

	<h1 style="text-align: center;">Reconciliation Action Plan Project Information Paper</h1>
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1. Purpose

To provide context and content to interested community members working and living in Melton City Council Local Government Area about Council's previous Reconciliation Action Plans and the proposed fourth Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) Project.

2. Scope

To invite community members to provide feedback and contribute to the development of the RAP. There are a number of other State and Federal Government policies which affect Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander community members living or working in Melton. Melton Council works with all levels of Government to support implementation of those policies and actions and measures specific to those policies are the responsibility of the relevant Government Department. This RAP will include actions which can be taken by Local Government to achieve reconciliation.

3. Definitions

Word/Term	Definition
Aboriginal	Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
Council	Melton City Councillors
Community	Community members living or working in Melton City Council
Melton Council	Melton City Council as an organisation
Melton LGA	Melton Local Government Area (the boundaries of Melton City Council)
RAC	Melton Council Reconciliation Advisory Committee
RAP	Reconciliation Action Plan

4. Background

Melton Council is committed to working in partnership with Aboriginal or First Nations community members living and working in Melton to achieve reconciliation.

Reconciliation Australia says reconciliation is about strengthening the relationship between Aboriginal and mainstream Australia, for the benefit of all Australians. Reconciliation Australia sets out the five actions required for reconciliation to be achieved: race relations, equality and equity, institutional integrity, historical acceptance and unity.

This is the fourth RAP Melton Council will develop. In Victoria the goal of reconciliation has become aligned with the right to self-determination for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people. Self-determination is a right within the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People. The right means that Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people have a right to be involved in decisions which affect them and their communities.

The policy environment for Aboriginal communities has undergone significant change over the time Melton Council has had Reconciliation Action Plans in place. There is a distinct societal shift towards self-determination for Aboriginal communities, with reconciliation being seen as a

transition activity towards self-determination, rather than an end point in the relationship between Aboriginal communities and mainstream communities.

5. Previous Achievements

Melton Council's first Council Reconciliation Action Plan was produced in 2010 and there have been two further Plans produced covering the periods 2014-2017 and 2018-2020.

The 2018-2020 Plan incorporated 14 policy principles of the RAP which underpinned the actions committed to in the Melton City Council Reconciliation Roadmap 2018-2020. There were four key areas within the Roadmap: Relationships, Respect, Opportunities and Monitoring and Reporting against the agreed 15 action areas.

Council also established the Melton City Council Reconciliation Advisory Committee, which comprises Aboriginal community members from Traditional Owner Groups, Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, independent Aboriginal community members and non-Aboriginal City of Melton community members. The operation of this committee is governed by Terms of Reference authorised by Council.

The previous Reconciliation Action Plan has produced a stronger relationship across Aboriginal communities living and working in Melton and has seen the development and establishment of Aboriginal Community Controlled service delivery within Melton's boundaries. Kirirp Aboriginal Corporation has been established in Melton which offers a broad range of culturally safe services for local First Nations people. The Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency, Victorian Aboriginal Community Services Association Limited, Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation and Elizabeth Morgan House Aboriginal Service also have a presence in Melton.

Melton Council also advocates for Melton Aboriginal community interests and identify opportunities to develop, enhance or expand culturally responsive services and programs:

- Western Region Local Government Reconciliation Network (comprising Hobsons Bay, Moonee Valley, Maribyrnong, Brimbank, Melton and Wyndham Councils) hosted jointly by all six Councils.
- Local Aboriginal Network meetings hosted by Department of Premier and Cabinet.
- Western Metropolitan Regional Aboriginal Justice Advisory Committee meetings hosted by the Department of Justice and Community Services.
- Djelk Dja hosted by Family Safety Victoria.

Melton Council has hosted Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC week events under the guidance and advice of the RAC.

Other activities which advanced reconciliation in Melton LGA included the development of a child friendly logo for Early Years, exhibitions and activities delivered by Libraries and signage for Neighbourhood Houses. Partnerships between Aboriginal communities and mainstream organisations such as the Melton Historical Society, Edmund Rice Centre, Woodgrove Shopping Centre and Djerriwarrh Health Services have been supported. Additionally, work has been undertaken in consultation with Traditional Owner Groups, such as the Old Melton Cemetery refresh and signage for the Woodlea Town Centre.

Melton Council also developed a contact list for local Aboriginal artists and art businesses, working to support the establishment and development of Aboriginal artists in Melton and provide opportunities for artists to support each other. Aboriginal artists were engaged on a number of specific art exhibitions held at the Caroline Springs Gallery, the Wayne Quilliam Exhibition and the Women of the West NAIDOC 2018 photographic exhibition. All Aboriginal artists were invited to participate in the 2019 Djerriwarrh Festival and Council hosted a double marquee to accommodate them. An Aboriginal COVID-19 art design was displayed in July 2020 at the Caroline Springs Civic Centre.

6. References and links to other State and Federal Policies

The table below lists some, but not all, of the relevant State and Federal Government policies for information and consideration.

Name	Description
Closing the Gap 2021-2031	<p>Close the Gap intends to deliver:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. close the gap in life expectancy 2. increase healthy birthweights, 3. increase children enrolled in early childhood education 4. Increase children assessed as developmentally on track 5. increase attaining year 12 or equivalent 6. increase completion of a tertiary qualification 7. increase youth (15–24 years) who are in employment, education or training 8. increase employment for people aged 25–64 9. decrease overcrowded housing 10. reduce the rate of adults held in incarceration 11. reduce the rate young people (10-17 years) in detention 12. reduce the rate of over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out-of-home care 13. reduction in violence and abuse against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children 14. reduction in suicide of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people 15. a) increase in Australia's landmass subject to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's legal rights or interests b) increase in areas covered by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's legal rights or interests in the sea 16. increase in number and strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages being spoken
Korin-Korin Balit Djak 2017-2027	This policy is intended to support safe, secure and strong families and individuals and physically, socially and emotionally health Aboriginal families and communities.
Marrung 2016 to 2026	The Department of Education Plan seeks to ensure that universal services, such as early childhood and education meet the learning and development needs of Aboriginal Victorians.
Tharamba Bugheen 2017-2021	Aboriginal Victoria sets out a plan for Aboriginal Victorians to become innovative entrepreneurs and business leaders through access to networks and support to develop, improving visibility and networks for Aboriginal businesses and strengthening business experience and entrepreneurial culture of Aboriginal businesses.
Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework 2018-2023	This policy is the Victorian Government's enabler to the Commonwealth National Indigenous Reform Agreement ('Closing the Gap'). It is intended to create specific self-determination enablers which will empower Aboriginal Victorians to work with Government to eliminate structural and systemic barriers they experience.
Victorian Aboriginal Local Government Action Plan. <i>Note: This Plan was developed in 2016 and is currently being reviewed.</i>	This Plan is designed to strengthen relationships between Councils and Aboriginal communities and drive positive change. It was created to align with Government policies on self-determination, equity, achievement and opportunity for Aboriginal Victorians by taking a leadership role in reconciliation, celebrating Aboriginal community and culture, emulating good practices and sharing across Councils, working with Councils to take the next steps in reconciliation to have an Aboriginal perspective inform

Name	Description
	Council Plans and Strategies from the beginning of their development and then measure the difference that is being achieved.
Victorian Charter of Human Rights	Clause 19 sets out that Aboriginal communities have a right to enjoy their identity and culture, maintain and use their language and maintain kinship ties. It further recognises the special relationship between land, water and resources that Aboriginal communities have. The Charter also makes provision for special measures declarations to enable employers to protect and promote cultural diversity and inclusion. These rights can be limited or restricted if the right comes into conflict with another person or group's rights, but the need to limit or restrict must be reasonable, justifiable, proportionate and necessary.