

RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

COMMUNITY
REFERENCE GROUP

TERMS OF REFERENCE

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► CONTACT

Rachel Palmer - Coordinator Community Partnerships

03 5321 6425

rpalmer@hepburn.vic.gov.au

Hepburn Shire Council acknowledges that our municipality is located on Jaara people country, of which members and elders of the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans and their forebears have been custodians for many centuries.



On this land, the Jaara people have performed age old ceremonies of celebration, initiation and renewal.

We acknowledge the Dja Dja Wurrung living culture and the unique role it plays in the life of this region.

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1. Project Background

In July 2018 Hepburn Shire Council adopted a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). By adopting a RAP, Council makes a commitment to working positively today and into the future with the Dja Dja Wurrung Traditional Owners and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members to learn, acknowledge and move forward together with the whole Hepburn Shire community. Council's 'Reflect' RAP was developed in partnership with Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation (DDWCAC), Atkinson Consulting Group and a community reference group appointed by Council.

Council's RAP is a 'Reflect' RAP, which sets a 12 month plan of actions for Council to implement. The 'Reflect' RAP includes practical actions that will drive Council's contribution to reconciliation both internally and in communities throughout the Hepburn Shire. These actions aim to enable Council to scope and reflect on how the organisation (Council) can contribute to reconciliation. Some actions may be impacted by the capacity of partners and retention of staff and volunteers.

Council's future RAPs will build on the success achieved through the 'Reflect' RAP under the themes of Relationships, Respect and Opportunities. These depend upon the partnerships and collective action as well as further developing Council's capacity to enable mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.

2. Role of the Community Reference Group

The community reference group is comprised of non-indigenous and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants and its functions are;

- To represent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and provide input on the interests, needs and experiences identified by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.
- To provide feedback on the methodology and research processes involved in developing each RAP stage (Reflect, Innovate, Stretch and Elevate).
- To support and assist with research and community engagement activities.
- To represent their respective organisations, sectors or groups.
- To communicate feedback on the RAP development between organisations, the community and Council.
- To promote a shared knowledge and understanding of the Shire's commitment to reconciliation.
- To discuss issues and concerns and recommend ways forward.
- To provide advice and comment on the RAP framework and priorities identified by Council for the Plan.

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3. Community Reference Group Function

The community reference group will function to:

- Provide a forum for the Hepburn Shire to consult key stakeholders and seek input with regard to the process, development and implementation of each RAP stage. Each RAP stage will set practical actions that the organisation will take to build strong relationships and enhance respect between Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander peoples and other Australians.

3.1 Ideas

The Group members will draw on their connections and experience from within their respective areas of expertise for how the project can be most effectively carried out.

3.2. Advocacy

The Group members will actively support the project and act as advocates for its intent and outcomes.

3.3. Review

The Group will provide input and comment on the RAP implementation and development of future RAP stages.

Community Reference Group Operations

4.1. Term

Council has committed to a multi-year project to enable it to progress through the RAP stages identified by Reconciliation Australia. To enable an equitable opportunity for community members to participate in the RAPCRG, the term for members is 18 months. Existing RAPCRG members may reapply. Appointment of RAPCRG members will be based on the following criteria:

- Applied knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history.
- Relevance of background and expertise to assist in the implementation and future development of Hepburn Shire Council's Reconciliation Action Plans.
- Influence to promote reconciliation in the Hepburn Shire (e.g. affiliations with community organisations or local businesses).
- People who identify as Djaara (Traditional Owner), Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

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4.2. Meetings

It is expected that the Reference Group will meet at least four times per year at key project milestones and further if required.

4.3. Venue

Meetings will be held at Hepburn Shire offices or Community Halls unless otherwise arranged.

4.4. Time Involvement

Approximately two hours per meeting will be required of members.

4.5. Disclosure of Conflict of Interest

Members have a responsibility to disclose any direct or indirect conflict of interest or potential conflict between their business or professional interests, and their roles as members of the Community Reference Group. If a conflict of interest is disclosed, the conflicted member must take the following steps:

1. Tell the committee you have a conflict of interest.
2. Tell the chair you are leaving the meeting.
3. Leave the room until the matter has concluded.

Where the Community Reference Group discusses the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation in its role as the Traditional Owner group entity under the Recognition and Settlement Agreement, no conflict of interest will apply.

4.6. Agenda

The Hepburn Shire Council officer is responsible for the preparation and circulation of meeting agendas and attachments. The agenda and attachments will be distributed at least five working days prior to the next scheduled meeting. Agenda items must be forwarded to the project officer by the close of business, seven working days prior to the next scheduled meeting. Members may raise an item under "Other Business" if necessary and as time permits, at the discretion of the Chair.

Agendas will generally be structured as follows:

- Attendance (members present and apologies).
- Actions arising from previous meeting and their outcomes.
- Project Status Update.
- Items for Discussion.
- Other Business.
- Next Meeting details and review of actions.

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4.7. Meeting Minutes

The Hepburn Shire Council officer will be responsible for supporting the meeting. A minute taker will be provided by the officer. Previous meeting minutes will be circulated at least five working days prior to a meeting and emailed to Group members.

4.8. Chairperson

A Hepburn Shire Councillor will chair the Community Reference Group. The Councillor will be appointed by Council. Should a Councillor not be in attendance, a Chair will be nominated by Council staff present.

4.9. Reporting Requirements

The Group is not a decision making body but rather a reference group providing advice and expertise. All feedback from the RAPCRG will be considered by Council.

5. Membership

The group will consist of at least five members and a maximum of ten members in addition to one Hepburn Shire Councillor. The Councillor will be appointed by Council, perform the role of Chair and be an ex officio member of the committee without voting rights.

Council will appoint membership to the Community Reference Group based on one or more of the following attributes:

- Knowledge, understanding and expertise in reconciliation and a general comprehension and interest in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and culture, particularly within the Hepburn Shire.
- Dja Dja Wurrung or other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background.
- Hold positions of leadership and influence in businesses or organisations within the Shire.
- Coopted members from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background may be appointed for participation in a RAPCRG meeting where existing members do not have a lived experience as a First Nations people. A fee for DDWACC (or other organisation) may be paid or a travel reimbursement may be offered to coopted community members in recognition of the cultural load they may carry.

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5.1. Co-Opted Members

Co-Opted Member	Amount \$	Approval
Dja Dja Wurrung Aboriginal Clans Corporation (DDWACC) Employee or other relevant formal organisation/consultancy.	Fee as set by organisation	Council Officer and relevant Supervisor. According to budget availability.
Co-opted Member from community (no ABN).	Travel reimbursement @ ATO rate per/km. (0.68 per/km 2018-19) <i>* Up to a maximum of \$250.00 per meeting</i>	Council Officer and Supervisor. According to budget availability. Community Member will complete Reimbursement Form that includes; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Date of meeting • Locations of travel • Total KMs

5.2 Membership Recruitment

An invitation for expressions of interest will be publicly advertised and circulated through numerous community networks including: Shire-based Neighbourhood Houses, the Dja Dja Wurrung Aboriginal Clans Corporation (DDWCAC), local and regional newspapers and local reconciliation networks. Membership will be sought from the Dja Dja Wurrung Aboriginal Clans Corporation (DDWCAC) and other identified Aboriginal representatives and community agencies who express an interest in participating. The recruitment process will occur as such:

- a. Invitation for Expressions of Interest circulated.
- b. Expressions of Interest received by Council.
- c. Prospective member invited to the RAP Community Reference Group meeting.
- d. Recommendation of members to Council for approval
- e. RAP Community Reference Group member agrees to Terms of Reference.

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5.2. Term of Members

An Expression Of Interest (EOI) will be conducted to appoint or reappoint members for the 18 month term. This EOI process for membership will be repeated throughout the four phases of the reconciliation framework.

5.3. Condition of Members

The Chair is responsible for ensuring the Community Reference Group operates efficiently, effectively and according to the Terms of Reference. The Chair will act to enable all members have equal opportunity to contribute. In the event of the absence of the Chair from a meeting, members present have the authority to appoint one of their members to act as a Chair.

The following qualities are expected of members:

- To be supportive of the process.
- To read information provided prior to the meeting.
- To provide apologies.

5.4. Apologies

Members are required to inform the Hepburn Shire Council officer if they are unable to attend a meeting.