

**ITEM 3.1 VALE NICHOLAS SHEHADIE AC, OBE**

**FILE NO: S051491**

### **MINUTE BY THE LORD MAYOR**

To Council:

It is with deep regret that I inform Council of the death of Sir Nicholas Michael Shehadie, AC, OBE, former Lord Mayor and Alderman of the City of Sydney, distinguished Australian and proud son of Redfern on 11 February 2018.

Born in Coogee, New South Wales on 15 November 1926, Nick Shehadie grew up in Redfern, attending Cleveland Street and later Crown Street schools. He first came to public attention in 1947 at the age of 16 as one of the New South Wales XV rugby team against New Zealand, later making his debut for Australia in the final Test against the touring All Blacks.

He was selected for the 1947–48 Wallaby tour and continued to play for the Wallabies until the late 1950s. He represented Australia 114 times, the first player to reach the century mark and played in 20 tests, three as captain.

Off the field, he worked in sales, becoming a sales manager with an asphalt company. Following his footballing career he established a successful vinyl tile supply business. In February 1957, he married medical practitioner, Marie Bashir, later Governor of New South Wales.

His lifelong dedication to public service began with his election to City of Sydney Council on 1 December 1962 as a Civic Reform alderman. His second term was cut short when the Council was dismissed on 13 November 1967. He became Deputy Lord Mayor following his election to the new shrunken Council on 27 September 1969. On 27 September 1973 his fellow aldermen elected him to be Lord Mayor.

As Alderman, Deputy Lord Mayor and Lord Mayor, Sir Nicholas was part of a council that saw the adoption of the first Sydney Strategic Plan, developed by the late George Clarke. That plan had four objectives related to management, accessibility, diversity and environment, 16 major policies and about 84 action priorities, covering not only land use and built form, but community services, finance, tourism, leisure and learning, and pollution control.

An early outcome of the plan was the transformation of Martin Place into a pedestrian plaza. As Lord Mayor, he also supported the Green Bans campaign to protect Woolloomooloo from over development. This led to the Federal and State Governments working together with the City of Sydney to develop a plan for Woolloomooloo, with the Federal Government purchasing land used for public housing.

After the late Leo Port succeeded him as Lord Mayor, Sir Nicholas continued as an alderman until 1977. In 1971, he was awarded an Order of the British Empire (OBE), knighted in 1976 and made a Companion of the Order of Australia in 1990.

In 1978, Sir Nicholas returned to his first love, sport, with his appointment as a trustee of the Sydney Cricket Ground, becoming Chair in 1990. In 2001, his final year as Chair, the Cricket Ground opened a Walk of Honour with 33 plaques honouring sporting champions, including Sir Nicholas.

He became Chairman of the New South Wales Rugby Union in 1979, and President of Australian Rugby Union from 1981 to 1987. As President, he was instrumental in the schoolboy rule changes which outlawed forceful scrum engagements aimed to avoid neck injuries and make schoolboy rugby safer. He worked with the International Rugby Football Board to establish a Rugby World Cup and was appointed joint chairman of the organising committee for the inaugural World Cup in 1987.

Away from sport, Sir Nicholas served as Chairman of the Special Broadcasting Service from 1981 to 1999 and national Chair for the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award, Australia from 1992 to 1994.

Sir Nicholas' final public service was providing steadfast and wonderful support to his life partner, Dame Marie Bashir, when she was Governor of New South Wales from March 2001 to October 2014.

I often met him at civic and ceremonial events during this period and it was obvious that he was very proud of her. He also had a great sense of humour and told my husband, Peter, when I became Lord Mayor that he would have to get used to carrying my handbag!

It is to Dame Marie and her family that I offer my sincere condolences.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is resolved that:

- (A) All persons present in the Chamber stand for one minute's silence to mark the life of Sir Nicholas Shehadie and his contribution to Sydney, New South Wales and Australia.
- (B) A letter, under the Lord Mayor's signature, be conveyed to Sir Nicholas' wife, Dame Marie Bashir, expressing Council's sincere condolences to her and her family.

## **COUNCILLOR CLOVER MOORE**

Lord Mayor