

MEETING NAME	Indigenous Strategic Reference Group
ATTENDEES	E Imbs (Manager Customer Engagement and Experience), C Argent (Director Shire Connections), P Buckley (Director Shire Services), Mayor Matt Gould (Chair) (arrived at 4.21pm), Councillor Ally Dench (Deputy Chair), Councillor Suzy Brandstater (arrived at 4.33pm), Daniel Chalker, (Aunty Glenda) Glenda Chalker (online), Jason Mitchell (online – left at 5pm), Leann Dykes, (Aunty Kazan) Kazan Brown (online), Karen Breeze, Karen Magee, (Aunty Karen) Karen Adams and one Minute Taker.
APOLOGIES	Star-Jade Lavery and M Nelson (Manager Assets, Transport and Engineering),
DATE	10 June 2026
TIME	4:11pm

ITEM	NOTES
Opening	Councillor Ally Dench opened the meeting in the Chair's absence noting that the Mayor would arrive shortly.
Declaration of Interests	Nil.
Confirmation of Minutes	The minutes of the previous meeting held on 18 March 2026 were confirmed. Mover: Leann Dykes Seconder: Aunty Kazan Brown
Matters Arising from Previous Minutes	The minutes from the previous meeting were discussed as follows: Action 8: • The Director Shire Services provided a status update on the draft Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). The group were informed of further funding received under round 2 of the Caring for Country grants which enables delivery of this action. He advised that the consultant engagement process was underway and once revised by the successful consultant the draft RAP will be shared with the group. • The importance of group involvement in the RAP's development was discussed. The Director confirmed that the intent is for the work to be developed collaboratively with the SRG.

Briefings/Updates	Introduction/Welcome to New Members • Councillor Dench noted and welcomed the addition of three new members, (Aunty Karen) Karen Adams, Karen Magee and Eddie Wiradjuri Birrang. A round table of introductions occurred. • The Mayor joined the meeting at 4.21pm and assumed the chair. Caring for Country Grants Projects • Director Shire Services provided an update on the Caring for Country Grant projects and sought feedback on two projects. • The Picton Botanic Gardens signage and guidance project: ○ The Director Shire Services advised the project involves replacement of current signage and maintenance works at the Picton Botanic Gardens memorial and sculpture. ○ It was noted that previous signage (installed 2010-11) had been impacted by flood events. ○ It was noted that the Dharawal Knowledge Holders Circle has expressed interest in being involved, as they were part of the original project. ○ In response to group discussions the Director Shire Services and Mayor Gould clarified that this funding is separate to the funding discussed at the last meeting which was returned to the funding body. ○ Aunty K Adams clarified that as a member of the Dharawal Knowledge Holders Circle she is not representing them when in attendance at this SRG. ○ In response to questioning about other project options the Director Shire Services advised that there were other projects already underway being managed by Council's Caring for Country Officer that he would update the group on later in the meeting. ○ The group commended Council staff for their efforts noting the memorial/gardens as a modern significant site worthy of protection. ○ A consensus vote was taken to determine whether the group agreed to proceed with the signage project, with the majority in favour.
-------------------	---

- It was noted that engagement for the project will be commenced with options discussed at a future meeting.
- The group advised their preference would be to have modern/updated signage.
- Community Workshops:
 - The Director Shire Services introduced a proposed program of community workshops focused on First Nations culture, seeking their feedback on appropriate workshop topics and potential facilitators/knowledge holders.
 - Members noted the importance of identifying a target audience commencing with Council Staff followed by community delivery with a focus on first nations culture.
 - A range of potential workshop themes were suggested, including:
 - Cultural awareness and cultural safety
 - Local plants, bush medicine and bush tucker
 - Language, art and early education/children's programs
 - Embedding cultural understanding across organisations and community settings.
 - Members emphasised that:
 - Workshops should be led by Aboriginal people, with Elders and knowledge holders central to delivery
 - Consideration should be given to who is appropriately placed to deliver content, and cultural capability of facilitators
 - Opportunities to extend beyond the local area could be considered if suitable local facilitators are not available.
 - Discussion also considered:
 - The potential for staff cultural awareness training and "train-the-trainer" approaches, noting sensitivities around cultural authority and capability
 - The importance of practical outcomes, including mentoring and embedding learning within organisations
 - Questions regarding the number of workshops, budget, and overall objectives, which remain to be confirmed.
- Aunty K Brown noted she will not be involved in Caring for Country projects.

Question on Notice

- When was the last time Council ran a cultural awareness campaign?

Other Caring for Country Project Updates (Round 1 and Future Funding)

- Director Shire Services provided updates on additional Caring for Country initiatives, including:
 - Environmental DNA (eDNA) monitoring in the Upper Nepean catchment
 - Weaving workshops (led by Aunty Annette Euston)
 - Proposed cultural burn (currently at quotation/tender evaluation stage)
 - Relationship-building event in collaboration with community representatives and Dharawal LALC.
- The Director noted that further grant funding (Round 2) is being pursued with additional smaller initiatives being considered, including:
 - Further eDNA monitoring.
 - Aboriginal cultural heritage and legislation awareness program to be delivered to Council's planning staff by Rebecca Chalker. Councillor Dench requested that this be expanded in some format to Councillors.
 - Development of a RAP through community engagement.
- Members noted the importance of support for Council employing staff to work with and engage the Aboriginal community, with recognition of the importance of cultural respect and appropriate boundaries.

ACTION 10: Hard copies of all future SRG documents to be posted to Aunty K Adams and K Magee.

ACTION 11: Photos and original signage in regards to the Picton Botanic Gardens signage and guidance project to be distributed to the group.

ACTION 12: Director Shire Services to circulate further detail on the proposed workshops (including scope, topics, quantity, funding, intended audience and approach) to SRG members. SRG members are to provide feedback on further details within one week following circulation.

	<i>ACTION 13: Councillors to receive information about the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage and Legislation Awareness Program.</i> <i>ACTION 14: Circulate eDNA report and supporting materials to SRG members.</i> <i>ACTION 15: Provide an update on the development of Round 2 grant applications and the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) engagement approach.</i>
Workshops	Naming Policy Post-Exhibition Workshop • The Mayor advised the Naming Policy has concluded exhibition and feedback is currently being reviewed, with the aim of improving how Indigenous naming is applied across the Shire. • The proposed approach adopts a “double-veto” model, which involves: ○ Actively seeking Indigenous names and identifying appropriate themes by locality ○ Council endorsement of themes following consultation with relevant SRGs ○ Consultation with the Aboriginal Land Council, as required by the Geographical Names Board ○ Agreement from both the SRG and Land Council before any name proceeds. • It was noted that if agreement cannot be reached, Indigenous naming may not proceed in those circumstances. • Questions were raised regarding how this approach would operate long-term, including scenarios where an SRG may not be in place. The Mayor confirmed that an SRG or equivalent mechanism would continue to inform the process. • Members discussed their views on the proposed model with no clear consensus reached on the preferred approach. • The Mayor confirmed willingness to continue working with the Aboriginal Land Council and stakeholders to refine the approach. • Members acknowledged Council’s efforts to progress Indigenous naming in a respectful and considered manner, despite the complexities involved.
Engagement News and Updates	• Manager Customer Experience and Engagement provided an update on NAIDOC week events highlighting the proposed schedule for the day.

	The group was referred to the shared email that provided rsvp details and information regarding a ticket to the movie screening.
General Business	Members were encouraged to email any topics for discussion at a future meeting.

MEETING CLOSE: 5.58pm

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday 2 September 2026

REFERENCE: CM 15598~5#85