

Item 10.7

Notices of Motion

Truth-Telling in the Public Domain

By Councillor Weldon

It is resolved that:

(A) Council note:

- (i) although a majority of Australians voted against constitutional recognition through a Voice to Parliament, the City of Sydney community voted, overwhelmingly, in support of the proposal;
- (ii) the opportunity to promote reconciliation and tackle disadvantage and systemic racism at the local level through initiatives that advance the core principles of the Uluru Statement from the Heart;
- (iii) the City's ongoing work and commitments embodied in our Reconciliation Action Plan, Closing the Gap framework and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Strategy;
- (iv) the City's commitment to recognise and acknowledge the history, heritage and living culture of First Nations people in the public domain through the Eora Journey;
- (v) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities have long called for truth-telling;
- (vi) the First Peoples Dialogue Forum, held as part of the City's consultations for Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050, identified truth telling initiatives as a "first priority aspiration". Participants suggested this should include "decolonising the city by debunking the myths of Australia and telling the truth". The 2030-2050 Citizens Jury made a similar recommendation;
- (vii) that by reassessing established narratives, mistruths, and one-dimensional accounts of past events, all Australians gain a richer understanding of our shared history and story;
- (viii) in June 2011, Council amended the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statement in our Corporate Plan to acknowledge that colonisation "had far reaching and devastating impacts on the Eora Nation, including the occupation and appropriation of their traditional lands";
- (ix) the Lord Mayor's August 2022 Minute to advance truth-telling through public education and the City's communications, in new and imaginative approaches in the public domain, by reviewing the City's symbols and emblems and by promoting an honest conversation about Australia Day; and

- (x) there are more than two dozen statues around the city centre commemorating colonial figures such as Captain Cook, Governors Phillip and Macquarie and Queen Victoria; and that many of the associated inscriptions and plaques feature inaccurate, misleading and offensive accounts of the feats of those commemorated; and
- (B) the Chief Executive Officer be requested to:
 - (i) report to both Council and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Panel on the progress of actions included in the Lord Mayor's August 2022 Minute - Progressing the Uluru Statement from the Heart; and
 - (ii) undertake a review of public statues in the City of Sydney and – in consultation with local and state historical and cultural institutions, the City's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Public Art Advisory Panels and the Local Metropolitan Aboriginal Land Council introduce alternate plaques, signage or other additions to ensure that the representation of these figures is accurate and incorporates contemporary and First Nations perspectives.

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