



BUSINESS PAPER

Notice is hereby given in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993* and Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 of the below mentioned meeting.

Aboriginal Advisory Committee Meeting

Wednesday, 20 August 2025

Commencing at 4:00 PM

Shellharbour Civic Centre

AGENDA

1 Acknowledgement to Country

2 Apologies / Leave of Absence

3 Confirmation of Minutes

3.1 Aboriginal Advisory Committee Meeting-21 May 2025

4 Disclosures of Interest

5 Presentations

6 Reports

6.1 Aboriginal Employment Update (Standing Item)

6.2 Aboriginal Interpretive Centre Update (Standing Item)

6.3 Capital Projects Update (Standing Item)

6.4 Aboriginal Community Events Update

6.5 Reconciliation Framework Update

6.6 Aboriginal Advisory Committee Sub-committees

6.7 Review of Alcohol-Free Zones and Alcohol-Prohibited Areas

6.8 Oak Flats Aquatic Facility Masterplan Project

7 General Business

8 Next Meeting

9 Meeting Closed

1. Acknowledgement to Country

Shellharbour City Council acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the Dharawal Country and recognise their continued connection to the land we meet on today. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging and the contribution they make to the life of this city and this region and extend our recognition to their descendants who continue to live on country.

2. Apologies / Leave of Absences

3 Confirmation of Minutes

3.1 Aboriginal Advisory Committee Meeting-21 May 2025

That the Minutes of the Aboriginal Advisory Committee meeting held on 29 May 2025 be received and noted.

**Minutes of the Aboriginal Advisory Committee Meeting
of Shellharbour City Council held in the Ground Floor Training Room
on Wednesday, 21 May 2025 commencing at 4:00 PM**

Attendance

Present:

Mayor Chris Homer (Chair)	Councillor
Cr Lou Stefanovski	Councillor
Cr Robert Petreski	Councillor
Aunty Lindy Lawler	Community Representative
Uncle Richard Davis	Community Representative
Jodi Edwards	Community Representative (on-line)
Anne-Maree Fohrman	Community Representative
Suzanne Clapham	Community Representative (on-line)

In Attendance:

Cr John Davey (part)	Councillor (observer)
Kate Jessep	Executive Director Community and Culture
Matt Sutherland	Executive Manager Community and Creative Services
Bonnie Hittmann	Manager Community Life
Maiquilla Brown	Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer
Anne Peden (part)	Project Delivery Officer
Fiona Robbe (part)	Consultant (on-line)
Lisa Davey	Governance Manager
Allison Bonaz	Corporate Meetings Officer (Minute Taker)

1 Acknowledgement to Country

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2 Apologies / Leave of Absence

An apology was tendered on behalf of Councillor Kane Murphy.

3 Confirmation of Minutes

Committee Recommendation: Jodi Edwards / Cr Stefanovski

That the minutes from the Aboriginal Advisory Committee Meetings held on 12 March and 2 April 2025 be received and noted.

CARRIED

4 Disclosures of Interest

Nil

5 Presentations

Committee Recommendation: Cr Petreski / Cr Stefanovski

That the presentation on the Boonerah Point Project by Fiona Robbe was received and noted.

CARRIED

ACTION: Jodi Edwards to meet with Fiona Robbe to provide clarification of the story and connection of Gurangaty and Mundarbri.

At this point in the meeting Fiona Robbe presented via Teams the 11th award received for the Yirran Muru project, the 2025 Monocle Design Award for Best Playground.

6 Reports

6.1 Aboriginal Employment Update (Standing Item)

Committee Recommendation: Uncle Richard Davis / Cr Stefanovski

That the Aboriginal Advisory Committee receive and note the Aboriginal Employment Update Report.

CARRIED

Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer, Maiquilla Brown announced that she has resigned from Council to take up an opportunity with the University of Wollongong. Maiquilla was thanked by the Committee for her passion and the work she has done for the community.

6.2 Aboriginal Community Events Update

Committee Recommendation: Jodi Edwards / Cr Petreski

That the Aboriginal Advisory Committee receive and note the Aboriginal Community Events Update Report.

CARRIED

6.3 Aboriginal Interpretive Centre Update (Standing Item)

Committee Recommendation: Uncle Richard Davis / Jodi Edwards

That the Aboriginal Advisory Committee receive and note the update report on the Aboriginal Interpretive Centre including:

1. a presentation on the project site due diligence to date;
2. the draft objectives and design principles for the business case for feedback during the meeting; and
3. a workshop on key stakeholders and needs analysis.

CARRIED

ACTION: Following the presentation and discussion, the Committee decided that the Aboriginal Interpretive Centre (AIC) Subcommittee should meet with senior staff to further progress the AIC and bring the outcome back to the Committee. The IAC Sub-committee includes Uncle Richard Davis and Jodi Edwards.

ACTION: As per the Minutes of the previous meeting, the Committee discussed the appointment of members to the Aboriginal Culture and Heritage Subcommittee. Following discussion it was determined to continue with Uncle Richard Davis and Jodi Edwards until further discussion can occur at the next meeting.

6.4 Reconciliation Frameworks Update

The Committee agreed to defer this item to the next meeting in August 2025.

7 General Business

Nil

8 Next Meeting

20 August 2025 at 4:00pm

9 Meeting Closed

5:35pm

4. Disclosures of Interest

Note: Councillors and staff who declare an Interest at the Meeting are also required to complete a Declaration of Interest form.

5. Presentations

6 Reports

6.1 Aboriginal Employment Update (Standing Item)

Manager: Bonnie Hittmann, Community Development Manager

Approver: Matt Sutherland, Executive Manager Community and Creative Services, Kate Jessep, Executive Director Community and Culture

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on Aboriginal employment matters within Council.

Bush Regeneration Team Leader (Aboriginal targeted)

Council advertised for an Aboriginal-targeted role as a Bush Regeneration Team Leader from 4 April – 11 May 2025. The role is a part of the Open Spaces Team and will be responsible for leading bush care and regeneration activities across the Shellharbour local government area.

The role was promoted using an Aboriginal-focused communication plan including:

1. Social media promotions

A social media video was created with the Aboriginal Community Planner and Team Coordinator Bushland Management. The video was completed in the format of an informal interview with yarning and was filmed on-site at Bass Point. In addition to the short social media video, a longer video was put on the Council website to further promote and explain the position.

2. Flyer

A flyer was designed to promote the position, which was handed out at community events and programs. The flyer was graphically designed and visually appealing and was used to further support email communication promoting the position.

3. Presentation at the Illawarra Aboriginal Community Based Working Group (IACBWG)

The Aboriginal Community Planner gave an informal presentation to the IACBWG May meeting, which involved promoting the role as well as handing out flyers.

4. Targeted emails to local networks and community members

Targeted emails have been sent to the IACBWG email network, Illawarra Aboriginal Corporation and Illawarra Local Aboriginal Lands Council, as well as environment focused networks.

No appointment was made as a result of that recruitment round and Council have recently commenced another round of advertisement for this role, running from 21 July to 20 August. In addition to the above-mentioned advertisement techniques, Council have promoted directly to organisations including the Illawarra Aboriginal Corporation, Gawura, Illawarra Local Aboriginal Lands Council, Woolyungah Indigenous Centre and the Shoalhaven Aboriginal Information Network.

Aboriginal Community Planner - new title

As was announced at the last AAC meeting, Council's Aboriginal Community Planner, Maiquilla Brown, has left Council and moved onto another opportunity.

Council has reviewed the position description for this role and is considering an alternate position title to broaden the applicant base and to make the position clear to community on its key purpose, whilst still recognising the seniority of this position within Council.

The position purpose is 'to work strategically with Community, Councillors, Council and Customers to achieve social justice outcomes for the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and to strive for Reconciliation. To provide specialist advice to support decision making that addresses strategic and operational cultural awareness and inclusion whilst assisting to coordinate and engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and broader community stakeholders'.

There are concerns that the title Aboriginal Community *Planner* may suggest that it is predominantly a land use planning role and prevent application from candidates who would actually be capable of fulfilling this role. Therefore, we are seeking AAC feedback on an alternate position title. Suggestions include:

- Aboriginal Community and Strategy Advisor
- Aboriginal Community Planning and Engagement Officer
- Aboriginal Community Specialist
- Other.

Recommendation

That the Aboriginal Advisory Committee receive and note the Aboriginal Employment Update Report.

Attachments

None

6.2 Aboriginal Interpretive Centre Update (Standing Item)

Manager: Matt Sutherland, Executive Manager Community and Creative Services

Approver: Kate Jessep, Executive Director Community and Culture

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the Aboriginal Interpretive Centre (AIC) project.

The Aboriginal Interpretive Centre Sub-Committee of the Aboriginal Advisory Committee made up of Uncle Richard Davis and Dr Jodie Edwards met with Council staff Kate Jessep and Matt Sutherland along with Mayor Homer on Thursday 24 July 2025.

This productive meeting moved through Agenda items including:

1. **Where this project is up to and past commitments and undertakings of Council.** - *Council staff presented Council records as to current commitments of Council and received guidance from Sub-Committee members on past reports and Committee meetings dating back to 1999.*
2. **Objectives of the Aboriginal Interpretative Centre (AIC) business case** - *These were principally agreed and supported*
3. **Design principles for the AIC** - *These were principally agreed and supported*
4. **Functional requirements of an AIC (essential and desirable)** - *A beneficial initial discussion around functional requirements, uses and display of items including the role of cultural knowledge holders occurred with further work and discussion to take place to further develop the Functional Requirements elements of the Aboriginal Interpretive Centre business case.*
5. **Stakeholder and needs and Identification** - *It was agreed Council staff will develop a preliminary list for further discussion and review following initial conversations.*
6. **Broad funding and operating models** - *Funding models and potential project partners were discussed at a high-level but this discussion was predominantly carried over until next meeting.*

A future meeting of the Aboriginal Interpretive Centre Sub-Committee has been tentatively scheduled for 4 September for the same attendees and may include some other Council subject matter experts as agreed by the Sub-Committee.

Recommendation

That the Aboriginal Advisory Committee receive and note the Aboriginal Interpretive Centre Update report.

Attachments

None

6.3 Capital Projects Update (Standing Item)

Manager: Bonnie Hittmann, Community Development Manager

Approver: Matt Sutherland, Executive Manager Community and Creative Services, Kate Jessep, Executive Director Community and Culture

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on capital projects that have been referred to Committee members Uncle Richard Davis and Dr Jodi Edwards for review and culture and heritage comment.

Since the last Aboriginal Advisory Committee meeting, the following capital projects have been referred to Uncle Richard Davis and Dr Jodi Edwards for review and culture and heritage comment:

Project	Referral reason	Project lead
Harrison Park Youth Zone Construction (27/06/25). Construction of the Youth Zone area of the Harrison Park Masterplan Implementation Design. The works will include pathways, multisport court, hang out areas and Youth Centre exterior works. Further information available on Harrison Park Master Plan in Action Let's Chat Shellharbour The Aboriginal culture and heritage due diligence assessment deemed this project at low risk level.	To advise that the Harrison Park Multipurpose Youth Zone construction will commence as part of the 2025/26 Capital Works Program and to outline the Aboriginal culture and heritage due diligence processes and outcomes.	Dean Adams - Infrastructure Officer
Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Assessment for Pur Pur Avenue Midden Site - by OzArk Environment and Heritage (25/07/25). OzArk Environment and Heritage undertaking Aboriginal consultation for Pur Pur Avenue Midden Site. The project will involve the management of an Aboriginal shell midden encountered at the intersection of Peterborough and Pur Pur Avenues,	OzArk seeking expressions of interest from relevant Aboriginal stakeholders and individuals.	Catherine Burrowes - OzArk

Warilla, NSW, during the construction of a flower bed.

Recommendation

That the Aboriginal Advisory Committee receive and note the Capital Projects Update report.

Attachments

None

6.4 Aboriginal Community Events Update

Manager: Bonnie Hittmann, Community Development Manager

Approver: Matt Sutherland, Executive Manager Community and Creative Services

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the Aboriginal-focused events that have been delivered throughout June and July.

Reconciliation School Flag Walk, Monday 2 June 2025

The Reconciliation School Flag Walk event was held on Monday 2 June 2025 at Reddall Reserve, Lake Illawarra and was a great success. More than 650 students from 35 local schools walked from Warilla-Barrack Point Surf Life Saving Club to Reddall Reserve East, proudly carrying flags as symbols of unity and reconciliation. Approximately 1000 people in total attended the event, including Elders and key community members, and participated in a variety of free activities and workshops delivered by Coomaditchie and Council teams.



Image 1 - Reconciliation School Flag Walk

Shellharbour NAIDOC Community Day, Monday 7 July 2025

The Shellharbour NAIDOC Community Day was held at the Shellharbour Civic Centre on Monday 7 July. Under the national NAIDOC theme of 'The Next Generation: Strength, Vision and Legacy', community celebrated the culture, voices and resilience of the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

communities. MC'd by the wonderful Suzanne Clapham, over 500 community members came along on the day with 30 different organisations delivering a series of free family friendly activities. Activities included:

- Weaving activity with Buribun Art
- Boomerang painting with A&T Culture
- Painting with Coomaditchie.



Image 2 - Shellharbour NAIDOC Community Day

Local Government Regional NAIDOC Awards, Saturday 28 July 2025

Shellharbour City Council, in collaboration with Wollongong, Kiama and Shoalhaven Council, delivered the 2025 Local Government Regional NAIDOC Awards event on Saturday 28 July. The event was a resounding success with almost 350 community members attending the night that celebrated the achievements of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members and organisations.

The event was held at the Civic Centre which saw the library being converted into an exquisite event space. Entertainment included:

- Welcome to Country by Uncle Gerald Brown
- Smoking and cultural performance by Gumaraa
- Master of Ceremony Isaac Compton
- A Legacy of Song and Culture by Lake Illawarra High School Black Swans
- Yanggaa Garaba Ensemble - Southern Stars
- Kutcha Edwards
- Kyarna Rosa

And of course, the highlight of the event are the many and varied award winners which included:

- Elder of the Year (Aunty) - Aunty Gwenda Jarrett
- Elder of the Year (Uncle) - Uncle Stanley Jarrett
- Community Member of the Year - Ray Timbery
- Young Achiever of the Year - Kyarlee-Rose Clulow
- Young Achiever of the Year - Marle Ashby
- Caring for Country and Culture - Betty Smith
- Aboriginal Community Volunteer of the Year - Tina McGhie
- Organisation of the Year (Business) - CMJ Food Services
- Organisation of the Year (Not-for-profit) - Juborsay Aboriginal Education Consultative Group
- Outstanding Contribution to Reconciliation (Aboriginal) - Aunty Lindy Lawler
- Outstanding Contribution to Reconciliation (non-Aboriginal) - OUW Pulse - Kids Uni.



Image 3 - Local Government Regional NAIDOC Awards



Image 4 - Recipient of the Outstanding Contribution to Reconciliation (Aboriginal) award, Aunty Lindy Lawler, with Mayor Chris Homer.

Recommendation

That the Aboriginal Advisory Committee receive and note the Aboriginal Community Events Update Report.

Attachments

None

6.5 Reconciliation Framework Update

Manager: Bonnie Hittmann, Community Development Manager

Approver: Matt Sutherland, Executive Manager Community and Creative Services

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the different strategic frameworks available for consideration as Council seeks options to strengthen the relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous peoples for the benefit of all of the Shellharbour City Community.

This item is carried over from the Aboriginal Advisory Committee meeting held on 21 May 2025.

At its Ordinary Council Meeting on 17 December 2024, Council resolved,

'That Council:

- 1. Receive and note the Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan 2023-2024 Outcomes Report; and*
- 2. Refer to Aboriginal Advisory Committee to provide Council with options to strengthen the relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-indigenous peoples for the benefit of all of the Shellharbour City Community.'*

This report examines a variety of strategic frameworks that can be used by Council to progress reconciliation outcomes for Council and Community. The report explores the differences and similarities between Reconciliation Action Plans (RAPs) developed through Reconciliation Australia and a range of alternate frameworks operating at national, state, and local levels. The comparison focuses on how these frameworks support systemic change, cultural safety, and improved outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and the broader community.

This report considers the strengths, limitations, and practical applications of the RAP model in comparison to other approaches including the Closing the Gap Framework, Indigenous Advancement Strategy, and state-led Aboriginal Action Plans. By examining these frameworks, this report provides guidance on how Council can best position itself to support reconciliation and embed long-term, community-driven change for the local community.

Reconciliation Action Plans

Reconciliation Australia is a national organisation whose vision is to promote and facilitate respect, trust and positive relationships between the wider Australian community and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This is achieved by encouraging organisations and businesses across Australia to establish a formal Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

There are four different levels of Reconciliation Action Plans:

1. Reflect – scoping reconciliation
2. Innovate – implementing reconciliation
3. Stretch – embedding reconciliation
4. Elevate - leading reconciliation

A Reflect RAP clearly sets out the steps that an organisation should take to prepare themselves for reconciliation initiatives in successive RAPs. Committing to a Reflect RAP allows an organisation to spend time scoping and developing relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders, deciding on their vision for reconciliation and exploring their sphere of influence, before committing to specific actions or initiatives. This process will help to produce future RAPs that are meaningful, mutually beneficial and sustainable.

An Innovate RAP outlines actions that work towards achieving an organisation's unique vision for reconciliation. Commitments within this RAP allow an organisation to be aspirational and innovative to help an organisation to gain a deeper understanding of its sphere of influence and establish the best approach to advance reconciliation. An Innovate RAP focuses on developing and strengthening relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, engaging staff and stakeholders in reconciliation, and developing and piloting innovative strategies to empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

A Stretch RAP is best suited to organisations that have developed and embedded strategies and established a strong approach towards advancing reconciliation internally and within the organisation's sphere of influence. This type of RAP is focused on implementing longer-term strategies and working towards defined measurable targets and goals. The Stretch RAP requires organisations to embed reconciliation initiatives into business strategies to become 'business as usual'.

An Elevate RAP is for organisations that have a proven track record of embedding effective RAP initiatives in their organisation through their Stretch RAPs and are ready to take on a leadership position to advance national reconciliation. Elevate RAP organisations have a strong strategic relationship with Reconciliation Australia and actively champion initiatives to empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and create societal change. Elevate RAP organisations also require greater transparency and accountability through independent assessment of their activities.

The national framework divides all Reconciliation Action Plans into 4 key pillars:

- relationships
- respect
- opportunities
- governance

Each pillar outlines prescribed actions which support Council in scoping and developing relationships with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders, deciding on a central vision for reconciliation and exploring Council's sphere of influence for supporting and promoting reconciliation within the local community.

Shellharbour City Council completed a Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan in 2024 and has made investigations into the potential of developing an Innovate RAP. The Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan was the first strategic action plan for Shellharbour City Council that focused on reconciliation and supporting the local Aboriginal community.

Alternative Strategic Frameworks

For the purposes of this report an 'alternative strategic framework' is a locally developed approach to strengthen the relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous peoples for the benefit of all of the Shellharbour City community. It focuses on strengthening respectful relationships across all community members, enhancing social justice outcomes and community wellbeing, and creating culturally safe, inclusive communities in ways that are led by and meaningful to local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. These frameworks prioritize community voice, cultural integrity, and practical actions tailored to local needs.

There are a variety of alternative frameworks which are comparable to RAPs in terms of addressing systemic inequities and working towards improving outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. These frameworks are generally delivered at a local level, with a focus on co-design and self-

determination, where actions and deliverables are designed specifically to meet local needs such as education, health, employment, aim to reduce disparities between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Australians.

The following provides an overview of alternative strategic frameworks delivered at a national, state and local level, and how they compare to the national RAP standard overseen by Reconciliation Australia.

1. Closing the Gap Framework (National Government)

The Closing the Gap (CTG) Framework is the national effort to improve the health, education, employment, and justice outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Since its launch in 2008, the framework has been periodically reviewed and updated, most recently in 2020 to reflect a more culturally respectful, collaborative approach.

Key Features:

- **Partnerships with Aboriginal Communities:** The framework emphasizes co-design and self-determination, acknowledging the need for Aboriginal communities to be at the forefront of the decision-making processes.
- **Clear Target Areas:** Focuses on several key areas including:
 - Early childhood education
 - School attendance and literacy
 - Employment outcomes
 - Life expectancy and child mortality
 - Housing and health outcomes
- **Accountability and Reporting:** There are regular reviews and progress reports that hold governments and agencies accountable for meeting these targets. The national Closing the Gap report is presented each year.

Comparison to RAPs:

- **Action-Oriented:** Both the CTG framework and RAPs are action-oriented, with tangible goals and targets.
- **Holistic Focus:** RAPs tend to be broader in scope, covering reconciliation in social, cultural, and business spheres, while CTG is more focused on specific outcomes in health, education, and employment.
- **Ongoing Commitment:** Both frameworks are designed to be long-term commitments, with progress measured over several years.

2. Local Action Plans (Local Governments)

Some local councils and state governments have adopted their own modified versions of the CTG framework, often integrated into RAPs or as standalone frameworks. These plans can align with the national CTG priorities but are

tailored to the specific needs of their local Aboriginal communities.

Key Features:

- **Community-Led Goals:** Local councils may work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders to co-develop goals and action plans specific to local priorities.
- **Targeted Interventions:** Local CTG actions can address things like:
 - Aboriginal student support programs
 - Health programs targeting chronic disease prevention
 - Economic opportunities, such as Aboriginal employment strategies within the council
 - Cultural and community strengthening initiatives

Comparison to RAPs:

- **Integration with RAPs:** Many councils integrate CTG actions within their RAPs. While RAPs focus on organizational relationships and respect, a CTG framework within a local council focuses more specifically on outcomes, often directly aligning with national targets.
- **Place-Based Approach:** Local CTG frameworks are often more customized, reflecting the unique demographic, social, and cultural needs of a specific region, while RAPs are standardized to some extent.

3. Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS)

The Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS) is another framework that focuses on improving the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, particularly in the areas of education, employment, and community development. The IAS was introduced by the Australian Government to streamline funding and improve program delivery outcomes.

Key Features:

- **Funding-Based Strategy:** The IAS focuses on targeted funding to support programs that aim to improve outcomes for Indigenous communities in education, employment, and community safety.
- **Priority Areas:** The IAS supports initiatives in key areas, including:
 - Education and training
 - Employment and economic development
 - Community safety and wellbeing
 - Culture and language

Comparison to RAPs:

- **Programmatic Focus:** Unlike RAPs, which focus on organizational change, the IAS is more about funding and managing specific programs that support Aboriginal communities. However, both share a focus on community empowerment and addressing the systemic inequities that exist.

- **Direct Action on Key Areas:** The IAS targets tangible outcomes, similar to CTG, but may not necessarily involve the same level of community consultation and co-design as RAPs or CTG frameworks.

4. State-Specific Aboriginal Action Plans

Several states in Australia have their own Aboriginal Action Plans that align with CTG goals but reflect local priorities and issues. These plans often include initiatives aimed at reducing disparities in education, health, and housing, similar to the national CTG framework. The NSW Aboriginal Affairs Strategy is an example of a framework which aims to increase opportunities for Aboriginal people in the areas of education, employment, and economic participation.

Comparison to RAPs:

- **Government-Centric Focus:** State Aboriginal Action Plans are more government-driven and focus on policy outcomes, while RAPs tend to be more community-driven and action-oriented at the organizational level.
- **Focus on Policy vs. Cultural Change:** While CTG-related frameworks primarily focus on closing disparities in outcomes, RAPs often incorporate cultural awareness and organizational change, which may not always be the focus of state-based frameworks.

Summary of Key Differences Between Non-RAP Alternatives	
RAPs	Focus primarily on building relationships, respect, and opportunities through cultural change within organizations (businesses, councils, and schools).
Closing the Gap Framework	Focuses on specific outcome-based targets to reduce inequities in health, education, and employment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
Local Action Plans	Can combine elements of RAPs and Closing the Gap, particularly when local councils tailor the national framework to their community's needs.
Indigenous Advancement Strategy	Primarily funding and program-oriented, focusing on achieving specific measurable outcomes for Indigenous communities.

Alternative strategic frameworks offer a locally driven, culturally grounded approach to advancing reconciliation outside of formal national structures like RAPs. While they vary in form, they are all united by a focus on community leadership, self-determination, and practical actions that respond directly to local priorities. These frameworks centre Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices and aim to create culturally safe, inclusive environments through meaningful, place-based change.

Summary: RAPs vs Non-RAP Alternative Frameworks		
Feature	Reconciliation Action Plans (RAPs)	Alternative Reconciliation Frameworks
Developer	Reconciliation Australia – National Peak Body	Various – typically co-designed with local Aboriginal community and can include local governments, state agencies, schools, businesses, NGOs, and community groups
Structure / Formality	Highly structured with four formal tiers (Reflect, Innovate, Stretch, Elevate), with consistent pillars of focus and regular reporting and review periods.	Varies from formal to semi-formal to informal; localised frameworks are self-determined and adapted to meet local community contexts and needs
Governance	Requires endorsement and annual reporting to Reconciliation Australia	Governance varies – may include advisory committees, community-led boards, or internal steering groups
Accountability	Formal accountability through internal evaluation, annual reporting, and public disclosure	Low level of accountability which can be localised or internal; minor public scrutiny and unlikely to be externally monitored
Scope	Often organization-wide; used in corporate, government, and education sectors	Can be organisation-wide or community-wide; more common in local government, schools, grassroots projects
Focus Areas	Relationships, Respect, Opportunities, and Governance	Focus are codesigned through collaboration; can include employment goals, truth-telling, cultural safety, policy reform, and local partnerships
Flexibility	Minor flexibility due to standardized templates, prescribed actions and reporting and compliance processes. Additional customised actions can be added, however prescribed actions cannot be removed.	Highly flexible – can be designed to meet specific cultural, geographic, or political needs of the local community This level of flexibility can also be a disadvantage as it can sidestep accountability or overlook significant cultural issues, particularly those that challenge organisational norms or power structures

Resourcing	Often well-resourced, particularly in government or corporate sectors. Prescribed actions ensure organisation considers financial implications and commits appropriate funding allocations	May be under-resourced or dependent on internal champions and community partnerships pushing for resourcing and funding to support delivery
Cultural Authority	Must consult Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders, but sometimes lacks deep local engagement	Often community-led or co-designed with Traditional Custodians, Elders and community members
Examples of Use	Corporates (Telstra, Qantas), Universities (UOW, UNSW), Government departments	Local councils (Yarra Ranges, Lismore), grassroots land return projects, cultural safety frameworks
Outcomes	Clear benchmarking for operational outcomes and internal cultural changes; can lead to employment, procurement, cultural training and systems change. Potential for actions to seem symbolic only, or tokenistic.	Has the potential to create deep local impact when community-led and co-designed; may include land-back initiatives, language revival, truth-telling, and cultural safety reforms. Has the potential to lack meaningful impact or change where there is insufficient community engagement and co-design, insufficient funding and lack of support from leadership.

Strengths of RAPs:

- National recognition, consistency and accountability
- Visibility and benchmarking
- Formal structure appeals to large institutions
- Provides strong framework for organisational change
- Supports mainstream sector engagement

Strengths of Alternative Frameworks:

- Locally led and often more meaningful at the community level
- Greater flexibility and innovation
- Encourages deep listening and truth-telling
- Often more culturally informed and place-based

Summary

Reconciliation Action Plans offer a nationally recognised and structured approach to advancing reconciliation, providing clear benchmarks and accountability through Reconciliation Australia's tiered framework. Shellharbour City Council's adoption of a Reflect RAP marks a significant step

in formalising its commitment to reconciliation and building on existing relationships and initiatives with the local Aboriginal community.

Non-RAP alternative frameworks, such as a locally developed action plans, highlight the importance of community co-design, flexibility, and place-based responses. While RAPs focus on internal organisational change through the pillars of relationships, respect, opportunities, and governance, alternative models often centre on direct community outcomes in areas such as education, health, housing, and employment. Both approaches have unique strengths: RAPs provide structure and national visibility, whereas non-RAP frameworks offer innovation and community-led depth.

Recommendation

That the Aboriginal Advisory Committee:

- 1. Receive and note the Reconciliation Framework Update report;**
- 2. Consider which strategic framework Council can utilise to drive reconciliation and other Aboriginal and community outcomes and provide advice to Council accordingly.**

Attachments

None

6.6 Aboriginal Advisory Committee Sub-committees

Manager: Bonnie Hittmann, Community Development Manager

Approver: Matt Sutherland, Executive Manager Community and Creative Services, Kate Jessep, Executive Director Community and Culture

The purpose of this report is to review and confirm the Aboriginal Advisory Committee sub-committee members.

The Aboriginal Advisory Committee (AAC) has established two sub-committees with two positions on each - these are:

- Aboriginal Interpretive Centre (AIC) sub-committee
- Aboriginal Culture and Heritage sub-committee.

These sub-committees allow an avenue for Council to consult with selected AAC members and seek advice on relevant issues outside of the standard bi-monthly full AAC meetings.

At the AAC meeting of 2 April, when the sub-committee nominations were discussed, Dr Jodi Edwards nominated herself for both committees and her nomination was unanimously supported by the broader AAC.

The AAC members also proposed Uncle Richard Davis for both sub-committees, in line with the previous sub-committee membership, however he was not at that meeting to either nominate or accept his nomination.

Additionally, there was discussion around the need to develop some terms of reference (ToR) to provide guidance and clarity around the roles and responsibilities of the different sub-committee members. Council staff agreed to develop such ToR and bring these to a future AAC meeting for endorsement.

Until the draft ToR have been developed, it is recommended that the Aboriginal Advisory Committee:

1. Endorse Uncle Richard Davis and Dr Jodi Edwards as the temporary Aboriginal Interpretive Centre sub-committee positions;
2. Endorse Uncle Richard Davis and Dr Jodi Edwards as the temporary Aboriginal Culture and Heritage sub-committee positions; and
3. Seek to endorse permanent sub-committee members (for the duration of the current AAC) once the terms of reference documents are developed and endorsed (noting this can be the existing temporary members).

Recommendation

That the Aboriginal Advisory Committee:

- 1. Endorse Uncle Richard Davis and Dr Jodi Edwards as the temporary Aboriginal Interpretive Centre sub-committee positions;**
- 2. Endorse Uncle Richard Davis and Dr Jodi Edwards as the temporary Aboriginal Culture and Heritage sub-committee positions; and**
- 3. Seek to endorse permanent sub-committee members (for the duration of the current AAC) once the terms of reference documents are developed and endorsed.**

Attachments

None

6.7 Review of Alcohol-Free Zones and Alcohol-Prohibited Areas

Manager: Bonnie Hittmann, Community Development Manager, Matt Sutherland, Executive Manager Community and Creative Services

Approver: Kate Jessep, Executive Director Community and Culture

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the review of the Alcohol-Free Zones and Alcohol-Prohibited Areas.

Background

The public consumption of alcohol can result in anti-social behaviour such as malicious damage, assault and offensive conduct. The establishment of Alcohol Free Zones (AFZ) and Alcohol Prohibited Areas (APA) in Shellharbour aims to enhance public safety by addressing alcohol-related problems in public places where they have been deemed to be an issue. The main objective of an AFZ and APA is to act as an early intervention measure to prevent the escalation of irresponsible drinking leading to incidents involving serious crimes.

AFZs relate to public places that are public roads, footpaths, or public car parks within a defined area where the consumption is prohibited 24 hours, seven days a week.

APAs relate to non-road related public spaces such as parks, reserves and beaches where the consumption of alcohol is prohibited 24 hours seven days a week or for a specific time period.

A comprehensive assessment of all existing AFZs and APAs have been conducted as well as a review of any potential new areas for establishment based on a demonstrated need. This involved: analysis of background information and legislative requirements; a review of Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research data and hotspots for crimes likely to be related to irresponsible street drinking, including malicious damage to property and non-domestic assault; reports to Council regarding problems related to public drinking; locations and impact of nearby licenced venues and takeaway alcohol outlets; Community Survey responses related to community safety; Police advice on how AFZs and APAs are used to perform their duties; feedback from stakeholders and community; and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design audits. Community members impacted by new or extensions to existing AFZs and APAs showed strong support for the establishment in these new areas.

As part of the community engagement process, Council reached out to local Aboriginal organisations for feedback - this included:

- Illawarra Aboriginal Corporation
- Guwara
- Illawarra Aboriginal Medical Service

No feedback was provided.

The recommendations for the revised AFZs and APAs will go to the Council meeting of 26 August 2025, after which it is anticipated the revised areas will go on public exhibition for a period of 30 days. Full information on the AFZ and APA review, including the proposed sites, is available at [Alcohol Free Public Spaces | Let's Chat Shellharbour](#).

AAC members are encouraged to review the sites and provide feedback through the Let's Chat platform. Alternatively, AAC members can request to speak to the project lead, Lauren Peters - Team Leader Community Planning, directly to ask any questions or provide feedback as agreed by the Sub-Committee.

Recommendation

That the Aboriginal Advisory Committee receive and note the Review of the Alcohol-Free Zones and Alcohol-Prohibited Areas report.

Attachments

None

6.8 Oak Flats Aquatic Facility Masterplan Project

Manager: Matthew Apolo, Executive Manager Technical and Recreation Services

Approver: Ben Stewart, Executive Director Infrastructure Services

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the Oak Flats Aquatic Facility Masterplan Project.

Background

In 2024, Council applied under the Regional Precincts and Partnership Program (RPPP) for a proposed Regional Aquatic, Sport and Leisure Precinct Masterplan Project to establish a new leisure and aquatic facility at Albion Oval, Albion Park Rail. As a nominated project partner, Council's Aboriginal Advisory Committee (AAC) provided valuable input into this project prior to the grant being submitted for assessment. Unfortunately, in March this year, Council was advised that this 2024 grant application had been unsuccessful. As a result, Council is currently preparing a new 2025 grant application for the latest round of the RPPP for the Oak Flats Aquatic Centre Masterplan Project (OFACMP) which will be for the early planning phase of the project. The proposed grant application is for the planning phase of this project, for the amount of \$1,238,592 which includes Council's in-kind contribution of \$260,900 (for project staff). The grant funds, if successful, will allow Council to undertake a detailed planning and feasibility assessment for the Oak Flats site to determine the size, scale and affordability of Council's aquatic options.

Description of the Project

The Oak Flats Aquatic Centre Masterplan Project (OFACMP) proposes to design and deliver a purpose built modern Aquatic Centre on the site of the existing 60-year-old facility. Engineering consultants conducted an asset dilapidation report in 2023, identifying that Oak Flats pool will be nearing the end of its useful life within 10 years. This Masterplan would deliver improvements and public benefits by providing an inclusive and accessible state-of-the-art indoor and outdoor aquatic facility, compliant with legislative and modern aquatic industry standards for the enjoyment and benefit of the City's 80,000+ residents, current annual attendances of up to 160,000 people, a visitor economy of 150,000 domestic overnight visitors, 653,000 day-trippers and continued visitation from neighbouring areas. The OFACMP will also address a much-needed lane space issue for Council's thriving Learn to Swim and Aquatics programs with over 1,000 children enrolled and a further 90 children currently on a waitlist.

Program Objectives and Alignment with Grant Criteria

A key strength of the project is its integration with the revitalisation occurring in Oak Flats Town Centre and the increase in housing density and infill development that is also taking place. There are already 3,000 homes within a 5-minute drive, 23,000 homes within a 10-minute drive and 32,500 homes within 15-minute drive of the project site. The centre will offer accessible, community-focused infrastructure contributing to local identity and resilience, enhanced passive surveillance of the precinct improving safety and reinforcing a sense of place. The OFACMP is a catalyst for regional renewal and a demonstration of Council's commitment to place-making, delivering infrastructure that is tailored to local needs, integrated with land-use planning and capable of driving long-term social, economic and environmental benefits.

Addressing the existing environmental and sustainability issues at the current Oak Flats pool will transform the facility from a high consumer of natural gas and electricity into a modern environmentally responsible and financially sustainable community asset. The new facility will be designed to align with the State Government's Net Zero interim targets of 50% and 70% reductions by 2030 and 2035 respectively, Australian Government's 43% emissions reduction target by 2030 and Council's own commitment to achieve net zero operational emissions by 2035. The proposed design of the new facility will aim to achieve these objectives by embedding Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) principles that optimise thermal performance and energy efficiency.

The OFACMP site is located on Dharawal Country and the project aims to acknowledge and integrate First Nations People's cultural significance within the Aquatic Centre footprint and could include landscaping, interior and signage designs. The new facility will serve as a modern meeting place for community and the design will aim to showcase the Dharawal history and culture. The OFACMP could also help to deliver significant Closing the Gap socio-economic targets and impact on life outcomes within the National Agreement, specifically Target No.1-Everyone enjoys long and healthy Lives, Target No.14-People enjoy high levels of social and emotional wellbeing and Target No.17-People having access to information and services enabling participation in informed decision making regarding their own lives.

Potential Project Partnerships

- Aboriginal Advisory Committee
- Illawarra Local Aboriginal Land Council
- Council's Disability Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee
- Destination Sydney Surrounds South
- Regional Development Australia (RDA) – Illawarra Shoalhaven
- Swimming Australia
- Swimming NSW

- Oak Flats Swim Club

Recommendation

That the Aboriginal Advisory Committee:

- 1. Provide In principle support for the Oak Flats Aquatic Facility Masterplan Project to be submitted under the Regional Precincts and Partnership Program (RPPP) Stream One: Precinct Development and Planning.**
- 2. Accept a role on the Oak Flats Aquatic Facility Masterplan Project Advisory Committee and nominate a committee member for the project.**
- 3. Accept a role on the Oak Flats Aquatic Facility Masterplan Project Working Party for this project and nominate a committee member for the project.**

Attachments

None

7. General Business

8. Next Meeting

TBC

9. Meeting Closed