Resolution of Council

26 October 2026

Item 13.11

Supporting Aboriginal Medical Service Ownership of its Redfern Home

Moved by Councillor Weldon, seconded by Councillor Arkins -

It is resolved that:

(A) Council note:

(i) the Aboriginal Medical Service (AMS) was established in Redfern in 1971 and was the first Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service in Australia

(ii) the AMS was founded to provide health-care services to the local Aboriginal Community in the Sydney Metropolitan area, and has serviced the community for over 50 years. It is recognised globally as a pioneer in Indigenous healthcare

(iii) since its establishment, the AMS has occupied the old school building behind St Vincents Catholic Church in Turner Street, Redfern. The property is owned by the Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney

(iv) the property was given to the AMS to use by former Redfern St Vincent's Catholic Church parish priest Father Ted Kennedy. Father Kennedy worked closely with the First Nations community, particularly Mum Shirl Smith to support reconciliation and healing

(v) for over 25 years, the AMS has sought ownership of the building from the Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney. Thus far, these efforts have been rejected

(vi) transferring ownership of the property to the AMS would represent an act of reconciliation and an appropriate acknowledgement of First Nations people as original owners of the land on which the Church buildings sit

(B) Council further note:

(i) the impact and historical significance of the Aboriginal Medical Service in the local Redfern community, greater Sydney community and broader global community

(ii) the AMS has engaged with Councillor Weldon's office requesting City of Sydney support for the transfer of ownership of the Turner Street property to the AMS

(C) the Lord Mayor be requested to write to Archbishop Anthony Fisher OP noting the significance of the property to the Aboriginal Medical Service, the local First Nations community and the broader Sydney community, and expressing the City of Sydney's strong support for the property ownership to be transferred to the Aboriginal Medical Service.

Carried unanimously.

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