



Deerubbin LALC

MEDIA RELEASE

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LAND COUNCIL ANNOUNCES NEW BOARD

Parramatta-based **Deerubbin Local Aboriginal Land Council**, one of the largest and most successful foundational land councils in the New South Wales land rights network, has announced its new Board, including four new young members, elected at its Annual General Meeting held the same day as Australia voted on the 'Voice to Parliament' referendum.

Long serving Board Member, Athol Smith, was returned as Chair in what will be his fifth term in the lead role of the renowned land council in the Sydney-Newcastle region. Maisie Cavanagh was elected unopposed as Deputy Chair. The elected appointments bring a breadth of knowledge and experience and follow the history-making appointment of the land council's first female Chief Executive Officer, Suzanne Ingram, in July.

"Along with the fresh faces drawn from our strong membership, this new Board provides the wisdom and stability to take us into the next exciting phase for Deerubbin Land Council," said Ms Ingram. "I look forward to working alongside the democratically elected representatives.

This land council is part of the continuing legacy of grassroots NSW Aboriginal people, many who are no longer with us. It was their dedication and vision for an autonomous economic base for our future generations that saw the land rights legislation come into being in New South Wales," said Ms Ingram.

This year marks the 40th anniversary of the NSW Aboriginal Land Rights Act and Mr Smith says Deerubbin LALC is looking forward to a new relationship with New South Aboriginal Land Council (NSWALC), the state body responsible for the legislation's regulatory procedures.

The new Board made the unanimous decision to not participate in NSWALC's *'Rock for Land Rights'* event on Saturday 4 November 2023 at Parramatta Park.

"We appreciate NSWALC's limited capacity in view of their numerous leadership changes at the state level and in the regional offices, new CEOs, another new registrar and the recent resignation of the Sydney-Newcastle Councillor, Mr Abie Wright," said Mr Smith. "We wish them all the best for their festivities."

Deerubbin LALC is a major recognised business enterprise in Western Sydney and values its work at the local level, chiefly important in the tough times happening across Australia right now and especially in the wake of the Albanese government's referendum which cost the Australian taxpayer \$400 million.

"Deerubbin LALC is located in an area full of prospect and opportunity and with this Board's commitment to the Deerubbin LALC community and the momentum of our projects, we continue to strive for our future prosperity," said Mr Smith.

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