a minimum of one internal event for NRW and NAIDOC annually and register events via relevant websites.  
• Support community NRW and NAIDOC events.  
• Encourage staff to participate in events to recognise and celebrate NRW and NAIDOC.  
• Promote NRW and NAIDOC events across Council. | 27 May to 3 June and 1 to 7 July, annually | Community Support and Diversity Coordinator |
| Further develop and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations to support positive outcomes | • Develop and implement a Community Engagement Protocol to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in Stonnington, and relevant stakeholders.  
• Continue to work with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to develop guiding principles for future engagement with the Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency for support to child safety principles and practices. | December 2018, June 2018 | Manager Aged, Diversity, Health and Animal Management  
Manager Children and Family Services and Events |
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Task Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 2018</td>
<td>Continue to consult with Aboriginal and Torres Strait families, children, young people and peak representative bodies, on issues that affect them, including child safety and cultural safety across Council services.</td>
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<td>January 2019</td>
<td>Investigate the opportunities for joint ventures, partnerships, pro bono support or secondments as community capacity building opportunities with organisations</td>
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<td>December 2017</td>
<td>Review Council’s RAP induction and awareness raising program to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff are engaged in its delivery and effectiveness is monitored.</td>
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<td>February 2018</td>
<td>Promote and communicate the RAP to all internal and external stakeholders.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Promote reconciliation through ongoing active engagement with all stakeholders, including the Citizens Reconciliation Stonnington group.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Continue to strengthen the RAP’s visibility, and awareness about Council’s commitments and events through social media and other platforms in Council’s use</td>
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Raise internal and external awareness of the RAP to promote reconciliation across community and business sectors
Respect

Council acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the first peoples of Australia and that the inter-generational impacts of dispossession and colonisation continues to impact disadvantage today. Council is committed to building knowledge and understanding to address inequality, including barriers to participation in services and community life. Council believes that by building two-way, respectful communication between Council, community members and stakeholder’s recognition and respect will increase. Council understands this will require education about local and broader histories, Traditional Owners, the lands, waters and community of today.

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| Engage employees in cultural learning opportunities to increase understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements | • Develop and implement Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Awareness training across the organisation.  
• Investigate opportunities to work with local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consultants to meet cultural training needs.  
• Provide opportunities for relevant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals and Community organisations and key leadership staff to participate in cultural learning opportunities.  
• Investigate a specific training module focused on promoting cultural safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people across Council services and programs. | June 2018  
June 2018  
June 2018  
April 2019 | Manager Aged, Diversity, Health and Animal Management  
Manager Community Support and Diversity Coordinator  
Community Support and Diversity Coordinator  
Manager Children and Family Services and Events |
| Engage employees in the significance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural protocols, such as Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country, to ensure there is a shared meaning and understanding | • Review the Organisation’s protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.  
• Maintain a list of key contacts for organising a Welcome to Country and maintaining respectful partnerships.  
• Continue to include Acknowledgement of Country at the commencement of important external and external meetings. | December 2018 | Manager Aged, Diversity, Health and Animal Management / Manager Governance and Civic Support |
| Provide opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and community members to engage with their culture and communities by celebrating NAIDOC Week | • Review HR policies and procedures to ensure there are no barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week.  
• Provide opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and community members to participate with their cultures and communities during NAIDOC Week.  
• Provide support to local community NAIDOC initiatives such as schools, | 1 to 7 July, annually | Manager People and Culture  
Cultural Diversity – Aboriginal Reconciliation Liaison Officer  
Cultural Diversity – Aboriginal Reconciliation Liaison Officer |
|---|---|---|---|
| Review and update the History of Stonnington material for schools, and community use | • Update existing materials in relevant current mediums.  
• Consult with key stakeholders to ensure History of Stonnington documents are user and culturally-friendly. | May 2018 | Community Support and Diversity Coordinator |
| Continue to provide connections for Early Childhood and Primary School educators with cultural and language immersion programs for children | • Connect Traditional Owners and relevant others to build capacity to support teachers and schools committed to cultural education and language emersion programs.  
• Support where possible the development of appropriate cultural teaching and learning resources. | May 2019 | Cultural Diversity – Aboriginal Reconciliation Liaison Officer |
| Develop a public places naming policy that acknowledges Aboriginal heritage of the City of Stonnington | • Develop in conjunction with Traditional Owners a public naming policy including the consultation process with Traditional Owners for the use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages and heritage information. | April 2018 | Manager Governance and Civic Support |
Opportunities

Council respects the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to self-determination, resulting in the best possible outcomes for individual, family and community life. Council understands that disadvantage is significant for many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people including those from Stolen Generations backgrounds, young people, and people with a disability. Council will work to build opportunities for participation in education, economic activities, employment and services linked to our organisation. Council will actively seek ways to build our internal systems and processes so that cultural safety, increased access and inclusion are also achieved.

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| Investigate opportunities to improve and increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment outcomes within our workplace | • Review Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment and retention in Council’s workforce planning strategies.  
• Engage with existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on employment strategies, including professional development.  
• Develop an employment strategy to advertise vacancies in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media.  
• Collect information on current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to inform future employment opportunities.  
• Review People and Culture recruitment procedures and policies to ensure there are no barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and future applicants participating in the workplace.  
• Continue to develop the Internship Trainee Model and Work Experience to include opportunities for Aboriginal youth. | December 2019 | Manager People and Culture      |
| Investigate partnership opportunities to improve participation and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people in education | • Investigate a partnership with the Inner Eastern Local Learning and Employment Network, the Local Indigenous Network, (and relevant other organisations) to develop a tailored Work Experience Program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Young People at-risk of disengaging from education to improve educational outcomes and career pathways.  
• Investigate opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people to participate in youth leadership programs. | December 2019 | Manager People and Culture / Manager Children and Family Services |
| Investigate opportunities to incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity within Council | • Review procurement policies and procedures to identify barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to supply Council with goods and services.  
• Develop and promote a list of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses that can be used to procure goods and services including Traditional Owner organisations.  
• Investigate Supply Nation membership for Council.  
• Develop relationships with any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses in Stonnington.  
• Investigate the use of Council spaces, events and facilities to support where possible Aboriginal enterprise activities such as Traditional Owner led tours, local artists, and other businesses | June 2018 | Manager Finance / Manager Aged, Diversity, Health and Animal Management |
| | | February 2019 | Coordinator Economic Development and Tourism |
| | | February 2019 | Coordinator Economic Development and Tourism |
## Tracking progress and reporting

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| Report RAP achievements, challenges and learnings to Reconciliation Australia | - Complete and submit the RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia annually.  
- Investigate participating in the RAP Barometer. | 30 September, annually Biennial | Manager Aged, Diversity, Health and Animal Management |
| Report RAP achievements, challenges and learnings internally and externally | - Publically report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings through Council’s Annual Report | Annually - August | Manager Aged, Diversity, Health and Animal Management |

**Contact details** Include contact details (job title, phone and email) for public enquiries about your RAP

Name: Julie Fry  
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Email: JFry@Stonnington.vic.gov.au
Acknowledgements

Insert on final