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**1. PREAMBLE**

This policy outlines Council’s stand regarding racism in the organisation and our city. Inclusion is critical and Council has a separate Inclusion Policy. This policy relates specifically to “prejudice, discrimination or antagonism directed against someone of a different race, based on the belief that one’s own race is superior”. (Oxford Dictionaries)

As a city that receives a great diversity of visitors, it is critical to delivering on Council’s vision of ‘a welcoming place for all’ that inclusion be actively pursued, and racism be strongly stood against.

**1.1 Background**

The City of Holdfast Bay is Kurna land. The area includes a number of spiritually and culturally significant locations, which continue to be important to the Kurna people today. These areas include burial grounds, historic gathering areas and dreaming places.

The city is also important to the European history of the State, as it includes the site of the first settlers’ arrival to the Province of South Australia, which was established under the “*Letters Patent under the Great Seal of the United Kingdom erecting and establishing the Province of South Australia and fixing the boundaries thereof*”, as presented to King William IV.

The Letters Patent stated “that nothing in these our letters patent contained shall affect or be construed to affect the rights of any Aboriginal Natives of the said Province to the actual occupation or enjoyment in their own Persons or in the Persons of their Descendants of any Lands therein now actually occupied or enjoyed by such Natives.”

South Australia’s first Vice-Regal Proclamation, which was read on 28 December 1836 echoed these sentiments. Under the English ensign of St George, the proclamation advised gathered settlers that the government of the province had been created, asked them to behave “with order and quietness”, respect laws and with sound morality and observance of religion, to prove worthy of being the “Founders of a great and free Colony”. The proclamation committed to “take every lawful means for extending the same protection to the Native Population as to the rest of His Majesty’s Subjects and...to punish with exemplary severity, all acts of violence or injustice which may in any manner be practiced or attempted against the Natives who are to be considered as much under the Safeguard of the law as the Colonists themselves, and equally entitled to the privileges of British Subjects.”

Despite the generally positive intentions of the Letters Patent and the Proclamation, since colonisation, Kurna people have been displaced, disenfranchised, marginalised and decimated. Kurna culture has been suppressed and much damage has been inflicted on

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the nation and individuals by successive governments and various organisations charged with the care of Kurna people.

Social and physical structures brought in and created by settlers, coupled with policies and actions taken in relation to “Aboriginal Affairs”, and initially keeping Australia white more generally, have created a legacy of systemic racism and many forms of unwitting discrimination.

This policy does not judge past actions but in the spirit of *Tiati Wangkanthi Kumangka* (truth-telling together), respectfully acknowledges those actions and seeks to begin to redress their consequences.

This policy also extends to acknowledging and standing against racism against people of any ethnic origin, cultural background, skin colour, religious affiliation, or citizenship status. Council values embracing and celebrating ethnic and cultural diversity, and understands it is vital to ensuring vibrant and inclusive communities.

## 1.2 Purpose

This policy articulates Council’s commitment to acknowledging our past, moving forward constructively with Kurna people and, more generally, taking a strong, ethical stand against racism of all kinds. Racism is best understood when acknowledging the context of power, oppression and privilege and Council does not shy away from acknowledging the power and privilege both Elected Members and staff often hold.

## 1.3 Scope

This policy applies to the whole of council.

## 1.4 Definitions

**Discrimination** – refers to a person or group being treated less favourably or not being given the same opportunities as others in a similar situation because of their race, skin colour, cultural background, ethnic origin, religious affiliation, or citizenship status. Discrimination is unlawful (refer to the *Equal Opportunity Act 1984*).

**Indirect Discrimination** – is when requirements, policies or practices which are the same for everyone appear to be neutral and fair but actually disadvantage people who share a particular attribute.

**Racism** - refers to "prejudice, discrimination or antagonism directed against someone of a different race, based on the belief that one's own race is superior" (Oxford Dictionaries).

## 1.5 Strategic Reference

Council’s vision for 2050+ is, in part, to create “a welcoming and healthy place for all in South Australia’s most sustainable city”.

‘All’ must by definition and strongly by intent, include first nations people and people from culturally diverse backgrounds.

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Furthermore, Council's Strategic Plan includes the following aspirations:

- Holdfast Bay is internationally recognised as a leader in inclusion and participation.
- The Kaurua people's cultural and spiritual relationship to the area is honoured in meaningful, collaboratively agreed ways.

Council's strategic plan is aligned to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, which were developed as an urgent call for action by all countries. The goals recognise that ending injustice and inequality must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education and spur economic growth, while tackling climate change and working to preserve the natural environment.

Goals relevant to this policy include:

Goal 10 – Reduce inequality within...countries

Goal 16 – Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

## 2. PRINCIPLES

- 2.1 Leadership matters - both for what it does and does not do. On this basis, Council supports the original intent of the Letters Patent and the Uluru Statement from the Heart and seeks to engage fully in truth-telling, and treaty-making to the extent of its powers.
- 2.2 Council acknowledges the existence of systemic and behavioural racism in our society and is unwavering in the view that it is unacceptable.
- 2.3 Council rejects all forms of racism and is committed to the elimination of racial discrimination in all aspects of its operations and spheres of influence, whether directed at Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people or people of any religious, ethnic, or cultural minority.
- 2.4 Council acknowledges that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and in our city in particular, Kaurua people, have been particularly adversely affected by European settlement and continue to suffer from systemic racism.
- 2.5 Council acknowledges the power and privilege that both Elected Members and staff often hold and commit to acknowledging this power and proactively opening circles of privilege where appropriate.
- 2.6 Council acknowledges that a reconciliation of the past and a future free from racism must be a joint and collaborative endeavour, undertaken in a spirit of *Tiati Wangkanthi Kumangka* (truth-telling together).
- 2.7 Council commits to and implores all Elected Members, staff and community members to commit to standing up against racism and racial discrimination in all its forms, including indirect discrimination. It is the shared responsibility of the City of Holdfast Bay

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community to combat racism and challenge racist expressions whenever it is safe to do so, irrespective of how they manifest or are intended. Racism stops with each of us.

- 2.8 Council supports Elected Members, staff and the community making complaints about racism. Anyone who experiences racism in any form is encouraged to report incident(s), and to seek support. Suggestions for how Council can improve or support the community in standing up against racism and welcoming diversity are also welcome.
- 2.9 Council commits to eliminating systemic racism from its policies and services, by developing these collaboratively and openly.
- 2.10 Council commits to seeking opportunities to support and invest in anti-racism activities and those that increase diversity in the city. Council considers it a responsibility to use resources to help people find commonalities, build bridges and support activities that focus on the similarities of our shared humanity.

### 3. REFERENCES

#### 3.1 Legislation

*The Equal Opportunity Act 1984*

*Local Government Act 1999*

International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

#### 3.2 Other References

Strategic Plan – Our Holdfast 2050+

Customer Feedback and Complaints Policy

Employee Code of Conduct

Code of Conduct for Council Members

United National Sustainable Development Goals.