

Minutes of the Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Reference Group Meeting**14 November 2017****Level 3, Function Room, Petersham Administration Building**

The meeting commenced at 6:30pm

Attendance**Members:**

Robert (Bob) Webb
Pam Touma
Allan Barnes
Janelle Scott
Agnes Ware

IWC Staff:

Rebecca Carroll (IWC – Aboriginal Programs)
Deborah Lennis (IWC – Aboriginal Programs)
Erla Ronan (IWC – Group Manager Community Services and Culture)
Victoria Johnstone (IWC – Arts and Cultural Development Coordinator)

Councillors:**Apologies**

Mayor Darcy Byrne
Clr Tom Kiat
Rebekah Raymond
Therese Heffernan
Jessica Staines
Phillip Butler
Ben Bowen
John Staines
Alana Freeburn

1. Welcome

In Ben Bowen's absence Bob stepped in as Chair and welcomed everybody to the meeting.

2. Acknowledgement of Country

Allan Barnes performed an Acknowledgement of Country.

3. Introductions

There was not a quorum but it was decided to go ahead as it is the last ATSIRG meeting for 2017 and the term of the Group will now cease. Council is in the process of reviewing of all its Reference Groups with a report to be presented to the December Council meeting regarding the review outcomes and including recommendations for a proposed way forward.

Members and staff introduced themselves.

Moved: Allan **Second:** Janelle

4. Code of Conduct and Disclosures of Interest

Nil

5. Summary of Recommendations from previous Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Reference Group meetings was received and noted.

Moved: Pam **Second:** Allan

6. Patyegarang Place Update

Victoria Johnstone, Arts and Cultural Development Coordinator gave the Reference Group background around the process of how Council's Living Arts team selected the non-Aboriginal artist, Belinda Smith, for the public artwork at Patyegarang Place and addressed some of the feedback received from the Reference Group at the last meeting. This included naming a detailed list of the Aboriginal artists that Victoria contacted directly to invite and encourage to submit a proposal for this work.

Additionally, to acknowledge contributions by creative team members and the Aboriginal community, the team (Belinda Smith, Professor Jakelin Troy, Nardi Simpson and Joel Davison) have formulated and agreed on the following statement to be included:

“Navigating Culture – The Story of Patyegarang

The Lilydale Corner artwork at Patyegarang Place – Marrickville Library and Community Spaces - is conceived by artist Belinda Smith as a two way sharing of knowledge, history and culture. Professor Jakelin Troy, with creatives and educators Nardi Simpson and Joel Davison, as custodians of knowledge and culture of the Eora community, are working in partnership with Belinda. This public artwork celebrates Patyegarang's story and embeds the Sydney Language in the public realm. Local Aboriginal communities are invited to join workshops and creative programs to develop the work and to share the history and story of Aboriginal communities and contributions to past and contemporary society”.

Victoria also detailed how Belinda will be collaborating with this team and with Aboriginal community members and Council's Aboriginal staff to contribute to the art at workshops.

Finally, Victoria confirmed that an Aboriginal artist will be selected for the rainwater tanks in the garden and that an Aboriginal person will be on the review panel for that selection.

Moved: Janelle **Second:** Allan

That the staff update and feedback in response to the queries raised by the Aboriginal Reference Group meeting on 10 October 2017 be received and noted by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Reference Group.

7. Inner West Council Australia Day Celebrations & NAIDOC Week Citizenship Ceremony

Moved: Janelle **Second:** Pam

1. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Reference Group provided the following feedback with regard to Council seeking advice on how the Inner West Council engages with Australia Day.

Australia Day Commentary:

- There are so many competing events on Australia day but Yabun is the most popular event for the Aboriginal community in this region because its where Aboriginal people see mob/enjoy cultural performances/music/ network/stalls and information about local services provide/foods.
- It's about celebrating survival.
- Some people see it as invasion day so they wouldn't support Australia Day events.
- It is a good day to hold it on but at the same time Australia Day shouldn't be on 26 January.
- The Reference Group feel that Australia Day, and the date, and how Council engages with it are an issue which is bigger than the group. It's an individual opinion and decision about whether it is celebrated.

2. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Reference Group provided the following feedback in regards to the motion that Inner West Council consider hosting a citizenship ceremony during NAIDOC Week embedding Aboriginal culture, history and survival.

Citizenship and NAIDOC Week Commentary:

- The Group suggested Council query whether it is Council or the Commonwealth that set the date for Citizenship.
- The Reference Group feel that to do anything in NAIDOC week would be taking away from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders week of celebration and that while the Group welcome new Citizen's it isn't the appropriate time or setting to share culture and history.
- The ATSIRG suggest that Council look at how many dates the ceremonies have throughout the year in the Inner West Council local government area and look at ways that Aboriginal culture/history are, or could be, acknowledged at each of these services. This may include giving new Citizen's a plant/booklet of local Aboriginal history etc.

8. Inner West Council Aboriginal Naming of the five Council wards**Summary**

Inner West Council is seeking feedback regarding the proposition to name the five Inner West Council wards with Aboriginal names. Council is also seeking comment about its proposal to promote Aboriginal culture by featuring Aboriginal artwork and design on the Council website.

Moved: Janelle **Second:** Pam

1. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Strategic Reference Group provided the following feedback on the proposition of Aboriginal naming for the Inner West Council wards;

Commentary:

The ATSIRG are very positive about the idea of the ward naming. Some suggestions at this preliminary stage are to use flora/fauna/tribe/clans/country names. Further investigation and discussion to be undertaken.

2. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Strategic Reference Group provided the following feedback and advice on the proposal to promote Aboriginal art on the Inner West Council website.

Commentary:

- i) Rather than just promoting art on the Inner West Council website the ATSIRG put forward the proposal to have a link on Council's website like the former Cadigal Wangal website (Marrickville) or Barani's website (City of Sydney). The content on this link would be a tool to educate people/local tours/promote Aboriginal businesses/Cooks River Alliance records of the local Aboriginal communities such as images/oral histories/native plants/promote the local arts/country/stories.
- ii) It was also recommended to highlight Boomalli Aboriginal Artists Cooperative as a link on Council's website.

9. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Naming Projects

Moved: Allan **Second:** Janelle

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Strategic Reference Group discussed the proposal to have Aboriginal names for the new Steel Park Child Care Facility, the Lewisham 'Luna' room and the street located at Crawford Place in Marrickville.

Commentary:

- i) The ATSIRG are happy to have Councils ATSI Childcare staff recommend a name for the new Steel Park Childcare facility and the proposed name to be emailed to the ATSIRG members for their input. If there is no issue or feedback with this naming proposal it is to be adopted.
- ii) The ATSIRG endorse 'Yanada' as the name for the Lewisham Room.
- iii) There was discussion that Aboriginal names should not be used for insignificant places/lanes or as a tokenistic gesture. It was agreed not to name Crawford Place. However, other place naming proposals would be welcome for consideration by the Reference Group.

10. Other Business

1. Evaluation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Strategic Reference Group was noted with the following feedback:

Commentary:

- One person said too many members in the ATSIRG

- Too much of a tick a box – felt like a lot of “rubber stamping”
- Would like more relevant discussion and time for feedback
- Current location at Petersham has been suitable for this Group
- One person would like the meetings to rotate locations – more fair
- Time of day: Alternate times might work. Sometimes have lunch meetings.
- No Councillors should be on the SRG – they may be invited as non- voting guests where requested by the Group
- ATSI membership only
- Maybe investigate ways of different structures: such as a pool of approved ATSI community members that can attend meetings at different times so it allows for more people to contribute – gives more opportunity for people to attend at different times etc.

Moved: Allan **Second:** Pam

Staff encouraged the Group to please complete the survey monkey.

2. ERLGATSIF update

Deborah and Rebecca advised the Group that one applicant will be interviewed for the ERLGATSIF Coordinator position at this stage.

The meeting concluded at 9:00pm