



**Date:** Tuesday, 10 November 2020  
**Time:** 9.00am  
**Location:** Administration Centre  
10 Furneaux Street  
Cooktown

**AGENDA AND BUSINESS PAPERS**  
**Late Reports**  
**Ordinary Council Meeting**  
**10 November 2020**

**Linda Cardew**  
Chief Executive Officer

**Order Of Business**

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## 14 COMMUNITY, ECONOMY AND INNOVATION - REPORTS

### 14.4 RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN - WORKING GROUP

**File Number:** D20/29162  
**Author:** Director Community, Economy and Innovation  
**Authoriser:** Linda Cardew, Chief Executive Officer  
**Attachments:** Nil

#### PRECIS

This report is presented to Cook Shire Council to endorse recommendations for the formation of Council's Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) Working Group (RWG), which will develop the Shire's first RAP for approval by Council. The development of a RAP provides a strong statement of Council's desire to facilitate the development of respect, trust and positive relationships between the Cook Shire community and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

#### BACKGROUND/HISTORY

Cook Shire Council seeks to develop a RAP program that will provide a framework for Cook Shire Council to engender respectful relationships and create meaningful opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and to support the national reconciliation movement.

In developing the framework for creating a RAP, Council staff have been guided by the work of Reconciliation Australia. Reconciliation Australia is the lead body for reconciliation across the nation. Reconciliation Australia is an independent, not-for-profit organisation that aims to enable all Australians to build relationships, respect and trust between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Australians.

Reconciliation Australia's purpose is to inspire and enable all Australians to contribute to the reconciliation of the nation. Their vision is for a just, equitable and reconciled Australia.

Their vision of national reconciliation is based on five critical dimensions: race relations, equality and equity, institutional integrity, unity and historical acceptance. These five dimensions do not exist in isolation; they are inter-related and Australia can only achieve full reconciliation if we, as a nation, progress in all five.

#### THE FIVE DIMENSIONS EXPLAINED

##### *Race Relations*

All Australians understand and value Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous cultures, rights and experiences, which results in stronger relationships based on trust and respect and that are free of racism.

##### *Equality and Equity*

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples participate equally in a range of life opportunities and the unique rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are recognised and upheld.

##### *Unity*

An Australian society that values and recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and heritage as a proud part of a shared identity.

#### *Institutional Integrity*

The active support of reconciliation by the nation's political, business and community structures.

#### *Historical Acceptance*

All Australians understand and accept the wrongs of the past and the impact of these wrongs. Australia makes amends for the wrongs of the past and ensures these wrongs are never repeated.

### **THE RAP PROGRAM**

Reconciliation Australia has developed RAP program to provide a framework for organisations to support the national reconciliation movement. A RAP is a strategic document that supports an organisation's business plan. It includes practical actions that will drive an organisation's contribution to reconciliation both internally and in the communities in which it operates.

The RAP Program contributes to advancing the five dimensions of reconciliation by supporting organisations to develop respectful relationships and create meaningful opportunities with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Each of the four RAP types (Reflect, Innovate, Stretch and Elevate) set out the minimum elements required from an organisation to build strong relationships, respect and opportunities within the organisation and community.

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

### **AN INNOVATE RAP**

An Innovate RAP needs to fulfil the following objectives:

- Establishing the best approach for advancing reconciliation within the organisation, and
- Implementing reconciliation strategies and initiatives.

An Innovate RAP needs the following prerequisites:

- General support and goodwill throughout the organisation,
- Support from senior leaders of the organisation, and
- An established governance structure, including an RWG with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander representation.

An Innovate RAP is suitable for organisations that:

- Have strong relationships with their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and understand who, how, why, and when to seek guidance and consultation,
- Are ready to begin or continue to implement strategies, initiatives and policies that support reconciliation, and

- Are ready to commit to additional actions tailored to their organisation.

An Innovate RAP has the following key expectations:

- Develop mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders,
- Develop and pilot strategies for reconciliation initiatives,
- Engage staff in reconciliation,
- Identify the best approach for the organisation through aspirational deliverables,
- Explore how the organisation can drive reconciliation through its business activities, services, programs, stakeholders and/or sphere of influence,
- Report to Reconciliation Australia by September each year, through the RAP Impact measurement questionnaire, and
- Publically report on RAP progress to external stakeholders.

### **THE RAP WORKING GROUP**

As noted above, the development of a RAP needs an effective governance structure, including the establishment and operation of an RWG.

The RWG is considered to be the governing body of the RAP. The RWG is ultimately responsible for the development, implementation and reporting phases of a RAP.

It is important that a RWG consist of employees from across an organisation, including a Councillor, members of the senior leadership team, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.

The number of members of a RWG will vary according to an organisation's size, geographic reach and core business. After consultation with the Human Resources Department, it was determined that the RWG will have up to 9 members and a RAP Champion, who will be appointed prior to the first meeting. His/her job is to raise the profile of reconciliation as an organisational priority, internally and externally and to lead by example by actioning the commitments in the RAP.

An Expression of Interest was sent to all staff on Monday 26 October 2020, seeking their interest, involvement and nominations for the RWG. The nominations have been evaluated and the RWG members selected by an Assessment Panel comprised of the CEO, Director Community Economy and Innovation, Manager Human Resources and Business Services, and Indigenous Partnership Officer. Members of the RWG are as listed below, which is presented to Council for endorsement:

1. Chief Executive Officer
2. Director Community Economy and Innovation
3. Project Engineer
4. Customer Service Officer
5. Media & Communications Officer
6. Regional Arts Officer
7. Treatment Plant Operator
8. Land Tenure & Native Title Coordinator
9. Creative Director, Cooktown & Cape York Expo 2021
10. Administration Officer

11. Indigenous (Bama) Partnership Officer
12. Manager Human Resources & Business Services

### **LINK TO CORPORATE PLAN**

Council's 2017-2022 Corporate Plan captures the requirement for legislative compliance as follows:

**Community** – A sense of common purpose, whilst retaining local diversity, with the goals and aspirations of individual communities reflected in localised strategy and planning.

Strategy 2: Develop and build on community engagement measures to encourage inclusiveness and partnerships within communities.

Objective 2a: Community engagement measures are developed and implemented.

Strategy 3: Encourage the building of strong partnerships with community, private sector and government so as to build community capacity and develop strategies to encourage and support leadership and self-responsibility in the community.

Objective 3a: Opportunities and partners are identified to advance services and facilities for all Shire communities through increased community capacity, leadership and self-responsibility.

### **CONSULTATION**

There has been extensive consultation with Reconciliation Australia, Reconciliation Queensland and relevant Cook Shire Council Staff.

### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS (STATUTORY, BASIS, LEGAL RISKS)**

Nil

### **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

There are no policy implications in relation to this activity.

### **FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (BUDGETARY)**

All costs pertaining to the RWG are included in Council's annual budget.

**RECOMMENDATION**

That:

1. Cook Shire Council endorse the selected nominees for the Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group (RWG) listed hereunder:
  - a. Chief Executive Officer
  - b. Director Community Economy and Innovation
  - c. Project Engineer
  - d. Customer Service Officer
  - e. Media & Communications Officer
  - f. Regional Arts Officer
  - g. Treatment Plant Operator
  - h. Land Tenure & Native Title Coordinator
  - i. Creative Director, Cooktown & Cape York Expo 2021
  - j. Administration Officer
  - k. Indigenous (Bama) Partnership Officer
  - l. Manager Human Resources & Business Services;
2. Cook Shire Council acknowledge that from time to time the membership may change as the need arises; and
3. Cook Shire Council to nominate a Councillor to be a member of the RWG to publically signify recognition of reconciliation as an organisational priority.