Terms of Reference

A Committee for First Nations

### Background

The Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)Advisory Committee (which replaced the former Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee) contributed to Council’s commitment to engaging and supporting diverse communities as outlined in Banyule’s Council Plan and *Marrageil Strategy* between July 2024 and July 2031.

In June 2015, Council established its first Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee to provide feedback to Council about the key issues and concerns of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members in Banyule.

In 2009 Banyule Council adopted the Banyule Statement of Commitment to Indigenous Australians.  This Statement was developed in partnership with Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung Elders and marked the start of Council’s commitment to working alongside the Traditional Custodial Owners of the land on which we live, work, meet and play, to advance the aspirations of our local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

In 2024 Banyule Council adopted the Marrageil Strategy which supports enhancing local Aboriginal self-determination, and this committee will guide its implementation.

### Purpose

The aim of this Advisory Committee is to provide Council with advice and information on Inclusion, Access and Equity issues facing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and to oversee the development of Council’s *Marrageil Strategy* between July 2024 and July 2031.

To help Council understand and address issues and opportunities related to the First nations communities. This includes:

* Social: Support people to feel welcome and part of the community.
* Access: Foster equitable opportunities to use service and participate in activities.
* Equity: Treat everyone fairly and support them to access what they need to succeed.
* Human Rights: Protecting everyone’s basic rights and freedoms.

### Committee objectives

* Support and oversee the development, implementation and reporting phases of Council’s *Marrageil Strategy* between July 2024 and July 2031.
* Provide feedback and advice to Council on its policies, plans, services and projects that impact Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
* Consider and provide advice on key Government initiatives, programs and reviews that impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
* Advocate on behalf of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
* Assist Council to promote the benefits of diversity and enhance understanding about the barriers to equality facing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
* Provide advice to Council in relation to its communication, engagement and consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

### Key priorities of the committee term

* Name: Determine and establish the new name of the committee.
* Respect: Tackle racism, ageism, ableism, discrimination, and gender and family-based violence.
* Social Connection: Create meaningful and inclusive opportunities for community connections.
* Communication: Improve ways to share information and opportunities.
* Acknowledgement: Highlight and raise awareness of the contributions people that are Aboriginal and or Torres Strait Islander make to the Banyule community.
* Celebration: Celebrate and highlight Aboriginal culture throughout the municipality

### Membership

Essential selection criteria:

1. Ability to assist Council to address the key priorities of the committee.
2. Live, work or study, or have a relevant connection with Banyule
3. Knowledge and understanding of the needs and issues affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Banyule.
4. An interest and involvement in local and/or broader Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community projects, advocacy and networks.
5. Direct links to local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community populations and/or organisations in Banyule.

Up to 15 members, including:

* Up to 12 community members
* Up to 3 community organisational members

First Nations people are eligible to apply for a sitting fee per meeting.

**Organisational membership**

Organisational members are voluntary and may hold a position on the committee for a term of two years. The committee will consist of:

* Representatives from community organisations, agencies and service providers that have a focus on provision of services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Banyule. These will include (but not limited to):
* Barrbunin Beek Aboriginal Gathering Place Committee,
* Reconciliation Banyule, and
* Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation.

Please note for voting purposes only Aboriginal and / or Torres Strait Islander community members have voting rights.

Each Aboriginal and / or Torres Strait Islander community member present has a vote on each question to be decided, and if the votes are equal, the Aboriginal and / or Torres Strait Islander chairperson presiding has the casting vote and if a member fails to vote, the member is taken to have voted in the negative.

### Meeting frequence and duration

Meetings will be held six (6) times per year and for a duration of two (2) hours.

Meetings will be held in a location accessible to public transport and with adequate accessible parking. Heidelberg West, Watsonia, Greensborough or Ivanhoe.