

Strategic Alignment - Dynamic City Culture

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The State and Federal Governments have committed to establishing a First Nations Voice to their Parliaments; via parallel but separate processes.

The processes represent the commitment to implement the [Uluru Statement from the Heart](#).

The purpose of this report is to outline the context of the Voice to Parliament, the State Government and Federal Government processes, key resources, City of Adelaide involvement and next steps.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT THE RECONCILIATION COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS TO COUNCIL:

That Council:

1. Supports respectful conversations about constitutional recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and the Voice to Parliament at State and Federal Government levels.
 2. Authorises the Lord Mayor to write to the State Government and Commonwealth Government on behalf of Council requesting that Local Governments and communities are kept informed on the proposals as they evolve.
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IMPLICATIONS AND FINANCIALS

City of Adelaide 2020-2024 Strategic Plan	Strategic Alignment – Thriving Communities ‘Promote and showcase multiculturalism and Aboriginal culture and support local organisations to express this heritage.’ Strategic Alignment – Dynamic City Culture Support, promote and share Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and pay homage to the Kaurna people as Traditional Owners.
Policy	City of Adelaide’s Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) 2021-2024 includes deliverables under action item 15, ‘Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week’.
Consultation	Not as a result of this report
Resource	Not as a result of this report
Risk / Legal / Legislative	Not as a result of this report
Opportunities	City of Adelaide can play a role in informing its community of the Voice to Parliament.
22/23 Budget Allocation	Not as a result of this report
Proposed 23/24 Budget Allocation	Not as a result of this report
Life of Project, Service, Initiative or (Expectancy of) Asset	Not as a result of this report
22/23 Budget Reconsideration (if applicable)	Not as a result of this report
Ongoing Costs (eg maintenance cost)	Not as a result of this report
Other Funding Sources	Not as a result of this report

DISCUSSION

1. The purpose of this report is to consider the Voice to Parliament and to enable the Reconciliation Committee to agree on actions in response to the current process.
2. The State and Federal Governments have committed to establishing a First Nations Voice to their Parliaments.
3. The processes represent the commitment to implement the Uluru Statement from the Heart.

State Government

4. On Sunday 26 March 2023, South Australia became the first state in Australia to have a First Nations Voice to Parliament after the [First Nations Voice Bill 2023](#) was assented to by Her Excellency the Honourable Frances Adamson AC, Governor of South Australia in a special meeting of Executive Council on the steps of Parliament House.
5. The Bill provides a connected, direct and independent line of communication for First Nations people to South Australia's Parliament and the government, to allow important, shared communication by locally elected regional members.
6. The State Government has provided a [two page information brochure](#) explaining the process.
7. The First Nations Voice will be established through an election process for First Nations people to represent community at a local level. The presiding members of each Local First Nations Voice will become the State First Nations Voice members.
8. The Electoral Commission of South Australia will set a date for the South Australian Local Voice elections which will be held in 2023.
9. At this election, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in South Australia will be able to vote for who they want to represent them on their Local Voice. It will be important for community to be on South Australia's electoral role to be eligible to vote.
10. The Commissioner for First Nations Voice, Dale Agius, is engaging with community to share information on the model that has been passed by State Parliament. More details on the first election of the Local First Nations Voices is expected to come.
11. Further information on how to nominate and vote in the Local Voice will be provided to the Committee as it becomes available.

Federal Government

12. On 1 December 2022, the Federal Government introduced the [Referendum \(Machinery Provisions\) Amendment Bill 2022](#) to Parliament – taking the next step towards a referendum for a Voice to Parliament for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
13. This means that in 2023 Australians will have their say in a referendum to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Constitution through an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice.
14. The Voice will be an independent, representative advisory body for First Nations peoples. It will provide a permanent means to advise the Australian Parliament and Government on the views of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples on matters that affect them.
15. On 23 March 2023, the Prime Minister announced the constitutional amendment and referendum question agreed to by the Referendum Working Group and the Government. It is understood that these will soon be introduced into Parliament. The constitutional amendment and referendum question reflect the advice of the First Nations Referendum Working Group.
16. For a national referendum to be successful, the proposed question must receive a national majority "Yes" vote, and receive a majority "Yes" vote in a majority of states (at least 4 out of 6) as determined by the Australian people.

City of Adelaide involvement

17. The agenda for the Council meeting to be held on 9 May 2023 will include at a Motion on Notice regarding the Voice. The Motion on Notice seeks:

'That Council;

Consistent with successive Council terms at the City of Adelaide's in our strong support for reconciliation, agrees to recommend to all residents of the City a "yes" vote at the referendum to be held later this year to

alter the Constitution to recognise the First Peoples of Australia by establishing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice and asks the Administration to;

1. *Develop a page on Council's website setting out the resolution of Council supporting the "yes" vote, together with information about the referendum including, when available, locations at which votes can be cast in our local government area, and*
 2. *Arrange for official Australian Government publications related to the referendum to be accessed with an online link or, in the case of printed material, through the Colonel Light Centre, Council libraries and Community Centres.'*
18. Administration's comment about the Motion of Notice advises that the City of Adelaide has not adopted a formal position on the First Nations Voice to Parliament and has to date treated the vote as a decision for an individual. Should Council progress this motion, We will ensure all official information is made available linked through a dedicated page on the CoA website and that official publications are made available through the Colonel Light Centre, Council libraries and Community Centres.
19. [City of Adelaide's website](#) currently includes information about the Voice to Parliament, and we will share information via social media, Libraries and Community Centres.
20. Administration has already contacted the Australian Electoral Commission to access its resources to share with the community.

Next Steps

21. This report recommends that the Reconciliation Committee recommends to Council, that Council:
- 21.1. Supports respectful conversations about constitutional recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and the Voice to Parliament at State and Federal Governments.
 - 21.2. Authorises the Lord Mayor to write to the State Government and Commonwealth Government on behalf of Council requesting that local governments and communities are kept informed on the proposals.

DATA AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Link 1 – [Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan \(RAP\) 2021-2024](#)

Link 2 – [First Nations Voice Bill 2023](#)

Link 3 – State Government [two page information brochure](#)

Link 4 – [Referendum \(Machinery Provisions\) Amendment Bill 2022](#)

Link 5 – [City of Adelaide's website](#)

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

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