



# Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan 2023 – 25

April 2023 – April 2025





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Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are advised that this document may contain images of deceased people.

**Ash Firebrace, *Coming Together* (detail), 2021, acrylic on canvas, 147 x 215cm.**

Commissioned as part of the exhibition *Myths and Legends* held at the Manningham Art Gallery in 2021 that depicted Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung ancestral beings and deities in Ash's powerful graphic style.



Manningham Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people as the Traditional Owners of the land and waterways that is now known as Manningham.

Council pays respect to Elders both past, present and emerging, and values the ongoing contribution to enrich and appreciate the cultural heritage of Manningham.

Council acknowledges and respects Australia's First Peoples as Traditional Owners of lands and waterways across Country and encourages reconciliation between all.



## Endorsement from Reconciliation Australia



Since 2006, Reconciliation Action Plans (RAPs) have provided a framework for organisations to leverage their structures and diverse spheres of influence to support the national reconciliation movement.

With over 2.3 million people now either working or studying in an organisation with a RAP, the program's potential for impact is greater than ever. Manningham Council continues to be part of a strong network of more than 1,100 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have taken goodwill and transformed it into action.

The four RAP types — Reflect, Innovate, Stretch and Elevate — allow RAP partners to continuously strengthen reconciliation commitments and constantly strive to apply learnings in new ways.

An Innovate RAP is a crucial and rewarding period in an organisation's reconciliation journey. It is a time to build the strong foundations and relationships that ensure sustainable, thoughtful, and impactful RAP outcomes into the future.

An integral part of building these foundations is reflecting on and cataloguing the successes and challenges of previous RAPs. Learnings gained through effort and innovation are invaluable resources that Manningham City Council will continuously draw upon to create RAP commitments rooted in experience and maturity.

These learnings extend to Manningham Council using the lens of reconciliation to better understand its core business, sphere of influence, and diverse community of staff and stakeholders.

The RAP program's emphasis on relationships, respect, and opportunities gives organisations a framework from which to foster connections with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples rooted in mutual collaboration and trust.

This Innovate RAP is an opportunity for Manningham Council to strengthen these relationships, gain crucial experience, and nurture connections that will become the lifeblood of its future RAP commitments. By enabling and empowering staff to contribute to this process, Manningham Council will ensure shared and cooperative success in the long-term.

Gaining experience and reflecting on pertinent learnings will ensure the sustainability of Manningham Council's future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives, providing meaningful impact toward Australia's reconciliation journey.

Congratulations Manningham Council on your second Innovate RAP and I look forward to following your ongoing reconciliation journey.

Karen Mundine  
Chief Executive Officer  
Reconciliation Australia

## Mayor's message



Manningham Council is committed to being an inclusive and connected community. We proudly acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people as the Traditional Owners of the land and waterways known as Manningham, and are respectful of the Victorian First Nations communities.

We recognise and respect the deep and continuous connection the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people have for the land Manningham Council operates on.

Manningham's new Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) is the most recent milestone in a journey that began back in 1997.

At this time, *A Statement of Commitment to Indigenous People* was developed with the Eastern Region Councils and adopted by Manningham Council. It was an affirmation of respect and recognition for the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people as the Traditional Custodians of Manningham.

There have been many years of work since then to build on our commitment to our First Nations Peoples and the work of reconciliation. We recognise that although there is still much work to be done, local government has a key role to play in the achievement of reconciliation.

This new RAP has been developed in partnership with Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Corporation and local First Nations peoples. We thank them for their contribution and generosity in helping us to produce this document. We also thank the Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group who guided the development of this document.

It is our hope that this RAP supports us to:

- create meaningful relationships
- recognise and support First Nations self-determination and cultural rights
- build understanding of our shared history
- celebrate, recognise and respect First Nations cultural heritages
- educate our community on First Nations culture and history and provide them with an opportunity to take an active part in the process of reconciliation.

We are committed to fostering respect for and understanding of First Nations cultures, histories, knowledge and rights throughout our organisation and the municipality.

Cr Deirdre Diamante  
Mayor, Manningham Council

## Message from Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Corporation

As the Traditional Owners of the areas, the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people, we acknowledge that Manningham Council have consulted with us widely in producing this document and they have shown respect and understanding in regard to working with Traditional Owners and other First Nations peoples.

Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation are proud to be associated with like-minded people at Manningham Council who understand that we must accept and acknowledge the wrongs of the past, so we can all move forward together in the spirit of reconciliation.

Local governments are in a unique position, and they also have a responsibility to care for the Country and people within their municipality in order to form a real community that is inclusive and respectful for all, but particularly to those who are First People of the Country.

We are pleased to have involvement in Manningham Councils development of their Reconciliation Action Plan 2023-25.

Sincerely,

Wurundjeri's consultation team Elders



Wurundjeri  
Woi-wurrung  
Cultural Heritage  
Aboriginal Corporation



## Our vision for Reconciliation

Manningham's vision is for an inclusive and connected community, which proudly acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people as the Traditional Owners of the land and waterways and is respectful of the Victorian First Nations communities<sup>1</sup>. It is an informed community that celebrates and values the rich cultural heritages of First Nations peoples, their diversity, strengths and roles as knowledge holders, and their ongoing contributions to making Manningham what it is today.

We will achieve our vision by embedding the aspirations and commitments contained within the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) throughout our core business and with all activities, programs, and services in collaboration with the Manningham community. Namely, by

- developing meaningful relationships and strengthening our connections between First Nations people and the broader community;
- fostering respect and understanding;
- valuing and protecting cultural heritage; and,
- supporting self-determination in which Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and First Nations cultures are visible, widely recognised and apparent across all public spaces and through civic engagement.

We will learn from the past, we will celebrate continuing cultures, and together we will build our shared future for reconciliation.

<sup>1</sup> First Nations is used rather than 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander' and 'Indigenous' unless referring to the title of past policies. This was identified as preferred terminology by the Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group in July 2021.

Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung is used when referring to the Traditional Owners of Manningham. It is noted that there are many cultural differences between and within First Nations communities and while terms are often used interchangeably, the most appropriate terminology will be the way in which the community and or individuals wish to describe themselves. These preferences change with time.



**Artist Robert Michael Young creating his colourful mural at Templestowe Village.  
Photo credit, Charlie Kinross**

A placemaking activation project to bring life, connection and colour to a shared community space. The artworks across the village reflect the changing of seasons and indigenous animals - black swan, wombat, echidna and platypus which can be found in the Manningham area.



## Our business/our city

Situated entirely within Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung homelands, Manningham Council is the Local Government authority of the Manningham municipality, and provides more than 100 services to residents, ratepayers, businesses and community groups across the City. Manningham is a diverse community with an estimated resident population of 125,827 (2021 Census).

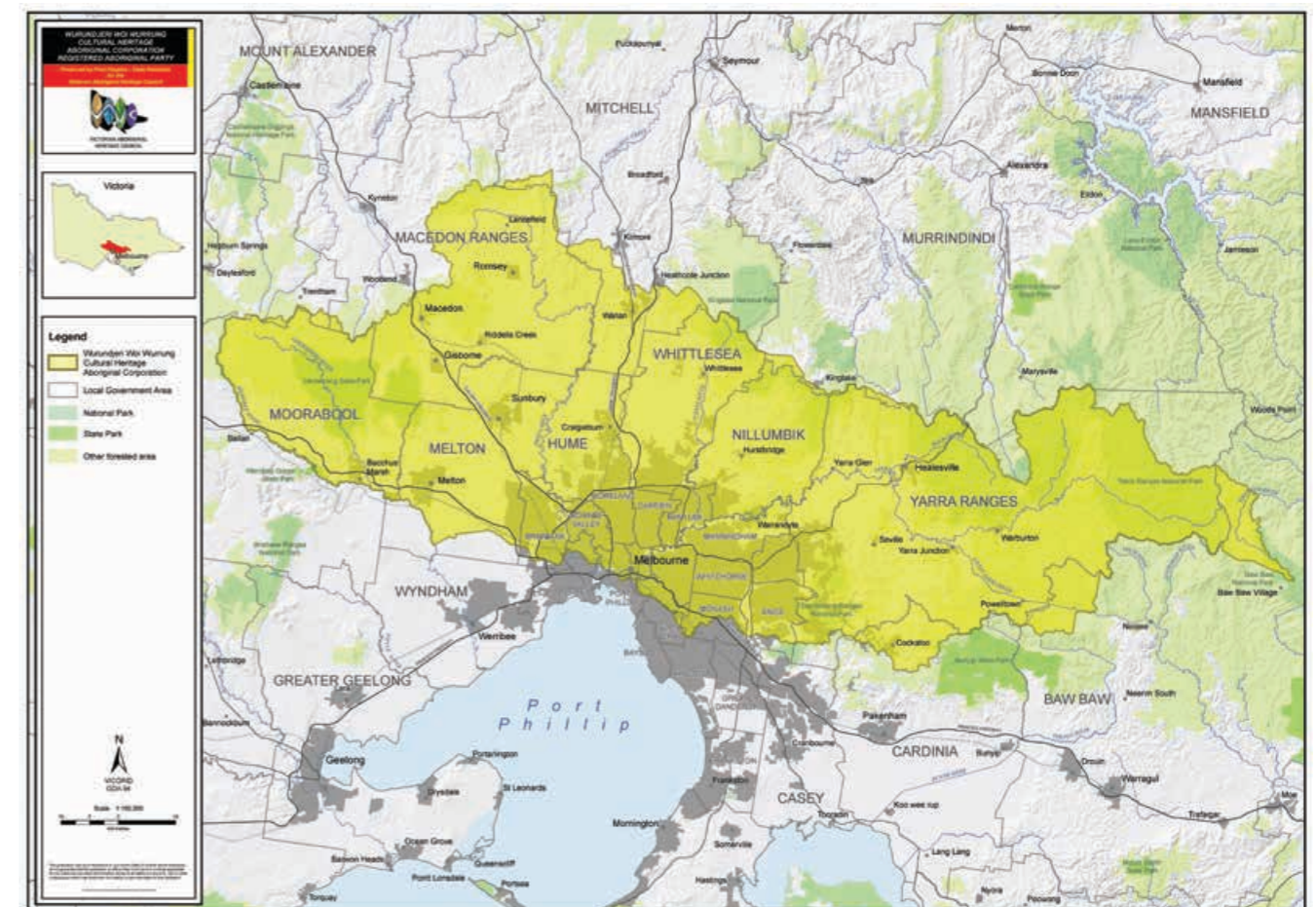
Manningham Council currently employs 638 people in a full-time, part-time or casual capacity, across two offices in Doncaster and Doncaster East, Victoria, none of whom identify as belonging to First Nations.

Manningham is in Melbourne's eastern suburbs and stretches from Bulleen, about 12km from Melbourne's Central Business District (CBD) to Wonga Park, about 32km from the CBD, linking to the Yarra Valley – bringing a unique combination of both cosmopolitan city and country lifestyles together, over a total land area of 114 square kilometres, including substantial green open space.

The municipality is mostly defined by natural boundaries: the Yarra to the north and west, Koonung Creek to the south, including the suburbs of Bulleen, Doncaster, Doncaster East, Donvale, Nunawading (in part), Park Orchards, Ringwood North (in part), Templestowe, Templestowe Lower, Warrandyte, Warrandyte South and Wonga Park (in part).

### First Nations communities

Manningham's First Nations community is diverse, with varied cultures, heritages, and histories. Based on the 2021 Census data, Manningham hosts a population of approximately 297 people who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, representing 0.2% of the resident population. The median age of the First Nations population of Manningham is 24 years. Census data does not take into consideration those who may reside outside Manningham but have continuing cultural or community connections to the municipality.



Source: Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council

## Our Reconciliation Action Plan

Manningham Council recognises that local government has a key role to play in the achievement of reconciliation. This includes playing a leadership role in creating meaningful relationships; recognising and supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander self-determination and cultural rights<sup>2</sup>; building understanding of our shared history; celebrating, recognising and respecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritages; and providing our local community with an opportunity to take an active part in the process of reconciliation.

Manningham Council has appointed Lee Robson, Director Connected Communities as its RAP Champion. The role of the RAP Champion is to drive internal engagement and awareness of the RAP at a senior leadership level.

Manningham Council also has a role in providing accessible services as an employer, procurer.

### Reconciliation Action Plan Development

The development of the Reconciliation Action Plan has involved a collaborative process. In 2019 Manningham Council formed a Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group to guide the development and implementation of the Reconciliation Action Plan and established regular Cultural Consultations with Elders and staff of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation (the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Corporation).

As the Registered Aboriginal Party for Manningham, the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Corporation plays a key role in decision making for and protection of cultural heritage and as such are recognised as the 'primary guardians, keepers and knowledge holders of Aboriginal Cultural heritage'.<sup>3</sup> In particular the contribution and guidance from the Cultural Consultations team, Aunty Gail Smith, Aunty Julieanne Axford and Aunty Doreen Garvey-Wandin.

The Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group membership comprised of First Nations community members, representatives from a range of agencies and Manningham Council officers. The Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group is chaired by Manningham Council's Director City Planning and Community and includes:

- Dale Wandin, Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung - Community Member
- Uncle John Baxter, Latji Latji/Narungga - Community Member
- Karen Milward, Yorta Yorta - Community Member
- Bronwyn Arnold, Whitehorse Manningham Libraries
- Alicia Wheatley – Wiradjuri - Department of Family Fairness and Housing

The contribution of former members is also acknowledged; Dr Jim Poulter (Reconciliation Manningham) Autumn Pierce (Women's Health East) Kate Jeffery (Inner East Primary Care Partnership), Jenny Mitchell (Whitehorse Manningham Libraries) and Alice Young, Gunai Kurnai /Yorta Yorta (Department of Education).

Each member of the Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group has brought with them their extensive experience, knowledge and skills to support Council's reconciliation efforts. While the accountability for actions rests with Council officers, the majority of actions require engagement and collaboration with external agencies for their successful delivery.

A number of lessons were learnt, and improvement opportunities were identified through the review of the 2015 – 17 RAP. This included:

1. The establishment of a new Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group with greater representation from the Executive Management Team
2. Ensure the actions are realistic and achievable
3. Strengthen corporate ownership, commitment, accountability, and resources to reconciliation
4. Embed the Reconciliation Action Plan within Council's corporate reporting framework
5. Invest in relationship building and partnerships

Council has strengthened relationships with the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Corporation, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community groups and residents. In addition, the establishment of the Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group and the inclusion of two members of the Executive Management Team demonstrates the increased ownership and commitment across Council.

The Reconciliation Action Plan is being championed by the Director Connected Communities, as well as members of the Diversity and Inclusion Working Group which will bring greater prominence to Council's Reconciliation efforts. Importantly, Manningham Council recognised the principal role our partnerships play in driving reconciliation outcomes and endeavours to work constructively with key stakeholders going forward.

<sup>2</sup> The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006

<sup>3</sup> Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 and the Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018



## Case study

### Annual art exhibition and programing

Manningham Art Gallery's National Reconciliation Week exhibition has been a key part of its annual program for over a decade and has hosted a number of significant and emerging contemporary First Nations artists in that time.

In recent years, exhibiting artists including Adam Ridgeway and Hayley Millar-Baker, the Manningham-based Young family (Richard, Judith, Robert and Lyn-Al) and emerging artists Maddi Moser and Troy Firebrace have extended the reach of the exhibition with a variety of successful engagement programs including artist talks, art workshops with local school students, the development of an education kit and a film screening and panel discussion that was praised by many in attendance.

Ash Firebrace's 2021 exhibition, included the commissioning of a new artwork permanently displayed in Manningham's Civic Building foyer, paved the way for further creative collaborations. In 2022 and 2023, consecutive exhibitions *Serving Country* and upcoming *Unfinished Business* exhibitions by photographer Belinda Mason, further enshrine the gallery as a space for exploring cultural attitudes, ideas and representation through the arts.

These programs have depended upon the deep commitment and positive engagement of these artists, along with members of the RAP working group and community, as well as the gallery and partners like Whitehorse Manningham Libraries and Aboriginal Victoria providing open and safe spaces to present culturally relevant art and discuss complex and sometimes difficult social issues. Council continues its commitment to delivering a diverse program and provide the opportunity for First Nations community members to share stories, arts and culture with Manningham and the broader community.



Ash Firebrace and his piece *Coming Together*.



## The journey so far

Manningham recognises the role of key partners, organisations and individuals and their contributions to Manningham Council's Reconciliation Journey.

- 1997** A *Statement of Commitment to Indigenous People* was developed with the Eastern Region Councils and adopted by Manningham Council. It was an affirmation of respect and recognition for the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people as the Traditional Custodians of Manningham.
- 1999** The first *Indigenous People's Policy* was developed, which provided a basic set of principles for Manningham Council to activate the journey of reconciliation, including the protocol of flying the Aboriginal flag on key dates, and the introduction of a Statement of Acknowledgement, to be read prior to key Council meetings.
- 2006** The second *Indigenous Peoples Policy* was developed which introduced a commitment to delivering a program of community activities during National Reconciliation Week, based on local partnerships.
- 2008** A more formalised *Indigenous Policy and Action Plan (2009 – 2012)* was developed, which saw the introduction of clear and measurable actions to support reconciliation. This guided the development of strong partnerships with Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Elders and local community in developing an extensive suite of programs and projects during National Reconciliation Week (NRW). This year also saw the Aboriginal Flag being permanently flown at the Manningham Council Municipal Offices.
- 2011** Manningham Council was awarded the National Local Government Award for Reconciliation, which recognised Council's program as outstanding in terms of its' community and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnerships, and diverse array of cultural, heritage, arts and education experiences for our community.
- 2012** Council developed our first nationally endorsed *Manningham Reconciliation Action Plan (2012 – 2014)*, an extensive and diverse set of actions that put Manningham at the forefront of Reconciliation programming within the Eastern metropolitan region. Most of these actions were achieved, with a number of actions that continue to roll over into the new Reconciliation Action Plan.

- 2013** Manningham Council received Federal funding for the "Wurundjeri Stories" Interpretive Signage trail project at Pound Bend, supporting Manningham Council's vision to signpost and culturally develop known Aboriginal Heritage Sites of Significance in Manningham in partnership with the Wurundjeri Tribe Council. The trail has been developed to provide a framework for schools to access local cultural heritage and progress their reconciliation objectives within a local setting. Resources have been developed to support school access to this program.
- 2015** Review of the *Manningham Reconciliation Action Plan (2012 – 2014)* sees the introduction of the *Manningham Reconciliation Action Plan (2015 – 2017)* using the Reconciliation Australia framework, which is designed to address reconciliation through three core pillars being Relationships, Respect and Opportunities.
- 2019** Review of the *Reconciliation Action Plan (2015 – 2017)* found that while a number of actions were undertaken, the completion of the actions diminished over time following a major restructure of the organisation. Manningham Council has identified the need to strengthen the approach to reconciliation outcomes and has established the Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group to guide and support this work.
- 2021** The *Acknowledgment of Country* was revised and included in all external council meetings and events. The *Vision for Reconciliation* is included in Council Plan, providing organisational commitment.  
  
Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group contribution to the placemaking framework resulting in changes to Manningham signage to include "Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Country".
- 2022** Manningham Council worked closely with Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Elders in the naming of wonguim wilam, Warrantdyte. This work was nominated by Geographic Names Victoria to receive the inaugural award for Excellence in Place naming. The award recognised the process Council took to engage the community and respect for Traditional Owner language.  
  
The activities of the Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group were a significant contributing factor into Manningham Council's accreditation as a "Welcoming City"



## Our commitment

Manningham acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people as the Traditional Custodians of the land and waterways in our city and recognises and respects their unique rights, obligations to and deep connection to Country. Manningham Council recognises the unique status of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as Australia's First peoples, and the world's oldest living cultures.

Manningham Council recognises the profound impact of colonisation and the dislocation from traditional lands on First Nations, as well as the injustices influenced by government policies and practices, including the forced removal of children from their families, a trauma still being felt today. Manningham acknowledges the strength and resilience of First Nations communities.

Manningham Council respects the rights of all First Nations peoples to exercise cultural rights and we acknowledge our role in supporting self-determination and empowering the community to share their stories. Manningham Council understands the importance of working with Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Corporation and local communities and organisations and is committed to building meaningful relationships.

Manningham Council recognises that the land we now call Manningham is a cultural landscape, nurtured by the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people, with many sites of significance being the combination of the tangible elements (e.g., artefacts, scarred trees, middens) and intangible elements of cultural practices (e.g., stories and traditional land management). There is a rich connection to Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung culture and heritage embedded within Manningham's history with a number of areas of great importance including the Birrarung (Yarra River), Bolin Bolin Billabong and surrounding billabongs, and Pound Bend, a central living and gathering place for the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people from time immemorial.

Council understands the important role we play in supporting the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people's rights to preserve archaeological sites and landscapes of cultural importance, located within Manningham and surrounds.

Manningham Council acknowledges and values the contributions made to our community by First Nations peoples. Manningham Council commits to fostering respect for and understanding of First Nations cultures, histories, knowledge and rights throughout our organisation and the municipality. This includes learning from our past, valuing cultural heritages and celebrating continuing cultures.



Interpretive signage at wonguim wilam in Warrandyte.  
Boomerang artwork by Ash Firebrace.



## Policy context

The Reconciliation Action Plan supports Manningham Council to deliver on its vision for a peaceful, safe and inclusive community. We celebrate life with its diverse culture, wildlife and natural environment. We are resilient and value sustainable and healthy living, a sense of belonging, and respect for one another.

Manningham Council's mission is "A financially sustainable Council that listens, consults, and acts with integrity, value and transparency." Our strategic direction flows from our mission, vision, values, and five strategic themes:

1. Healthy community
2. Liveable places and spaces
3. Resilient environment
4. Vibrant and prosperous economy
5. Well governed council.

The following strategies and policies also have objectives that support the delivery of the Manningham Reconciliation Action Plan (2023 – 2025):

### Local Government

#### **Local Government Act 2020**

The updated *Local Government Act* refers directly to *Traditional Owners of land in the municipal district of the Council* as members of the *municipal community*.

#### **Manningham Council Key Strategic Documents:**

##### ***Manningham Council Generation 2030 Community Plan***

A 20-year community plan for Manningham, based on community aspirations, that drives Council policies and prioritisation of resources.

##### ***Manningham Council Plan 2021 – 25***

Council's major strategic document that outlines the goals of Council and guides the delivery of services over a four-year period.

##### ***Manningham Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021 – 2025***

The Health and Wellbeing Strategy sits alongside the Council Plan to improve health and wellbeing, across themes of inclusive and harmonious; healthy and well; safe and resilient; and connected and vibrant.

Other relevant Council Strategies include:

- Active for Life Recreation Strategy
- Ageing Well in Manningham Strategy
- Dementia Friendly Action Plan
- Early Years Plan
- Economic Development Strategy
- Engagement Policy
- Environment Strategy
- Liveable City Strategy
- Manningham Planning Scheme, including the Municipal Strategic Statement and Cultural Heritage Policy
- Open Space Strategy
- 2010 – 2025 Affordable Housing Plan



## State

### *Local Government Act 2020 (see previous section)*

### *Victorian Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (2)*

Protects the rights of all people to equal opportunities. Prohibits discrimination on the basis of age, disability, employment activity, gender identity, physical features, pregnancy, race, faith, sex, sexual orientation and other attributes.

### *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*

Defines the fundamental rights of all people in Victoria under law. The Charter particularly acknowledges the special importance of human rights for Aboriginal Victorians including the rights to:

- enjoy their identity and culture
- maintain and use their language
- maintain their kinship ties
- maintain their distinctive spiritual, material and economic relationship with the land and waters and other resources with which they have a connection under traditional laws and customs.

Public authorities have a legal obligation to properly consider Aboriginal cultural rights when they deliver services, engage with the public, make decisions, and develop new projects or policies.

### *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*

Designed to protect the health of Victoria's population, promote conditions in which people can be healthy, and reduce inequalities in the state of public health and wellbeing.

### *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*

The Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act is a key piece of legislation on matters of national environmental significance. However, a review of the Act commenced in October 2019, with an Interim Report suggesting that the Act is currently ineffective. Terms of reference for the review include consideration of Indigenous peoples' knowledge and role in the management of the environment and heritage.

### *Advancing the Treaty Process with Aboriginal Victorians Act 2018*

Australia's first ever treaty law, which provides a road map to treaty or treaties in Victoria. The Act requires the future Aboriginal Representative Body and the State to establish foundations to support future treaty negotiations. This includes a treaty authority, treaty negotiation framework and a fund to support Aboriginal self-determination.

### *Yarra River Protection (Wilip-gin Birrarung murrong) Act 2017*

'Wilip-gin Birrarung murrong' means 'keep the Birrarung alive' in the Woi-wurrung language. The Act is bi-cultural in its intent. The first overarching legislation which outlines the protection of the Yarra River and adjacent corridor, recognising its significance as a single living and integrated natural entity, and the Traditional Owners' intrinsic custodianship of it. The Act established the Birrarung Council, guided the development of

a long-term Community Vision, the development of the Yarra Strategic Plan and requires the development of a decision-making framework (DMF) against which individual projects and proposals may be assessed or evaluated.

Victorian Aboriginal and Local Government Strategy 2021 – 2026. This is a practical guide towards self-determination, designed to support local councils to include Aboriginal Victorians at the centre of their decision making, and foster mutual respect, trust, and goodwill.

### *Water Act 1989*

The Water Act (Vic) legislates the use of water resources, including use, conservation and management. It allows for the rights of Traditional Owners to access, take and use water in specified areas where an agreement is in place.

### *Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 and Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018*

The Act ensures protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage in Victoria. The Regulations enforce the Act through a set of standards, defining 'high impact activity' and 'areas of cultural sensitivity', and requiring the development of cultural heritage management plans.

### *Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework 2018 – 2023*

The overarching whole-of-government framework for Victoria, representing bipartisan commitment to long-term generational change. Through foundations of self-determination, the VAAF provides oversight to a range of existing strategies in the areas of:

- Children, family and home
- Learning and skills
- Opportunity and prosperity
- Health and wellbeing
- Justice and safety
- Culture and country

This includes policies such as *Korin Korin Balit-Djak: Aboriginal health, wellbeing and safety strategic plan 2017–2027*; *Balit Murrup: Aboriginal social and emotional wellbeing framework 2017-2027*; and *Marrung, Aboriginal Education Plan 2016 – 2026*.

### *Victorian Local Aboriginal Networks Five Year Plan 2016 – 2020*

Local Aboriginal Networks (LANs) provide a local level, community led voice for Aboriginal people, and a forum for connection. The Five-Year Plan is designed to ensure the success and sustainability of LANs. Note: the LAN program is currently under review.

### *Water for Victoria*

Launched in 2016, Water for Victoria is a strategy to ensure the state's water system is efficient and affordable into the future. It recognises the value of water for Traditional Owners and Aboriginal Victorians, and highlights consideration of Aboriginal values and traditional ecological knowledge.



## Federal

### *Racial Discrimination Act 1975*

Enshrines equity in law, by legislating that all people should be treated equally regardless of race, colour, descent or national or ethnic background.

### *Closing the Gap*

First introduced in 2008, Closing the Gap addresses the gaps in health, life expectancy and other outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians, aiming to do so within a generation. The policy has recently been reviewed and resulting in the release of the first Commonwealth implementation plan in August 2021. The plan is designed to change commitments to meaningful actions and includes four priority Reforms and 17 socioeconomic targets. The Reforms are:

- Formal Partnerships and Shared Decision Making
- Building the Community-Controlled Sector
- Transforming Government Organisations
- Shared Access to Data and
- Information at a Regional Level

## International

### *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People*

Adopted in 2007, the Declaration expands on universal human rights by applying them specifically to Indigenous peoples, through a framework of minimum standards for their survival, dignity and wellbeing.



### *Serving Country*

In 2022 and 2023, consecutive exhibitions by documentary photographer Belinda Mason, *Serving Country* (with Dieter Knierim) and *Unfinished Business*, further enshrine the Manningham Art Gallery as a space for exploring.

Photo credit, Charlie Kinross



## Our actions



### Relationships

Manningham Council is committed to developing and nurturing meaningful relationships built on respect between First Nations, Council and the wider community. Strengthening relationships and engagement will enable First Nations perspectives to be heard and increase responsiveness to community needs and aspirations.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility <sup>4</sup>
<b>1. Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Traditional Owners and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.</b>	1.1 Meet with local First Nations stakeholders and organisations to develop guiding principles for future engagement	June 2023	Director Community Connections
	1.2 Develop and implement an engagement plan to work with First Nations stakeholders and organisations	December 2023	Manager Economic and Community Wellbeing
	1.3 Develop a First Nations community profile for Manningham	December 2023	Manager Economic and Community Wellbeing

<sup>4</sup>Please note deliverables sit with Unit Directors and Managers

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility <sup>4</sup>
<b>2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).</b>	2.1 Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff	May 2023 May 2024	Manager Economic and Community Wellbeing supported by Diversity and Inclusion Working Group
	2.2 RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event	27 May - 3 June 2023, 2024	Manager Economic and Community Wellbeing supported by Diversity and Inclusion Working Group
	2.3 Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW	May, June 2023 May, June, 2024	Manager Economic and Community Wellbeing
	2.4 Organise at least one NRW event each year that showcase First Nations Art and programing in partnership with key organisations	May, June 2023 May, June, 2024	Manager Economic and Community Wellbeing with support of Manager Engaged Communities
	2.5 Register all our NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website	May, June 2023 May, June, 2024	Manager Economic and Community Wellbeing with support of Manager Engaged Communities



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility <sup>4</sup>
<b>3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence</b>	3.1 Implement strategies to engage our staff in reconciliation	June 2023 June 2024	Manager Economic and Community Wellbeing with support of Manager Engaged Communities
	3.2 Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly and encouraging community participation in council events etc	June 2023 June 2024	Manager Economic and Community Wellbeing with support of Manager Engaged Communities
	3.3 Explore opportunities to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes	October 2023 October 2024	Manager Economic and Community Wellbeing
	3.4 Collaborate with RAP endorsed and other like-minded organisations to develop ways to advance reconciliation	December 2023 December 2024	Manager Economic and Community Wellbeing
<b>4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies</b>	4.1 Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs	December 2023	Manager People Experience
	4.2 Develop, implement, and communicate an anti-discrimination policy for our organisation	June 2024	Manager People Experience
	4.3 Engage with First Nations staff and/or advisors to consult on our anti-discrimination policy	December 2023	Manager People Experience
	4.4 Educate senior leaders on the effects of racism and the nature of institutional racism	June 2024	Manager People Experience



## Respect

Manningham Council has a key role in fostering respect for and understanding of First Nations cultures, histories, knowledge and rights throughout our organisation and the municipality. This includes learning from our past, valuing and protecting First Nations cultural heritages and celebrating continuing cultures.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>5. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning</b>	5.1 Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation	June 2023	Manager Economic and Community Wellbeing and Manager Engaged Communities
	5.2 Consult local Traditional Owners and First Nations advisors on the development and implementation of a cultural learning strategy	June 2023	Manager Economic and Community Wellbeing and Manager Engaged Communities
	5.3 Develop, implement and communicate a cultural learning strategy for our staff which considers how learning can be provided (online, face to face, workshops and cultural immersion)	December 2023	Manager Economic and Community Wellbeing and Manager Engaged Communities
	5.4 Provide opportunities for RAP Working Group members, HR managers, Councillors, CEO and Executive Management Team and other relevant staff to participate in formal and structured cultural learning	September 2023	Manager Economic and Community Wellbeing in partnership with Manager People Experience and Manager Governance and Risk
	5.5 Explore opportunities for cultural immersion for Councillors in term of their appointment	September 2023	Chief Legal and Governance Officer



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>6. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.</b>	6.1 Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols	July 2023	Manager Economic and Community Wellbeing with support of Manager Engaged Communities Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Corporation
	6.2 Review existing Acknowledgement of Country to ensure it is current and relevant and in line with best practice	December 2024	Manager Economic and Community Wellbeing with support of Manager Engaged Communities Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Corporation
	6.3 Develop, implement and communicate a cultural protocol document, including protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country	July 2023	Manager Economic and Community Wellbeing with support of Manager Engaged Communities Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Corporation
	6.4 Invite a local Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at significant events each year	December 2023 December 2024	Manager Economic and Community Wellbeing
	6.5 Include an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at the commencement of important meetings	December 2023 December 2024	Chief Legal and Governance Officer

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>7. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week</b>	7.1 RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event	July 2023 July 2024	Director Connected Communities
	7.2 Review HR policies and procedures to remove barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week	March 2024	Director Connected Communities and Manager People Experience
	7.3 Promote and encourage participation in external NAIDOC events to all staff	July 2023 July 2024	Director Connected Communities and Manager People Experience
<b>8. Increase public understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights throughout the municipality</b>	8.1 Environmental education programs delivered by Council to include Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung educational aspects (including traditional land management, bush tucker and cultural activities)	October 2023 October 2024	Manager City Amenity
	8.2 Create a welcoming environment in Council's offices and other facilities for First Nations peoples by displaying culturally appropriate material	December 2023 December 2024	Director City Planning and Manager Economic and Community Wellbeing
	8.3 Build awareness and support for First Nations cultures and histories in our Early Years centres and youth programs and through the promotion of culturally safe and inclusive settings for families and children	October 2023 October 2024	Director Connected Communities

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
	8.4 Reviewing and update Council's signage and naming policies and processes to align with state policy and consider Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung aspirations	December 2023 December 2024	Manager Integrated Planning
<b>9. Explore opportunities to recognise and promote Aboriginal cultural heritage and Connection to Country.</b>	9.1 Engage Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Corporation early at appropriate stages of conception and design of key places and spaces (e.g. civic facilities, regional park lands, public art projects, interpretative signage)	January, March, May, July, September, November 2023	Manager Integrated Planning and Manager Economic and Community Wellbeing
	9.2 Continue to collaborate with the Wurrundjeri Woi-wurrung Corporation in key initiatives in land and water	January, March, May, July, September, November 2023	Manager Integrated Planning and Director City Planning
	9.3 Explore opportunities for cultural practice, spiritual healing and celebration of First Nations communities 'people and stories' and heritage	December 2023 December 2024	Manager Economic and Community Wellbeing



## Opportunities

Increase and enhance opportunities for First Nations peoples through employment and supporting economic participation of First Nations owned Businesses.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>10. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development</b>	10.1 Build understanding of current First Nations staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities	December 2023 December 2024	Manager People Experience
	10.2 Engage with First Nations staff to consult on our recruitment, retention and professional development strategy	October 2023	Manager People Experience
	10.3 Develop and implement a First Nations recruitment, retention and professional development strategy	March 2024	Manager People Experience
	10.4 Advertise job vacancies to effectively reach First Nations stakeholders	December 2023 December 2024	Manager People Experience
	10.5 Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to remove barriers to First Nations participation in our workplace	March 2024	Manager People Experience
	10.6 Increase the percentage of First Nations staff employed in our workforce	December 2024	Manager People Experience



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>11. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes</b>	11.1 Develop and implement a social procurement strategy	December 2023	Manager Procurement All Service Unit Managers
	11.2 Investigate Supply Nation membership	December 2023	Manager Procurement
	11.3 Develop and communicate opportunities for procurement of goods and services from First Nations businesses to staff	March 2024	Manager Procurement
	11.4 Review and update procurement practices to remove barriers to procuring goods and services from First Nations businesses	December 2023	Manager Procurement
	11.5 Develop commercial relationships with First Nations businesses	December 2023 December 2024	Manager Procurement



## Governance

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>12. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.</b>	12.1 Maintain First Nations representation on the RWG	February, May, August, November 2023 February, May, August, November 2024	Director Connected Communities
	12.2 Establish and apply a Terms of Reference for the RWG	July 2023	Director Connected Communities
	12.3 Meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation.	February, May, August, November 2023 February, May, August, November 2024	Director Connected Communities
<b>13. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments</b>	13.1 Define resource needs for RAP implementation	September 2023 September 2024	Director Connected Communities
	13.2 Pursue opportunities to embed RAP vision and aspirations in corporate or strategic documents, including the Council Plan	December 2023 December 2024	Manager People Experience
	13.3 Pursue opportunities to embed RAP vision and aspirations in Council policies	December 2023 December 2024	Chief Legal and Governance Officer
	13.4 Engage our senior leaders and other staff in the delivery of RAP commitments	September 2023 September 2024	Director Connected Communities
	13.5 Define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments	July 2023	Chief Legal and Governance Officer



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
	13.6 Appoint and maintain an internal RAP Champion from senior management	July 2023	Director Connected Communities
<b>14. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges, and learnings both internally and externally</b>	14.1 Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia	September 2023 September 2024	Manager Economic and Community Wellbeing
	14.2 Report RAP progress to all staff and senior leaders quarterly	March, June, September, December 2023  March, June, September, December 2024	Manager Economic and Community Wellbeing
	14.3 Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings, annually	November 2023 November 2024	Manager Engaged Communities
	14.4 Investigate participating in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer	May 2024	Manager Economic and Community Wellbeing
<b>15. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP</b>	15.1 Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP	December 2024	Manager Economic and Community Wellbeing

For more information, please contact Catherine Simcox, Coordinator Social Planning and Community Strengthening, 9840 9297  
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