

NOTICE OF MOTION - CR DAN LODEN - COMPULSORY CITIZENSHIP CEREMONIES

Attachments: Nil

That Council:

1. **ACKNOWLEDGES** the City of Vincent's long-standing commitment to work in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to address disadvantage and close the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians;
2. **RECOGNISES** that:
 - 2.1 **Australia Day on 26 January celebrates the establishment of the first permanent European settlement on the continent of Australia, when Arthur Phillip sailed onto Sydney Cove and hoisted the British flag at the site and that under Australian Citizenship Ceremonies Code local councils are required to host Citizenship ceremonies for new citizens every year on 26 January; and**
 - 2.2 **the arrival of the first fleet and raising of the British flag was the point at which Aboriginal people were dispossessed of their land and celebrations on this date are considered disrespectful by many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples particularly to their prior 65,000 years of continuous civilisation; and**
3. **ACKNOWLEDGES** the City of Vincent Elder's group support for the City of Vincent to seek to change the date of our Citizenship Ceremony in January.
4. **REQUESTS** that the Chief Executive Officer writes to the relevant federal Minister and departments to request that the decision of the previous Federal government for 'compulsory Citizenship Ceremonies' to be held on Australia Day cease. Further that this decision making be returned to each local government to decide as was previously the case.

REASON

The City of Vincent has a long-standing commitment to work in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Our engagement with our Elders group and past engagement with the Aboriginal members of our Reconciliation Action Plan Working group has indicated support for changing the date of our citizenship ceremony on the 26th of January to a less disrespectful date. This is currently a requirement by the Federal Government to host a citizenship ceremony on the 26th of January. This is proposed to request that this requirement be removed or be permitted to not comply, recognising the disrespect that many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people feel when celebrations occur on the 26th of January which signifies the date when Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples were dispossessed of their land.

ADMINISTRATION COMMENTS

Administration supports this Notice of Motion.

The City has continuously acknowledged and demonstrated our belief that the Whadjuk people of the Noongar nation are, and always will be the Traditional Owners of the land upon which the City of Vincent is located.

The number of attendees at the Australia Day Citizenship Ceremonies has varied over the past five years, with 25 applicants to date for January 2023.

Irrespective of the number of attendees, the cost of running the ceremony remains the same, with increased fees and penalty rates incurred for the Australia Day public holiday. When attendee numbers are below 50, it would be more cost-effective to postpone the ceremony until more attendees are registered.