

## Resolution of Council

**31 October 2022**

### Item 3.1

#### Vale Aunty Selena Blakeney

#### Minute by the Lord Mayor

To Council:

The Woolloomooloo community along with many City staff were saddened by the recent passing of Aunty Selena Blakeney. Her family has given me permission to honour her life in this Lord Mayoral Minute.

Born on 13 September 1948, Aunty Selena identified as a Yaegl / Wiradjuri woman from Cabbage Tree Island. Passionate about her culture and communities, she shared her time between her family and the communities of Cabbage Tree Island and Woolloomooloo. A generous and kind respected Elder, she was also known in the Woolloomooloo Community as the Black Queen.

Her Woolloomooloo home was a gathering place, a place for all ages to meet, feel welcome and enjoy a sense of belonging. On Christmas Eve, she would have her famous spaghetti bolognaise ready for anyone who popped in for a yarn.

Beyond her home she helped organise many NAIDOC gatherings and community events. The City is particularly grateful for Aunty Selena's leadership, advocacy and assistance in supporting the needs of the Woolloomooloo community during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Aunty Selena's legacy will continue through the many community projects she worked on over her years. Most recently, we recognise her success in creating 'Matora Mob Committee' with support from the City, which provides a space for the needs and aspirations of the Woolloomooloo community that she cared so deeply about.

## **COUNCILLOR CLOVER MOORE**

Lord Mayor

Moved by the Chair (the Lord Mayor), seconded by Councillor Scott –

It is resolved that:

(A) Council note:

- (i) Aunty Selena Blakeney was an elder and wise woman from Yaegl and Wiradjuri lands, living from 1948 until 2022;
- (ii) Aunty Selena has been remembered as a strong, cultural woman who stood her ground, for her people;
- (iii) Aunty Selena played a role in delivering successful native title claims on Yaegl and Wiradjuri lands, securing outcomes for Indigenous Australians on lands known by many as Cabbage Tree Island and Yamba; and
- (iv) much of Aunty Selena's life was spent, with her family, in Woolloomooloo advocating for our City's Indigenous communities, bringing together diverse communities to achieve tangible outcomes over the long term;

(B) all persons attending this meeting of Council observe one minute's silence to commemorate the life of Aunty Selena Blakeney and her significant contribution to the Woolloomooloo community;

(C) Council express its condolences to Aunty Selena's family; and

(D) the Lord Mayor be requested to convey Council's condolences to Aunty Selena's family.

Carried unanimously.

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Note – the Chair (the Lord Mayor) acknowledged the presence of Michelle Blakeney, Ruby Lai Blakeney, Natasha Davies and Kori Blakeney.

Note – All Councillors, staff, and members of the public present stood in silence for one minute as a mark of respect to Aunty Selena Blakeney.