CUMBERLAND
CITY COUNCIL

Council Meeting

Wednesday, 25 February 2026 at 6:30 PM

Cumberland City Council Chambers

Merrylands Service Centre, 16 Memorial Avenue, Merrylands

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Statement of Ethical Obligations

Oath or Affirmation of Office
In taking the Oath or Affirmation of Office, each Councillor has made a commitment to undertake the duties of the office of councillor in the best interests of the people of Cumberland and Cumberland City Council and that they will faithfully and impartially carry out the functions, powers, authorities and discretions vested in them under the Local Government Act 1993 or any other Act to the best of their ability and judgment.

Conflicts of Interest
A councillor who has a conflict of interest in any matter with which the council is concerned, and who is present at a meeting of the council when the matter is being considered, must disclose the interest and the nature of the interest to the meeting as soon as practicable. Both the disclosure and the nature of the interest must be recorded in the minutes of the Council meeting where the conflict of interest arises. Councillors should ensure that they are familiar with the Code of Conduct in relation to their obligations to declare and manage conflicts of interests.

For information on Council services and facilities please visit www.cumberland.nsw.gov.au

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Item No: MM02/26-40

MAYORAL MINUTE - VIGIL IN MERRYLANDS

Author: Mayor Ola Hamed

SUMMARY

On Tuesday, 17 February 2026, a distressing and deeply saddening incident occurred in the Merrylands CBD where a local community member, Mr Amamuddin Sardar, was fatally stabbed with another two people critically injured. These were members of our community, simply going about their business on an ordinary Tuesday morning. Their lives were changed forever when they were randomly set upon by a member of the community facing severe mental health challenges, who had escaped Cumberland Hospital. The perpetrator is now in NSW Police custody.

Mr Sadar was a local volunteer and a truly valued member of our community, who tragically lost his life in this random attack. He was the eldest of five children and a refugee who grew up in Afghanistan, who came to Australia by boat in search of a better life. For 13 years, Mr Sardar had been hoping for a permanent visa, so that he could see his family once again. He was only 38 years old. I would like to extend Council's deepest condolences to his partner Becky, his family, friends and all those impacted by this devastating incident.

I would also like to extend my heartfelt sympathies to those injured in this incident and wish them a full recovery. My thoughts are also with those who witnessed this shocking incident. I am deeply grateful to the brave members of the community who stepped in to provide assistance during this confronting and traumatic situation. The General Manager and his Executive Team also locked a number of Council buildings down temporarily, to ensure the absolute safety of our Council staff and patrons in Council buildings.

I'd like to send our sincerest thank you to the Cumberland Police Area Commander Superintendent Simon Glasser and team, NSW Ambulance for responding rapidly to locate the alleged perpetrator and for providing emergency medical support to the victims, and the Member for Granville Julia Finn MP for reaching out to her residents and ensuring they have continued support.

Our community is grieving. Moments like this remind us of our shared responsibility to approach vulnerability with compassion and dignity. I was at the scene shortly after the incident and witnessed the profound shock felt by all present, yet I was heartened by the way people instinctively put their arms around each other and supported one another. Since then, I have spent time with local shopkeepers and residents who have been significantly affected, listening to their concerns and experiences.

This Council has worked tirelessly over the past 4 years to deliver additional homelessness and mental health initiatives, forums and support programs. Incidents like this show us that these efforts are still desperately needed, and highlights how essential those efforts remain, and that our work in this space continue with enduring commitment.

I was today advised by the Minister for Mental Health, the Hon Rose Jackson MLC, that the NSW Government has appointed, with immediate effect, an independent team of experts to oversee the management of Cumberland Hospital. This independent oversight is intended to improve safety, strengthen governance and accountability, and restore public confidence, and will operate alongside a formal security review into the recent incidents. Additional security has also been engaged to support safe and secure care for patients and staff.

I'd like to also announce that Council will be arranging a community vigil to honour the life of Mr Sardar and the victims, so that the community can come together in quiet reflection and solidarity. The vigil will be held in the Merrylands Civic Square, and details will be placed on Council's website shortly.

As Mr Sadar had little immediate family in Australia, a donation of $5,000 is proposed to help cover funeral costs and provide immediate assistance during this heartbreaking time. This will be funded from the Emergency Relief Fund.

Therefore Councillors, tonight I move:

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. **Expresses solidarity and send our sincerest condolences to the family of Mr Amamuddin Sadar for his passing, the victims and family;**
2. **Expresses its thanks to NSW Police, NSW Fire & Rescue and NSW Ambulance for its support and response to this incident;**
3. **Donate $5,000 to the family of Mr Sadar to assist in covering funeral costs and support for his immediate family;**
4. **Organise a community vigil to honour the life of Mr Sadar and;**
5. **Observe a minute's silence to honour the life of Mr Sadar.**

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

Item No: MM02/26-41

MAYORAL MINUTE - CONDOLENCES - BONDI BEACH ATTACK

Author: Mayor Ola Hamed

SUMMARY

On 14 December 2025, our community was shaken by a devastating attack at Bondi Beach. What began as a joyful Hanukkah celebration, a moment for families, children, and neighbours to gather in light and hope, was shattered by an act of unprecedented violence in this country that inflicted deep and lasting trauma. The sadness felt across our community remains profound.

In the days and months that followed, I witnessed remarkable acts of kindness, compassion, and solidarity. Community members supported one another with quiet strength, reminding us that even in grief, the humanity we share is stronger than any attempt to divide us. These gestures reflect the very best of who we are.

The attack at Bondi Beach, reinforces our shared obligation to confront intolerance wherever it surfaces. We collectively condemn all acts of violence, in any part of the world, that target individuals because of their faith, their race, their ethnicity, or any part of who they are. Such violence has no place in our society and stands in direct opposition to the values of unity, respect, and mutual dignity that bind us together.

To the families who lost loved ones, to those injured or traumatised, and to everyone affected by this event, our hearts, our thoughts, and our ongoing support remain with you. We also acknowledge the courage and compassion shown by emergency responders, medical staff, volunteers, and community leaders who stepped forward in the darkest of moments.

As we move forward, we reaffirm our commitment to working with all parts of our community, cultural groups, faith organisations, advocates, neighbours, and families, to strengthen understanding, unity, and safety. Together, guided by empathy and shared purpose, we can continue to build a community grounded in hope, resilience, and mutual respect.

Therefore Councillors, tonight I move:

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. **Note with sadness the 15 lives that were lost, those injured, and the shock and trauma this tragedy has caused to those present at the time and the community more broadly;**
2. **Donate $1,000 to the NSW Government & Rotary NSW - Unite for Bondi – Bondi Terror Attack Appeal; and**
3. **Observe a minute's silence to honour the 15 lives that have been tragically lost.**

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

Item No: MM02/26-42

MAYORAL MINUTE - AUSTRALIA DAY HONOURS - JULIANA (KATHY) GARANSCI

Author: Mayor Ola Hamed

SUMMARY

It is with great pride that I bring to Council's attention the outstanding achievement of Chief Inspector Juliana (known as Kathy) Garansci, a member of the NSW State Emergency Service (SES) who has been awarded an Emergency Services Medal (ESM) in this year's Australia Day Honours List.

Kathy joined the NSW SES in August 1980 and has since been a volunteer for more than 45 years. She has held key operational roles and provided support through several critical incidents and complex operations.

Her devotion and commitment to NSW communities has been invaluable, with Kathy having provided support during many emergencies and natural disasters including, but not limited to, the 1997 Thredbo Landslide, the 1999 Sydney Hailstorm, the 2019-2020 Bushfires, the widespread flooding events of 2021-2023 and Ex-Tropical Cyclone Alfred in 2025.

Kathy continues her volunteer work in the SES, now serving as both the Zone Operational Readiness Officer for Metro Zone and the Local Commander of the Metro Central Cluster, out of the SES Auburn Unit which is now into its 43rd year of operations. Kathy and Auburn SES have always had a strong relationship with this Council, both through Auburn City Council and now with Cumberland City Council.

On behalf of Council, I sincerely congratulate Kathy on this thoroughly deserved award and thank her for her dedication and efforts through the decades. Kathy has undoubtedly made a difference to the lives of many during difficult times.

Therefore Councillors, tonight I move:

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. **Congratulate Chief Inspector Kathy Garansci on being awarded the Emergency Services Medal (ESM) in the 2026 Australia Day Honours List; and;**
2. **Provide a copy of this Mayoral Minute to Ms Garansci.**

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

Item No: MM02/26-43

MAYORAL MINUTE - CONGRATULATING COUNCIL STAFF

Author: Mayor Ola Hamed

SUMMARY

Tonight, I wish to formally record Council's strong appreciation for the outstanding efforts of our staff throughout the December – January holiday period. This time of year is one of significant demand across all areas of Council operations, and our workforce once again demonstrated professionalism, commitment, and genuine care for our community.

I extend my heartfelt thanks to those staff who worked during public holidays and weekends — times traditionally spent with loved ones. Your willingness to serve ensured that essential functions continued uninterrupted and that our community received the support it needed.

Our teams responsible for maintaining parks, reserves, gardens, street cleansing and open spaces worked tirelessly during peak visitation, keeping our outdoor areas clean, safe, and welcoming for all. Likewise, our rangers and compliance officers continued their important duties with diligence, helping to ensure community safety throughout a busy festive and summer period.

To our customer service staff, thank you for being the responsive and compassionate first point of contact for residents during a period of continued enquiries and requests. Your work reflects the high standard of service we strive to maintain.

We also recognise the tremendous effort that went into delivering major community events, including Christmas celebrations and Australia Day activities, which was Council's best Australia Day celebrations ever. These events require careful planning, coordination, and on the ground support, and Council's Events team delivered these events with great professionalism and community spirit. Next up on the events calendar is the Ramadan Street Festival on the evenings of the 7 and 8 March. I encourage everyone within our community to come along.

Importantly, I want to acknowledge the many staff who serve our community every day from outposted locations and community facilities. To our aquatic and pool staff, thank you for managing high traffic and high risk venues, ensuring safety, supervision, and community enjoyment during the height of summer. To all other Council service areas who are equally as vital, your contributions ensured that Council continued to deliver high quality, reliable services throughout a demanding period.

Finally, to every staff member across every function of Council — whether you work behind the scenes, in an outdoor team, in a frontline role, or in a community-facing facility — thank you. Your professionalism and dedication ensured that Council continued to operate smoothly and deliver the great services our community relies upon, even during the busiest time of year. Your efforts reflect the true spirit of public service.

Therefore Councillors, tonight I move:

RECOMMENDATION

That Council congratulate all Council staff for their unwavering dedication to delivering for the Cumberland Community over the December to January period.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

Item No: MM02/26-44

MAYORAL MINUTE - CONDOLENCES - THE LATE DAME MARIE ROSLYN BASHIR AD CVO FTSE

Author: Mayor Ola Hamed

SUMMARY

Today we pause to honour the life, service, and extraordinary legacy of Her Excellency Professor The Honourable Dame Marie Roslyn Bashir AD CVO FTSE, who passed away on 20 January 2026 at the age of 95. Dame Marie Bashir's life stands as one of remarkable dedication—to medicine, to community, to public service, and to humanity itself.

Born in Narrandera, New South Wales, to Lebanese-Australian parents, Dame Marie's upbringing instilled in her a commitment to education, compassion, and the public good. A gifted student, she attended Narrandera Public School, Sydney Girls High School, and the Sydney Conservatorium of Music before completing her Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery at the University of Sydney in 1956.

Her distinguished medical career began at St Vincent's Hospital and grew into a lifelong passion for psychiatry, particularly the wellbeing of children and adolescents. She became a leading advocate for early intervention and improved mental health services, serving as Clinical Director of Mental Health Services for the Central Sydney Area Health Service and later as a Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Sydney. She also worked extensively in Indigenous health, serving as a senior consultant to Aboriginal medical services in Redfern and Kempsey.

In recognition of her contributions, Dame Marie was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia in 1988 for her services to child and adolescent health and was promoted to Companion of the Order in 2001. In 2006, she was invested as a Commander of the Royal Victorian Order by Her Majesty The Queen. She also served her alma mater as the 17th Chancellor of the University of Sydney from 2007 to 2012.

In 2001, Dame Marie Bashir made history as the first female Governor of New South Wales, a role she fulfilled with distinction, humility, and empathy for more than 13 years—one of the longest tenures in the state's history. Her appointment was also a milestone for multicultural representation, as she became the first person of Lebanese descent to hold the role. Throughout her governorship, she remained known for her warmth, dignity, and steadfast advocacy for mental health, education, social inclusion, and the arts.

Beyond her official duties, Dame Marie was a patron of numerous cultural, medical, and community organisations, including the Sydney Symphony and Amnesty International. She also championed equality and inclusion.

Throughout her life, Dame Marie was celebrated not only for her significant achievements—more than 70 awards, distinctions, and formal honours—but also for her humility and humanity. She "led with humanity," as many have said, bringing dignity, intellect, and kindness to every sphere of her work.

Her passing leaves a profound sense of loss across New South Wales and the nation. Yet her legacy lives on in the countless lives she uplifted, the systems she improved, and the spirit of service she embodied so completely.

On behalf of our community, we extend our deepest condolences to her family, friends, and all who were inspired by her remarkable life. May her memory continue to guide us toward compassion, understanding, and service to others.

Therefore Councillors, tonight I move:

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. **Observe a minute's silence in honour of Dame Marie Bashir, recognising her distinguished service and contribution to the community; and**
2. **Provide a copy of this Mayoral Minute to the Bashir family.**

ATTACHMENTS

Nil