

Thankyou Mayor, through the Chair We have received correspondence informing the City of Palmerston that our preferred selection to sit on the Ministerial Advisory Committee for Multiculturalism, Councillor Kenyai has not been endorsed by Minister Charls and instead he has indorsed Deputy Mayor Wayne Bayliss.

I would like to take this opportunity to put on the public record that on my watch as Acting Mayor at our Ordinary Council meeting on January 20th 2026 it was resolved by Councilors present to endorse Councillor Kanyai as our recommendation to the Ministerial Advisory Committee on Multiculturalism and Councillor Bayliss was put forward as our Alterative.

I have long advocated for more diversity of age, gender and ethnicity on Council and I don't believe the selection of Counciler Bayliss is consistent with what many of us including myself have spoken about in Chambers over my time on the Council. I do not want the people of Palmerston particularly the multicultural communities, to think that this selection was made by our Council when I was Acting Mayor because it wasn't.

I note that the Minister has every right in his position to select who he wishes to have advising him, but I also note that as a Chamber if we put forward a person for any position and our wishes are not followed we have a right to make the public aware of it and that we weren't responsible for it.

I can assure the community that we went through a democratic process and Councillor Kenyai was endorsed by the majority of Council Members. She was our recommendation; however she has been overlooked for the position by Minister Charls.

I feel this is a missed opportunity by the Minister to endorse Councillor Kenyai who has very recent lived experience as a migrant and new Australian. She has experienced the highs and lows, the issues, the challenges and ultimately the triumphs of leaving her native Zimbabwe and settling in the Northern Territory. A Very similar road travelled as Minister Charls.

Councillor Kenyai was born in Harare. Zimbabwe and came to Australia in 2016 as an International Student. She became an Australian Citizen in 2023 and was Awarded Palmerston Young Person of the Year in 2025 in the same year she successfully nominated in the City of Palmerston Council Elections and subsequently won a seat on the 11th City of Palmerston Council. We need to have more young women of diverse cultures encouraged to seek opportunities to serve in public life without unnecessary and petty interference to their contribution.

Can you imagine leaving Australia, moving to a different country, contributing so much to that country that you are recognized as the citizen of the year and then standing in the local government elections and winning a seat. Just how difficult that would be but she has achieved in just 9 years.

I will continue to support the multicultural community in Palmerston, I will continue to support the autonomy and independence of local government and the rights of the City of Palmerston Council to make the decisions we make in the best interests of the people of Palmerston without fear or favour and certainly not under partisan pressure from any political parties.

I have and continue to have a strong working relationship with the Deputy Mayor, my comments are by no means are a reflection on him as I fully respect the contribution he has made to our community in his past professional life as a Northern Territory Police Officer and now on the

Council and will continue to work closely with him to make Palmerston a great place to live, work and raise a family.

In my 9 years on Council we have achieved much by working together and not by playing politics, may this long be the case.

I would like my contribution tonight to be recorded in the minutes in its entirety please as I believe the multicultural community groups in Palmerston need to have confidence that their Council is listening to them, understanding of their needs and cognitive of the challenges they face in their journey as Australians.

Thank you Mayor.