City of South Perth
Aboriginal Engagement Strategy 2013

The City of South Perth Aboriginal Engagement Strategy Working Group (AESWG) was established in March 2011 after a Council resolution of September 2010 mandated the establishment of a working party with the objective to develop an Aboriginal Engagement Strategy for the City (with a two year timeframe for reporting back to Council).

In early 2011, members of the community were sought through advertisements and invitation to be part of the Indigenous Engagement Strategy Working Group (later to be known as the Aboriginal Engagement Strategy Working Group - AESWG). The group was made up of representatives of key Aboriginal community groups, members of the public, elected members and two City officers. The AESWG have been meeting on a regular basis through 2011/2012 and have consulted with Aboriginal groups/organisations/service providers to develop an Aboriginal Engagement Strategy for the City of South Perth.

As part of the process of consultation, the AESWG operate according to the City of South Perth P103 Communication and Consultation matrix of level 4 – collaborate. This is outlined in City documentation and the City’s promise to the community was:

“We will look to you for direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decision to the maximum extent possible.”
The City of South Perth Aboriginal Engagement Strategy outlines the objectives of the City of South Perth Aboriginal Engagement Strategy Working Group categorised into four guiding principles:

- Connection/inclusiveness
- Advancement
- Relationships
- Visibility

Key requirements to ensure the sustainability of the City of South Perth Aboriginal Engagement Strategy are:

- Acceptance, implementation and commitment by the City of South Perth
- Acceptance and support of the strategy by the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal community
- Continuation of the AESWG is an appropriate form to guide actions and act as a reference group for the City of South Perth Aboriginal Engagement Strategy
- Review of the City of South Perth Aboriginal Engagement Strategy annually

The local Aboriginal people and traditional owners of this land in the City of South Perth are often collectively known as the Noongar people. There are a number of alternative spellings in use for the word Noongar. After consultation with AESWG and others, the majority agreement was to use the spelling Noongar. This will be used by the City of South Perth in a consistent manner. The AESWG, after discussion decided that Noongar, meaning male, does not fully represent our group and community and therefore will refer to the traditional Aboriginal people of our areas as the Noongar/Bibbulmun people.

The Noongar/Bibbulmun people of the City of South Perth are known as Wadjuk people. To the south, the Pinjar people have a historical and cultural connection to the South Perth area.

NB: Throughout this document comments from people within the AESWG are noted in inverted commas to assist in further understanding of the discussion and process to the development of each strategy.
“That today we honour the indigenous peoples of this land, the oldest continuing cultures in human history. We reflect on their past mistreatment. We reflect in particular on the mistreatment of those who were stolen generations - this blemished chapter in our nation’s history. The time has now come for the nation to turn a new page in Australia’s history by righting the wrongs of the past and so moving forward with confidence to the future. We apologise for the laws and policies of successive parliaments and governments that have inflicted profound grief, suffering and loss on these our fellow Australians. We apologise especially for the removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families, their communities and their country. For the pain, suffering and hurt of these stolen generations, their descendants and for their families left behind, we say sorry. To the mothers and the fathers, the brothers and the sisters, for the breaking up of families and communities, we say sorry. And for the indignity and degradation thus inflicted on a proud people and a proud culture, we say sorry…”
Kevin Rudd 13 February 2008
What does reconciliation mean to our group?
We aim to build and develop long lasting relationships of mutual benefit and inclusiveness to the first owners – the Noongar/Bibbulmun people and all members of the City of South Perth. The City of South Perth aspires to work together as a community to create a City for everyone.

1. Connection and Inclusion
Connection: connecting people and places; working on supporting and building relationships; inclusion of all; bringing together; creating community

Group Reflections:

“As Aboriginal people we are from the land and feel part of the land. It is our sacred ground, like a church.”

“It is us as, people’s original home - our birthplace, resting place, spiritual place - we need to put our hands back into the earth to help heal it.”

“Many people do not understand our connection to the Boodjar (land) and its importance in our everyday life - we care for her and she will care for us. It would be great if all people could understand this relationship and how it is important for ALL people to connect to the land - not just Aboriginal peoples.”

“The Swan River is a place that is important to all of us. As a kid, I have fond memories of coming down to the foreshore with my family - including my nonna - and we would all swim, crab and have a BBQ on the foreshore - everyone was there - from all communities and walks of life and the river provided. Aboriginal people seem to understand this and its importance and it is now up to all of us and the general community to learn more and be responsible to understand, protect and be a part of - for the future of all.”

“We must protect the land for the future - for all our kids, grandkids and families – Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal.”

“Be seen as a person first then a Bibbulmun person - and it be positive not a negative option as often judged negatively against being Aboriginal - people don’t realise what that is like.”
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Stakeholders/partners</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Recognise the Noongar/Bibbulmun people and their significant contribution to the land, history and future of the City of South Perth.</td>
<td>1.1.1 Acknowledgement and/or Welcome To Country at selected City of South Perth civic and community events and functions by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people with respect and understanding, e.g. ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day – Acknowledgement given; Citizenship ceremonies Acknowledgement and Welcome to Country undertaken; Fiesta Concert Acknowledgement and Welcome to Country.</td>
<td>• City of South Perth</td>
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<td>1.1.2 Aboriginal flag to be flown at the front of the City of South Perth Civic building alongside the Australian national flag.</td>
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<td>• City of South Perth • Southwest Land and Sea Council</td>
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<td>1.1.3 Encourage local schools to fly the Aboriginal flag. Provide a one off City of South Perth grant for schools to install flag poles for flying the Aboriginal flag.</td>
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<td>• City of South Perth • Schools/P&amp;Cs/School • Councils • AESWG DET</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.1.4 Record written and oral history and house within libraries, schools and the Historical Society in the City of South Perth.</td>
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<td>• City of South Perth • Historical Society • Libraries • Schools • Community elders</td>
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<td>1.1.5 Participate in National Aboriginal and Island Day of Celebration (NAIDOC) week celebrations in partnership with community organisations and local Noongar/Bibbulmun community members.</td>
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<td>• Community organisations • Aboriginal Community organisations eg Moorditj Keila, Clontarf Local schools • City of South Perth • Community Elders • Curtin University • State NAIDOC Committee Businesses</td>
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<td>1.1.6 Encourage the formation of a committee to plan and implement NAIDOC activities, by supporting financially/in-</td>
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<td>Kind local groups holding celebrations or through direct Council initiative.</td>
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<td><strong>1.1.7 Fly the Aboriginal flag at Sir James Mitchell Park for NAIDOC Week.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>1.1.8 Include Aboriginal design/art/names in new buildings and upgrading within the City of South Perth.</strong></td>
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<td>• Aboriginal elders</td>
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<td><strong>1.1.9 Develop a reference working group comprising of Noongar/Bibbulmun people to continue consultation, engagement, knowledge &amp; information sharing and learning.</strong></td>
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<td>• AESWG</td>
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<td>• Aboriginal elders</td>
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<td>• Broader community</td>
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<td><strong>1.1.10 Include Aboriginal/Noongar/Bibbulmun design/art/names for plants and landscaping within the City of South Perth in/around public buildings, parks and reserves and other City of South Perth managed areas and projects (such as Karawara Revitalisation).</strong></td>
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<td><strong>1.1.11 Revise P103 to increase scope and include culturally appropriate consultation and inclusion of Aboriginal people.</strong></td>
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<td>• AESWG</td>
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<td><strong>1.2 Acknowledge past injustices.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>1.2.1 Record written and oral history and house within libraries and schools within the City of South Perth.</strong></td>
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<td>• Historical Society</td>
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<td>• Schools</td>
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<td>• Community elders</td>
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<td><strong>1.2.2 Include Noongar/Bibbulmun history on the history page of the City’s website.</strong></td>
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<td>• Aboriginal Community Groups</td>
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<td>• Aboriginal elders</td>
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<td>• AESWG</td>
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1.3 Recognise the significance of the Derbarl Yerrigan/ Swan River its waterways, shores and flora and fauna.

| 1.3.1 AESWG with local community partners seek to develop, seek out and include appropriate education and understanding about ways to restore and protect the Swan River/Derbarl Yerrigan as it is such an important connection for all the people of the City of South Perth. | • City of South Perth – City Environment  
• AESWG  
• Swan River Trust  
• Engineering Design  
• Local schools |

| 1.3.2 Consult with Noongar/Bibbulmun people regarding areas of cultural significance and land use that may affect sacred sites or land that is significant to Aboriginal history. | • City of South Perth – Planning City Environment  
• South Perth Historical Society |

| 1.3.3 Seek to provide places for ceremonial purposes that reflect and support cultural connections to land. | • City of South Perth – City Environment  
• Aboriginal community groups |

City of South Perth Fiesta 2013 Angelo Street Market Place
2. Advancement

Advancement: moving forward.

Group Reflections:

“Assisting in getting Noongar/ Bibbulmun people into roles of power, decision making and employment.”

“There are a lot of service providers around and we need to work with them and all work together, share information and talk.”

“Closing the gap – health education.”

“I want to know and understand the Noongar people’s history and am able to teach my kids more about the first Australians. I know a lot about my Italian heritage and as Australians I want to ensure that my family see Aboriginal people for what they are and their history not as a statistic or from a story on the six o’clock news. It is about coming together and learning, sharing and growing as a community moving forward.”

“Education, employment, empowerment.”

“Look at the whole life of an Aboriginal person and make it possible for them to have a life from 0 - 80 and provide for each stage - at present Aboriginal people living 20 years less than the general population.”

“An elder said get the men together and do something - as they are not doing their roles at home and have lost respect and identity; spoke to the men to see what they liked and would want to do - boating / fishing was the answer; organised some of them to do a recreational skippers ticket in Fremantle over 4 days; couple had poor relationships with white people and low self-esteem and value; course leader very good and inclusive and some members changed their thoughts; all passed the course and one participant very pleased with himself and his friends and that a white man believed in him and he COULD drive a boat, bring it into the jetty etc. This changed the self-esteem and value - spread throughout the community and had a positive effect.”

“Recognise the importance of building self-esteem, knowledge and confidence.”
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<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Actions for consideration</th>
<th>Stakeholders/partners</th>
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</table>
| 2.1 To consult, liaise and work with Aboriginal people to encourage and promote opportunities within the City of South Perth. | 2.1.1 Promote cultural exchange and provision of opportunities to headline, promote and include Noongar/Bibbulmun culture into City of South Perth civic and community events and activities wherever possible. | • City of South Perth Arts and Events  
• Aboriginal Community groups  
• Aboriginal Elders |
|          | 2.1.2 Provide opportunities for involvement and interaction at City of South Perth community events through strong ties, communication and support for Aboriginal community groups. | • City of South Perth Arts and Events  
• Schools and Aboriginal and Islander Education Officers  
• Indigenous Land Corporation  
• Aboriginal Community Groups |
|          | 2.1.3 Ensure that the City of South Perth grants information is distributed and promoted to Aboriginal community groups, schools and Aboriginal and Islander Education Officers. | • City of South Perth Community Development  
• Aboriginal Community Groups |
| 2.2 Building opportunities for advancement through sharing and learning together. | 2.2.1 Provide opportunities for City of South Perth staff to develop an awareness of Noongar / Bibbulmun culture, history and current issues through information, education and networking. | • City of South Perth  
• AESWG  
• Training providers |
|          | 2.2.2 Provide a networking forum for local service providers to come together, share information. (e.g. through annual/biannual information and networking forum facilitated by the City or supported by the City). | • City of South Perth Community Development  
• AESWG  
• State Government departments  
• NGOs |
<p>|          | 2.2.3 Promote cultural exchange and provision of | • City of South Perth Arts and Events |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2.2.4 Encourage people from Aboriginal background to participate in civic activities such as steering committees, Council, and public consultation.</th>
<th>City of South Perth, Aboriginal Elders, Local community groups and organisations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Highlight and acknowledge the unique culture of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.</td>
<td>City of South Perth</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.3.1 Provide opportunities and encourage City of South Perth staff to develop an awareness of Aboriginal/Noongar/Bibbulmun culture, history and current issues through information, education and relationships.</td>
<td>City of South Perth</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.3.2 Promote cultural exchange and provision of opportunities to headline, promote and include Noongar/Bibbulmun culture into City of South Perth events and activities wherever possible.</td>
<td>City of South Perth</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.3.3 Seek opportunities for the expression of Noongar/Bibbulmun people identity in the built form. Develop general design position statement/guidelines on best practice, including case studies, to support the above.</td>
<td>City of South Perth</td>
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<td>2.4 Support initiatives that build capacity for employment.</td>
<td>City of South Perth, Clontarf</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.4.1 Collate list of local schools offering Indigenous scholarships for dissemination through AESWG, Moorditj Keila, primary schools.</td>
<td>City of South Perth</td>
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<td>2.4.2 Employ Aboriginal trainees or staff within the organisation and develop adequate support</td>
<td>City of South Perth, Clontarf</td>
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</table>
2.5 Adopt strategies that contribute to economic growth and foster links to Indigenous history and tourism.

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<tr>
<th>Networks to assist.</th>
<th>2.5.1 Facilitate links to local and international tourism that identify significant sites and events in the City of South Perth.</th>
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<td>2.5.2 Promote and support local groups to develop tourism and educational packages/experiences.</td>
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<td>2.5.3 Support, guide and lobby for the development of an Aboriginal Cultural Centre, preferably along the Swan River/Derbarl Yerigan.</td>
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- City of South Perth
- Western Australian Indigenous Tourism Operators Council
- Aboriginal elders
- Aboriginal community groups
- Curtin University

City of South Perth
Aboriginal Engagement Strategy
3. Relationships

Relationships: a connection, association, involvement.

Group Reflections:

“Past influences present.”

“Noongar/Bibbulmun people have many stories to tell and if we could tell them, maybe there would be a greater understanding of our culture.”

“Coming together to form a connection and a community.”

“Understanding of the importance of men’s and women’s culture.” “Understanding of relationship to land and country.”

“Building connections to communities past, present and future.” “Respect for land, country and self.”

“Authentic cultural awareness.”

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<tr>
<td>3.1 Promote respect for land, and the traditional owners past and present connection to country.</td>
<td>3.1.1 In collaboration with local Noongar/Bibbulmun people develop a City protocol for Welcome To Country and/or Acknowledgement that can be used by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people and takes into account the significance of the occasions.</td>
<td>City of South Perth, Local elders, Department of Environment and Conservation, Department for Indigenous Affairs</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3.1.2 Consult relevant Noongar/Bibbulmun community members on matters relating to land use where relevant.</td>
<td>Aboriginal community groups, Southwest Land and Sea Council, Aboriginal elders, Department for Indigenous Affairs</td>
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<td>3.1.3 Provide opportunities and encourage City of South Perth staff to develop an</td>
<td>City of South Perth</td>
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</table>
## 3.1.4 Nurture and develop natural spaces and reduce impacts on the environment through increased understanding of land and country and the unique relationship between people, flora and fauna.

**Objectives:**
- City of South Perth
- Aboriginal community groups

### 3.2 Promote respect for self and self-understanding.

#### 3.2.1 Respect and acknowledge dates significant to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

**Objectives:**
- City of South Perth
- Aboriginal community groups

#### 3.2.2 Provide support to local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community groups.

**Objectives:**
- City of South Perth
- Aboriginal community groups

### 3.3 Foster relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people within the City of South Perth.

#### 3.3.1 Develop a reference working group that consists of Aboriginal people and City of South Perth staff to continue consultation, engagement and knowledge information sharing and learning. Continually review best practice and methods and determine if/when a Reconciliation Action Plan should be developed by the City of South Perth.

**Objectives:**
- City of South Perth
- AESWG

#### 3.3.2 Build on the above reference working groups role by introducing key City staff to the group as needs arise, strengthening communication between City departments and the reference group.

**Objectives:**
- City of South Perth
- All departments

#### 3.3.3 Promote cultural exchange and provision of

**Objectives:**
- City of South Perth
- All departments.
<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>opportunities to headline, participate, promote and include Noongar/Bibbulmun culture into City of South Perth events and activities wherever possible.</strong></th>
<th><strong>Aboriginal community groups</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 3.3.4 Continue to build and develop partnerships with local community groups and service providers that work with/service Aboriginal people in the City of South Perth. Support external community groups in partnering with Aboriginal /Bibbulmun people. | **City of South Perth Community Development**  
• Adventures  
• Local Primary schools  
• Moorditj Keila Winmar Football Foundation  
• Clontarf |

City of South Perth Fiesta Fun Day 2013
4. Visibility

Visibility: the act or fact of being visible.

**Group Reflections:**

“For Aboriginal people visibility is in our hearts and minds.”

“Awareness that Aboriginal people were the first people of this land.” “Seeing the person in front of you as a person not as a label.”

“Making the invisible visible.”

“Aboriginal culture is there but people don’t know about it.”

“We need a willingness to share our vision – the AESWG and what we are trying to achieve – not holding things, sharing things.”

“Aboriginal community members employment – encourage employment working within the City of South Perth and IN FRONT of the community. Lead by example and show them that it is possible.”

“We have a role to play, both in general advocacy, and in including and promoting Aboriginal culture and history.”

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| 4.1 Incorporate Noongar / Bibbulmun people stories and themes into existing events, activities and programs. | 4.1.1 Include Noongar/Bibbulmun cultural information in existing City of South Perth maps, info brochures etc. eg. tourist maps, local flora and fauna guides. | • WA Tourism commission  
• Department of Transport  
• Aboriginal Community groups  
• Inclusive Community Action Group  
• Western Australian Indigenous Tourism Operators Council |
| 4.1.2 Provide opportunities to headline, and promote Noongar/Bibbulmun culture in City of South Perth community events and activities wherever possible. | | • City of South Perth All departments  
• Local schools  
• Curtin University  
• Community organisations |
| 4.1.3 Incorporate Noongar/Bibbulmun people/local Aboriginal oral history into the Library’s oral history collection and distribute to schools for their libraries. | City of South Perth All departments  
Aboriginal Community Groups  
Elders  
Local schools |
|---|---|
| 4.2 Use technology to express Noongar/Bibbulmun stories and themes. | 4.2.1 Investigate the feasibility of expressing Noongar stories through podcasts, GIS mapping, apps and web downloads etc. | City of South Perth All departments  
Aboriginal Community Groups  
Other local governments Authorities  
Grants |
| 4.2.2 Include Noongar/Bibbulmun history on the history page of the City’s website | 4.3 Demonstrate and recognise the Noongar/Bibbulmun culture and its contribution to the City of South Perth through increased visibility and public recognition | City of South Perth All departments  
Aboriginal Community Groups  
Swan River Trust  
Southwest Land and Sea Council |
| 4.3.1 Install signage in Noongar language on areas of importance and significance including parks, reserves, etc. | 4.3.2 Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to advocate and lobby on behalf of Noongar / Bibbulmun people. | City of South Perth All departments  
Government and community stakeholders |
| 4.3.3 Capture and express Noongar / Bibbulmun people’s stories in culturally appropriate ways. | 4.3.4 Promote positive local stories in the local paper and City publications. | City of South Perth All departments  
Local paper  
Aboriginal Community Groups |
| 4.4 U|
Working Group Members:

Dena Gower (Chairperson)
James Webb (Deputy Chairperson)
City of South Perth Mayor Sue Doherty
Garry Gower
Honey Webb
Jacqui Hills
Koodah Cornwall
James Best
Kris Sappal
Margaret Keanew
Cr Sharron Hawkins-Zeeb
Margaret King – City of South Perth
Danielle Cattalini – City of South Perth
Kellie Bennett (December 2011 – present) City of South Perth