

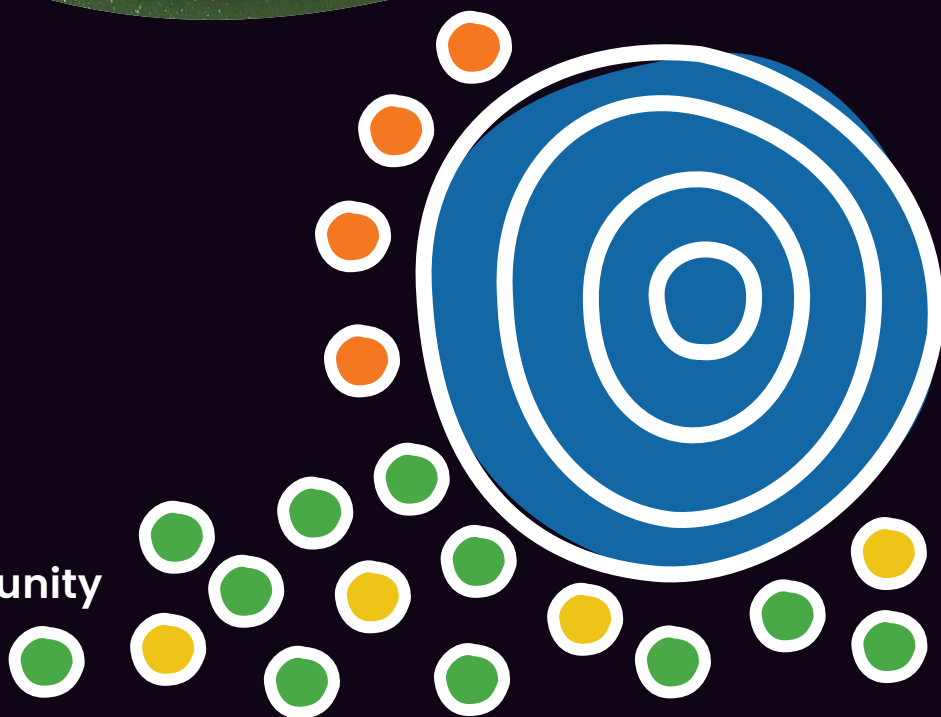



First Nations Strategy

2022 – 2026



Building Australia's
best regional community





Bundaberg Regional Council acknowledges the Traditional Country of the Taribelang Bunda, Gooreng Gooreng, Gurang, and Bailai Peoples and recognises that this Country has always been and continues to be of cultural, spiritual, social and economic significance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People. We recognise the thousands of generations of continuous culture that have shaped this Country and the people on it. We pay respects to Elders, past and present. Bundaberg Regional Council further acknowledges other neighbouring traditional owner groups within the Wide Bay–Burnett Region.

“... the Bailai (Byellee), Gurang, Gooreng Gooreng, Taribelang Bunda People maintained an unbroken physical and spiritual connection with their land during the period of early European settlement and I have referred to the pain and indignity caused to the Bailai, Gurang, Gooreng Gooreng, Taribelang Bunda People by displacement from their traditional homelands.

That they have survived as a recognisable society, with ongoing connection to their traditional lands, says much about their individual and collective strength and resilience.”

The Honourable Justice Dowsett,
Consent Determination of Native Title Speech
28/11/2017.

Introduction

Bundaberg Regional Council's First Nations Strategy 2022–2026 informs the importance of cultural awareness, appropriateness and inclusion throughout all of Council. It outlines a framework to develop and implement cultural strategies and actions. It introduces the use of cultural protocols as guiding principles for regional engagement and communication practices. Further, it supports Council's commitment to advance reconciliation in collaboration with First Nations communities.

The First Nations Strategy respectfully aligns with the vision and values of Council's Corporate Plan. It underpins aspirations of the Indigenous Land Use Agreement and Reconciliation Action Plan and its primary function is to coexist, with interchangeable deliverables in both.

Background for change

Prior to 1788, Aboriginal Peoples lived a traditional way of life to look after Country, knowledge systems and each other. Dreamtime stories, tribal lore and cultural continuance survived through intergenerational passing down of knowledge.

When the *Aboriginals Protections and Restriction of the Sale of Opium Act (1897)* was introduced in Queensland, the frontier conflicts, dispossession of lands, desolation of sacred sites, loss of languages and forced removals especially of children, totally disrupted and oppressed tribal societies.

As we move forward in community, we learn more about the true histories, intergenerational trauma and impacts that colonisation had and continues to have, upon First Nations Peoples.

Actions speak louder than words and Council's First Nations Strategy 2022–2026 intends to be a catalyst of positive change for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in our region.

Council's values underpin and guide our actions, behaviours and decisions at all times.

The First Nations Strategy aligns with Bundaberg Regional Council's Corporate Plan 2021–2026:

Our Community

1.2 Safe, active, vibrant and inclusive community

Strategies

1.2.5 Develop a Cultural Strategy, that celebrates and embraces our local connections to First Nation Peoples and other cultures.

Council vision:

To build Australia's
best regional community

Corporate values:

The First Nations Strategy focuses on becoming a culturally competent workforce. It aligns with Council's vision, values and corporate plan.



Communication and leadership

Inspire and actively support the Council, our colleagues and our community to excel.

Effectively engage and work with First Nations Community and Peoples



Sustainability

Engage with stakeholders in making decisions that will protect and enhance our community's future.

Raise awareness of cultural protocols as being key to building relationships

Support an understanding of First Nation governance structures as being key to cultural protocols, decision-making and engagement practices

Support Caring for Country perspectives within environmental initiatives



Team work

Connect passion with purpose in working as one team with one vision.

Acknowledge and value the skills and perspectives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees in our workplace

Support recruitment and retainment of First Nations employees



Customer focus

Foster a 'can do' attitude committed to meeting the needs of all customers.

Support cultural initiatives, procurement opportunities, programs and services



Respect

Act ethically, honestly, respectfully in building complete trust and confidence.

Encourage shared understanding of the importance of culture and identity to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples



Innovation

Embracing new ideas and new technologies to continually adapt and improve.

Advocate cultural inclusion for positive social change in shaping our regional identity

Support cultural visions as integral and attributable within regional development



Safety and wellbeing

Ensure safety and wellbeing for everyone through safe work practices, vigilance and awareness.

Promote reconciliation and truth-telling as continual learning and approaches to effect cultural safety and systemic change

The First Nations Strategy, the Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA) and the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)



The First Nations Strategy works interchangeably with the ILUA and RAP. It co-exists as a baseline for the aspirations and expectations of both documents.

The First Nations Strategy:

- is intent on shining a cultural torch across whole-of-Council.
- provides a framework to develop actions, implement activities and achieve results.
- is a living document to be reviewed annually.

The First Nations Strategy recognises the need to develop greater understanding of:

- First Nations cultures, identities and histories of place-based meaning
- Traditional Owners in our region
- cultural awareness and articulation of cultural protocols
- cultural visibility in Council practices

An ILUA is:

- a voluntary agreement between a native title group and others about the use of land and waters. Council is co-signatory to the Port Curtis Coral Coast (PCCC) and Local Government ILUA with agreed expectations to support economic, community and cultural development.

As the Registered Native Title Body Corporate/ Prescribed Body Corporate, PCCC is the legal entity overseeing governance of the First Nations Traditional Owners sector in our region and serves as a conduit on formal traditional matters for ILUA outcomes.

The Parties to our ILUA include:

- the PCCC people, which comprises the First Nations Bailai, Gurang, Gooreng Gooreng and Taribelang Bunda Native Title Holders; and
- the Local Government areas of Bundaberg Regional Council, North Burnett Regional Council and Gladstone Regional Council.

The ILUA comprises five parts:

- Part 1 - relates to technical and preliminary issues, definition and parties to the agreement
- Parts 2, 3 and 4 - outline the legislative requirements on both Council and the PCCC regarding Native Title claim and Aboriginal Cultural Heritage compliance.
- Part 5 - places further obligations on Council and sets out requirements regarding place and road names, publications, local events, cultural awareness training, funding programs, tender policy and the establishment and ongoing role in a consultative committee.

A RAP:

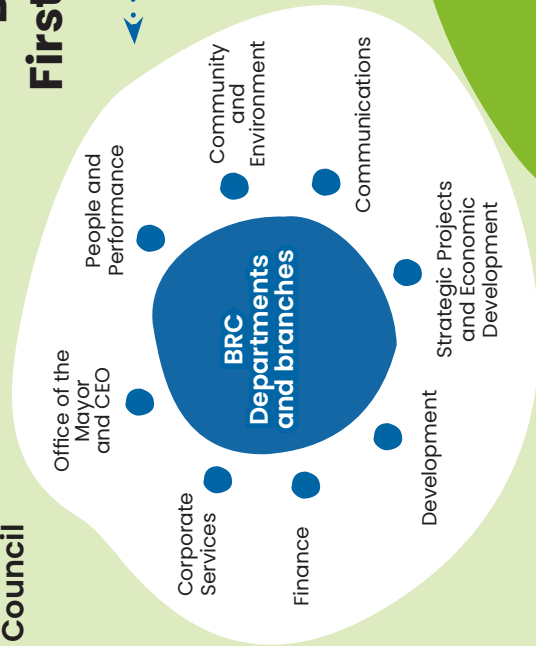
- enables organisations to sustainably and strategically take meaningful action to advance reconciliation around the core pillars of relationships, respect and opportunities.
- provides tangible and substantive benefits for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, increasing economic equity and supporting First Nations self-determination.
- framework is a structured approach to advance reconciliation.

There are four types:

1. Reflect RAPs - is about scoping capacity for reconciliation and developing relationships with Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Peoples. Reflect RAPs decide on a vision for reconciliation, sets out the steps to prepare for reconciliation initiatives in future RAPs and explores organisational sphere of influence.
2. Innovate RAPs - outline the actions to achieve the vision and establish best approaches. Innovative RAPs focus on developing and strengthening relationships with Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Peoples, engaging staff and stakeholders and developing piloting innovative strategies to empower Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Peoples.
3. Stretch RAPs - focus on longer-term strategies and working towards defined measurable targets and goals. Stretch RAPs require embedding reconciliation initiatives into business strategies to become 'business as usual'.
4. Elevate RAPs - have a proven track record of embedding effective RAP initiatives and have a strong strategic relationship with Reconciliation Australia to actively champion initiatives, empower Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Peoples and create societal change.

Source: <https://www.reconciliation.org.au/the-rap-framework/>

Bundaberg Regional Council



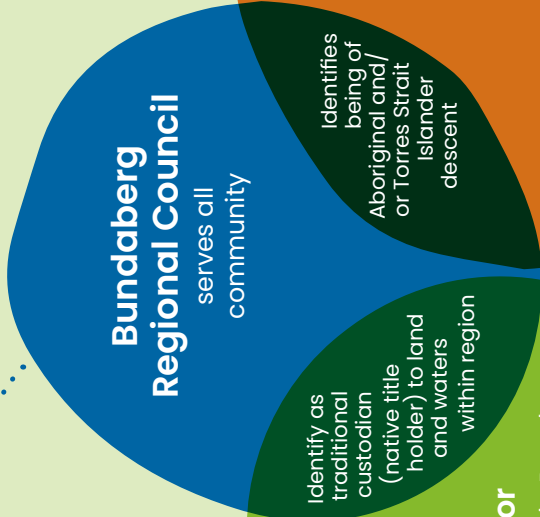
Bundaberg Regional Council's First Nations Communication Model

First Nations Community

Family -

Household Compositions

- Parents and grandparents or kinship carers (extended family)
- Elders and disability and vulnerable members
- Children: Early learners, school-aged and youth
 - Workforce (see First Nation Frontline Workers Network)
- Department of Human Services (Welfare recipients)
- Businesses (Indigenous consultants)
- Organisations (Indigenous identified workers and mainstream (with high First Nations clientele/caseload))



First Nations People and Communities Sector

Bundaberg - Gin Gin - Childers

- i) Traditional connection
- ii) Historical connection

First Nations Traditional Custodian Sector

- i) Taribelang Bunda Peoples
- ii) Gooreng Gooreng Peoples
- iii) Gurang Peoples
- iv) Bailai (Byellee) Peoples

Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA)



Community Services -

First Nations

Community sectors

- Community Health and Safety
- Child, Youth and Family Services
- Education, Employment and Training
- Elders/Seniors and Disability Services
- Housing, Emergency and Legal Services
- First Nations, Arts-Culture and Diverse Services

Building Australia's best regional community

Engaging effectively with First Nations Peoples and Communities

The Bundaberg Regional Council First Nations Communication Model illustrates the relationship between Council and our First Nations sector. Council's First Nations Communication Model is a place-based model which uses diverse modes of communication to disseminate information, be responsive and reach target groups in an effective and transparent manner. It is important that First Nations Peoples feel engaged and connected with Council so relationships and reconciliation steps becomes business as usual to build Australia's best regional community.

1. **Bundaberg Regional Council**
Council serves all community regardless of ethnicity.
2. **First Nations Traditional Owners**
Any Aboriginal person identifying as a Traditional Owner/custodian to our region. Traditional Owners/custodians must be

of Taribelang Bunda / Gooreng Gooreng / Gurang / Bailai descent. The PCCC and Local Government Areas ILUA serves to meet agreed expectations for traditional owners (see Indigenous Land Use Agreement, Glossary).

3. **First Nations Peoples and Communities**
Any person identifying Aboriginal descent (including traditional owners/custodians) as well as any persons identifying Torres Strait Islander descent within our region. This collectively is the First Nations sector. The model above indicates the composition of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander households and intergenerational community members. It exemplifies engaging with Indigenous organisations and Government departments. The First Nations Interagency Network pertains to First Nation (Indigenous) frontline workers/ services in our region.

Below: Yarning circle under the fig trees at the Bundaberg Multiplex grounds.



Developing a cultural framework for the First Nations Strategy

The First Nations Strategy presents a cultural framework to enable a First Nations lens across whole-of-Council. Internal consultations with branch staff informed a snapshot of Council's current connections and future opportunities at the operational level relative to engaging with First Nations Peoples and communities. This approach aided in the development of a framework to inform and guide cultural benchmarks and measurables across whole-of-Council.

The First Nations Strategy's Cultural Framework is to be a living document designed to work interchangeably with the PCCC ILUA and Council's development of a RAP.

The Cultural Framework and Action Plan

The First Nations Strategy's Cultural Framework applies building a strong foundation for cultural awareness, appropriateness and inclusion. The Cultural Framework Action Plan 2021-2026 presents eleven focus areas for Council towards building and supporting a culturally competent workforce:

1. Ensure awareness of Legal Frameworks
2. Ensure Cultural Safety across Council
3. Ensure Welcomes and Acknowledgements of Country are respectful and appropriate
4. Engagement of Elders and Traditional Owners is built into Council processes
5. Cultural Heritage Compliance and Intellectual Property is understood and practiced across Council
6. Employment and training opportunities are planned and monitored across Council
7. The arts are pivotal to communicating culture
8. Natural Resource Management is at the core of cultural practice
9. Communications and marketing demonstrates Council's best practice to the world
10. Procurement recognises Specialist Cultural Services
11. Council has an endorsed Reconciliation Action Plan

Bundaberg Regional Council's First Nations Cultural Framework and Action Plan is available to view [here](#)

First Nations Strategy – Fact Sheet Series

Disclaimer: the First Nations Strategy Fact Sheets, are to be used as guiding principles only to bring an awareness of (place-based) cultural protocols. The information contained within the fact sheets series are for internal purposes only and are not for public distribution.

1. Bundaberg Regional Councils' Acknowledgement of Country
 - Using Council's Acknowledgement of Country in email blocks and PowerPoint presentations
 - When and how to use Bundaberg Regional Council's Acknowledgement of Country
2. Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country Guidelines
 - What is the difference between a Welcome to Country, and an Acknowledgement of Country
3. Engaging Elders and First Nation Peoples for Cultural Services
 - How do I know who to contact to do a Welcome to Country or other Cultural Service Provision?
4. Local Language Groups within our Local Government Area
 - Includes table referencing language groups, spelling variants and pronunciations
5. Council's support of key Cultural Events
 - Includes table referencing Council hosted events and when to organise Welcome to Country
 - Includes table referencing key Cultural Events
6. Native Title Maps and Cultural Mapping
 - Map No 1 – the Bundaberg Regional Council Local Government Area
 - Map No 2 – the Port Curtis Coral Coast and Local Government ILUA Area
 - Map No 3 – the NNTT Register Extract of the ILUA Area
7. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flags
 - What is Sorry Business?
 - Flying the flags at half-mast to respect Sorry Business of prominent community Elder/ leader
8. Respecting Sorry Business
 - What is Sorry Business?
 - Why are flags flown at half-mast for some community members and not others?
 - Respecting sorry business for First Nations staff members



Welcome to
Alexandra
Park
ZOO
Kangaroo silhouette

Addendum – Glossary of terms and useful links

For the purposes of the First Nations Strategy it is important to note that some of the following references are specific to the Bundaberg Regional Council area.

<p>Boundaries are important</p>	<p>It is important to note that there are tribal boundaries which comprise many clan (family) groups and there are language boundaries which comprise many tribal groups. These boundaries establish adherence/observance of traditional lores and customs as well as traditional connections and responsibilities to look after Country.</p>
<p>Cultural Protocols (internal resources only)</p> 	<p>For further information, click on the relative resource link:</p> <p>Section 1: BRC’s Acknowledgement of Country Section 2: Welcome to, and Acknowledgement of, Country Guidelines Section 3: Engaging Elders and First Nations Peoples for cultural services Section 4: Local Language Groups within our Local Government Area Section 5: Council’s support of key Cultural Events Section 6: Native Title Maps and Cultural Mapping Section 7: Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Flags Section 8: Respecting Sorry Business</p> 
<p>First Nations Communities</p>	<p>This term references the community sector which includes any person of Aboriginal descent and any person of Torres Strait Islander descent. Persons of Aboriginal descent includes those with traditional connections (see below) and those with historical connections (meaning Aboriginal people who come from other Country or tribal areas outside our region).</p>
<p>First Nations Peoples</p>	<p>For the purposes of this strategy, First Nations is the preferred terminology to collectively reference Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. The term “Aboriginal” does not include Torres Strait Islander people (and vice versa) because they are two totally separate and unique cultures. Aboriginal Peoples belong with traditional affiliations to mainland Australia. Torres Strait Islander people belong traditionally to the island nations in the Torres Strait off far north Queensland.</p>
<p>First Nations Strategies and Actions</p>	<p>The First Nations Strategy and actions were based upon an internal consultative review undertaken from 2020-21.</p>
<p>Identity is important</p>	<p>It is important to note that only Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Peoples can say and determine who they are. The Australian Government and (most) State Governments use the following criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Must be of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent 2. Must identify as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander 3. Must be accepted as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander by their community

<p>Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA)</p>	<p>Council is co-signatory to the PCCC and Local Government ILUA with agreed expectations to support economic, community and cultural development. The other Local Government signatories are the Gladstone and North Burnett Regional Councils. As the Prescribed Body Corporate, PCCC is the legal entity overseeing governance of the First Nations Traditional Owners sector in our region and serves as a conduit on formal traditional matters for ILUA outcomes.</p> <p>The First Nations Strategy's Cultural Framework is to be a living document designed to work interchangeably with the PCCC ILUA and Council's development of a RAP.</p>
<p>Language is important</p>	<p>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages strongly link Country, culture and identity. They include rules about communication, culturally bound concepts and knowledge systems. Through language, relationships are developed, culture taught, information transmitted, knowledge learned and stories told.¹ Council supports the reclamation of traditional language projects within our region.</p>
<p>Related Legislation</p>	<p>Related Legislation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003 (QLD)</i> • <i>Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)</i> • <i>Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth)</i> • <i>Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (QLD)</i> • <i>Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)</i> • <i>Human Rights Act 2019 (QLD)</i> • <i>Industrial Relations Act 2016 (QLD)</i> • <i>Native Title Act 1993 (Cth)</i> • <i>Public Sector Ethics Act 1994 (QLD)</i> • <i>Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)</i> • <i>Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)</i> • <i>Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage Act 2003 (QLD)</i> • <i>Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (QLD)</i>
<p>Native Title</p>	<p>The Federal Court of Australia granted consent determination of native title to the First Nations Bailai, Gurang, Gooreng Gooreng and Taribelang Bunda Peoples within the Local Government areas of Bundaberg Regional Council, Gladstone Regional Council and North Burnett Regional Council on 28 November 2017.</p> <p>Native title is a law passed by the Australian Parliament in recognition of the rights and interests of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in land and waters according to their traditional lores and customs. Native title can co-exist with other forms of land title such as pastoral leases and Crown land whereas freehold title extinguishes native title upon that land tenure.</p> <p>Native title rights and interests may include rights to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • live on the area • access the area for traditional purposes • visit and protect important places and sites • hunt, fish and gather food or traditional resources
<p>First Nations Peoples</p>	<p>For the purposes of this strategy, First Nations is the preferred terminology to collectively reference Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. The term "Aboriginal" does not include Torres Strait Islander Peoples (and vice versa) because they are two totally separate and unique cultures. Aboriginal Peoples belong with traditional affiliations to mainland Australia. Torres Strait Islander Peoples belong traditionally to the island nations in the Torres Strait off far north Queensland.</p>



¹ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages Statement, State of Queensland (Department of Education) 2018

Port Curtis Coral Coast (PCCC)

When a determination recognising native title is made by the Federal Court, the *Native Title Act 1993* requires traditional owners to establish a corporation to represent them and their interests known as registered native title bodies corporate (RNTBCs) or prescribed bodies corporate (PBCs).

Since the Federal Court granted consent determination, Native Title stipulates that the PCCC as the PBC is legally responsible for bringing together the four Traditional Owner groups.

The PCCC has two nominated representatives from each traditional owner group to manage country-related cultural matters as well as social and economic autonomy through their respective governance structures.

An RNTBC has prescribed functions under the *Native Title Act 1993* to:

- hold, protect and manage determined native title in accordance with the objectives of the native title holding group
- ensure certainty for governments and other parties interested in accessing or regulating native title land and waters by providing a legal entity to manage and conduct the affairs of the native title holders.²

Traditional Custodians

Bundaberg Regional Council acknowledges the Traditional Country of the Taribelang Bunda, Gooreng Gooreng, Gurang, and Bailai Peoples and recognises that this Country has always been and continues to be of cultural, spiritual, social and economic significance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People. We recognise the thousands of generations of continuous culture that have shaped this Country and the people on it. We pay respects to Elders, past and present. Bundaberg Regional Council further acknowledges other neighbouring traditional owner groups within the Wide Bay–Burnett Region.

² <https://www.oric.gov.au/registered-native-title-bodies-corporate>



Cultural Resources and References

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage Database and Register – Department of Seniors, Disability Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships (online portal)
- Advancing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Interests in Land Use Planning (Guidance for Local Governments)
- Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies
- Australian Museums and Galleries Association (AMGA) Cultural Heritage Arts Regional Tourism (CHART) Program
- Closing the Gap Framework – building on the foundation of respect and unity provided by the 2008 National Apology to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.
- National Native Title Tribunal
- Queensland Tourism Industry Council (QTIC) – First Nations Tourism Plan
- Reconciliation Action Plan – find out more about RAPs from Reconciliation Australia
- State Library of Queensland – Community History (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Links)
- Tracks to Treaty – reframing the relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders (watch this space)
- Wide Bay Burnett Regional Plan 2011

Related Corporate Strategies

- Bundaberg Regional Council Advocacy Priorities 2022
- Bundaberg Regional Council Arts & Cultural Strategy 2019-2023
- Bundaberg Regional Council Community Development Strategy
- Bundaberg Regional Council Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2021-2023

Preamble to the Constitution of Queensland

The people of Queensland, free and equal citizens of Australia... honour the Aboriginal Peoples and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, the First Australians, whose lands, winds and waters we all now share; and pay tribute to their unique values, and their ancient and enduring cultures, which deepen and enrich the life of our community.

Date of Assent:
25 February 2010

