

## 7. COUNCIL REPORTS

### 7.1 RENAMING OF MORELAND CITY COUNCIL - COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, EDUCATION AND TRUTH TELLING

**Director Community Eamonn Fennessy**

#### **Community Engagement**

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#### **Officer Recommendation**

That Council:

1. Endorses the proposed community engagement approach and the community education and cultural program to inform and support the renaming of the municipality which includes:
  - a) Receiving options for new names proposed by the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation and inviting community consultation on the options.
  - b) Municipal-wide engagement with the community from March to May 2022 including a printed and online feedback survey on proposed names, translated information, distribution of surveys and information to households, and an optional submissions process for community members who wish to provide additional comment.
  - c) Supporting municipal-wide community education and truth-telling around local Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung history, and why renaming Moreland is an important step towards reconciliation and healing.
  - d) At completion of the consultation period, a panel consisting of Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation representatives, the Mayor and Deputy Mayor will deliberate on community feedback and recommend a final name for endorsement by Council.
2. Receives a report in June 2022 setting out feedback received through the community engagement process and the panel's recommendation for a new municipal name.
3. Determines at the June 2022 Council meeting the recommended new name for the municipality, for recommendation to the Minister for Local Government.

<b>REPORT</b>
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#### **Executive Summary**

In November 2021, information was presented to Council by Elders from the Traditional Owner community and other community representatives, showing that Moreland City Council was named after land, between Moonee Ponds Creek and Sydney Road, that Farquhar McCrae acquired in 1839. He named the land 'Moreland' after a Jamaican slave estate his forebears had operated. The land which forms part of the Moreland local government area was sold to Farquhar McCrae without the permission of the Traditional Owners, who were suddenly dispossessed from their land.

In 1994 the State Government chose Moreland as the name for the newly formed municipality which was amalgamated from the Cities of Coburg, Brunswick and part of Broadmeadows. The municipal name "Moreland" is therefore associated with slavery, racism, and dispossession, and the Elders requested that Moreland City Council change its corporate name.

Council considered a report on 13 December 2021 and resolved to change Moreland's name. Council also resolved to co-design the engagement, education and name selection process with the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation and other community representatives. A report was to come back to the February 2022 Council meeting (later rescheduled to March 2022).

A collaborative planning process took place over December 2021 – March 2022 with regular meetings between Council, the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation and community representatives.

This report sets out:

- A proposed approach to community engagement about options for a new municipal name, with the options being names in Woi Wurrung language proposed by the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation.
- A community education and truth telling process involving events, forums and information which:
  - Encourages the community to consider the ongoing impacts of past injustices including dispossession and racism.
  - Raises awareness around why a name change is a significant step towards reconciliation and healing.
  - Builds pathways to Council's broader reconciliation work that supports the Statement of Commitment, and forms a continuing program.
- Specific measures to encourage and facilitate participation from people of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, people who are not computer literate or unlikely to participate online, and children and young people. This includes translated information and hard copy information provided to households.

This report proposes the community engagement and education processes take place over March – May 2022. A panel would then consider community feedback and recommending a proposed name for Council's consideration in June 2022. The panel would consist of Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation representatives, the Mayor and the Deputy Mayor.

In June 2022 Council would then consider the community feedback and the panel's recommendation, and endorse a new municipal name. The endorsed name would be recommended to the Minister for Local Government.

## **Previous Council Decisions**

### **Proposed Renaming of Moreland City council - Special Council Meeting – 13 December 2021**

*That Council:*

1. *Supports in principle changing the name of the municipality.*
2. *Partners with stakeholders, including the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation, to co-design a process to select a new name during 2022 including consideration of arrangements such as community nominations and a consultative survey.*
3. *Plans and commences in 2022 a community information and education program that acknowledges the impacts and consequences of dispossession and racism and encourages respectful understanding through truth telling and reconciliation.*

4. *Receives a report in February 2022 detailing the proposed community information and education campaign, and recommendations from the name selection process co-design activity, including plans for community engagement with such matters as nominations, shortlisting processes and surveys.*
5. *Following community and stakeholder engagement, which includes consideration of matters such as nominations, and surveys, receives a further report with survey results and other considerations, and selects a preferred suitable name for the municipality to present to the Minister for Local Government for consideration in 2022.*
6. *Notes and refers to the budget process an additional \$250,000 per year for two financial years (\$500,000 total) to update Council's digital platforms, signs at significant Council buildings and facilities and municipal entry signs and notes updating Council assets such as street and park signs, smaller facilities signage, staff uniforms and vehicles will be addressed incrementally within existing budget allocations and asset renewal programs over a 10-year timeframe.*

**Statement of Commitment to Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung People and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities of the City of Moreland – Council Meeting 12 May 2021**

*That Council:*

1. *Endorses the Statement of Commitment to Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung People and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities of the City of Moreland as approved by the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Board of Management on 4 March 2021*
2. *Supports a public signing ceremony that will be livestreamed from Council Chambers at an appropriate time hosted by the Mayor, Councillors, Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Elders and members of the Moreland Reconciliation Working Group.*

## **1. Policy Context**

This report is consistent with the following Council plans and policies:

### **Council Plan 2021-2025**

Theme 3: A healthy and caring Moreland

*Council will:*

- *Strengthen the relationship with Traditional Custodians and First Nations communities to support a process towards self-determination and local, regional or national Treaty or Treaties.*

### **Moreland Human Rights Policy 2016 – 2026**

Extract from Theme 4: Advocacy and Leadership:

*Council will:*

- *In collaboration with people from identified priority groups, Council will advocate to other spheres of government, business, partner organisation and the community to promote human rights and address issues of discrimination and marginalisation at the local, regional, national and international level.*

*Outcomes:*

- *Advocacy and leadership initiatives to promote human rights and address discrimination.*

## **Social Cohesion Plan (2020–2025)**

Extract from Theme 4: Diversity and Discrimination

*Council will:*

- *Continue to celebrate the diversity of Moreland and upholding human rights. We will ensure our workforce reflects the diversity of our community and will fight against racism and discrimination in all forms.*

## **Statement of Commitment to Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung People and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities of the City of Moreland (Attachment 2)**

Extract:

*Council recognises that:*

- The Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people are the Traditional Owners of these lands and waterways in Moreland.

*Council supports:*

- *A process towards self-determination and local, regional, or national Treaty or Treaties that enshrine the rights of Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians*

*Council commits itself to:*

- *Undertake cultural consultations with the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people and seek to include Woi-wurrung names in the process of naming and renaming spaces, places, roads and parks in the City of Moreland.*

While the renaming of Moreland is of broad impact to all residents and visitors to Moreland Local Government Area, Council is under no statutory obligation to consult the community. The proposal to support a community engagement program at the level of consult and inform is recommended on the premise community feedback is valuable to the renaming process to understand community sentiment and preferences, and to encourage participation in cultural education as part of the program which is seen as a benefit to community cohesion and wellbeing. This is consistent with the above policies and this section of the:

## **Community Engagement Policy 2020**

In accordance with Moreland City Council's Community Engagement Policy

*Council will:*

*"Consult the community to obtain community feedback on analysis, alternatives or decisions where opportunities for community input may be limited."*

*"Where projects are constrained by existing strategy or policy decisions or involve matters of a technical nature that limit the opportunity of the community to influence outcomes (e.g. technical engineering projects), we will engage the community at the level of 'consult' on the IAP2 spectrum."*

The following policies, although not directly setting requirements for municipal name changes, have influenced the recommended engagement approach:

## **Naming Moreland Places Policy**

Extract:

*As a means of recognising the Aboriginal/Koori heritage of Moreland, Council will encourage the use of traditional Aboriginal/Koori names - subject to the involvement and agreement of the relevant Aboriginal communities.*

*When Council is considering / or chooses to adopt an Aboriginal name, reference shall be had to Aboriginal / Koori Name Orthography and guidelines for Use of Indigenous Place Names provided by the Committee for Geographical Names Australasia. Reference can also be made to the Victorian Corporation for Languages as well as the local indigenous group.*

### **Naming Rules for Places in Victoria**

Although it is not a legal requirement for the municipal renaming, Council will observe General Principles set out by Land Use Victoria (DEWLP) in Naming Rules for Places in Victoria 2016

Extract:

*(Principle F) The use of Aboriginal languages in the naming of roads, features and localities is encouraged, subject to agreement from the relevant Traditional Owner group(s).*

*Naming authorities are strongly encouraged to consult with the relevant Traditional Owner group(s) prior to any public consultation on the proposed name(s). In instances of more than one relevant Traditional Owner group, naming authorities must consult all parties.*

## **2. Background**

In November 2021, information was presented to Council by Elders from the Traditional Owner community and other community representatives, showing that Moreland City Council was named after land, between Moonee Ponds Creek and Sydney Road, that Farquhar McCrae acquired in 1839. He named the land 'Moreland' after a Jamaican slave estate his forebears had operated.

The land which forms part of the Moreland local government area was sold to Farquhar McCrae without the permission of the Traditional Owners, who were suddenly dispossessed from their land.

In 1994 the local government areas of the City of Brunswick, the City of Coburg and part of Broadmeadows were amalgamated and the Victorian Government named the new council Moreland. The name Moreland City Council is therefore 28 years old.

Council has a long history of proactive leadership on issues of racism, inclusion and reconciliation and has for many years used the description of 'one community, proudly diverse'. In 2021 Council signed a Statement of Commitment to Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung People and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities. Council also supports a process towards self-determination and local, regional, or national Treaty or Treaties that enshrine the rights of Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.

In the light of this, retaining the name Moreland City Council conflicts with the Council's history and aspirations.

### **13 December 2021 Council meeting**

A report was tabled at a Special Council Meeting on the 13 December 2021 which recommended that Council support in principle changing the name of the municipality, that is, changing Moreland City Council's corporate name.

It was recommended that this be supported by a name selection and community engagement process in 2022 that will be co-designed with stakeholders, including the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation. The timing for such education, engagement and truth telling at a local level aligns well with Treaty and truth telling activities underway across Victoria.

### **Final decision of new name**

Ultimately the decision to change Council's corporate name rests with the Victorian Government via an Order in Council under s 235(g) of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act). Once a suitable name has been selected following community engagement a preferred name will be presented to the Minister for Local Government for consideration in 2022.

The Minister for Local Government has encouraged Council to work closely with the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation throughout the proposed renaming process. The Minister also confirms his support and has offered to facilitate renaming of the Council in accordance with the requirements of the Act if the proposal is supported by Council and the local community.

## **3. Issues**

### **Collaborative planning process to develop a community engagement approach for renaming**

The Mayor Cr Mark Riley, Deputy (and Acting) Mayor Cr Lambros Tapinos, CEO Cathy Henderson and Director Community Eamonn Fennessy have worked collaboratively with Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Elders from December 2021 to March 2022. Through a series of discussions, they have developed a preferred community engagement approach for renaming Moreland. This includes a supporting education and cultural program.

The group had several considerations that contributed to the collaborative outcome, including:

- The lived experiences and history of Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and other First Nations people in the area known as Moreland and beyond, and that the devastating impact and intergenerational pain of these truths are not widely known or understood.
- The legal process for renaming municipalities and the conditions communicated by the Minister for Local Government.
- The racist hurt and offence the name Moreland causes to many in the Moreland community.
- The importance of Council's Statement of Commitment.
- Council's desire to lead and successfully implement all the policies and plans outlined above plus the recognition of naming practices that are trending nationally and internationally.
- The diversity and communication needs of our community.
- The importance of the journey ahead towards reconciliation and treaty.
- The desire for a harmonious relationship between all our community and the new name.
- Creating a transparent way for the community to understand the importance of having a Woi-wurrung name.
- Enabling the community to provide feedback on their preferred Woi-wurrung name and to have an option to submit their support and communicate any concerns without undermining Council's Statement of Commitment and positive steps towards reconciliation.

The outcome recommended is that Council supports consulting on Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung names for a new municipal name.

Through the collaborative planning process, a program of community education and truth-telling is being prepared to provide context and build understanding around our local history and the reasons for renaming of Moreland, informing the wider engagement process (see Attachment 1).

The Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation will propose recommendations for names for consideration by Council in March. Attachment 1 also provides more information about the proposed community engagement approach. The implications of this approach uphold Council's Statement of Commitment to supporting the right to self-determination.

**In summary, this is the recommended consultation process for renaming:**

- After receiving naming options from the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation, Council will facilitate wide engagement across the municipality to ensure all residents and stakeholders can share their feedback on proposed names and the reasons for their preference.
- A program of online and face-to-face education and engagement activities will run from March – May 2022 via a range of methods to gather a broad representation of community feedback. A community education and truth telling program will also take place.
- A panel of representative from the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation, the Mayor and Deputy Mayor will deliberate community feedback received to inform a final recommendation on a new name in May 2022.
- A final name recommendation will be presented to Council for consideration in June 2022.
- Council will determine in June 2022 the preferred new name for recommendation to the Minister for Local Government.

**Community impact**

The proposal to change the name of the municipality is a matter of significant interest for the Moreland community and beyond. The recommendation is to engage the community widely to enable them to have their say on the deliberation and selection of a new name for the municipality.

**Climate emergency and environmental sustainability implications**

There are no direct climate emergency or environmental sustainability implications associated with this report.

**Legal and risk considerations including official name change process**

Council was constituted by an Order of Council made on 21 June 1994, and published in the *Victorian Government Gazette* the following day. This named the newly amalgamated municipality Moreland City Council.

Only the Victorian Government can change Council's corporate name. It can do so by making an Order in Council under s 235(g) of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the LGA), which would occur on the recommendation of the Minister for Local Government.

The Minister has encouraged Council to work closely with the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation throughout the proposed renaming process, and seek community support.

Broad community engagement is proposed in order to seek community feedback on the options for new names. However, consultation should be limited to Moreland residents, Moreland ratepayers and other members of the Moreland community. The survey will be in the form of a survey or poll, available in hard copy or online. Where possible, participants filling out the survey will be asked to provide their name and address and to confirm they have not previously filled out the same survey.

### **Human Rights Consideration**

The implications of this report have been considered in accordance with the requirement of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities. The report supports Charter Section 19 (2) Aboriginal Cultural Rights and Responsibilities which say that Aboriginal People hold distinct cultural rights and must not be denied the right to:

- Enjoy their identity and culture.
- Maintain their distinctive spiritual, material and economic relationship with the land and waters and other resources they have a connection under traditional laws and customs

## **4. Community consultation and engagement**

### **Engaging with Traditional Owners**

Traditional Owners are an important stakeholder group that Council looks to for advice on a range of Council projects. When Council initiates a project that may impact Traditional Owners, we will engage Traditional Owners early, and at various stages in the development of the project.

A final name recommendation will be selected by a panel of representatives from the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation, the Mayor and Deputy Mayor. The recommendation will then be considered by Council.

### **Naming engagement**

A full overview of the engagement approach is outlined in Attachment 1.

The community consultation and engagement approach has been carefully considered and designed to maximise community participation within the scope of community influence based on the recommended naming process.

Considerations have been made to address common barriers to participation including digital access, low-level English and certain age demographics including older citizens and young people, to ensure all community members have the opportunity to have a say.

Information and engagement will be facilitated via mailouts, online and face-to-face activities with tailored options for residents who require translations or other support. Our youth team are working with schools and young people. Information that supports engagement and goes to every household will be in plain English and include translated content and promotion of interpreter service. Culturally and linguistically diverse Community Connectors will be supported to reach people who might not otherwise engage with Council communications. Our education packs will support this proactive engagement too.

While the renaming of Moreland is of broad impact to all residents and visitors to Moreland LGA, Council is under no statutory obligation to consult the community. The proposal to support a community engagement program at the level of consult and inform is recommended on the premise community feedback is valuable to the renaming process to understand community sentiment and preferences, and to encourage participation in cultural education as part of the program which is seen as a benefit to community cohesion and wellbeing.



## Education and truth telling

A full overview of the engagement approach is outlined in Attachment 1.

Council has an important role to play in creating a diverse, inclusive and connected city. We must promote a community in which people from all backgrounds are treated fairly and equally, feel welcome and have a strong sense of belonging in Moreland.

The community engagement process to inform the decision for a new name for Moreland will be implemented in conjunction with a community information and education program. This program is being developed with guidance from the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation, including identifying matters for truth telling.

Council recognises that this is by no means a comprehensive retelling of the Aboriginal history of the local area, and renaming Moreland is just one aspect of reconnecting all cultures to Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung history.

The education and truth telling components of this proposal are critical to raise awareness and guide respectful and informed participation in the renaming process. The proposal supports Moreland's Social Cohesion Plan by creating opportunities for social connection and cultural exchange.

## 5. Officer Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Council officers involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

## 6. Financial and Resources Implications

Resources required to support the community engagement, information and education programs can be met within current budget allocations.

As previously advised to Council, an additional estimated \$250,000 per year for two financial years starting 2022/23 would be required to update Council's digital platforms, signs at significant Council buildings and facilities and municipal entry signs.

Updating Council assets such as street and park signs, smaller facilities signage, staff uniforms and vehicles will be addressed incrementally within existing budget allocations and asset renewal programs over a 10-year timeframe.

## 7. Implementation

In summary, the engagement and education programs will take place with the following timelines:

<b><i>Program/event</i></b>	<b><i>Timing</i></b>
Community education and truth telling program	From March 2022 onwards
Community consultation on options for names	18 March – 15 May 2022
Panel considers community feedback	Late May 2022 (to be confirmed)
Council considers community feedback and panel recommendation and determines preferred name	Early June 2022 (to be confirmed)
Recommended name provided to Minister for Local Government	June 2022
Informing the community of the outcome of the proposed renaming	June 2022 onwards

## Attachment/s

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|---|--|-----------|
| 1 | Attachment 1 - Renaming, education + truth-telling processes | D22/86413 |
| 2 | Attachment 2 Statement of Commitment                         | D22/86424 |

## Attachment 1

### Engagement, Community Education and Truth Telling Proposal

*The approaches outlined below have been developed through collaborative discussions from November 2021 to March 2022 between Council and the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation and other community stakeholders. The community education and truth telling program is fundamental to the engagement about a new municipal name.*

#### 1. Determining the new municipal name

The Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation has advised they will provide name options for consideration by the community. The community engagement process will support learning about the meaning and significance of the names.

Moreland community members will be invited to provide feedback about their preferred name option via a survey.

The engagement process will build understanding and a strong connection to the names provided by the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation. Council will encourage the community to actively participate in the renaming process and to provide feedback about which name they prefer.

The community survey will be facilitated via household mailout and through Conversations Moreland. There will be clear options for residents not online, including via all education activities and printed survey mailouts.

#### Proposed activities:

- Community feedback survey inviting community feedback on the proposed names to take place from Friday 18 March to Sunday 19 May 2022.
- A direct mail to every household with reply paid postage including translations into top eight languages other than English.
- The survey will be available online on the dynamic Conversations Moreland website
- Options for a drop box at libraries and customer service
- Survey printouts at all education activities.
- Free interpreters through Council's customer service.
- Translated video content and information on the Conversations Moreland website.

**Decision making on a final name recommendation**

A panel of Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation representatives with the Mayor and Deputy Mayor will meet in approximately late May 2022 to review community feedback on proposed names.

The recommended name would then be presented to Council for consideration and endorsement at a Special Council Meeting on 1 June 2022.

Council would then recommend the endorsed name to the Minister for Local Government. The final decision rests with State Government.

**2. Community education and truth telling (March 2022 onwards)****Objectives:**

- Increased community awareness and understanding of the dispossession and genocide that occurred in what is now called the Moreland local government area, and its long-lasting intergenerational impact.
- An increased community understanding of the racist origins of the Moreland name, and racism and its impacts today.
- An increased community sense of connection to local Aboriginal heritage and culture through understanding the history of land, its people and experiences.

**Approach:**

The community education program will focus on promoting resources and opportunities for our community to learn about Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung culture and history and participate in respectful discussion by:

- Recognising the impact of past injustices suffered by Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people through truth-telling led by Wurundjeri Elders, including a presentation event and/or park circles.
- Providing opportunities to consider actions that community can take (for instance in consideration of Treaty discussions) including distributing information toolkits to support community action and conversations.
- Developing and promoting educational resources to schools, libraries, community venues, sports clubs, youth groups, faith groups and other community groups.
- Developing and promoting accessible educational content such as videos with translated closed captions, including partnering with Moreland Connectors

representing over 16 language groups to support CALD community participation.

- Facilitating opportunities to speak at local schools.
- Running a series of interactive library talks on local history, including the origin of the name Moreland and about dispossession of land and colonisation.
- Hosting “walk and talks” or place-based cultural learning experiences to strengthen connection to local places and landmarks – eg specific topics such as land management or important heritage sites.
- Targeted conversations with representational groups and key stakeholders eg seniors groups, faith groups, youth groups, schools, early education centres, rotary clubs and sporting clubs.
- Community engagement via local community events e.g Brunswick Music Festival and Glenroy Festival.

**Potential activities include:**

- Communications and education campaign to inform community about the renaming context, process and information on how community members can participate.
- Communications and education campaign around names recommended by Elders and advocating for support for Aboriginal place names.
- Recognising the devastating and ongoing impacts of dispossession for Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people through truth-telling.
- Providing opportunities to consider actions that community can take (for instance in consideration of Treaty discussions) including distributing information toolkits to support community action and conversations.
- Facilitating opportunities to speak at local schools.
- Cultural learning experiences at Moreland Libraries and interactive talks on local history, including the origin of the name Moreland and dispossession of land and colonisation.
- Arts programming and exhibitions by First Nations artists Public screenings of educational and history documentaries around First Nations experiences in Australian history.
- Community information sessions targeting residents and key stakeholder groups e.g. seniors groups, faith groups, youth groups, schools and institutes, rotary clubs and sporting clubs.
- Community engagement via local community events e.g. Brunswick Music Festival, Ballerit Mooroop Community Day, Glenroy Festival, major sporting events.

- Promoting participation in Council's annual program of events around reconciliation and cultural awareness, and other community-led events.

**Education materials**

- Information booklet/toolkit
- Educational resource for schools / child-friendly resource
- Tailored resources and shareable content (ie pre-prepared social media kit, slideshow presentation) for community champions and other key stakeholders
- Slideshow presentation for library series
- Educational videos
- Displays in public spaces- e.g libraries, neighbourhood houses etc
- Communications campaign including mailouts, flyers, posters, social media, local media, public signage etc. to build awareness and promote community participation

**Continuing program**

The community education and truth telling process will continue beyond June 2022, becoming part of Council's ongoing 'business as usual' community programs. This is as part of Council's actions arising from the Statement of Commitment and as part of Council's commitment to reconciliation.



## Statement of Commitment to

# Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung People and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities of the City of Moreland



**Moreland**  
City Council

In May 1998, Moreland City Council endorsed the 'Statement of Commitment to Indigenous Australians'. The Moreland City Council has now renewed this statement to strengthen and formalise its commitment to Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung People and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in the City of Moreland.

### Vision for reconciliation

Moreland City Council's vision for reconciliation is respectful and inclusive recognition of Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people as the Traditional Owners of the lands and waterways in the area now known as Moreland. Council commits to addressing dispossession and dislocation of Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples from their traditional lands by establishing and maintaining into the future, respectful partnerships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the broader community.

### Council recognises, that:

- The Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people are the Traditional Owners of these lands and waterways in Moreland.
- Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the First People of the lands and waterways and are intrinsic to Australia's national identity.
- City of Moreland is home to many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples from diverse family and community groups from across Australia, and therefore peoples of many moiety, kinship and language groups.
- Living Elders and knowledge holders, as well as their ancestors, are central to the social, emotional and spiritual wellbeing of their communities. They continue to play a pivotal role in sharing, and keeping alive, heritage, history, songs, dances, and languages.
- Diversity, inclusive of culturally varied views and opinions within the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family and community groups requires respect and consideration when making decisions related to Moreland.
- Past government policies and acts were responsible for injustices including forcible

*Julianne Axford*  
Julianne Axford

Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Elders  
Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural  
Heritage Aboriginal Corporation

removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their homes, families and traditional lands and the ongoing effects of these injustices continue to this day.

- Such injustices while leaving a devastating impact on the traditional life of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, have not erased their connection to country, culture or community, their resilience and their strength.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have never ceded sovereignty of their lands and have continuously cared for their country for over 60,000 years and continue to carry forth the legacy of being the world's oldest living culture.
- January 26 commemorates the British invasion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lands and oppression of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and is therefore an inappropriate date for an inclusive national celebration.

### Council supports

- A process towards self-determination and local, regional or national Treaty or Treaties that enshrine the rights of Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.
- The right for Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to enjoy their identity and culture, maintain and use their language, maintain their kinship ties and maintain their distinctive spiritual, material and economic relationship with the land and waters as defined in the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.
- Campaigns for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's rights, especially to land and waterways.
- The call contained in the Uluru Statement from the heart and its aspirations for justice, truth-telling, Makarrata (agreement-making) and a voice.
- The right of all Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the City of Moreland to respect and equality and to live free from discrimination based on age, sex, gender identity, race, disability and any type of disadvantage.

Mayor  
Moreland City Council

### Council commits itself to:

- Build trust, collaborate and support partnerships with the Traditional Owners the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, communities and individuals and seek their guidance, and respect their leadership towards, self-determination as per the recommendations of United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People.
- Guide staff and Councillors to meaningfully acknowledge the Traditional Owners the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people and engage Traditional Owners in delivering Welcome to Country and other traditional ceremonies.
- Engage Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people in providing Aboriginal cultural competence and diversity inclusion learning and training initiatives for Council staff so that Council can deliver culturally sensitive and inclusive and accessible services that provide equity and access for all members of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- Undertake cultural consultations with the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people and seek to include Woi-wurrung names in the process of naming and renaming spaces, places, roads and parks in the City of Moreland.
- Protect Aboriginal cultural heritage through ongoing connection and engagement with Traditional Owners the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people and continue to protect the Aboriginal history of Moreland.
- Work with Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people in developing strategies and projects that protect our waterways, communicating Aboriginal water values and interpreting landscapes.
- Engage the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Narrap Team to bring cultural values and cultural practices to natural resource management projects in managing parks across the City of Moreland.

*S.R. Phillips*  
*Gary J. Murray*  
*Paul Williams*  
*D. Atkinson*

Members  
Moreland Reconciliation Working Group

Image above of manna gum leaves, used in Welcome to Country ceremonies, by Wurundjeri artist Mandy Nicholson with design by Dixon Patten of Bayila Creative