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Department of the Premier and Cabinet  
2 Havelock Street  
West Perth, WA 6005

Your Reference:  
Our Reference:  
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93973320

To whom it may concern

## **Response to Discussion Paper – Office for advocacy and accountability in Aboriginal affairs in Western Australia**

Thank you for inviting the City of Gosnells to provide feedback on the Discussion Paper regarding an office for advocacy and accountability in Aboriginal affairs in Western Australia.

Issues concerning Aboriginal people are important to the City of Gosnells. The City has an Aboriginal population of around 2.3%, and we have identified issues consistent with some of those outlined in the statistics section on page 5 of the discussion paper. Moreover, it is noted that Aboriginal young people are often most vulnerable in such instances. With this in mind, the City has continued its youth engagement programs which often attract participation by Aboriginal youth. The City also delivers a range of celebratory events each year to coincide with NAIDOC week, with the aim of continuing to acknowledge, strengthen and celebrate Aboriginal culture in Gosnells. The City would welcome the opportunity to work with other stakeholders more collaboratively to continue to address issues relevant to its Aboriginal community.

The City provides the following in response to the questions on page 12 of the Discussion Paper.

### **1. What are your views about this outline of the office's basic features? Does it miss anything important? Is anything included that shouldn't be?**

The City agrees with the points in the discussion paper that refer to engagement and collaboration with the Aboriginal community, including agencies, community organisations, community groups and community members. As a Local Government, the City of Gosnells is well placed to work with the proposed office to facilitate engagement and consultation at the local level, acting as a conduit between the office and the community, and potentially partnering with and supporting organisations to deliver programs and initiatives which respond to identified issues.

The City notes that the discussion paper outlines the following:

- That the government can improve its contribution to Aboriginal people's well-being through stronger and more systemic engagement with Aboriginal people (p. 3)

- That there are a number of complex issues relating to Aboriginal people's well-being, which the proposed office could not resolve on its own (p. 4)
- That the proposed office could work collaboratively with stakeholders to identify opportunities to improve services for Aboriginal people (p. 10)
- That the proposed office could assist other government agencies and Aboriginal organisations to engage with each other to achieve outcomes (p. 10)
- That the proposed office could engage the public and the public sector to promote positive stories and successful partnerships (p. 10)

As a Local Government, the City of Gosnells is well placed to work with the office and other stakeholders towards these outcomes at the local level. Any government efforts or initiatives to address Aboriginal people's issues would be welcomed by the City.

With a strong connection in place with our local aboriginal community, the City is keen to build on this relationship and would be open to discussions in relation to a potential location for the new office within the City of Gosnells.

## **2. What should be the formal name of the office?**

The City agrees with the discussion paper (p.12), that Aboriginal people and organisations should play a key role in determining a suitable name for the proposed office. The City of Gosnells could assist by providing contact details for relevant people and organisations within the City.

## **3. How should Aboriginal people and organisations be involved in the appointment process of the office-holder. Who should be involved?**

The City of Gosnells suggests that direct engagement with Aboriginal community organisations and Aboriginal leaders within the community would be a suitable way to involve Aboriginal people in the appointment process. For example, a working group could be established in the lead-up to establishing the office. The group could comprise representatives from Aboriginal organisations and communities. The City of Gosnells could assist by providing contact details to relevant people and organisations.

I hope this feedback is useful in assisting you to further scope the establishment of the proposed office for advocacy and accountability in Aboriginal affairs.

Should you have any further questions, or wish to discuss the City's response in more detail, please contact me on 93973320.

Yours faithfully



**Mel Reid**  
**A/Director Community Engagement**