

Payinthe Kumangka Community Forum

Date: Friday 1 October 2021, 6pm – 9pm

Venue: Eliza Hall, Payinthe, 128 Prospect Road, Prospect

Attendees*:

KYAC Board Members
Kurna Elders
Kurna Community Members
City of Prospect Community Members
Councillors
Council Staff

**Attendance at the event was open to everyone - all welcome (however numbers were capped due to COVID restrictions so it was first come, first served).*

Discussion:

Attendees were invited to participate in small group discussions around the following two questions/topics:

1: UNDERSTAND

- Why is coming together in this way important?
- What truths need to be said and heard?

2: JOURNEY

- What might be achieved?
- Payinthe Kumangka is the start of this process, what do we want to achieve?
- What do we do next?

In summary, there was a positive atmosphere to the evening with a sense of good-will expressed for Council's initiative and commitment to progress the interests of Kurna people. Observations of the table 'hosts' were that the discussions held at each table were robust and productive with a genuine desire expressed for Kurna and non-Kurna to work together on this journey, to develop a shared understanding and way forward.

Below is a detailed outline of the feedback received on the night.

1: UNDERSTAND

- **Why is coming together in this way important?**
- **What truths need to be said and heard?**
- It is important to have these discussions to inform and progress the Prospect Council RAP. Events and new programs like this can make a RAP a living document.
- Racism needs to be addressed – individual and systemic.
- This is reconciliation in action.
- More people in Prospect are keen to have this discussion. Important to broaden the audience when restrictions allow, or engage in different ways.
- People are acknowledging Country as being on Kurna land and this is seen as genuine and positive.
- This is a rights based conversation.

- To know about the movement of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.
- Young people represented.
- Hearing about resilience.
- To educate self and others about culture.
- It would be great to hear from other Councils or the Local Government Association.
- Good to have the conversation regarding coming together, hearing people different views between different cultures.
- I am so pleased to see Prospect showing leadership to recognise the Uluru Statement, even when the Australian Government won't.
- The Uluru Statement says that we should start a conversation across the nation – so we can start in Prospect, and start with Kurna.
- Important to listen to the Kurna Elders and the Kurna people.
- I also want to be able to see other Aboriginal people in Prospect have a place and a voice too.
- Talking together is a good way to help change attitudes.
- Wasn't raised with learnings about culture and connection.
- Acknowledgement at a community organisation level of Kurna land is gradually increasing.
- Is recorded history more important or different from people's personal histories when it comes to what truths need to be said and heard?
- Opportunity to learn, to know about our First Nation's history.
- To listen and learn from the Elders.
- I would like to know how to speak "Welcome to Country" in language.
- Young people from schools being involved in the process – First Nations - from Anglo culture multi-cultural.
- Finding out more about who we are as a whole society.
- We do need to hear about BLM (*Black Lives Matter*)/ the effects of racism.
- Young People being engaged in Change the Date discussions for Australia Day.
- Great ideas shared and exciting to be a part of this journey with Kurna people - working/talking and sharing together.
- More of us need to know the true history of this land.
- Events like this are a great starting point. Need to start somewhere.
- Looking for partnership.
- Open the conversation to be clear on aspirations of all parties but we need to ensure we stay on the path together
- KYAC is the key – they are the partner, they can help with the protocols, they are the collective voice of Kurna.
- Reconciliation Australia is not necessarily the voice of the Kurna.
- Be clear to understand whose land we are on.
- This is about cultural leadership from the Kurna people.
- Connection with broader community and all of ratepayers is really important.
- Wouldn't it be great if this process (whatever it yields as a result) became a template for other Councils.
- Important to identify the Kurna people of Prospect. Get to know them and where they are from (what lands).
- Consistent voice and being sure we are speaking to the right people is important.
- Keep coming to us – keep including us – keep valuing us – keep talking to us (us = Kurna).
- Encourage the Kurna of Prospect to be involved. Empower them. Look for true participation.
- Learnings: 5 cultural groups that make up Aboriginal people – traditional, rural and remote, fringe, urban, stolen generation. Important for more people to understand the diversity –

they have different needs. Understand the gaps. With that knowledge a Council can provide culturally appropriate service. Map the services – map the needs.

- Why come together? To give cultural respect.
- Scope the services that are needed – cultural liaison, health etc...
- What truths - Important truth is the new information. Let's learn, let's educate. If we can each take something out of this type of event and share that knowledge.
- Need to acknowledge colonisation and its effect. Must recognise its effect continues to be felt by Kurna today. Post-traumatic stress is real.
- No RAP plan talks about De-colonisation. Is that the step we can reach?
- Overall goal – ensure Kurna can speak for Kurna.
- Racism still exists – this hurts.
- Schools are doing better today (and childcare centres) than in years gone by. Are other elements of society improving?
- Bringing community along. Informing people what is going on. Genuine interactions – authentic conversations – meeting actual people.
- Making it a visible journey.
- Understanding – sharing knowledge. Time for discussion.
- Education – information – knowledge – sharing. Programs for students, children, people new to Australia.
- Normalising Kurna people in community.
- Why is there such a low Aboriginal population in Prospect?
- Struggles and trauma – not just historical – that is real and current and continuing.
- Plan. Process – not just a lot of meetings – need actions. Who is involved? What are people's reasons for taking part?
- Living together in the community. Sharing story. Community feeling included, allow them to learn from Kurna.
- Feeling included/accepted (Kurna people)
- Access to information – make it accessible to the community.
- Kurna culture should simply always be part of the default culture of the community. Residents should understand, include and accept the contribution the Kurna culture and history can offer the community and individual residents.
- Aboriginal voices are the truth, we don't waste our time and energy, we don't want to be repeating ourselves all the time. It's time for every voice to be heard, young and old.
- Too many years too long, same old story being said, things need to change.
- Let Aboriginal people lead in this space. Collaborate. Employ. Develop. Capacity build. Encourage. Uplift, etc.
- Our history the real history.
- Tokenism or real
- How to communicate – communication, comprehension, interpretation.
- This treaty needs to be real!
- Has to be bigger than a RAP.
- Kurna people need to be appropriately resourced.
- If you are serious as a Council where is the 1FTE project officer (or the like) position to see this to fruition?
- Too often only white opinions were listened to. It only makes sense when people realise working together has better outcomes.
- Understanding collaboration.
- So people can be heard. Kurna community voices.
- Bringing awareness to this space and highlighting the importance.
- Statements are integral to shaping our shared future.

- Embracing culture, but not appropriating.
- Demonstrating leadership.
- We need to understand what we're apologising for.
- We need more education about our Kurna history.
- Make an effort to celebrate and embrace Kurna culture.
- Words are important (example of Canada vs Australia First Nation Peoples)
- This is political but necessary.
- Building respect.
- About learning – want to know how to bring people along on journey.
- Healing.
- Special opportunity – not available previously.
- Need to recognise what we're asking of Kurna people.
- We need to make more of an effort.
- I have never been invited to be a part of the coming together with so many Kurna people.
Thanks.
- It's vital that we listen, acknowledge Aboriginal sovereignty, that we take steps towards understanding indigenous culture.
- The mess that we as colonisers have made to their land and culture, we need to be accountable to give space and real effort to promote indigenous culture in order to even begin to heal the traumatic injuries.
- Respect each other.
- Truth, voice, treaty.
- Empathy and understanding.
- It is nice for Kurna people to be meeting in a Council meeting place.
- Acknowledging the pain of the past freely and openly.
- Creating a document that shares what the future can be.
- Sharing.
- Having a representative voice.
- Feeding the hunger for knowledge.
- City of Prospect leading the way together with Kurna.
- Truths from the heart to lead to understanding at a deeper level.
- Coming together in this way is important for all our voices to be heard, to give ideas of how we can make change.
- The truths that need to be said and heard are the traumas and healing and the journey that the Kurna people have suffered.
- Don't assume Kurna people we want to communicate with have email, computers, telephones, cars – or can get around easily.
- Coming together gives an opportunity to understand history, invasion, education, health, housing, healing, many other topics.
- Young people involved in process.
- Equality - Healing? How and is it most important?
- Truths from the very beginning of history 1788 – 2021.
- Healing? What does that mean and how. Everyone. Understanding each other.
- So much to understand. What healing means? And for who. Different for different people. What happened to Kurna people and where is this story told? Where do people access this story. Bones and artefacts were taken, taken to overseas countries, away from country. Thousands!! The numbers are staggering. And why are they still there? What does it mean that they haven't been returned yet?
- It is very important to coming together as Kurna people.

