

To: The City of Mandurah
Re: Support for an Elder in Residence

13/11/2020

Dear Mayor & Councillors,

As we celebrate NAIDOC WEEK we are reminded of this year's theme: *Always Was, Always Will Be*. It recognises that First Nations people have occupied and cared for this continent for over 65,000 years.

Further to your unanimous vote that Council:

1. Directs officers to provide a report outlining:

1.1 The 'Uluru Statement from the Heart' - providing background information and options relating to supporting its principles.

1.2 The establishment of a First Nations Voice to Council and the City of Mandurah, through in-principal support for an 'Elder in Residence'.

2. Prior to any decision, refers for consideration the 'Uluru Statement from the Heart' and the 'Elder in Residence' to the City's Reconciliation Action Group for their guidance and potential establishment of a working group.

3. Notes a report will be presented to Council for consideration by May 2021.

The Mandurah Environment and Heritage Group Inc. hereby endorses your support of the Uluru Statement of the Heart to walk with the First Nation's people in a movement of the Australian people for a better future, and we recommend input from Indigenous residents on the appointment of an Elder in Residence.

The Uluru Statement calls for three fundamental changes: Voice, Treaty and Truth. We see the creation of an Elder in Residence position as a step towards strengthening local relationships and honouring the Statement. As proposed by Cr. Peter Rogers, formalising the relationship - rather than engaging cultural consultants on an ad hoc basis - would enable visible Indigenous Leadership within Mandurah's governance structure.

The MEHG Committee recommends that you consider the merits of having more than one representative, for example both male and female, and that you consult the First Nations People and the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) group.

We also refer with interest to the formula used by the Uluru Statement gathering organisers to invite 60% original owners, 20% Indigenous services and 20% Indigenous individuals to the conversation.

Thanking you sincerely for your leadership in this matter.

Merrilee Baker
MEHG Project Officer

References <https://ulurustatement.org/campaign-toolkit>