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# Reconciliation Action Plan Advisory Group - appointment of Councillor Members

*Responsible Officer: Group Manager Corporate and Commercial (Guy Bezrouchko)*

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## **Recommendation**

That nominations for the appointment of Councillor Member and alternate Councillor Member as Chair of the Reconciliation Action Plan Advisory Group (RAPAG) be sought from councillors; Chair's duration being for the term of this Council.

## **Background**

Reconciliation Action Plans (RAP) are practical plans of action built on relationships, respect and opportunities. They are designed to create social change and economic opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Rous is continuing the process of reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through its RAP. The 2021-2023 Plan has recently been updated and endorsed by Reconciliation Australia (refer [Attachment 1](#)).

Our Innovate 2021-2023 RAP builds on the foundations and achievement of our initial Reflect RAP and aims to consolidate and increase our engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We will focus on our relationships with an intent to increase representatives in the Advisory Group to enable increased visibility and further opportunity to provide input into the work we do. Rous is continuing to encourage staff to become a part of the Advisory Group and learn and share alongside our Elders and community members.

Rocky Creek Dam, our supply network's principal source, sits on Widjabul Wiyabal country of the Bundjalung Nation. We acknowledge the Widjabul Wiyabal people's deep relationship with the land and water, and strongly value their traditional laws, knowledge and lessons about places and sustainability.

Reconciliation aims to restore ecological, cultural and social values that are unique to our region.

The RAP provided for the establishment of a RAP Advisory Group to assist staff with implementation of RAP actions.

The RAP Advisory Group is supported by a Terms of Reference (refer [Attachment 2](#)).

## Membership

The RAP Advisory Group includes the following representatives:

- Traditional Custodians of Council catchment areas (2 members)
- Ngulingah and Jali Local Aboriginal Land Councils (1 member from each Council)
- The Bundjalung Elders Council (1 member)
- Rous County Council member (Chair)
- Community members (2)

## Meeting attendees

- Consultant (1)
- Staff representatives as required.

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## Term

The term of membership of the RAP Advisory Group is one (1) year with the possibility of extension as Council develops future RAPs.

The Rous Councillor Member will chair the RAP Advisory Group meetings. Term of office for the Chair to be for the term of this Council. The alternate Councillor Member is appointed as a contingency for situations when the Councillor Member is unable to attend meetings.

## Meeting schedule

Meetings will be held on Wednesdays commencing 10.00am (duration approx. 2 hrs) at Council's Administration Office or via video conferencing. The 2022 meeting schedule is: 23 March; 22 June; 24 August and 23 November.

## **Finance**

The Operational Plan 2021/22 includes a budget of \$121,300 for Reconciliation initiatives, which covers costs for:

- Reconciliation Liaison Officer (1 x full time employee)
- RAP Advisory Group meetings, including sitting fees
- participation in NAIDOC and Reconciliation Week events; and
- cultural awareness training.

The Chair position on the committee is vacant. While the position is not a paid position, actual travel and out-of-pocket expenses are reimbursed.

## **Conclusion**

The position of Chair on the Reconciliation Action Plan Advisory Group is vacant. It is proposed that nominations from Councillors be called to fill that vacancy. Term of office for the Chair to be for the term of this Council.

A vote will be taken in the event of more than one nomination being received for this position.

Nominations are to be made by Councillors by completing the nomination form provided at Attachment 3.

## Attachment

1. Reconciliation Action Plan
2. Terms of Reference
3. Nomination form (*copy also available at the meeting*)