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**National Reconciliation Week encourages Australians to walk together with courage**

Strathbogie Shire Council has led the way in achieving state-wide local government support and recognition for the Uluru Statement from the Heart and the movement for Voice, Treaty, Truth, in putting forward its resolution to the Municipal Association of Victoria State Council which was passed on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> May.

National Reconciliation Week, from Monday 27<sup>th</sup> May to Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> June, invites Australians from all backgrounds to work towards a unified future, by learning about our shared histories, cultures, and achievements, and exploring how each of us can contribute to achieving reconciliation in Australia.

Honeysuckle Creek Ward Councillor Kate Stothers said achieving state-wide support for the Uluru Statement from the Heart was a positive step for Strathbogie Shire Council on the journey forward.

“Council resolution supports the sentiments contained in the Uluru Statement from the Heart, the process for Aboriginal recognition and reform of the Constitution and a referendum to enshrine a First Nations Voice to Federal Parliament,” Cr Stothers explained.

“We have also resolved to advocate on behalf of its community to promote the need for these processes to provide the Aboriginal community the opportunity to be heard and have discussions about what recognition means for them.”

Council remains committed to ensuring that the needs and aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are properly reflected in council plans, strategies and policies and is in ongoing conversation with Taungurung Land and Water Council, including arranging cultural awareness training for staff.

“It is heartening to see members of our communities advocating about the need for greater recognition of our First Nations peoples and their place as a First Nations Voice in parliament, being directly involved in the development and implementation of policies and programs to address issues that affect them,” Cr Stothers said.

“We are in ongoing discussion with our community about the ways we can better support our Aboriginal community, including through our Let’s Talk campaign at the beginning of our term, as well as in our Arts and Culture Committee and draft Sustainable Strathbogie 2030 Strategy consultation. It is so important in continuing the conversation and moving forward as a community and as a nation.”

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