



# **Aboriginal Advisory Committee**

**09 September 2025**

# Meeting Notice

**The Aboriginal Advisory Committee  
of Central Coast Council  
will be held in the Function Room 2,  
2 Hely Street, Wyong,  
on Tuesday 9 September 2025 at 10:00am,  
for the transaction of the business listed below:**

## **1 Procedural Items**

- 1.1 Introduction: Welcome, Acknowledgement of Country, Apologies, Disclosure of Interest..... 3
- 1.2 Previous business: Confirmation of Minutes, Review Action Log ..... 3

## **2 Reports**

- 2.1 Priorities Identified from Workshop in April 2024 .....12
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- 2.5 First Nations Accord - Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) .....28
- 2.6 General Business.....29

Jake MacDonald  
**Chairperson**

## **ITEM 1.1 WELCOME**

### **ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY**

#### **Welcome, Acknowledgement of Country, Receipt of Apologies**

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we live, work and play.

We pay our respects to Darkinjung Country, and Elders past and present.

We recognise the continued connection to these lands and waterways and extend this acknowledgement to the homelands and stories of those who also call this place home.

We recognise our future leaders and the shared responsibility to care for and protect our place and people.

### **APOLOGIES**

### **DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

## **ITEM 1.2 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

**1**  MINUTES - Aboriginal Advisory Committee - 17 June 2025      D16905734

### **REVIEW OF ACTION LOG**

**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting Aboriginal Advisory Committee of Council (cont'd)**

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Central Coast Council  
Aboriginal Advisory Committee

Held  
Held in Function Room 2,  
2 Hely Street, Wyong

17 June 2025

## MINUTES

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### Attendance

#### Members

Jake MacDonald	Present
Shahni Wellington	Present
Vickie Parry	Apology
Phillip Bligh	Present
Barry Duncan	Present
Monica McKenzie	Present
Colleen Fuller	Present
Stephen Ella	Apology

#### Staff

	Status
Melanie Smith, Director Community and Recreation Services	Present
Belinda McRobie, Section Manager Community Development	Apology
Beth Burgess, Unit Manager Community & Culture	Present
Paul Procter, Team Leader Community Programs	Present
Lisa Martin, Civic Support Officer	Present

#### Guest Speakers

	Status
Samantha Cummins, Unit Manager Libraries and Education	Present

The Chairperson, Jake MacDonald declared the meeting open at 10:12am

**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting Aboriginal Advisory Committee of Council (cont'd)**

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**PROCEDURAL ITEMS**

**1.1 Introduction: Welcome, Acknowledgement of Country, Apologies, Disclosure of Interest**

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10:12am

Shahni Wellington gave an Acknowledgement of Country.

**1.2 Previous business: Confirmation of Minutes, Review Action Log**

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10:14am

The Committee confirmed the minutes of the 11 March 2025 meeting with no amendments.

The Committee advised there were no disclosures of interest.

**REPORTS**

**2.1 Central Coast Aboriginal Employment Target Update**

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10:14 am

Director Community and Recreation Services spoke to the report.

The Committee discussed:

- Employment statistics
- Progress on the development of an Employment Strategy

**2.2 Memorandum of Understanding**

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10:23 am

Director Community and Recreation Services spoke to the report.

The committee discussed drafting up Memorandum of Understanding, which will be brought back to a future meeting. Vickie Parry and Mel Smith will draft the MoU.

**2.3 Aboriginal Advisory Committee Structure**

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10:27 am

Director Community and Recreation Services spoke to the report.

The Committee discussed the options of how the reporting lines would change if the

**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting Aboriginal Advisory Committee of Council (cont'd)**

Aboriginal Advisory Committee became a subcommittee of the Community and Culture Standing Committee.

The Committee voted to leave the Aboriginal Advisory Committee as an Advisory Committee directly under Central Coast Council for the following reasons:

- The Committee was established as an action from the First Nations Accord to advise Council on all matters that pertain to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders community.
- The function of the Committee is to advise Council.
- To ensure Council works towards the Closing the Gap targets as outlined in the Local Government NSW Toolkit.
- Items cover multiple Directorates (whole of organisation) and all subcommittees.

The decision was unanimous

**2.4 Naming Conventions - Gosford Regional Gallery**

11:11am

Unit Manager Libraries and Education spoke to the report.

Signs are to be created for the meeting rooms ready for the opening in September using the below language:

Meeting Room Names

Words in English	Words in Darkinyung language (including capitalisation)	Room allocation
Emu	Gunggurung	Room 1
Carpet snake	Badayir	Room 2
Happy	Wadhayi	Room 3 (Program Rooms)
Children	Gudjagang	Room 4 (Program Rooms)
Coast	Waagir	Room 5
Water	Badhu	Room 6
Jeebung	Mambar	Room 7
Grass tree	Wiraagal	Room 8

The Darkinyung word for Hello will be shown at the front of the entrance to the library 'Walambiyiwa'.

A reading area will be named 'The Uncle Keith Chubby Hall' Reading Room.

**2.5 Communication with Committee**

10:42 am

**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting Aboriginal Advisory Committee of Council (cont'd)**

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Director Community and Recreation Services spoke to the report.

The Committee discussed:

- Increasing the profile of the Aboriginal Advisory Committee throughout the broader community.
- Ways in which to promote that the AAC Committee as being available to assist all staff of Central Coast Council on all issues regarding Aboriginal education and or queries.
- Make information/education pieces and resources more easily accessible.
- Revisiting the original intentions of the AAC Committee and prioritise the list of topics to achieve successful outcomes.

**2.6 Talk Series at Gosford Regional Library**

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11:30am

The Chairperson spoke to the report.

The Committee discussed the following:

- Dates for the 'Talk Series'.
- 5 September 2025 is the official opening date for the Library

**2.7 General Business**

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11:38 am

The Committee discussed the possibility of Councillors and/or staff wanting to participate in NAIDOC week.

New Central Coast Council employee, Team Leader of Community Projects, introduced himself to the committee.

**The Meeting** concluded at 12:08pm.

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting Aboriginal Advisory Committee of Council (cont'd)

Item No.	Meeting Date	Item	Action	Responsibility	Status
001	03/10/23		Bring back to the Committee presentations around Council's Aboriginal employment strategy and approach to community information and engagement.	Director, Community and Recreation Services	
002	09/04/24		Invite an ELT member to each Aboriginal Advisory Committee meeting	Unit Manager, Community and Culture	Director, Community and Recreation Services will action
003	18/09/24		Gosford Regional Library – any strategies, naming conventions and engagement be brought back to the Committee for review.	Director, Community and Recreation Services	
004	18/09/24		Every 6 months - report on the First Nations Accord Actions and Review	Director, Community and Recreation Services	
005	18/09/24		The Section Manager of Community Development to attend and present the findings of the Committee meeting (workshop) – Priorities of the Committee, held on 9 April 2024.	Section Manager, Community Development	
006	18/09/24		Draft scope and sequence of objectives for the training for Councillors – circulate outside of session – due in 10 days	Director, Community and Recreation Services and V. Parry	This Thursday
008	18/09/24		Council staff working with Barang Regional Alliance to arrange an onboarding day for Councillors – full day if possible	Director, Community and Recreation Services	Send names of councillors to committee members



**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting Aboriginal Advisory Committee of Council (cont'd)**

009	18/09/24		Distribute new ToR to Committee members	Civic Support Officer	Emailed out to all committee members on 18/09/2024
010	18/09/24		Pass on J. MacDonald and M. McKenzie's details to Unit Manager of Libraries and Education to organise a tour of the Library around December 2024.	Director, Community and Recreation Services	
011	18/09/24		Upload new ToR to website ASAP.	Civic Support Officer	Uploaded 18/09/2024
012	11/03/25	<b>Gosford Regional Gallery – First Nations exhibition programs and cultural engagement projects</b>	Provide to the committee members a copy of the presentation for Gosford Regional Gallery from meeting on 11 March 2025.	Civic Support Officer	
013	11/03/25	<b>Gosford Regional Gallery – First Nations exhibition programs and cultural engagement projects</b>	Employ a culturally aware individual to assist with supporting the development of this project, and an architect to drive the project.	Director, Community and Recreation Services	
014	11/03/25	<b>Gosford Regional Gallery – First Nations exhibition programs and cultural engagement projects</b>	Gosford Regional Gallery - Invite Tim Brahm and Joanna O'Toole back to a future meeting.	Unit Manager, Community and Culture	
015	11/03/25	<b>Gosford Regional Gallery – First Nations exhibition programs and cultural engagement projects</b>	Discuss being a member of the Focus group with Tim Brahm.	P. Bligh	
016	11/03/25	<b>Priorities Identified from Workshop in April 2024</b>	Discuss at the next meeting the priorities identified from the workshop in April 2024.  Revisit the past notes from the workshop in April and bring back to	All committee members	

**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting Aboriginal Advisory Committee of Council (cont'd)**

	17/06/25		the Committee.		
017	11/03/25	<b>Aboriginal Employment Strategy</b>	Review and/or propose a new policy – What is Council doing to recognise aboriginal people and what they are doing in the community. Mel Smith to work with BJ to bring back a draft to the next committee, then take it to Council meeting. Around recognition of contributors in the local community as part of the employment feedback on what we are currently doing.	Director, Community and Recreation Services	
018	11/03/25	<b>Gosford Regional Library Naming Convention</b>	Provide to the committee members a copy of the presentation of Gosford Regional Library Naming Convention from the meeting on 11 March 2025.	Civic Support Officer	
019	11/03/25	<b>Gosford Regional Library Naming Convention</b>	Form a sub-committee to select the final naming convention for the Library.	All Committee members	
020	11/03/25	<b>5 Lands Walk</b>	Draft up a report on ways in which to ensure the aboriginal culture and perspectives remain central.	P. Bligh	
021	11/03/25	<b>5 Lands Walk</b>	Question taken on Notice: Could the committee be exempt from having to lodge a DA application for their events.	Director, Community and Recreation Services	
022	11/03/25	<b>Manning Park Historic Walk Signage- Review Wording</b>	Provide feedback on the scripted words for the sign.	Committee members and Director, Community and Recreation Services	
023	11/03/25	<b>Manning Park Historic Walk Signage- Review Wording</b>	Agenda Item for next committee meeting. Draft up guidelines for scripted wording to be approved by the Aboriginal Advisory Committee – due in 4 weeks.	Unit Manager, Community and Culture	
024	11/03/25	<b>The Uncle Bob Public Lecture</b>	Nominate a candidate at the next Aboriginal Advisory Committee meeting	All Committee members	
025	11/03/25	<b>General Business:</b>	Organise a meeting with Adina regarding the Memorandum of	Director, Community	

**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting Aboriginal Advisory Committee of Council (cont'd)**

		<b>Memorandum of Understanding Darkinjung</b>	Understanding with Darkinjung.	and Recreation Services	
026	11/03/25	<b>General Business: Local Government and Closing the Gap</b>	Research Local Government and Closing the Gap and report back to committee.	V. Parry	
027	17/06/25	<b>Central Coast Aboriginal Employment Target Update</b>	Analysis of what level those jobs are at to see if there is a spectrum of Management or hierarchy and note the timeframes it takes from idea of high priority to action.	Director, Community and Recreation Services	
	17/06/25	<b>Memorandum of Understanding</b>	Create a draft Memorandum of Understanding. Once this has been finalised add positions and responsibilities.	Director of Recreation Services and V. Parry	
	17/06/25	<b>Talk Series at Gosford Regional Library</b>	Source a location for this event.  Lauren from Newcastle University will liaise with the Director of Community and Recreation Services to discuss the options.	B.J. Duncan  Director of Community and Recreation Services.	
	17/06/25	<b>General Business – NAIDOC Week</b>	Circulate an information brochure to all Councillors and staff	Director of Community and Recreation Services	



**Item No:** 2.1  
**Title:** Priorities Identified from Workshop in April 2024  
**Department:** Community and Recreation Services

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9 September 2025 Aboriginal Advisory Committee

Reference: F2023/01359 - D17031955  
Author: Belinda McRobie, Section Manager Community Development  
Manager: Beth Burgess, Unit Manager Community and Culture  
Executive: Melanie Smith, Director Community and Recreation Services

## **Recommendation**

### ***That the Committee***

- 1. note the update provided within this report.***

## **Report purpose**

The purpose of this report is to provide an update to the Aboriginal Advisory Committee on the priorities identified in the workshop on 24 April 2024.

## **Executive Summary**

Four key recommendations were identified at the workshop conducted on 24 April 2024, which responded to the identified priorities of the Aboriginal Advisory Committee.

## **Background**

In April 2024, a workshop was held with members of the Aboriginal Advisory Committee to determine community priorities, understand Council gaps and make recommendations to move forward.

## **Report**

The priorities of the Committee were identified as:

- Social justice and equity for Aboriginal people.
- Self-determination regarding decisions impacting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people including Senior Council Management consultation with the AAC to determine projects and operational programming linked to project planning and budgeting.

## **2.1 Priorities Identified from Workshop in April 2024 (cont'd)**

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- Bring lived experiences, collective voices, unheard voices and help to overcome barriers to be a more inclusive Council and Community.
- Align Council and Community priorities to achieve outcomes around employment, health and education.
- Support the embracing of culture within Council – through cultural awareness training, formalities and events.
- Understanding the history and impacts of colonisation, and the process of negotiating Aboriginal People's place in modern society.
- Shape the narrative of Aboriginal people on the Central Coast.
- Support better governance – assist Councillors in governing for residents.

Council gaps were identified as:

- Structured understanding of what is appropriate and when e.g., Welcome to Country, raising profile and understanding of AAC, proper remuneration for time and expertise of Aboriginal people associated with council projects and programs.
- Cultural understanding within the organisation – more immersion in culture for Councillors and Senior staff.
- Events and activities – better support for events, programs and activities in the Community – what Council should pursue/support should be informed by the AAC e.g., NAIDOC Week Family Day.
- Storytelling, narrative and cultural expression - what is appropriate and what should happen e.g., Gosford Regional Gallery 25th Anniversary – Garden and artworks.

Key themes were identified by the Committee as follows:

### Cultural Knowledge and Understanding /Education and Training

- Emphasis on cultural education for incoming Council members and senior management.
- Develop cultural immersion program tailored for Central Coast Council staff.

### Strategic Planning and Implementation

- Align AAC strategic priorities and Central Coast First Nations Accord with DLG Closing the Gap targets.

## **2.1 Priorities Identified from Workshop in April 2024 (cont'd)**

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### Resourcing and Staffing

- Recommendation to appropriately resource the rollout of cultural programs.
- Proposal for a temporary contracted role or dedicated officer to support AAC implementation.
- Action item to investigate opportunities for creating a purpose-built 'Elder in Residence' position.

### Leadership Engagement and Accountability

- Executive Leadership Team (ELT) representation at AAC meetings.
- Importance of tangible and reportable outcomes linked to the Community Strategic Plan and operational budgets.
- Recognition of how internal culture and interpretation affect interactions with the Aboriginal community.

Recommendations were made by the Committee as follows:

#### **Recommendation 1**

Increase cultural knowledge and understanding within Central Coast Council through the development and roll-out of a foundational educational piece for Executive Leadership Team, incoming Councillors, Senior Managers and relevant staff through onboarding/ induction. Monica McKenzie has offered to assist with the education piece, and it was acknowledged organisations such as Barang Regional Alliance and University of Newcastle already have relevant programs in place that could be utilised.

#### **Recommendation 2**

Identify short term funding to contract an Indigenous person or organisation on a temporary basis to assist in the development and delivery of the Cultural Awareness training.

#### **Recommendation 3**

Investigate opportunities to resource a permanent Indigenous position to support Council and the AAC implementation priorities/actions and improve cultural connection, knowledge and relationships within Council. This could include the concept of an "Elder in Residence" project which has proven effective in similar circumstances elsewhere.

#### **Recommendation 4**

The Executive Leadership Team attend the Aboriginal Advisory Committee meetings on a rotating basis to stay up to date on cultural discussions.

### **Stakeholder Engagement**

## 2.1 Priorities Identified from Workshop in April 2024 (cont'd)

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Members of the Aboriginal Advisory Committee participated in the workshop held in April 2024.

### **Financial Considerations**

Financial Year (FY) Implications.

**The proposal has cost financial implications for the current FY and outer years in the LTFP.**

Budget and Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP) Impact.

**The FY adopted budget does not include funding for this proposal and the amount will need to be included in a future Quarterly Budget Review.**

### **Link to Community Strategic Plan**

**Goal - PE1: A shared sense of community spirit and pride that celebrates our First Nations voices, diversity, art, creativity, culture and identity**

Strategy - PE1.2: Celebrate, recognise and partner with our First Nations people to share local history and traditions

### **Risk Management**

Nil

### **Critical Dates or Timeframes**

Nil

### **Attachments**

Nil

## 2.2 Aboriginal Engagement Strategy Update

Kailah Larson

### **Attachments**

*Nil.*





**Item No:** 2.3  
**Title:** Wording on signage - Mannering Park Historic Walk  
**Department:** Community and Recreation Services

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9 September 2025 Aboriginal Advisory Committee

Reference: F2023/01359 - D17032342  
Author: Belinda McRobie, Section Manager Community Development  
Manager: Beth Burgess, Unit Manager Community and Culture  
Executive: Melanie Smith, Director Community and Recreation Services

## **Recommendation**

### ***That the Committee:***

- 1 Review the proposed wording for signage provided by Mannering Park Progress Association for the Mannering Park Historical Walk.***
- 2 Provide advice to Council Officers on recommended wording to be provided back to Mannering Park Progress Association.***

## **Report purpose**

The purpose of this report is to present proposed wording for signage associated with the Mannering Park Historical Walk and to seek guidance and recommendations from the Aboriginal Advisory Committee (AAC) to ensure the language used appropriately reflects and respects Aboriginal heritage and cultural perspectives.

## **Executive Summary**

This report has been prepared to inform the Aboriginal Advisory Committee (AAC) of proposed wording for signage associated with the Mannering Park Historical Walk, with a focus on acknowledging and respectfully representing Aboriginal heritage in the area. Preliminary content was sourced by the Mannering Park Progress Association through online research, and efforts were made to engage the Awabakal Aboriginal Land Council for cultural guidance; however, no response has been received to date.

In addition to the Mannering Park signage, the report includes an example of wording used for entry signage at Summerland Point/Gwandalan. This example was previously provided to the Lions Club of Gwandalan Lioness Incorporated by the AAC and is included to support consistency and cultural appropriateness across similar community signage initiatives.

The AAC's review and recommendations are sought to ensure the final wording for the Mannering Park signage is culturally sensitive, accurate, and aligned with best practices for representing Aboriginal heritage.

### **Background**

Mannering Park Community Garden Incorporated (auspicing Mannering Park Progress Association) were successful applicants in the 23/24 Colliery funding program.

The project funds were approved by the Chain Valley Colliery Contributions Expenditure Community Advisory Panel for a project to develop historic signage along a walk in the suburb of Mannering Park. Part of the conditions of the grant funding were that wording of the signs be approved prior to finalisation.

One of the proposed historic signs is intended to acknowledge the Aboriginal heritage of the area. The preliminary information was compiled by the Treasurer of the Mannering Park Progress Association through online research. In an effort to ensure cultural accuracy and appropriate representation, contact was made with a Director of the Awabakal Aboriginal Land Council to seek guidance on the wording. However, despite follow-up attempts, no response has been received over the past 12 months.

### **Report**

See below proposed sign wording from Mannering Park Progress Association:

#### *Our First Nations People*

*The Awabakal people were the original custodians of the Hunter Region, including Lake Macquarie. They are those Aboriginal Australians who identify with or are descended from the Awabakal tribe and its clans scattered along the coastal area of what is now known as the Mid North Coast region of New South Wales. Their traditional territory spread from Wollombi in the south, to the Lower Hunter River near Newcastle and Lake Macquarie in the north.*

*They have lived on, loved and looked after the magnificent Awabakal land and water systems continuously for millennia, at least since the last Ice Age, 11,800 years ago. In the Awabakal language, Awaba, meant flat or plane surface. It was the Awabakal word for Lake Macquarie.*

*The Awabakal people played a significant part in shaping the environment of their Region. Fishing, particularly for shellfish, was a significant part of the Awabakal people's diet and culture pre-colonisation. Middens have been found on the shores of Mannering Park, proof of their habitation of this area. The Awabakal people also ate kangaroo, emu, wild turkey, rock wallaby, possum, snake and lizard. The boys went out hunting because of their tradition and culture, and the girls went out collecting berries and firewood to cook all the meat that the boys had collected.*

*For the Awabakal people, Birabaan (Wedge-tailed Eagle) is a celestial being and the higher order totem for all Awabakal people. The 19th century leader Birabaan took his name from this bird.*

*Awabakal language was recorded by Rev Lancelot Edward Threlkeld assisted by Birabaan, a recognised headman of the Awaba clan. Birabaan aided the Rev Lancelot Edward Threlkeld to compile the first grammar of an Aboriginal language in Australia. This is the first, and most comprehensive record of any indigenous language in Australia.*

*The arrival of European settlers in the Hunter Region had a significant impact on the Awabakal and other Indigenous groups in the area. The Awabakal were dispossessed of their traditional lands and were subjected to widespread discrimination and exploitation. Many Awabakal were forced to work in the coal mines that were established in the area, with many either being paid low wages or not being paid at all.*

*Mannering Park was also visited by the Guringai clan of First nations.*

See below previous entry sign wording for Summerland Point/ Gwandalan provided to Lions Club of Gwandalan Lioness Incorporated by the Aboriginal Advisory Committee on 29/01/2024:

#### *Traditional Custodians*

*For tens of thousands of years, the land around what is now called Lake Macquarie, has been home to Aboriginal people.*

*With a temperate climate and plentiful food including much marine life, evidence exists of intensive habitation in the middens along the foreshores.*

*Life for Aboriginal people was rich in culture and connection to Country, and they took good care of the environment.*

*Convict settlements at Sydney Cove and Hunter River had a dramatic effect on the Aboriginal population and by 1852, the impacts of disease, displacement, dispossession and mistreatment decimated numbers.*

*Today, however, both the Darkinjung and Awabakal Local Aboriginal Land Councils are strong organisations supporting the needs of Aboriginal people.*

*In language, Awaba is "lake" and Gwandalan is "Haven of peaceful waters".  
Always was... Always will be...*

#### **Stakeholder Engagement**

## 2.3 Wording on signage - Mannering Park Historic Walk (cont'd)

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Engagement with relevant stakeholders has been a key consideration throughout this process. The Mannering Park Progress Association has undertaken preliminary research and made efforts to consult with the Awabakal Aboriginal Land Council to ensure cultural sensitivity and accuracy in the representation of Aboriginal heritage. While direct input from the Land Council has not yet been received, the Association remains committed to ongoing engagement and welcomes further collaboration and advice from the AAC to ensure the historical signage reflects appropriate cultural perspectives.

### **Financial Considerations**

Financial Year (FY) Implications.

**The proposal does not have financial implications for the current year or outer years in the LTFP.**

Budget and Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP) Impact.

**The FY adopted budget includes funding for this proposal.**

### **Link to Community Strategic Plan**

Our People - All the elements that make our people feel safe, supported, celebrated, and connected to their life on the Central Coast.

**Goal - PE1: A shared sense of community spirit and pride that celebrates our First Nations voices, diversity, art, creativity, culture and identity.**

Strategy - PE1.2: Celebrate, recognise and partner with our First Nations people to share local history and traditions.

### **Risk Management**

Nil

### **Critical Dates or Timeframes**

Nil

### **Attachments**

*Nil.*



**Item No:** 2.4  
**Title:** Draft Aboriginal Advisory Committee Communication Plan  
**Department:** Community and Recreation Services

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9 September 2025 Aboriginal Advisory Committee

Reference: F2023/01359 - D17033077

Manager: Beth Burgess, Unit Manager Community and Culture

Executive: Melanie Smith, Director Community and Recreation Services

## **Recommendation**

### ***That the Advisory Committee:***

- 1 *Reviews the draft Aboriginal Advisory Committee Communication Plan and provides feedback on the proposed strategies and content***
- 2 *Endorses the next steps for finalising and implementing the Aboriginal Advisory Committee Communication Plan.***

## **Report purpose**

To present the draft Aboriginal Advisory Committee Communication Plan to the Aboriginal Advisory Committee (AAC) for review and feedback, following the Committee's request at the 17 June 2025 meeting to increase the Committee's visibility and promote its role as a resource for Council staff.

## **Executive Summary**

A draft Communications Plan has been developed for the AAC to increase the profile of the Aboriginal Advisory Committee throughout the broader community and identify ways in which to promote the AAC as being available to assist all staff of Central Coast Council on all issues regarding Aboriginal education and or queries.

The draft plan covers three focus areas including, community awareness, internal staff engagement and visual identity and messaging.

*Consideration of confidentiality (Delete if not required)*

## **Background**

At the AAC meeting on 17 June 2025, members identified the need for a more strategic approach to raise awareness of the Committee's role and availability—both within Central Coast Council and across the broader community.

The Committee's Terms of Reference state:

"The role of the Aboriginal Advisory Committee (the Advisory Group) is to identify, examine, and formulate a collective response to issues that affect the Central Coast Aboriginal community."

To support this role, the Committee requested the development of a Communication Plan that would:

- Increase the profile of the AAC throughout the organisation
- Promote the AAC as a resource for all Council staff on Aboriginal education, cultural matters, and community engagement.

### **Report**

A draft Communication Plan has been developed that outlines a range of proposed actions under three key focus areas:

#### **1. Community Awareness**

- Develop a dedicated AAC webpage on Council's website, including member profiles, meeting highlights, and cultural resources.
- Share AAC updates and initiatives through Council's social media.

#### **2. Internal Staff Engagement**

- Develop a dedicated AAC webpage on Council's intranet Sharepoint, including member photos and profiles.
- Publish regular intranet articles via CHiP and staff updates about the AAC's role and availability, leveraging a range of Council communication channels.
- Publish minutes from the Aboriginal Advisory Committee Minutes on CHIP.
- Introduce a clear contact process for staff seeking cultural advice or support.

#### **3. Promotion**

- Create a consistent visual identity for AAC communications.
- Develop key messages that reflect the Committee's purpose, values, and cultural leadership.

### **Stakeholder Engagement**

Members of the AAC will be presented the draft Communication Plan for review and feedback and invited to provide input on the proposed actions, priorities, and messaging.

Following feedback, the Plan will be refined and prepared for implementation in collaboration with Council's Communications and Engagement team.

### **Financial Considerations**

Financial Year (FY) Implications.

**The proposal does not have financial implications for the current year or outer years in the LTFP.**

Budget and Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP) Impact.

**The FY adopted budget includes funding for this proposal.**

### **Link to Community Strategic Plan**

Our People - All the elements that make our people feel safe, supported, celebrated, and connected to their life on the Central Coast.

**Goal - PE1: A shared sense of community spirit and pride that celebrates our First Nations voices, diversity, art, creativity, culture and identity.**

Strategy - PE1.2: Celebrate, recognise and partner with our First Nations people to share local history and traditions.


### **Risk Management**

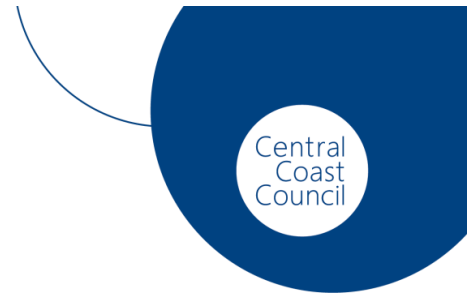
Nil

### **Critical Dates or Timeframes**

Nil

### **Attachments**

1  Aboriginal Advisory Group - Communications Plan D17038588



# Aboriginal Advisory Group Communications Plan

August 2025

## Communications Objectives

Goal	Key Actions
<b>Community Awareness</b> Strengthen understanding, respect, and visibility of Aboriginal culture, history, and contributions within the broader community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Cultural Education Campaigns:</b> Share stories, traditions, and achievements of Aboriginal people through local media, social platforms, and community events.</li> <li>• <b>Community Forums:</b> Host regular gatherings to listen to Aboriginal voices, build trust, and foster two-way communication.</li> <li>• <b>Partnerships:</b> Collaborate with respected community members including Elders and local groups to guide messaging and ensure cultural integrity.</li> </ul>
<b>Internal staff engagement</b> Build cultural capability and foster a workplace culture that values and supports Aboriginal perspectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Cultural Competency Training:</b> Provide regular workshops and learning opportunities for staff to deepen their understanding of Aboriginal cultures and histories.</li> <li>• <b>Staff-Led Initiatives:</b> Encourage Aboriginal staff to lead internal events, share experiences, and contribute to policy development.</li> <li>• <b>Celebration of Key Dates:</b> Promote and participate in events like NAIDOC Week, National Reconciliation Week, and Sorry Day with meaningful activities.</li> <li>• <b>Internal Communication Channels:</b> Use newsletters, intranet, and team meetings to share updates, stories, and opportunities related to Aboriginal engagement.</li> </ul>
<b>Promotion</b> Elevate the profile and impact of the Aboriginal Advisory Group both internally and externally.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Visual Identity and messaging:</b> Develop culturally respectful branding for the group that reflects its purpose and values.</li> <li>• <b>Success stories and impact reports:</b> Share achievements, milestones, and community outcomes through engaging formats like videos, infographics, and testimonials.</li> <li>• <b>Social media and website presence:</b> Maintain a visible and active online presence to reach broader audiences and showcase ongoing work.</li> <li>• <b>Collaborative campaigns:</b> Partner with other departments or community organisations to amplify messages and increase reach.</li> </ul>
<b>Section Managers, Unit Managers, Team Leaders</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Influencing team culture and individual development of employees through implementation of communication and staff engagement initiatives.</li> <li>• Encouraging staff to engage with internal communications channels (CHIP, CEO video, staff BBQs, corporate key messages) and initiatives.</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leader led communications to encourage their teams to participate in story submissions and ensure their contributions are highlighted appropriately.</li> </ul>
Council employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actively engage with and share their own stories, as well as recognise and celebrate the contributions of their colleagues.</li> <li>• Embracing the leadership principles and 'a win for one is a win for all at Council' ethos</li> </ul>

### Key Stakeholders

Stakeholders	Responsibility
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Purpose:</b> To ensure their voices, perspectives, and cultural values are represented in local decision-making.</li> <li>• <b>Needs:</b> Genuine engagement, cultural respect, advocacy, and support for community-led initiatives.</li> </ul>
Central Coast Council Councillors and Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Purpose:</b> To receive culturally informed advice that guides policy, planning, and service delivery.</li> <li>• <b>Needs:</b> Strategic input, cultural competency, and community connection.</li> </ul>
Broader Local Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Purpose:</b> To foster understanding, reconciliation, and inclusive community development.</li> <li>• <b>Needs:</b> Education, awareness, and opportunities for collaboration.</li> </ul>
State and Federal Government Agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Purpose:</b> To align local initiatives with broader government strategies and funding opportunities.</li> <li>• <b>Needs:</b> Evidence of community consultation, policy alignment, and impact reporting.</li> </ul>
Non-Government Organisations and Service Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Purpose:</b> To collaborate on programs that support Aboriginal communities.</li> <li>• <b>Needs:</b> Cultural guidance, partnership opportunities, and community insights.</li> </ul>
Educational Institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Purpose:</b> To integrate local Aboriginal knowledge and history into curricula and community learning.</li> <li>• <b>Needs:</b> Access to cultural resources, speakers, and advisory support.</li> </ul>

**Internal Communications Channels**

Communication Channel	Application	Frequency
Intranet (CHIP) page	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dedicated CHIP hub with bios, meeting schedules, key documents</li> <li>Highlight success stories and changes influenced by the group.</li> <li>“You Said, We Did” section to show responsiveness</li> </ul>	Fortnightly or as required
Intranet (CHIP) news articles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular updates on meeting outcomes, upcoming topics, and ways to contribute.</li> <li>Highlight success stories and changes influenced by the group.</li> <li>Video Series of updates about progress and insights.</li> </ul>	Monthly
Corporate Key Messages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shared internally each month throughout the organisation.</li> <li>Updates and success stories, calls to action for staff</li> </ul>	As appropriate
CEO Videos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CEO interviews a staff member on a project, award or update and delivers corporate key messages, updates and community events.</li> </ul>	As appropriate
Screensavers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visual communication with staff via rotating screensaver on staff computers when in sleep mode.</li> <li>Use to share success and calls to action</li> </ul>	As required
CHIP News (email)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An EDM sent to all staff with a list of all CHIP news stories from the past week to inform staff of recent news and drive engagement with CHIP.</li> </ul>	Distributed weekly (Any AAC articles included from week prior)
Staff BBQs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CEO and ELT present corporate key messages on site at the four depots and at Wyong Administration Building to inform staff of current or upcoming information/initiatives while driving positive culture and staff engagement.</li> <li>Updates, shout outs and calls to action can be included.</li> </ul>	Quarterly
Posters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Events, campaigns, updates and reminders. Located at Administration Building and depots.</li> </ul>	As required

Outdoor Worker Development Days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All outdoor workers are brought on location annually over 2 days to receive compliance training and as an opportunity for connection, coordinated by the Learning and Development Team.</li> <li>Important updates, learnings, success stories can be promoted at these events.</li> </ul>	Annually
Staff newsletter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A new print and online initiative to showcase staff stories, share news and organisational updates, celebrate success and more – launching FY25/26.</li> </ul>	Quarterly (seasonal)
Payslips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opportunity to share important updates with staff</li> </ul>	As required

#### External Communication Channels

Communication Channel	Application	Frequency
Website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dedicated page with bios, goals, meeting schedules, key documents</li> </ul>	As required
Social media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share success stories and calls to action in engaging, visually appealing ways</li> <li>Leverage video content to create connection and approachability</li> </ul>	As required
Traditional media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update community on updates from the committee through media releases</li> <li>Ensure availability of committee member and CCC staff for media interviews</li> </ul>	As appropriate

2.5 First Nations Accord - Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

Melanie Smith

**Attachments**

*Nil.*

2.6 General Business

Jake MacDonald  
Chairperson

Nil