

8.4 Aboriginal Affairs

Principles

The Shire of East Pilbara supports harmony with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people so as to:

1. create a better understanding in the general community of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and culture
2. improve co-ordination and cooperation between the three spheres of government and recognised Aboriginal Community Organisations to assist in the development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People aspirations

The Shire of East Pilbara has a commitment to assist Federal and State Governments and recognised Aboriginal Community Organisations to identify and minimise any inefficiency or duplication, which might occur in the delivery of services and programs.

Policy

1. Within the existing framework of Government and via the democratic process Local Government is recognised as the appropriate mechanism whereby Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people can have greater input into the control and management of their communities and affairs so as to promote Aboriginal culture, social and economic aspirations.
2. The Shire of East Pilbara recognises the benefits of cooperation with all levels of Government and recognised Aboriginal Community Organisations in the planning and delivery of programs and services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
3. The Shire of East Pilbara supports initiatives which enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation and input in Council activities and processes at a level equal to that of other residents.
4. The Shire of East Pilbara supports activities that promote goodwill between people within the Shire.

Rateability

The Shire of East Pilbara supports changes to the *Local Government Act 1995* and any other legislation that allows for the rating of Aboriginal communities living on Aboriginal Lands Trust, other Special Purpose leases or previously non rateable Aboriginal lands.

Infrastructure and Services

1. The Shire of East Pilbara believes that in partnership with Federal and State Governments and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people it is best placed to assist in the planning for appropriate social, physical and economic infrastructure for Aboriginal Communities.
2. The Federal and State Governments and Aboriginal Communities should resource the Shire of East Pilbara where the establishment and maintenance of Aboriginal specific services utilise Council's resources.
3. The Shire of East Pilbara supports initiatives which enable the delivery of municipal services to Aboriginal communities and non-rateable land, including:
 - a. options such as ex gratia payments in lieu of rates

- b. payments for specific services
- c. assisting communities to attract funding which allow Council to deliver a more effective service

Planning

1. The Shire of East Pilbara recognises the rights of Aboriginal community groups to develop and use their land as they desire, within the constraints of land tenure and Local Government planning schemes and processes.
2. The Shire of East Pilbara supports the development of site assessment procedures, in negotiation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, for the identification of areas likely to be protected under the Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972, to enable mineral and other forms of development to proceed in the Shire.
3. The Shire of East Pilbara supports the development of local consultative mechanisms, where appropriate, to ensure that Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, as with other local interest groups, are included in local planning processes.

Training of Staff and Councillors

The Shire of East Pilbara recognises the importance of cross cultural training for staff and elected members to develop skills and knowledge which enable Local Government to more effectively understand the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

It is Council policy that all staff should attend cultural awareness training when it is available in their local area.

Aboriginal Employment and Training

The Shire of East Pilbara has a role in stimulating and promoting the employment and training of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people by:

1. identifying Council positions where Aboriginality is an occupational advantage as allowed for under Section 50 (d) of the *Equal Opportunity Act 1984*
2. supporting involvement in employment training programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
3. ensuring Aboriginal Organisations have equal access to tendering for contracts for the delivery of local services
4. supporting Aboriginal organisations that aim to help to develop and implement local employment programs

Housing and Health

1. The Shire of East Pilbara recognises the right of all people to affordable and secure housing, and supports initiatives that aim to meet the housing needs of Aboriginal people.
2. The Shire of East Pilbara supports institutions and voluntary groups working to improve the health and welfare of Aboriginal people.
3. The Shire of East Pilbara supports Aboriginal communities and health workers within their districts by:

- a. assisting in providing advice on the maintenance of a safe water supply, sewerage and rubbish disposal systems
 - b. ensuring Commonwealth and State bodies meet their obligations under the Public Health Act 2016
4. The Shire of East Pilbara should be adequately resourced by Federal and State Governments to assist in Aboriginal environmental health issues.

Culture & Heritage

1. The Shire of East Pilbara encourages Aboriginal people to develop cultural activities, and participate fully in general community activities.
2. The Shire of East Pilbara encourages the promotion of local Aboriginal history, heritage and culture in consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Promotion of Local Government

The Shire of East Pilbara supports initiatives that provide education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and other community members on the role of Council and electoral procedures and encourages participation in elections as voters and candidates.

Inter-Governmental

1. The Shire of East Pilbara supports a partnership between the Federal, State and Local Governments, in the planning and delivery of services and programs to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people at the local level.
2. The Shire of East Pilbara believes it should be adequately resourced by the State and Commonwealth to develop improved working relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The Shire of East Pilbara supports the inclusion of the ALGA and the WALGA in relevant inter-governmental Aboriginal affairs decision-making bodies.

Authorisation Details

References:	<i>Local Government Act 1995</i> <i>Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972</i> <i>Equal Opportunity Act 1984</i> <i>Public Health Act 2016</i>		
Authorised by:	Council		
Date:	27 June 2003	Item No.	9.1.3
Review/Amendment Date	28 January 2011	Item No.	
Next Review			
Responsible Directorate	Chief Executive Officer		
Responsible Officer	Manager Strategy and Partnerships		
File No.			