

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Committee

Terms of Reference

September 2019

1 *Purpose and Objectives*

At its meeting held on the 14 December 2016, Council resolved to re-establish the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Committee (the Committee).

Its function is to build on the success of the previous Committee and provide advice to Council in relation to Aboriginal culture.

The objectives of the Committee are:-

1. To engage and consult with representatives from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community who live within the Cessnock local government.
2. To provide a forum within the Cessnock local government area to discuss issues of interest to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.
3. To raise local awareness of issues of interest to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.
4. To encourage understanding and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, heritage and culture.
5. To provide Council with strategic advice and guidance in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues. This includes obtaining an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspective on the development of plans and strategies, as appropriate.
6. To provide advice for Council events/activities associated with actions identified in Council Plans, for example NAIDOC Week and Reconciliation Week.
7. To maintain and enhance positive working relationships between Council and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

2 *Strategic Framework*

The Committee will be guided by Council's current planning and policy framework including:-

- Community Strategic Plan - Cessnock 2027
 - 1.1 Promoting Social Connections
- Delivery Program for 2017-21
 - 1.1.1 Engage with the community in reconciliation activities

- Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan

3 Membership of the Committee

The Committee will comprise:-

- Three (3) Councillors as resolved by Council at its meeting held 14 December 2016 (Mayor Pynsent, Councillor Doherty, Councillor Gray).
- Up to eight (8) community representatives from the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander community.

The Committee's membership for community representatives must be inclusive of Wonnarua people.

Community representatives must be a resident of the Cessnock local government area.

Nominations for community representation during the term of the Committee will be consulted with the Committee.

4 Term of Membership

Membership to the Committee is for the term of Council.

If a Committee member is unable to regularly attend Committee meetings or contribute to the Committee in other ways, the Committee member must inform the Committee Co-ordinator in writing. The Committee Chair will be informed and consideration may be given to vacating the Committee member's position.

If a Committee member is absent for more than three consecutive meetings without an apology, the Committee Co-ordinator will advise the Committee Chair and consideration may be given to vacating the Committee member's position.

Any determination regarding membership will be made by resolution of the Council.

5 Coordination

The Committee will be administered by the Community and Cultural Engagement Manager and administration support will be provided by a Committee Co-ordinator.

The Committee Co-ordinator will ensure the preparation and distribution of agenda and business papers and ensure minutes are taken and distributed. They will also be responsible for ensuring consultation occurs with the Chair to confirm the proposed agenda and Committee meeting minutes.

6 Meetings and Quorum

The meeting frequency will be determined by the Committee, but at least three (3) meetings will be held per annum.

The meetings will be held at a time suitable to the majority of Committee members. If practical a Committee member may participate in the meeting via phone or internet.

The quorum will be five (5) members of the Committee including a minimum of one (1) Councillor and three (3) Community representatives.

In order to ensure a quorum, if a Committee member is unable to attend a Committee meeting an apology must be sent to the Committee Co-ordinator.

Council staff are non-voting advisors to the Committee.

Meetings will be conducted in accordance with the principles of Council's Code of Meeting Practice and Code of Conduct.

Where the advice of Committee members is sought between meeting dates, information may be sent to members to review and respond in accordance with the 'Consultation Protocol for the Referral of Matters to the Cessnock City Council Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Committee'. A special meeting may also be called if needed and/or a report forwarded to the Committee in an electronic format for the Committee's review with recommendation sought.

7 Reporting

Agenda items and reports for the Committee will be forwarded to the delegated Committee Co-ordinator no later than two weeks before the scheduled meeting.

The agenda will be distributed to Committee members one week before the scheduled meeting.

Committee meeting minutes will be submitted to Council for adoption at the next available Council meeting. The meeting minutes will then be distributed to members of the Committee with the agenda for next meeting to be held.

8 Council Resolution

The Council resolutions referenced above are the relevant resolutions applicable to this Committee.