

# **SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA 1**

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## **INNER WEST COUNCIL**

**COUNCIL MEETING**

**TUESDAY 26 JUNE 2018**

**6.30pm**

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Location Ashfield Service Centre, 260 Liverpool Road, Ashfield

**MEETING AGENDA – PRECIS  
SUPPLEMENTARY ITEMS**

The following report/s appear as late item/s with Mayoral approval as information required for the preparation of the report/s was not available at the time of distribution of the Business Paper.

**1 Mayoral Minutes**

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**Item No:** C0618 Item 29  
**Subject:** MAYORAL MINUTE: SUPPORT FOR SOUTH SEA ISLANDER COMMUNITY  
**From:** The Mayor, Councillor Darcy Byrne

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**MOTION:**

**THAT:**

- 1. Council flies the Flag of the Australian South Sea Islands annually on 25 August;**
  - 2. Officers liaise with the Australian South Sea Islanders Secretariat to investigate the inclusion of a Australian South Sea Islander mural as part of the Perfect Match program in 2019; and**
  - 3. On provision of Australian South Sea Islanders (Port Jackson) (ASSIPJ) Historical academic advisory panel completed information resources, Council makes these resources available at Council libraries.**
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**Background**

I was recently approached by the Chairwomen of the Australian South Sea Islanders Secretariat to discuss ways in which Council can support the recognition of their history in Australia. Inner West Council has a focus on reconciliation and acknowledgement of our Indigenous cultures, with whom the ASSI community have an evident kinship.

Australian South Sea Islanders are the descendants of Australia's Indentured Labour scheme known as Blackbirding of the Pacific which is derived from the African Slave trade.

Beginning in NSW in 1847 with the influx to Queensland between 1863 and 1904, around 62,500 South Sea Islanders (SSI) were Blackbirded from the eighty islands of Vanuatu and the Solomons to work, primarily on sugar cane plantations but also in maritime and pastoral industries. Many were kidnapped or tricked into this service with 95% of the trade being male and 5% women.

With the adoption of the White Australia Policy under the Pacific Island Labourers Act in 1901, some 7,000 collectively Islander families and individuals were forcibly deported. All were forced to pay for a portion of their fare home from the negligible (if any) wages they had received.

Some 15,000 died as a part of the trade and lie in unmarked graves across mainly Queensland and New South Wales regions.

This is clearly a significant chapter of Australian History, and whilst it is relatively well known in some Queensland communities, it is largely unknown or acknowledged in the rest of Australia.

As Sydney was a receiving port since the 1790s for many of the SSI brought into the country who were deployed to the Torres Strait Islands, there is a significant population in Sydney and along the east coast of Australia.

Numbers are hard to verify, as they have only recently been included as a distinct community in the Australian Census, but there is an estimated 70,000 ASSIs in Australia, approximately 16,000 of which live in Sydney.

Emeritus Professor Clive Moore, one of Australia's foremost advocates of Pacific Studies, has worked consistently for some forty years in producing informational resources regarding the SSI/ASSI history in Australia.

There has been Commonwealth recognition of the history of the ASSI since 1994, which the National Australian South Sea Islander Day was instituted on 25 August. The Commonwealth has committed to a review of all levels of Australian Government with regards to recognition of ASSI, programs and services.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Nil.

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**Item No:** C0618 Item 30  
**Subject:** MAYORAL MINUTE: CAMPAIGNING AGAINST CUTS TO PUBLIC LIBRARY FUNDING  
**From:** The Mayor, Councillor Darcy Byrne

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**MOTION:**

**THAT Council:**

- 1. Make representation to the local State Members, in relation to the need for additional funding from the NSW State Government for the provision of public library services; and**
- 2. Write to the Hon Don Harwin, Minister for the Arts and the Hon Walt Secord, Shadow Minister for the Arts, calling for bi-partisan support for the provision of a significant increase in state funding for NSW public libraries, supported by a sustainable future funding model.**

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**Background**

In a major blow for one of the most popular community facilities that councils around Australia deliver, the 2018-19 NSW state budget delivered just \$23.528M for public libraries.

This is \$5.275M less than the 2017-18 funding level.

The State Government has completely ignored the recommendation of its own expert panel – the Library Council of NSW – which in consultation with the State Library of NSW and the NSW Public Libraries Consultative Committee recommended a 2018-19 increase in public library funding to \$30M.

The public library grant funding component, which has been a budget inclusion for many years, has been scrapped entirely. This component financed a competitive grant project which has part-funded countless library infrastructure and service projects over many years including a technology grant for the new Marrickville Library project.

Given the risk to our public libraries, I am recommending that Council initiate action to lobby for the reverse the ongoing deterioration of state funding for public libraries to ensure that local councils will not be forced to continue meeting the funding shortfall.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Nil.