

Resolution of Council

2 July 2020

Item 16.7

Patyegarang Statue

Moved by Councillor Phelps, seconded by Councillor Scott –

It is resolved that –

(A) Council note:

- (i) fifteen-year-old Gadigal woman, Patyegarang, was Australia's first teacher of Gadigal language. She taught her language to First Fleet naval officer Lieutenant William Dawes and ensured its survival. Dawes recorded their conversations and his notebooks are the only known first-hand accounts of the Gadigal language;
- (ii) the Black Lives Matter protests in the US, which started on 26 May 2020, spurred on by a string of racially charged events, has sparked a global Black Lives Matter movement, with protests across Europe, Japan, New Zealand and Australia. These protests have included the defacing and/or removal of colonial statues;
- (iii) Australia has a long history of discrimination and injustices against the First Nations people, whose land we are standing on today;
- (iv) despite being the custodians of this land for tens of thousands of years, there are only four statues nationally representing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people; and
- (v) in the Sydney CBD, there are 25 publicly funded statues of the colony's early leaders. Among them are Captain Cook, Governor Arthur Phillip, Lachlan Macquarie, Queen Victoria, explorer Matthew Flinders and even his cat Trim;
- (vi) on 9 December 2019, Council endorsed the Eora Journey which “will include and highlight, a major public art project dedicated to Pategarang’s story and her impact upon the revitalisation of Gadigal language”; and

- (vii) in response to recent #BlackLivesMatter protests and international movements to destroy existing statues, the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council (MLALC) has specifically requested a statue of Patyegarang, to commemorate her as a significant individual in Sydney's First Nations history to begin to address the imbalance in representations of significant individuals in Sydney's history"; and
- (B) the Chief Executive Officer be requested to:
- (i) work with local Aboriginal groups, including a representative from the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council (MLALC), to commission a statue commemorating Patyegarang; and
 - (ii) report the findings back to Council.

Note – the motion above was not carried. The resolution as below was carried –

It is resolved that:

(A) Council note:

- (i) fifteen-year-old Gadigal woman, Patyegarang was Australia's first teacher of Gadigal language to Europeans. She taught her language to First Fleet naval officer Lieutenant William Dawes and ensured its survival. Dawes recorded their conversations and his notebooks are the only known first-hand accounts of the Gadigal language;
- (ii) the Black Lives Matter movement is part of a long history of civil rights activism, advocacy and protest seeking justice for black communities and redress of systemic and institutional racism. Recent protests have focused on police and criminal justice reform;
- (iii) in recent weeks protesters have gathered in major cities across Australia demanding justice over Aboriginal deaths in police custody, in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement, and recognising the local dimensions of this global issue;
- (iv) discourse about the role, relevance and context of Confederate and Colonial statues around the world has been ongoing for many years;
- (v) Australia has a long history of discrimination and injustices against the First Nations people, whose land we are standing on today;
- (vi) despite being the custodians of this land for tens of thousands of years, there are only four statues nationally representing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people;
- (vii) in the Sydney CBD, there are statues of the colony's early leaders. Among them are Captain Cook, Governor Arthur Phillip, Lachlan Macquarie, Queen Victoria, explorer Matthew Flinders and even his cat Trim;

- (viii) in 2012, Council endorsed the Eora Journey, Recognition in the Public Domain Implementation Plan;
- (ix) in response to recent #BlackLivesMatter protests and international movements to destroy existing statues, the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council (MLALC) has specifically requested a statue of Patyegarang, to commemorate her as a significant individual in Sydney's First Nations history to begin to address the imbalance in representations of significant individuals in Sydney's history;
- (x) on 9 December 2019, Council unanimously received and noted the Eora Journey Harbour Walk Storytelling Report by Emily McDaniel and endorsed the recommended projects and strategic initiatives set out in the report, including Tar-ra (Dawes Point), a public art project that highlights the site where Patyegarang gifted the Sydney language to William Dawes, recording it for future generations in his notebooks;
- (xi) the Harbour Walk draws a siteline from Tar-ra to bara, a major monument by Waanyi artist Judy Watson, which celebrates and recognises the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation and connects First Nations people who now call Sydney home;
- (xii) the Harbour Walk project forms part of the Eora Journey, an extensive process of addressing the imbalance of markers in the public domain, which are skewed towards colonial perspectives, and works towards truth telling and recognition of the enduring and vital presence of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in this place of first contact;
- (xiii) Eora Journey Curatorial Advisor Hetti Perkins and the Aboriginal and the Torres Strait Islander Advisory Panel have guided the Harbour Walk project;
- (xiv) there has been significant engagement with the Panel and first nations people including:
 - (a) emerging themes for the project being presented to the Panel in October 2018;
 - (b) panel members participating in a forum of curators and historians of the city's cultural institutions, departments and organisations which generated significant discussion on the idea of a Harbour Walk, the concept of Designing for Country and key words, phrases and stories associated with the Harbour;
 - (c) McDaniel and Perkins conducting several one-on-one meetings with key stakeholders including Panel members and community leaders;
 - (d) McDaniel, Perkins and the City's Indigenous Leadership and Engagement Manager meeting with CEO of the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council who provided his feedback on refined project ideas; and
 - (e) McDaniel presenting the draft Report to the Panel, with Panel members invited to provide her with any further feedback; and

- (xv) further detailed consultation will precede each project as it is implemented; and
- (B) the Chief Executive Officer be requested to refer the request from the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council outlined in (A)(ix) to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Panel, and to report back to Council via the CEO Update.

The amendment was carried on the following show of hands –

Ayes (6) The Chair (the Lord Mayor), Councillors Kok, Miller, Scott, Scully and Thalys

Noes (3) Councillors Chung, Forster and Phelps.

Amendment carried.

The substantive motion was carried unanimously.

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