

Governance and Corporate Leadership

GL21 Aboriginal Reconciliation



24 May 2017

This policy was adopted by Council to set governing principles in place that align the strategic direction of the organisation with Goal 5 – Effective Leadership and Governance

Objectives

The objectives of the Shire's Aboriginal Reconciliation policy are:

- 1) To build mutually respectful relationships between Indigenous and other Australians that allow us to work together to solve problems and generate success that is in everyone's best interests;
- 2) To raise awareness and knowledge of Indigenous history and culture and in particular the rich cultural heritage of the Wardandi people as the first inhabitants of the Capes Region, and
- 3) To encourage action where everyone plays their part in building a better relationship between all Australians.

Policy

The Shire of Augusta Margaret River recognises the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the first inhabitants of Australia and the Wardandi people in particular as the traditional custodians of the land on which the Shire of Augusta Margaret River is now situated. The Council acknowledges the loss and grief experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples caused by alienation from traditional lands and past injustices including the forced removal of children.

The Shire recognises the traditions and customs of Indigenous Australians and their special spiritual relationship with the land. The Shire acknowledges the right of all Australians including Indigenous Australians to live according to their own beliefs, values and customs, and the Shire acknowledges the importance of these beliefs, customs and values in strengthening and enriching the heritage of all Australians.

The Shire of Augusta Margaret River recognises that it is required to consider the needs of the local Aboriginal peoples in addressing the needs of the whole local community. The Shire supports Reconciliation Australia's ambition to eliminate the glaring gap in life expectancy between Indigenous and other Australian children. The Shire of Augusta Margaret River supports the vision expressed by the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation of "a united Australia which respects this land of ours, values the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage and provides justice and equity for us all".

Accordingly, the Shire will work with local Aboriginal People towards reconciliation and supports the need to improve non-Indigenous understanding of Aboriginal issues. The Shire will work to ensure the principles of equity and access for all members of the Indigenous community to culturally appropriate services and programs.

The Shire of Augusta Margaret River commits to –

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- Developing and promoting, as appropriate, Indigenous involvement in events and celebrations of significance which respects the dignity and protocols of the local Indigenous community;
- Taking effective action on issues of social and economic concern when they lie in the sphere of interest and responsibility of the Shire;
- Participating in education processes which enhance the increased knowledge, understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal culture and heritage and the needs of Indigenous communities;
- Developing strategies that improve the level of participation of Aboriginal Peoples in local government at all levels; and
- Working with State and Federal Governments and Aboriginal Communities to resolve Native Title Claims through negotiation in preference to litigation.
- Acknowledging the Wardandi People as the traditional custodians of the land within the Shire at relevant events and celebrations at the President's discretion.
- Flying the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flags in accordance with State and National protocols.

Application

Responsibility for the implementation of this policy rests with Council, Shire President and the CEO. The policy is to be reviewed every three years

Document and version control table		
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