



ATTACHMENTS

**Under Separate Cover
Council Meeting**

6.00pm Tuesday 23 March 2021

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7.6 Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan 2021
Attachment 1 Reconciliation Action Plan 2021 4



RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN **DRAFT**



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Council Acknowledges the traditional Wadawurrung and Eastern Maar owners of the land where we live, work and meet. Council pays its respects to Wadawurrung and Eastern Maar Elders both past and present and extends that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People who are a part of Golden Plains Shire.

*Image: Sunset over Bunjil's Lookout in Maude.
Artwork: Wabdallah Dja by Shu Brown*

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Wabdallah Dja is the name of the artwork I have created and is reflective of the Golden Plains Shire landscape with a blend of contemporary and traditional style of artwork. Incorporating all the diverse country, past and current uses of the land in colors that can be seen all throughout the shire.



An art print of Wabdallah Dja will be proudly displayed in the foyer of GPSC offices in Bannockburn.

ABOUT WABDALLAH DJA

We see hills and mountain ranges covered with Gum Trees, Blue Gums, vast Green Rolling Hills directing the water into the many creeks and streams flowing deep into the valleys and crevices. The hills have their own songlines and travel routes across country. Wadawurrung people were farmers, agriculturalists and relied on many different grass and plant species on country.

The rivers and creeks carry their own stories that connect us to the land, a river has many uses and is not bound by one name of the extent of the river, rather giving the sections of the river names because of its use or significance. The rivers flow varies as it runs over rocks and soft river sand beds, creating ripples of water on its course, at the waters edge various reeds and grasses grow that are used to make baskets, fish and eel traps. Rocks lay within the water making rapids and sections used to cross making access to country easier in places. These waters carry life and spawn growth of many different water life, fish, eels and freshwater shellfish.

Golden plains by name and Golden in Color, across the once volcanic plains we see fields of grasses, pastoral lands once scattered in remnant stone now a rich commercial way of life for farmers and people living from the land. Meeting places dotted across the country now small towns with their own communities much like to the Wadawurrung clans that lived across the landscape. To the north people of the Goldfields, to the West people of the Golden Plains and to the East people of the Ranges and Hills.

All bound together by Bunjil, the Creator Spirit who can be seen in every corner of the Golden Plains, watching over his creations, his people, connecting us all to the land and skies. His presence is affirmation that our country, our place is healthy, guided by his lore we are respectful of our environment and all who live in our community.

SHU BROWN



I am a proud Adnyamathanha Yura (Man) of the Ikara- Flinders Ranges South Australia. I have lived on Wadawurrung Country most of my life and call Wabdallah (Bannockburn) home with my wife and 2 children.

Aboriginal Art and sharing my culture has always been a huge part of my life, I began dancing at a young age, teaching people of all ages about our strong culture and knowledge of place and the importance of connection to country. As a father I now have the responsibility of teaching all I have learned to my children. I continue to paint, share stories, create educational resources and more recently utilise the digital technology available.

I pay my respects to elders before me and to those of our next generation, the Traditional Owners of the Lands and Waters and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, the first people belonging to this country.



At the 2016 census, 204 members of the Golden Plains Shire community identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. Golden Plains Shire is home to two Traditional Owner groups, who have lived within the region for more than 25,000 years and Council Acknowledges and recognises the Traditional Owners and Custodians from two communities on whose land the Shire is located.

Council also recognises the many other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members across the Shire who make up the communities to which our organisation provides services.

The majority of the Shire is situated in Wadawurrung Country. The traditional boundaries of the Wadawurrung people span the coastline from the Werribee River to Lorne peninsula and traverse inland in a north-westerly direction towards Ballarat. The name Wadawurrung is a recognised tribe (community) which consisted of some 25 clans (or family groups) that forms part of the Kulin Nation of Aboriginal people.

A small pocket of Golden Plains Shire south-east of Rokewood is under the Custodianship of the Eastern Maar people, who are the Traditional Owners of south-western Victoria, from Ararat to Warrnambool and the Great Ocean Road.

Council commits to working positively today and in the future with all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members to learn, acknowledge and move forward together with the whole Golden Plains Shire community.

Reconciliation begins when we as a community become informed about our history as a whole. The history of the Shire is typically associated with pastoralists, gold seekers and timber getters. Our Shire also has a rich Aboriginal past. The Wadawurrung belong to seven family groups who are the sole descendants of John Robinson (1846-1919), but Traditional Owners have lived within this region for more than 25,000 years.

Our organisation acknowledges that there is more than one voice or one memory making up the story of Golden Plains Shire. Council seeks to recognise and promote the collections of stories that make up the shared history of the Shire. Golden Plains Shire Council also acknowledges our leadership role and responsibility in promoting reconciliation in the community.

2 TRADITIONAL OWNER GROUPS
LIVING IN THE REGION FOR MORE THAN
25,000 YEARS
204 MEMBERS OF THE GPS COMMUNITY IDENTIFY AS ABORIGINAL & TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER

As the Mayor of Golden Plains Shire and the CEO of Golden Plains Shire Council, we are pleased to present Council’s first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

Joined by the Golden Plains Councillors and staff of Council, we stand united to deliver the commitments detailed in this RAP, and we seek support from the whole Golden Plains community, to make reconciliation a priority in our Shire.

“I would like to acknowledge the Wadawurrung and the Eastern Maar people as Traditional Owners and Custodians of this land and pay my respects to their elders past, present and emerging”- these are the words of our Acknowledgement to Country.

The RAP takes these meaningful and heart-felt words and puts them into action in our Council and our organisation. This acknowledgement now becomes instilled in all Council’s work and relationships through the RAP, building greater understanding and mutual respect for all people in Golden Plains.

The RAP was developed in consultation with the Traditional Owners of the Shire, and at the heart of this plan is a mutual commitment to building more meaningful relationships and stronger connections between Council and all residents and communities in Golden Plains. The plan identifies opportunities and details actions to support respect and reconciliation.

This is our first Reconciliation Action Plan for Golden Plains Shire, but it won’t be the last. As you read this plan, we encourage all people to Golden Plains to reflect – reflect on our past, reflect on who we are and who we want to be, and reflect on the part we all play in reconciliation.

Our reconciliation journey in Golden Plains and across the nation is not quick and it’s not easy. The history of Australia is challenging and painful for many and it’s a long road to reconcile but we are determined and committed to building these bridges and in so, creating a brighter future for all residents of Golden Plains Shire and all Australians.

Cr Helena Kirby
Mayor of Golden Plains Shire

Eric Braslis
CEO, Golden Plains Shire Council



Leigh Barwon River Isolation

Golden Plains Shire Council is a local government organisation situated between Geelong and Ballarat. The Golden Plains Shire covers 2,705 square kilometres with a population exceeding 20,000; it has 56 communities and 16 townships, and is among the fastest growing regional Local Government Areas in Victoria.

Council is responsible for delivering a wide range of services, facilities and infrastructure, including family and children’s services, active ageing and inclusion services, youth programs, waste management, support and infrastructure for community and sporting groups, matters concerning business development, planning for appropriate development and ensuring accountability for Council’s Budget.

This broad range of community services and infrastructure for residents supports the wellbeing and prosperity of our community. While Council operates many activities and services, others are provided in partnership with, or solely by, state and federal governments, community organisations and private businesses.

Golden Plains Shire Council currently has approximately 283 (comprising 247 full/part time and 36 casual) employees working across a number of areas throughout the Shire. The organisation is not currently aware of any staff who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people.



Sunset over Bunjil’s Lookout in Mowde



Bannockburn Customer Service Centre, Golden Plains Shire Council

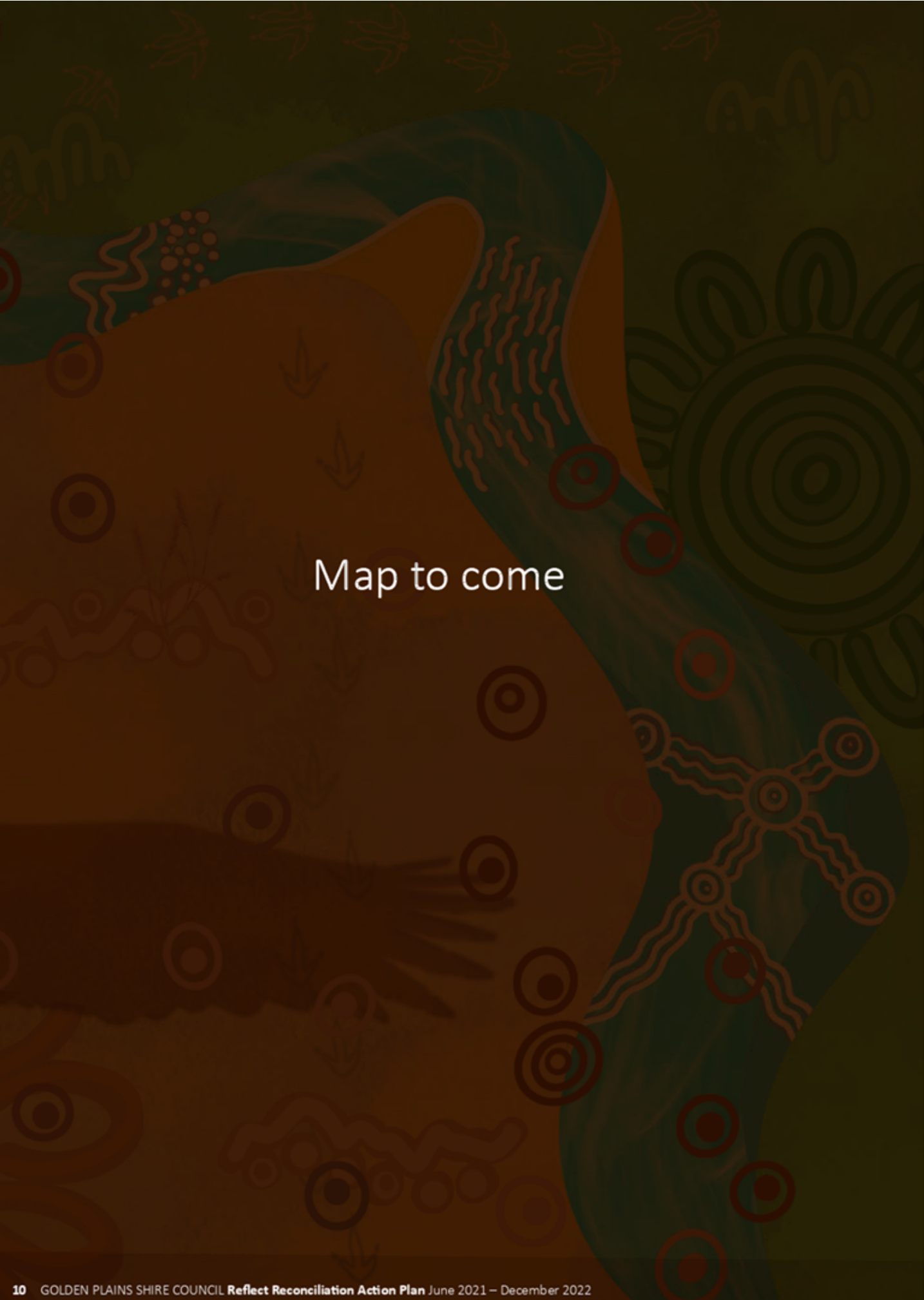
We believe that all residents should have the opportunity to develop to their full potential and strive to create a place in safe, sustainable and supportive communities.



River Red Gum



Wiyin-macrop yongarramela – Fire Spirit Comes Back. Image courtesy: Corangamite CMA



OUR RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

Golden Plains Shire Council seeks to develop more meaningful relationships with the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the Shire, the Wadawurrung and the Eastern Maar communities.

Council’s Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) provides a cohesive direction for reconciliation activities in the Shire. Council committed to developing a RAP in 2019; previously, individual teams within Council have acknowledged, celebrated and developed relationships with our Traditional Owners, the Wadawurrung and Eastern Maar communities. This is particularly evident when looking at the work of Child and Family Services who celebrate NAIDOC week annually and host an ongoing program of activities. Council’s Early Years services educators strive to embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, history, and culture into the educational program, not just during NAIDOC Week or Reconciliation Week, but throughout the year. These services also have their own RAPs and are active participants in regional cultural networks.

Council’s Environment Strategy 2019-2027 identifies the preservation and protection of Aboriginal heritage values and culture through sensitive land management practices and community education and appreciation. Ongoing programs facilitated by the Environment team include cultural burns in partnership with Custodians and the renaming of reserves throughout the Shire with targets set to achieve the 50% renaming of reserves and undertake 8 cultural burns by 2027.

Council meetings and events begin with an Acknowledgement of Country, and we intend to incorporate a Welcome to Country at the beginning of future significant civic events. Council flies the Aboriginal flag at Customer Service Centres and conducts Acknowledgement of Country at Council run events. Council wish to integrate meaningful acknowledgement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Culture into our everyday activities.

The RAP has been developed by the Golden Plains Shire Council internal RAP Working Group incorporating targeted consultation with key current and future partners in our pursuit of a reconciled Shire. Key partners include the Wadawurrung Aboriginal Corporation, with whom Council has an existing relationship and the Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation with whom Council seeks to develop a relationship.. We look forward to developing our relationships further via the establishment of a Community RAP Working Group as a key action contained in this plan.

Our RAP is championed by our internal RAP Working Group drawn from across council departments. The Working Group currently comprises representation from Council’s Child & Family Services, Connected Communities and Community Services, Works, Environment & Sustainability, Youth & Recreation, Corporate Services, and Communications and Engagement teams.

This is the beginning of the journey for Golden Plains Shire Council which focuses on building relationships and Acknowledging the Wadawurrung and Eastern Maar as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of this land.

RELATIONSHIPS

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	• Identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence.	June- December 2021	Arts & Culture Advisor
	• Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	October 2021- March 2022	Arts & Culture Advisor
	• Maintain ongoing commitment towards reconciliation and relationship building with First Nations communities across all of Council as per unit strategies and plans.	Ongoing	Full Management Team
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	• Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.	April- June annually	Events & Engagement Officer
	• RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	27 May- 3 June, annually	Arts & Culture Advisor
	• Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	27 May – 3 June, annually	Director Community Services
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	• Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all staff.	Ongoing	CEO
	• Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey.	June- December 2021	Arts & Culture Advisor
	• Identify RAP and other like-minded organisations that to approach and collaborate with on our reconciliation journey.	January- March 2022	Arts & Culture Advisor
	• Establish a physical acknowledgement of First Nations communities via the placement of Acknowledgment materials at the entry to Customer Service Centres.	Commencing March 2021	Team Leader People and Customer Service
	• Continue to fly the Aboriginal flag at Customer Service Centres and where possible incorporate acknowledgement of the Torres Strait Islander Community by displaying additional flags.	July 2021	Manager People and Culture

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
3. continued...	• Support other community groups to acknowledge First Nations communities	Ongoing	Community Partnership Officer
	• Assess possibilities for inclusion of discreet acknowledgment material (stickers, badges, etc). across the corporate environment	June- October 2021	Arts & Culture Advisor
	• Incorporate use of language and place naming into naming of reserves, meeting rooms, on signage and in other places as opportunity arises	Ongoing	Full Management Team
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	• Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination.	September- November 2021	Manager People & Culture
	• Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.	December 2021	Manager People & Culture
	• Review Council's processes relating to the employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff at Council.	September- November 2021	Manager- People & Culture

RESPECT

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
5. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.	• Develop a business case for increasing understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights within our organisation with a view to undertaking organisation wide cultural awareness education. We will seek advice on an appropriate training provider.	December 2021	Manager People & Culture
	• Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.	September 2021	Manager People & Culture
6. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	• Develop an understanding of the Traditional Owners of the lands and waters within our organisation's operational area the Wadawurrung and Eastern Maar communities.	June- December 2021	Arts & Culture Advisor
	• Explore opportunities to engage an appropriately qualified external consultant to facilitate cross departmental cultural education, how data is shared across departments and internal procedures relating to Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) protocols.	July- December 2021	Arts & Culture Advisor
	• Scope and/or investigate the development of a CHMP Register to map known Golden Plains Shire sites. Review capacity to extend and make more accessible the existing Cultural Heritage Layer in existing mapping systems. (Aboriginal Victoria- Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Register and Information System).	Commencing July 2021	Manager Community Places and Environment
	• Increase Council staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	July 2021	Manager People & Culture
	• Develop best practice organisational protocols for Acknowledgement of Country including an approved script.	May- June 2021	Coordinator Communications, Engagement and Advocacy
7. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	• Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff about the meaning of NAIDOC Week annually.	May- July annually	Events & Engagement Officer
	• Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local area.	June- July annually	Arts & Culture Advisor
	• RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	First week in July, annually	Arts & Culture Advisor

OPPORTUNITIES

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
8. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	• Develop a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation.	November 2021	Manager People & Culture
	• Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	August- October 2021	Manager People & Culture
9. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	• Identify Aboriginal- and Torres Strait Islander-owned businesses within the Shire and develop a database.	Commencing May 2021	Economic Development Officer
	• Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-owned businesses and promote internally and externally.	Commencing August 2021	Economic Development Officer
	• Explore partnerships with appropriate organisations to further identify and support business opportunities- such as Kinaway Aboriginal Chamber of Commerce	Commencing May 2021	Economic Development Officer
	• Investigate Supply Nation membership.	Commencing Oct 2021	Economic Development Officer
10. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures by elevating awareness of Traditional Owners.	• Investigate options for incorporating Aboriginal place naming opportunities. Review associated protocols and investigate signage options for acknowledging Traditional Owners and country.		Manager Asset Services & Coordinator Economic Development
	• Investigate opportunities for including a page within the existing Council web presence dedicated to Acknowledging and celebrating our First Nations communities.	July- August 2021	Coordinator Communications, Engagement and Advocacy
11. Ensure capacity to identify and plan for all of our communities into the future.	• Make a commitment to collecting, reviewing and interrogating relevant data to inform future direction.	Commencing June 2021	Strategic Corporate Planner

GOVERNANCE

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
12. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	• Support an ongoing RWG to govern RAP implementation.	Ongoing	Arts & Culture Advisor
	• Revise and update the Terms of Reference for the RWG.	May - June 2021	Arts & Culture Advisor
	• Establish Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	June - December 2021	Arts & Culture Advisor
13. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	• Define resource needs for RAP implementation and allocate budget accordingly.	October - November annually	Director Community Services
	• Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments.	Ongoing	Director Community Services
	• Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	May - June 2021	Arts & Culture Advisor
14. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	• Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	30 September, annually	Arts & Culture Advisor
15. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	• Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	September 2022	Arts & Culture Advisor





For public enquiries about Golden Plains Shire Council's RAP contact:

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