

LAKE  
MACQUARIE  
CITY

# Bayikulinan

(to act in the future)



# Acknowledgement of Country and Traditional Custodians

Lake Macquarie City Council acknowledges that Aboriginal people, in this area, the Awabakal, were the first people of this land, and are the proud survivors of more than 200 years of continuing dispossession.

Council recognises that European occupation brought massive changes to the land and its people.

As a vital step towards building a just and common future, Council recognises the sense of loss and the grief held by all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people for the alienation from their traditional land, the loss of their freedom, their lives, their languages, their health and the disruption of their cultural practices.

Council respects the rights of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to pursue their own values and culture. Lake Macquarie City Council acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land on which this document was prepared, the Awabakal people. We pay respect to cultural knowledge holders and community members of the land and waters and pay respect to Elders past, present and future.

Lake Macquarie City Council has prepared this Plan on behalf of the Lake Macquarie community and would like to thank representatives of the Aboriginal<sup>1</sup> community, residents, service providers, government agencies, community groups and other stakeholders who provided input into the Plan and participated in the community engagement process.

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<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of this document, the word Aboriginal refers to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people inclusively.



# Acknowledgement of Country

We remember and respect the Ancestors  
who cared for and nurtured this Country.

***Dhumaan ngayin ngarrakalu kirraanan barayidin.***

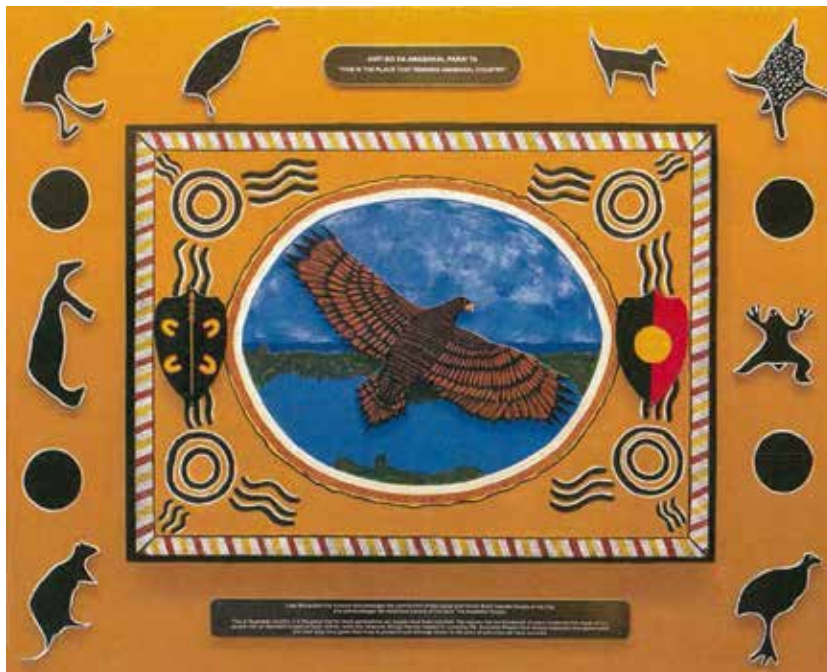
It is in their footsteps that we travel these lands and waters.

***Ngarrakalumba yuludaka bibayilin barayida baaduka.***

Lake Macquarie City Council acknowledges the Awabakal people  
and Elders past, present and future.

***Lake Macquarie City Council dhumaan Awabakala ngarrakal  
yalawaa, yalawan, yalawanan.***

Wording by the Aboriginal Reference Group and translated by Miromaa Aboriginal Language and Technology Centre



Above artwork by Uncle Jim Ridgeway *Anti Bo Ka Awabakal Parai Ta* (This is the place that remains Awabakal Country.)

The word “Aboriginal” was introduced by Europeans to label the First Inhabitants of this Country.  
“Awabakal” was a name given to local First Inhabitants of this region.

As in some European language, the masculine suffix is used in a word, unless specified.  
For example “kal” is the masculine suffix and “kaliin” is the feminine suffix.

# Commitment

## to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community

Lake Macquarie City Council recognises that within this City, many cultures reside. This includes the Awabakal people and many other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from across the nation. Therefore, in consultation with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, Lake Macquarie City Council commits to:

- denouncing racism directed at Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and will take action to combat racism within its capacity;
- recognising the vital importance and the contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to strengthening and enriching our City and region;
- respecting and conserving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural practices, traditional sites and significant places;
- promoting activities, which increase cultural sensitivity and awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people;
- supporting an agreement between the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and other community members for the care of the local environment;
- working towards the recovery of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language, health, cultural practices and lost kinship;
- looking towards Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture for practical knowledge, which could help to secure a sustainable future;
- supporting reconciliation between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people the wider community;
- promoting the employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people; and
- promoting the advancement of economic development through supporting and advocating community business initiatives.

Lake Macquarie City Council, in conjunction with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, has developed an Aboriginal Community Plan to redress disadvantages experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of this community. Council recognises the positive contribution made by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and looks forward to a future of mutual respect and harmony.

Lake Macquarie City Council endorsed the Statement of Commitment to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of Lake Macquarie in 2017. View the full Statement of Commitment at [lakemac.com.au](http://lakemac.com.au) or contact Council for a hard copy.





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# Message from the Mayor



I am proud to present the Lake Macquarie City Aboriginal Community Plan 2019-2023, *Bayikulinan*<sup>2</sup>, which has been developed with the Aboriginal community of Lake Macquarie.

This new plan speaks to the strength and capacity of Aboriginal people in our City, their enduring connection to Country, their connection with the spirit of their ancestors and the Dreamtime, and their vision for the future.

At the same time, it recognises that disadvantages will persist if we do not work to build understanding and empathy, listen well and find ways to put good ideas into action.

The first year of this plan, 2019, is the International Year of Indigenous Languages, which recognises that through language, people preserve their history, customs and traditions, convey their unique modes of thinking, meaning and expression, and construct their future.

With this in mind, I would like to usher in the Plan with some words from Awabakal language, which I am honoured to have permission to share with you<sup>3</sup>.

The first is '*pulii*', which means language or voice. The second is '*kakilin*', which means to exist. Another is '*bulbul*', which means heart. These are all words that, for me, reflect the intentions of this Plan, and aspirations for the Aboriginal community of Lake Macquarie – that we move forward with *pulii*, *kakilin*, *bulbul*, (voice, presence and heart), and make our City a place where Aboriginal people, their history and culture are respected and celebrated.

Language, education and relationships are some of the areas we hope to maintain and strengthen through our actions over the four-year life of this Plan. Consultation has told us that these are priorities for our community that need to be addressed by supporting and involving Elders, so that connections to culture are maintained for future generations.

We heard there is a strong need to create real opportunities for young Aboriginal people to connect and learn about

their culture, be supported in their families and through their schooling. Success will be measured by the extent to which these experiences give them confidence to express themselves, care for Country, celebrate who they are and develop skills that lead to quality employment and healthy, fulfilling lives.

Consultation is an ongoing process. As we deliver on this Plan, we will continue to engage in culturally appropriate ways and build on the achievements made under our previous Aboriginal Community Plan.

Together, we have made some real gains over recent years, many of which are captured in the pages that follow. In coming years, I look forward to working with our community and strategic partners to focus on the fresh set of priorities and actions that form this new Plan.

**Councillor Kay Fraser**

MAYOR

<sup>2</sup> '*Bayikulinan*' is a translation of 'to act in the future'.

<sup>3</sup> Language provided by the Miromaa Aboriginal Language and Technology Centre.

# Message from the CEO



The Aboriginal Community Plan 2019-2023, *Bayikulinan*, is a key part of Lake Macquarie City Council's planning framework.

Over the next four years, this new Plan will play an important role in helping to achieve our community's vision for our City, and supports the achievement of our City's overarching long-term Community Plan, 'Our Future in Focus', as well as our four-year delivery program and annual Operational Plan, 'Our Future in Detail'.

The Plan contains links to many other Council plans and strategies that will help us take a coordinated approach. These plans include our Aboriginal Heritage Management Strategy, Arts, Heritage and Cultural Plan, Children and Family Strategy, Youth Strategy, Crime Prevention Strategy, Multicultural Plan, Arts, Heritage and Culture Plan, Ageing Population Plan and Disability Inclusion Action Plan.

As one of the largest employers in Lake Macquarie City, our commitment to Aboriginal

people and culture is reflected in the way we manage our employment and training.

Leadership and cultural awareness training for our staff will continue to include education on respectful work practices for consultation and fostering a culturally safe workplace.

Council continues to implement strategies to recruit and support Aboriginal people in our workforce. This will include opportunities for young Aboriginal people to work with Council through identified traineeships. We will also create significant opportunities for employment of Aboriginal artists, curators, historians and other cultural workers and creatives through our Arts, Heritage and Cultural Plan.

To support and facilitate the work set out in this Plan, we employ an Aboriginal Community Development Officer who serves as an important touchpoint between Council, Local Aboriginal Land Councils, organisations, schools, community groups, Elders and the wider Lake Macquarie community.

Beneficial partnerships are essential to achieving our goals.

As an organisation, we will work with our elected Council

and decision-makers at other levels of government to support and consult appropriately with the Aboriginal community of Lake Macquarie.

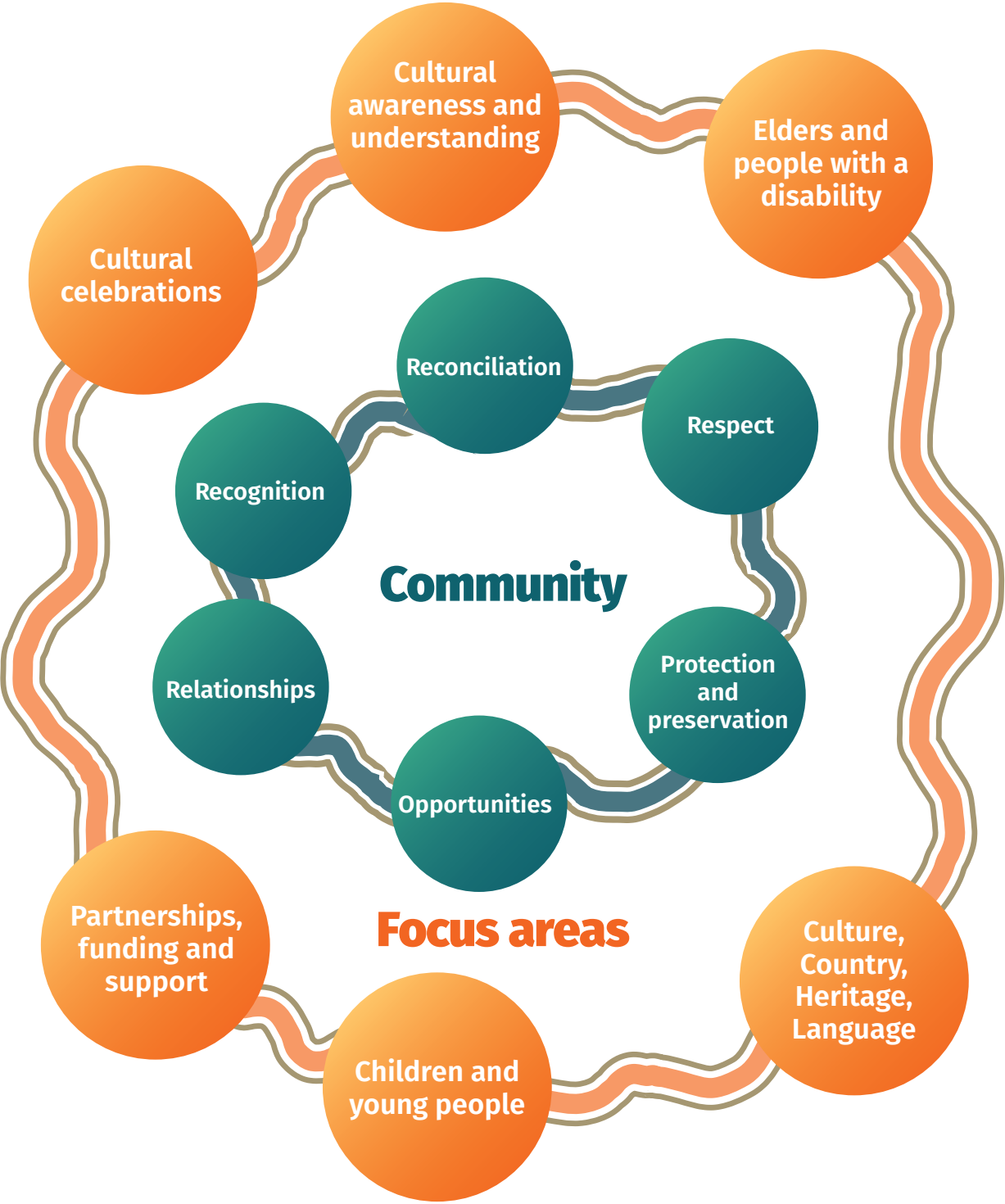
The next four years will focus on building further partnerships that will help strengthen decision-making and harness greater resources. Providing opportunities to attract funding and use our resources effectively to create better outcomes for the Aboriginal community of Lake Macquarie, and benefit our City as a whole.

Council has plans to co-fund a number of significant projects, including extending Lake Macquarie City Art Gallery to include a new section exclusively for contemporary Aboriginal art and cultural exhibitions and programs.

We can all contribute to the inclusion, celebration and preservation of Aboriginal culture, heritage and community contribution in Lake Macquarie. Working together through this Plan, we will support our local Aboriginal community's connection to Country and security of the cultural legacy for each new generation.

**Morven Cameron**  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

# Overview and vision





The Aboriginal Community Plan reflects the needs of and future opportunities for the Aboriginal community in Lake Macquarie.

The purpose of the Plan is to set clear targets that aim to improve the overall health and wellbeing of Aboriginal people living and working in Lake Macquarie, providing opportunities for equal access to services and foundations that encourage and support cultural identity.

Together, through extensive community consultation with local Aboriginal people and the wider community, we have developed six key focus areas and more than 50 actions to achieve our community goals:

<b>1. Cultural awareness and understanding</b>	Providing cultural advice, information and support to Council, community and service providers to give an understanding of past and present Aboriginal matters.
<b>2. Cultural celebrations</b>	Celebrating and recognising the achievements and success of Aboriginal people and various organisations, which increases the understanding, respect and awareness of Aboriginal culture and heritage matters within Council and the wider community.
<b>3. Elders and people with disability</b>	Encourage the inclusion of Elders and Aboriginal people with disability to participate in and attend Council and community services, activities and events, as well as investigate improved opportunities for inclusion and access to appropriate community services.
<b>4. Culture, Country, Heritage, Language</b>	Strengthen respect, understanding and preservation of Aboriginal culture, language and heritage within Council and the wider community, and offer support to reviving traditional cultural practices throughout the City.
<b>5. Children and young people</b>	Provide an understanding of the needs of young Aboriginal people and implement or support services, advice and programs to meet those needs.
<b>6. Partnerships, funding and support</b>	Advocate to progress and deliver service provisions through partnerships, in-kind and financial support, and ensure Aboriginal people have equitable access to programs and community services.

Lake Macquarie City Council is committed to ensure that local services, facilities and programs provided, sponsored and supported by Council are designed to meet the needs of the Aboriginal community and are delivered in a culturally appropriate, accessible and inclusive manner.

# Our community

## A snapshot of our community



Lake Macquarie City's population is more than 204,000, being the largest city in the Lower Hunter and the seventh largest by population in NSW, and the population is expected to increase by 24,450 by 2036.<sup>4</sup>

Lake Macquarie is a landscape of more than 760 square kilometres, comprising beaches, lake and mountains, and is home to one of the largest saltwater lakes in Australia.

In the 2016 Australian Population Census<sup>5</sup>, 8032 residents in Lake Macquarie City stated they were of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin, or both. Of these, 96 per cent were of Aboriginal decent (7721), two per cent were of Torres Strait Islander decent (157), and both totalled 151 (two per cent).



### Age

About 12 per cent of the Aboriginal population was under five years of age in 2016. This high infant population accounted for two-fifths of the Aboriginal population growth between 2011 and 2016. Additionally, there was a higher proportion of people under 18 years old in the Aboriginal community: 43 per cent compared with 21 per cent of the non-Aboriginal population in Lake Macquarie City.

The Aboriginal community is significantly younger than the non-Aboriginal population, with a median age of 21 compared to 43 years.

There was a lower proportion of people aged 65 or over in the Aboriginal community, only five per cent compared with 21 per cent. Commonly, Aboriginal communities have a lower proportion of people aged over 65, due to a shorter average life span and higher birth rates.



### Disability

The disability rate for Aboriginal people aged 35-44 years was three times the average for this age group in Lake Macquarie City. For Aboriginal people aged 45-54, the rate of disability was two and a half times the average. More than 680 Aboriginal people (8.5 per cent of the Aboriginal population) reported that they had a severe or profound disability. Aboriginal people have higher disability rates and larger families, so often have proportionally more carers than the general population.

<sup>4</sup> NSW Department of Planning and Environment Hunter Regional Plan 2036, published 2016, OEH2016/0547.

<sup>5</sup> Australian Population Census information provided by the Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016. The copyright in all Census data is held by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) for the Commonwealth of Australia. The copyright in the design, text and software code used in this product, called a Portrait, is held by The Public Practice Pty Ltd, ABN 003 052 140.



### Households

Aboriginal households had an average of 3.2 residents, which was larger than non-Aboriginal households (2.5) in Lake Macquarie City.

Almost four in 10 Aboriginal households were couples with children and one in four was a one-parent family.

Twelve per cent of Aboriginal households were single persons compared to 25 per cent of non-Aboriginal households.

In all, 51 per cent of Aboriginal households in Lake Macquarie were homeowners, with or without a mortgage, which was up by three per cent since 2011. Of Aboriginal households, 45 per cent lived in rented dwellings.



### Employment and education

The median income of Aboriginal adults was \$480 a week, which equates to 78 per cent of the median income per week for non-Aboriginal adults in Lake Macquarie City (\$613).

Sixty per cent of Aboriginal adults were in the labour force, which is on par with 59 per cent of non-Aboriginal adults. Fifteen per cent of the Aboriginal workforce was unemployed, compared with seven per cent of the non-Aboriginal workforce.

Compared with non-Aboriginal residents of the same age, there were:

- eleven per cent fewer young Aboriginal people, aged 15–24 years, enrolled in education;
- forty-six per cent of Aboriginal adults had some type of post-school qualification, 13 per cent fewer than non-Aboriginal adults (59 per cent); and
- seven per cent of Aboriginal adults had a degree or higher, compared with 25 per cent for non-Aboriginal adults.

Eighty per cent of Lake Macquarie's Aboriginal households had an internet connection, which was nine per cent higher than in 2011.

# Council services and support

## Council strategies, programs and services

Council delivers the following strategies, programs and services to celebrate and support the Aboriginal community in Lake Macquarie City:

- protecting and maintaining the City's distinct Awabakal cultural heritage for future generations through the implementation of the Aboriginal Heritage Management Strategy;
- supporting Aboriginal artists and creatives through Lake Macquarie City Art Gallery exhibitions, education programs and community projects in consultation with the Aboriginal Reference Group;
- employing a full-time Aboriginal Community Development Officer to offer assistance and provide information to the Aboriginal community, service providers and the wider community;
- education programs related to the Lake Possum Skin Cloak and Cloak Education Suitcase through the Lake Macquarie City Art Gallery and Lake Mac Libraries;
- the IDX Flint educational program in Lake Mac Libraries;
- Aboriginal performers and storytellers for programs and displays in Lake Mac Libraries;
- display of Aboriginal art, artefacts and flags at Council;
- maintaining and supporting cultural knowledge centres in Lake Mac Libraries and Local History Online;
- preserving our environment with Landcare's Clean up the Lake Program, Junior Landcare and Landcare events and services;
- promoting external grants and funding opportunities; and
- promoting employment opportunities for Aboriginal people within Council and the wider community.



## Partnerships and activities

Council funds and partners with service providers to deliver a range of programs and services for the Aboriginal community in our region by:

- providing funding and support for NAIDOC celebrations in Lake Macquarie, which are coordinated by local Aboriginal communities and not-for-profit organisations;
- supporting the annual NSW Koori Knockout netball tournament held at Charlestown Netball courts;
- assisting with financial and in-kind support for the Lake Macquarie Police District annual youth cultural exchange programs;
- collaborating with local Aboriginal communities, businesses and organisations for the delivery of cultural programs, events and activities; and
- attending and contributing information to interagency networks and various committees.

# Culturally significant dates 2019

**26 January**

Australia Day/  
Survival Day

**13 February**

National Apology  
Anniversary

**21 March**

National Close the  
Gap Day

**26 May**

National Sorry Day

**27 May  
to 3 June**

National  
Reconciliation Week

**3 June**

Mabo Day

**1 July**

Coming of the Light

**7-14 July**

National NAIDOC  
Week

**4 August**

National Aboriginal  
and Torres Strait  
Islander Children's  
Day

**9 August**

International Day  
of the World's  
Indigenous People

**5 September**

Indigenous  
Literacy Day

For further details visit Council's website at [lakemac.com.au](http://lakemac.com.au).



# About this Plan

The Aboriginal Community Plan 2019–2023 *Bayikulinan* supports the achievement of our City's over-arching 10-year Community Plan, 'Our Future in Focus' 2017–2027, as well as our four-year delivery program and annual Operational Plan, 'Our Future in Detail'.

This Plan forms part of a suite of plans that identify Council's actions in working with various groups, such as children and families, young people, multicultural groups, the ageing population and people with disability.

It aims to highlight the needs of Aboriginal residents in Lake Macquarie and contains strategies and actions that reflect Council's commitment to meet the needs and challenges facing our local Aboriginal community.

This review of the previous Aboriginal Community Plan has drawn on the experiences and knowledge of our local Aboriginal communities, Elders, local service providers and government agencies to test and update our priority areas and identify strategies and actions for Council to deliver over the next four years.

# Looking back

Together, we have made some real achievements over recent years including:



Promotion of local Aboriginal people's achievements



Annual NAIDOC Week celebrations including Council's ceremony, grant program and support for community organisations

Preservation of a significant scar tree at Glendale



Support of Aboriginal youth exchange programs and providing opportunities for mentoring and engaging young Aboriginal people in community activities

Commitment to Aboriginal cultural awareness training sessions for Council staff, community members and service providers four times a year



An annual Close the Gap Day fundraiser

Established partnerships with Local Aboriginal Land Councils and other organisations

Installation of interpretive signage explaining elements of European and Aboriginal culture along the Fernleigh Awabakal Shared Track



Promotion of local Aboriginal history and culture through Lake Mac Libraries cultural knowledge centres and Council's Local History Online

An annual celebration of Reconciliation Week and Harmony Day

Increased opportunities for employment and education for Aboriginal people at Council

Facilitation of Aboriginal community cultural programs and literacy resources



Educational programs at Lake Mac Libraries branches, such as IDX Flint

Employment of a full-time Aboriginal Community Development Officer at Council





The Aboriginal Youth Cultural Identity grant program

Implementation of a dedicated Council newsletter to the Aboriginal Community, the *Koori Grapevine*, published a minimum of four times a year



Aboriginal culture, art and heritage as a significant focus of the City's Arts, Heritage and Cultural Plan 2017-2027

Promoting awareness and understanding through permanent displays of Aboriginal cultural items and artworks in Council's Administration Building foyer, grounds and Council Chambers



Celebration of the local Aboriginal community at Council events through engagement of Elders and/or cultural performers and speakers

An internal Aboriginal Support Network at Council



A dedicated webpage on Council's website for Aboriginal community and cultural information

Cultural identification and understanding training to assist Council staff at outdoor sites



Lake Macquarie City Art Gallery working with the Aboriginal Reference Group and being recognised for excellence in Aboriginal exhibitions, projects and programs

Return of the Kurra Kurrin petrified forest to the Lake

# Awards

## 2015

**IMAGinE (NSW) Award** for the exhibition project *(in)visible: The First Peoples and War*

## 2016

**IMAGinE (NSW) Award** for the exhibition project *Lore & Order*

**MAGNA (National)** for the Temporary or Travelling Exhibition category with *(in)visible: the First Peoples and War*

**MAGNA (National)** for the Indigenous Project or Keeping Place category with *Lore & Order*

Council of the Year, Aboriginal Outdoor Worker of the Year and Aboriginal Youth Worker of the Year through the **Local Government Aboriginal Network Conference (LGANC)**

## 2017

**IMAGinE (NSW) Award** Highly Commended Level 2 Engagement Programs: *Lake Macquarie: Living Cultures (working watercraft)*

## 2018

Minister's Award for Women in Local Government, Non-senior staff member and Aboriginal Indoor Employee of the Year through the **Local Government Aboriginal Network Conference (LGANC)**.

# Looking forward

Over the life of this new Plan, some of the key actions across Council include:



Investigating ways to implement dual naming in Lake Macquarie City and **Welcome to Awabakal Country** signage



**Assisting** in the preparation of Swansea Heads boardwalk



**Working collaboratively** with Arts, Culture and Tourism, the Aboriginal Reference Group and the community to develop a new wing of the Lake Macquarie City Art Gallery dedicated to contemporary Aboriginal art



Continuing to support participation in **youth programs** such as Sista Speak, Wungkun Nubalan female youth exchange and the Tunbilliko male youth exchange and others, which may arise



**Extending** interpretive signage and artwork along the Fernleigh Awabakal Shared Track



In conjunction with community, assisting in **developing** a dedicated Aboriginal Cultural Centre



**Wording and language translation** to install Acknowledgement of Country plaques for Council facilities



Continuing to fund cultural programs such as **NAIDOC Week**

The Lake Macquarie Aboriginal Community Plan 2019-2023 is a strategic document that links in with these Council plans and strategies:

- Aboriginal Heritage Management Strategy 2011;
- Arts, Heritage and Cultural Plan 2017-2027;
- Community Strategic Plan 2017-2027;
- Ageing Population Strategy 2018-2022;
- Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2017-2021;
- Lake Macquarie Children and Family Strategy 2015-2020;
- Lake Macquarie Multicultural Plan 2016-2020;
- Lake Macquarie Youth Strategy 2014-2019; and
- Lake Macquarie Crime Prevention Plan 2015-2018.

# Community engagement

## Consultation and survey outcomes

In the development of this Plan, Council engaged with local Elders, community groups, service providers, government organisations and community members to review and update Council's four- year Aboriginal Community Plan and Statement of Commitment to Aboriginal people.

We asked our community to share ideas for programs and initiatives to provide support for our Aboriginal community and to identify strengths, priorities and actions to address local challenges.

## Who participated?

More than 200 people actively participated in the consultation, including:

- Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal residents;
- Bahtabah and Westlakes Elders groups;
- the Awabakal, Bahtabah and Biraban Local Aboriginal Land Councils;
- Lake Macquarie Aboriginal Reference Group;
- 10 community and support service providers; and
- three education and training providers.

## How did they participate?



315 visitors to our Have Your Say engagement webpage



99 community surveys



Six workshops across the City



6710 people reached via Facebook



## What we heard

We asked about local challenges, success stories and ideas for ways Council can contribute or provide support. Here is a selection of some of the ideas and comments we heard:

"The strength of our people, our connection to Country, our connection with spirit our Ancestors and our Dreamtime."

"Youth empowerment, cultural learning and youth leadership...there is a lack of youth wellbeing specific roles in the region."

"I would like to see Council focus on promoting more culture awareness and cultural celebration in the wider community throughout the year and not just on culturally significant dates."

"Engaging local Elders, leaders and youth leaders and sharing culture through stories, art and dance."

"The most important initiative and programs should be delivered to our children and families at our Lake Macquarie schools!"

"Partnerships with general services to support specific programs... playgroups, health programs, [and] school connections."

"More interaction with the Indigenous people with regards to land and planning management of sacred sites."

"I would like the Council to provide work experience/traineeships within the Council for Aboriginal youth. I feel it is important that young Aboriginal people understand what Council is and how it functions."



## Some of the key issues identified through community consultation:



Issues for children and young people need to be addressed by means of more activities, sports, workshops, jobs, programs and centres



Preserving language and caring for Country, the Lake and environment inclusive of significant sites with respect for people, culture, land, water, flora and fauna



A central Aboriginal Cultural Centre is needed in Lake Macquarie



Celebrate NAIDOC Week and other significant events in the City including Council's commitment to NAIDOC events



Advertise and promote opportunities to the wider community, especially people without computers or internet literacy



Reconciliation between each other and the wider community and mutual respect for community and Elders



Alcohol, drugs, domestic violence, financial problems and mental health issues

## Community survey results

Where would you like to see a greater focus over the next few years to support our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community? (Number of responses)



Health and wellbeing (69)



Caring for Country and the environment (68)



Education, employment and training opportunities (67)



Children and young people (66)



Celebration and promotion of culturally significant dates (58)



Support for families (57)

# Action Plan

The following Action Plan sets out a vision across six key focus areas:

1. Cultural awareness and understanding
2. Cultural celebrations
3. Elders and people with a disability
4. Culture, Country, Heritage, Language
5. Children and young people
6. Partnerships, funding and support

# Cultural awareness and understanding

## OBJECTIVE

To improve the knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal culture, heritage and issues facing the Aboriginal people to the wider community.

## STRATEGY

Provide cultural advice, information, education and support to Council, community and service providers.

NO.	ACTION	OUTCOME	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBILITY
1.1	Create and distribute regular information through a range of accessible channels, including the Koori Grapevine newsletter.	The Aboriginal and wider community is kept updated of news, events, activities, services, wellbeing, education and employment opportunities. Publish the Koori Grapevine a minimum of four times a year.	Ongoing	Aboriginal Community Development Officer
1.2	Review and update Council's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander webpage with relevant and appropriate cultural information.	The community has access to relevant and current cultural information at any time. Provides a better understanding of past and present Aboriginal culture and heritage.	Ongoing	Aboriginal Community Development Officer Communications
1.3	Provide advice on culturally appropriate engagement and protocols.	Cultural engagement activities and protocols are delivered respectfully with consideration to Aboriginal people, sites and culture.	Ongoing	Aboriginal Community Development Officer
1.4	Continue to deliver Aboriginal cultural awareness training for Council staff, community and service providers who engage with the Aboriginal community.	Increase participants understanding of Aboriginal matters, past, present and future, reconciliation and Council's commitment to the Aboriginal community.	Annually	Aboriginal Community Development Officer
1.5	Review Council's induction process to develop and deliver a cultural awareness talk to new staff.	A cultural awareness induction program is delivered to all new Council staff to give an understanding of working with the Aboriginal community and consultation processes.	One year	Aboriginal Community Development Officer Workforce Planning Unit
1.6	Advocate for additional daily Aboriginal flag raising, and introduce arts and artefact displays at other Council facilities.	Promotes greater understanding and respect for Aboriginal culture within community and Council.	One-three years	Aboriginal Community Development Officer



# Cultural celebrations

## OBJECTIVE

To celebrate and recognise the achievements of Aboriginal people and community organisations, increasing understanding, respect and awareness of Aboriginal culture, heritage matters and significance within Council and the wider community.

## STRATEGY

Deliver, promote and support cultural events and activities to celebrate and recognise culturally significant dates and community achievements.

NO.	ACTION	OUTCOME	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBILITY
2.1	Continue to deliver NAIDOC Week celebrations with an annual flag-raising ceremony at Council.	To bring the community and Council together for a significant cultural celebration. Council's commitment to supporting Aboriginal culture, heritage and reconciliation is demonstrated within Council and the community.	Annually	Aboriginal Community Development Officer  Social and Community Planning  Communications
2.2	Coordinate Council's annual NAIDOC Week community funding program.	To offer financial and in-kind support to celebrate cultural events across the City. Provide an opportunity for community groups to host NAIDOC Week celebration to promote reconciliation and respect for Aboriginal culture, community and heritage.	Annually	Aboriginal Community Development Officer  Aboriginal Grants Committee
2.3	Support and advertise local NAIDOC Week activities and cultural events.	Activities are supported by Council and the community is aware of events held in the City. Increase attendance and participation at cultural events.	Ongoing	Aboriginal Community Development Officer  Social and Community Planning  Communications
2.4	Engage local Aboriginal cultural performers and artists for large-scale Council community events.	Provide opportunities to engage, promote and support Aboriginal cultural knowledge holders, artists and performers while promoting Aboriginal cultural practices to the wider community.	Ongoing	Aboriginal Community Development Officer  Social and Community Planning  Arts, Culture and Tourism
2.5	Advertise and promote significant cultural dates and events.	Council, community and service providers are kept informed of upcoming significant cultural events and activities across the City. Increase attendance and participation at cultural events. Offer an understanding of the meaning of and the importance of these days.	Ongoing	Aboriginal Community Development Officer  Social and Community Planning  Communications
2.6	Organise and hold annual events for significant dates such as Close the Gap Day and Reconciliation Week.	Create awareness of the large life-expectancy gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. Support and promote reconciliation between people from various backgrounds and cultures.	Annually	Aboriginal Community Development Officer  Social and Community Planning  Communications

# Elders and Aboriginal people with Disability

## OBJECTIVE

To enable Elders and Aboriginal people with disability to contribute to and connect further with the wider community.

## STRATEGY

Advocate for and promote greater inclusion and accessibility of services, facilities and activities to enhance wellbeing and employment opportunities.

NO.	ACTION	OUTCOME	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBILITY
3.1	Promote Council's and other support services health and wellbeing programs, events and activities.	Awareness of services and better ability to access community transport operators. Decrease the health gap of preventable chronic illnesses in the Aboriginal community. Provide Aboriginal community members with relevant information on Council organised and funded events. Increase social participation and wellbeing for elderly Aboriginal people and Aboriginal people with disability to participate in a range of social activities throughout the City.	Ongoing	Aboriginal Community Development Officer Social and Community Planning Communications
3.2	Promote employment opportunities from a wide sector to the Aboriginal community.	Inform the Aboriginal community of job vacancies across the region, which increases access to employment opportunities with the potential to decrease the employment gap.	Ongoing	Aboriginal Community Development Officer Social and Community Planning
3.3	Advocate for additional opportunities to employ Aboriginal people and Aboriginal people with disability in Council.	Offer opportunities for Aboriginal people and Aboriginal people with disability to engage in the workforce and demonstrate Council's commitment to improve Aboriginal employment opportunities. Decrease the employment gap by sharing information and employment opportunities and providing options to apply for vacant positions within the Council and other organisations.	One-two years	Aboriginal Community Development Officer Social and Community Planning Workforce Planning Unit
3.4	Create opportunities to train Aboriginal people in advocacy and networking skills to ultimately increase access to services and close known health gaps.	Organise advocacy and networking training opportunities for Aboriginal people and support advocacy efforts for increased services.	One-two years	Aboriginal Community Development Officer

# Culture, Country, Heritage, Language

## OBJECTIVE

To increase respect and understanding of Aboriginal culture in the wider community and provide support to traditional cultural practices in Lake Macquarie.

## STRATEGY

Deliver options to protect and preserve traditional and cultural practices and to foster a social environment of respect and inclusion.

NO.	ACTION	OUTCOME	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBILITY
4.1	Consult for dialect and language translation for Acknowledgement of Country and Traditional Custodians plaques to be erected on Council facilities.	Provide a respectful welcome when visiting Council facilities and highlight recognition of the Traditional Custodians, the Awabakal people.	One-two years	Aboriginal Community Development Officer City Works Aboriginal Reference Group
4.2	Investigate ways to implement dual naming in Lake Macquarie City and Welcome to Awabakal Country signage.	Respectfully acknowledge Awabakal Country within our City and promote awareness of the Traditional Custodians of the land and waters of Lake Macquarie.	One-four years	Aboriginal Community Development Officer Aboriginal Reference Group City Works
4.3	Introduce artefact and site identification training to Council staff.	Train staff to recognise potential Aboriginal significant sites and areas of value to Aboriginal people and protect the environment and significant areas.	One-two years	Aboriginal Community Development Officer Workforce Planning Unit
4.4	Continue to monitor Council's consultation processes to appropriately engage the Aboriginal community.	Increased engagement between Council and the Aboriginal community. Consultation processes delivered in a culturally appropriate manner.	Ongoing	Aboriginal Community Development Officer Communications Community Land Planner - Native Title Culture and Heritage Officer
4.5	Advocate for ways to revive Aboriginal language and cultural practices.	Enable Aboriginal people to reconnect with traditional cultural practices.	One-three years	Aboriginal Community Development Officer
4.6	Cultivate culturally appropriate practices at Council events and ceremonies.	Events are delivered in a culturally appropriate manner.	Ongoing	Aboriginal Community Development Officer Arts, Culture and Tourism
4.7	Develop a Council guideline for Acknowledgement of Country to be performed at Council ceremonies, meetings and events.	Incorporates, recognition, respect and acknowledgment of the Traditional Custodians, the Awabakal people.	One-three years	Aboriginal Community Development Officer Communications and Corporate Strategy
4.8	Continue to work with local Aboriginal communities and knowledge holders to develop nominations for sites of special significance to Aboriginal people for Aboriginal Place listing and/or state heritage listing or local heritage listing.	Improve the protection of sites of significance from inappropriate development, increase the involvement of the Aboriginal community in decision making about future development proposals and raise awareness of the sites.	Ongoing	Aboriginal Community Development Officer Cultural and Heritage Officer

# Children and young people

## OBJECTIVE

To identify ways to improve the wellbeing and support the issues facing young Aboriginal people in Lake Macquarie.

## STRATEGY

Engage with the community to identify ways to increase services and programs to support Aboriginal children and young people.

NO.	ACTION	OUTCOME	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBILITY
5.1	Advocate for and promote opportunities to employ and train Aboriginal people within Council and other organisations.	Increase employment and training opportunities for young Aboriginal people.	One-two years	Aboriginal Community Development Officer
5.2	Continue Council's participation and support of programs and services for Aboriginal children and young families.	Increase the number of early childhood education and care services accessed by the Aboriginal community.	Ongoing	Aboriginal Community Development Officer Social and Community Planning
5.3	Continue Council's participation and support of school and programs for young Aboriginal people.	Support programs for young Aboriginal that deliver cultural learning and identity, empowerment and leadership skills, and promote good health and wellbeing.	Ongoing	Aboriginal Community Development Officer Social and Community Planning
5.4	Promote and sustain participation of young Aboriginal people as members of the Lake Macquarie Youth Advisory Council.	Provides the opportunity for young Aboriginal people to advise on Council matters and undertake community leadership.	Ongoing	Aboriginal Community Development Officer Social and Community Planning
5.5	Explore ways to exhibit and support young Aboriginal artists and performers.	Increase the number of exhibition opportunities and support programs for young Aboriginal artists and performers.	One-two years	Aboriginal Community Development Officer Arts, Culture and Tourism
5.6	Promote sports programs, events and venues available for children and young people throughout the city to the Aboriginal community.	Increase the health, wellbeing and social inclusion of Aboriginal children and young people through sports and exercise programs.	Ongoing	Aboriginal Community Development Officer Social and Community Planning

# Partnerships, funding and support

## OBJECTIVE

To maintain and build additional relationships between Council, community and service providers.

## STRATEGY

Collaborate to improve and deliver additional services through partnerships, in-kind and financial support.

NO.	ACTION	OUTCOME	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBILITY
6.1	Maintain and develop new relationships between Council, community and service providers to improve access to services and advocacy.	Increase the number of community members, organisations and service providers collaborating with Council to deliver services, events and programs to the Aboriginal community.  Maintain the participation of Aboriginal young people as members of the Lake Macquarie Youth Advisory Council.	Ongoing	Aboriginal Community Development Officer  Community Services  Development, Assessment and Certification  Integrated Planning  Arts, Culture and Tourism
6.2	Investigate the re-establishment of Council's Aboriginal Advisory Panel.	Bring cultural knowledge holders together to provide advice to Council on community and strategic matters.  Enable better community consultation practices.	Two-four years	Aboriginal Community Development Officer  Communications and Corporate Strategy
6.3	Maintain communication with Council's Aboriginal Staff Network group.	Support Council's Aboriginal staff by providing relevant information about Council and the Aboriginal community.	Ongoing	Aboriginal Community Development Officer
6.4	Uphold the Aboriginal Grants Committee (AGC) membership and Terms of Reference.	Maintain a balance of fair recommendations to ensure all grant applications processed in an unbiased manner.	Annually	Aboriginal Community Development Officer  Aboriginal Grants Committee
6.5	Promote Council's donations, sponsorship and funding opportunities, as well as external grant opportunities to community and organisations.	Provides funding opportunities for groups and organisations to apply for community funding in Lake Macquarie.	Ongoing	Aboriginal Community Development Officer
6.6	Maintain the established Aboriginal Reference Group.	Continue to receive cultural advice from the Group regarding upcoming Aboriginal exhibitions and programs with the Lake Macquarie City Art Gallery.	Ongoing	Arts, Culture and Tourism
6.7	Continue to support Aboriginal cultural programs, resources and exhibitions at Lake Mac Libraries and Council's Lake Macquarie City Art Gallery.	Increased opportunities to highlight Aboriginal artists and talent by exhibiting works to the wider community.  Provides education and awareness of traditional cultural practices and methods to the wider community.	Ongoing	Aboriginal Community Development Officer  Aboriginal Reference Group  Arts, Culture and Tourism
6.8	Assist service providers to deliver services in a culturally appropriate manner.	Provide guidance and recommendations to service providers to deliver their services respectfully.	Ongoing	Aboriginal Community Development Officer  Social and Community Planning

## Monitoring and evaluation

Council's Aboriginal Community Development Officer will provide reports on the actions within this Plan through the Operational Plan quarterly reports.

Council will also report on the Aboriginal Community Plan actions as part of the Annual Report, which is available on Council's website.

Information will also be updated in the Koori Grapevine newsletter and upon request.

With courteous consultation, Council's Aboriginal Community Plan 2019-2023 'Bayikulinan' will be reviewed and updated in 2023.

## References

1. Language translations provided by the Miromaa Aboriginal Language and Technology Centre, 57 James Street, Hamilton NSW 2303.
2. NSW Department of Planning and Environment Hunter Regional Plan 2036, published 2016, OEH2016/0547.
3. Australian Population Census information provided by the Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016. The copyright in all Census data is held by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) for the Commonwealth of Australia. The copyright in the design, text and software code used in this product, called a Portrait, is held by The Public Practice Pty Ltd, ABN 003 052 140.
4. NSW Department of Planning and Environment Hunter Regional Plan 2036, published 2016, OEH2016/0547.
5. Australian Population Census information provided by the Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016. The copyright in all Census data is held by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) for the Commonwealth of Australia. The copyright in the design, text and software code used in this product, called a Portrait, is held by The Public Practice Pty Ltd, ABN 003 052 140.



