



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, 3 December 2025

Commencing at 4:00 PM

Shellharbour Civic Centre

AGENDA

1 Acknowledgement to Country

2 Apologies / Leave of Absence

3 Confirmation of Minutes

4 Disclosures of Interest

5 Presentations

- 5.1 Presentation from NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure

6 Reports

- 6.1 Aboriginal Employment Update (Standing Item)
- 6.2 Aboriginal Interpretive Centre Update (Standing Item)
- 6.3 2026 NAIDOC Community Day - Consideration for Change of Event Location

7 General Business

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

That the minutes from the Aboriginal Advisory Committee Meetings held on 8 October 2025 be received and noted.

SHELLHARBOUR CITY COUNCIL

Aboriginal Advisory Committee Meeting – 8 October 2025

**Minutes of the Aboriginal Advisory Committee Meeting
of Shellharbour City Council held in the Ground Floor Training Room
on Wednesday, 8 October 2025 commencing at 4:00 PM**

Attendance**Present:**

Mayor Chris Homer(Chair)	Councillor
Cr Lou Stefanovski	Councillor
Cr Kellie Marsh	Councillor (online)
Aunty Lindy Lawler	Community Representative
Jodi Edwards	Community Representative (online)
Anne-Maree Fohrman	Community Representative
Suzanne Clapham	Community Representative (online)

In Attendance:

Kate Jessep	Executive Director Community and Culture
Matt Sutherland	Executive Manager Community and Creative Services
Lauren Peters	Acting Manager Community Life
Rylee Goodman	Acting Governance Manager
Claire Killeen	Executive Manager Marketing and Communications (part)
Melissa Ritchie	Tourism Manager
Marcello Chiodo	Executive Manager Technology and Corporate Services (part)
Trudy Costa	Coastal Environment Officer, Wollongong City Council (part)
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 Cr Robert Petreski.

3 Confirmation of Minutes

Committee Recommendation: Cr Stefanovski / Aunty Lindy Lawler

That the minutes from the Aboriginal Advisory Committee Meetings held on 20 August 2025 be received and noted.

CARRIED

4 Disclosures of Interest

Nil

5 Presentations

5.1 Lake Illawarra Coastal Management Program (CMP) Implementation Group

Committee Recommendation:

That the Aboriginal Advisory Committee receive and note the presentation from the Coastal Environment Officer from Wollongong City Council on the Lake Illawarra CMP Implementation Group meetings between the two Councils.

CARRIED

The Mayor thanked Trudy Costa for the presentation and she left the meeting.

6 Reports

The Committee agreed to bring Items 6.3 and 6.4 forward as two Community Representatives need to leave the meeting before 5:00pm.

6.3 Naming Reserve 143 in Albion Park and the creek using Dharawal language

Marcello Chiodo, Executive Manager Technology and Corporate Services spoke to this Item and outlined the process for naming reserves and creeks.

Jodi Edwards mentioned that the reserve and creek would already have Dharawal names. This would require some investigation to confirm.

Marcello to liaise with Jodi after the meeting concludes.

Committee Recommendation:

That the Aboriginal Advisory Committee:

1. Receive and note the Reserve 143 and Creek naming report;
2. Provide recommendations for suitable Dharawal language words or names to be used for naming Reserve 143 Albion Park and the creek that flows through it.

CARRIED

The Chair asked to Receive and note the remainder of the Items en bloc as Jodi Edwards and Suzi Clapham needed to leave the meeting.

The Committee agreed.

At 4:42pm Marcello left the meeting.

At 4:45pm Jodi and Suzi left the meeting.

Quorum was no longer reached for the remainder of the meeting

6.4 Destination Management Plan Workshop

Melissa Ritchie, Tourism Manager, gave a presentation on the Destination Management Plan currently on public exhibition.

The Community Representatives, Aunty Lindy Lawler and Anne-Marie Fohrman took part in a workshop with Cr Lou Stefanovski.

Further feedback can be provided via Council's [Let's Chat](#) platform which will be sent to the Committee with the minutes.

Committee Recommendation:

That the Aboriginal Advisory Committee consider and provide feedback on the discussion questions outlined in this report.

CARRIED

6.1 Aboriginal Employment Update (Standing Item)

Committee Recommendation:

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

CARRIED

6.2 Aboriginal Interpretive Centre Update (Standing Item)

Committee Recommendation:

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

CARRIED

6.5 Capital Projects Update (Standing Item)

Committee Recommendation:

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

CARRIED

At 5:18pm Claire and Melissa left the meeting.

7 General Business

Aunty Lindy showed the Committee a program that was completed by Jesse acknowledging the work he has done for the library and community.

8 Next Meeting

3 December 2025

Meeting Closed: 5:31pm

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

5.1 Presentation from NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure

A presentation and interactive workshop will be provided by Planning Officers from the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure to seek input and knowledge sharing from the Aboriginal Advisory Committee members.

This workshop will particularly seek advice from the Aboriginal Advisory Committee on whom should be targeted for engagement during the consultation process for the upcoming Shellharbour City Centre Rezoning Project.

6 Reports

6.1 Aboriginal Employment Update (Standing Item)

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 Aboriginal employment within Council.

We are very excited to advise that we have opened up recruitment for the new Aboriginal Cultural Advisor position. The position will play a vital role in strengthening cultural awareness, inclusion and reconciliation across Shellharbour. We are looking for a skilled professional to provide key cultural advice and support across Shellharbour City Council and the community. The position will be responsible for:

- Building strong and positive relationships with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, stakeholders and non-Indigenous stakeholders
- Contributing to improved social justice outcomes for the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- Assisting Council to develop, implement and evaluate strategies, policies and initiatives that address identified needs of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and enhance reconciliation throughout Shellharbour
- Provide advice on outcomes and impacts to local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

We are on the lookout for an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person who:

- Has strong and effective knowledge of and relationships with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- Advocates effectively for both Community and Council
- Is able to prepare and contribute to key strategic documents and outcomes.

The position has been promoted through Council standard recruitment processes and to local Aboriginal services throughout the Illawarra. The recruitment closes on Sunday 30th November.

Full details are available at:

[Aboriginal Cultural Advisor - Shellharbour City](#)

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.

Council held an Aboriginal Interpretive Centre (AIC) Sub-Committee Meeting on Thursday 13th November 2025 (as was rescheduled from 30 October 2025)

Attendees Included:

- Mayor Chris Homer (Chair)
- Uncle Richard Davis (Aboriginal Advisory Committee Member)
- Dr Jodi Edwards (Aboriginal Advisory Committee Member)
- Kate Jessep (Executive Director Community and Culture)
- Bonnie Hittmann (Manager Community Development)
- Marjorie Papagallo-Dix (Administration Officer, People and Culture)
- Tamara Hynd (Museum Curator)
- Matt Sutherland (Executive Manager Community and Creative Services)

A summary of agenda items, actions and next steps is as follows:

1. Artefacts Update
 - The Sub-Committee received an update on outcomes and findings from a recently provided report on the Artefacts within the Rutledge Collection.
2. Discussion - Possible Ownership and Operating Models
 - The Sub-Committee received a report on the possible different operating models and ownership structures for the Aboriginal Interpretive Centre.
3. Discussion on Bespoke Facility Requirements - Essential v Discretionary
 - Initial discussions were facilitated on facility requirements as may be prioritised/required to support varied future use activities.
4. Discussion - Review and Assessment of other Keeping Places within NSW
 - The Sub-Committee discussed a possible visitation and assessment of some keeping places within NSW to inform the business case. Further assessment of low-cost review opportunities and information gathering will take place.

A future meeting will take place in early March 2026 at a date to be advised.

Recommendation

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

Attachments

None

6.3 2026 NAIDOC Community Day - Consideration for Change of Event Location

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 a recommendation on a change of venue for Council's 2026 NAIDOC Community Day event as will be held on Monday 6 July 2026.

Council delivers its National Aboriginal and Islanders Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Community Day event annually as part of national NAIDOC week celebrations. This event is highly popular for attendees, an enjoyable free day out for local community, particularly those from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and aligns with several priorities of Council's Community Strategic Plan.

Council has traditionally hosted this event at the Shellharbour Civic Centre with strong historic community attendance:

- Monday 7 July 2025 - over 500 community members and 30 different organisations/stallholders (significantly rain affected)
- Monday 8 July 2024 - Approximately 1,200 visitors and 35 stallholders.

This event is very successful at the Shellharbour Civic Centre with attendees able to roam through the Auditorium, Civic Centre Lawns, City Library and surrounding lawn and gardens including the Yirran muru playspace. This activity also maximises activation of the Shellharbour Civic Centre.

With ever growing attendances this event can become quite crowded at times and stallholders are allocated set limited areas for displays and engagement activities. During inclement weather, when event layouts are modified, public spaces and corridors can become further condensed as stallholders, participatory activities and food service move inside the venue.

Council staff are recommending that the 2026 NAIDOC Community Day event be relocated to the Shellharbour City Stadium on Croome Road, Croom. A change of venue is recommended as the success of this event is starting to outgrow the Shellharbour Civic Centre location and this event is often impacted by wet weather due to its timing in the seasonal calendar.

A change of venue to Shellharbour City Stadium would not increase event costs but would deliver approximately four times the covered indoor event space. This would provide more room for stallholders to spread out and more room for participatory activities to occur such as arts and craft, football and basketball skills activities and provide weather proofing of this event for all participants. Some skills activities such as football programs may still occur externally to the venue in suitable weather.

Council staff would incorporate the current activities of the NAIDOC Community Day Format including a Welcome to Country, Smoking Ceremony, Speeches, free BBQ Lunch, Flag Raising (in a modified format) and the community fun day activities that are currently conducted to celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and heritage.

Recommendation

That the Aboriginal Advisory Committee receive and note this report and that the 2026 NAIDOC Community Day event be held at the Shellharbour City Stadium in Croom.

Attachments

None

7. General Business

8. Next Meeting

Proposed meeting dates for 2026 (to be confirmed):

- 11 February
- 22 April
- 10 June
- 26 August
- 21 October
- 2 December

9. Meeting Closed