

# ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL 5 FEBRUARY 2020



## 9.1 MULTICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

**EXECUTIVE MEMBER:** TONY KEENAN, GENERAL MANAGER, COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**PREPARED BY:** EWA ZYSK, DIVERSITY OFFICER

### 1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 For Council to adopt the Multicultural Advisory Committee Terms of Reference.

### 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 On 12 December 2018, Council endorsed the establishment of a new Advisory Committee of Council named the Multicultural Advisory Committee (MAC).
- 2.2 The City of Port Phillip is a vibrant multicultural city. We are home to people from over 163 different birthplaces, speaking 114 different languages. This rich, cultural diversity is one of our greatest strengths. We continue to see more people born overseas now calling Port Phillip home. The new Advisory Committee is a continuation of Council's commitment of civic engagement
- 2.3 The purpose of MAC is to assist Council to provide advice and feedback on all issues that affect multicultural communities, including refugees or asylum seekers in the City of Port Phillip.
- 2.4 The Terms of Reference (ToR) was taken for endorsement to Council on 15 May 2019 where an alternative motion was put forward that the ToR be subjected to further consultation and be brought back for adoption at a future Council meeting.
- 2.5 Vacant positions for the Committee were publicly advertised using the draft ToR and thirteen committee members were endorsed by Council on the 16 October 2019.
- 2.6 This report presents to Council the updated ToR (Attachment 1) which has taken into consideration the feedback from both the community consultation process and the newly established Advisory Committee.

### 3. RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 3.1 Adopts the Multicultural Advisory Committee Terms of Reference (Attachment 1).
- 3.2 Delegates authority to the Chief Executive Officer to make amendments to the document to correct any minor drafting errors that do not materially alter the intent.

### 4. KEY POINTS/ISSUES

- 4.1 A motion was raised at the 15 May Council Meeting that the ToR be subjected to further consultation. In June 2019 the draft ToR went out to consultation. This process occurred concurrently with the advertising of the MAC positions.



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- 4.2 The consultation process aimed to involve organisations, stakeholders and individuals with an informed position about the needs and issues of multicultural communities, refugees and asylum seekers.
- 4.3 Thirteen Advisory Committee members were endorsed by Council on the 16 October 2019. An induction session for the incoming Committee members was held on 19 November 2019 where members were orientated to the draft ToR and completed a 'Active Citizenships" workshop with the Victorian Electoral Commission. At the inaugural Committee meeting on the 3 December 2019, the draft ToR was reviewed by the Committee. The community consultation and Committee's feedback was incorporated into the document.
- 4.4 The ToR (attachment 1) have been updated to include that the MAC Chairperson be nominated and endorsed by Committee members. This process is in par with that of the Older Persons Consultative Committee.
- 4.5 Although it is not reflected in the ToR, at the MAC inaugural meeting it was decided that the Councillor representative act as Chairperson for the first three months. Many members of the Committee are new migrants to the municipality and they requested more time to orientate themselves to Local Government. The Chairperson will be nominated and appointed in April 2020.
- 4.6 Additional changes to the ToR also outlines additional guidance regarding the roles and responsibilities of the Committee members, particularly their role with the media. The ToR clearly states, 'It is against Council policy for Advisory Committee members to speak directly with the media on Council issues unless this has been cleared by the Council's Media Advisor and endorsed by the Committee'.
- 4.7 Two additional committee objectives have also been added due to feedback from the community consultation process and the committee, they include:
  - Assist Council to promote the benefits of cultural diversity, social cohesion and inclusion of all residents within City of Port Phillip and beyond.
  - Facilitate and encourage opportunities for multicultural communities and community groups to work together on joint projects and initiatives.
- 4.8 It is anticipated that the Advisory Committee will meet monthly for the first six months of its inception and bi-monthly thereafter.

### **5. CONSULTATION AND STAKEHOLDERS**

- 5.1 An induction session for the incoming MAC was held prior to the inaugural meeting on 3 December 2019. At the first meeting the committee reviewed the draft ToR and incorporated any relevant community feedback.
- 5.2 A stakeholder information session about the MAC was held on 11 July 2019. Fourteen service providers attended including Jewish Care, Space 2b Social Design, Port Phillip Community Group, Brigandine Asylum Seeker Project and Women's Health in the South East. The aim of the session was to gather feedback from organisations with an informed opinion to ensure that the draft ToR is reflective of community needs. The primary feedback from this consultation was that the MAC works towards encouraging



opportunities for communities to work together and the creation of intercultural events. This feedback was incorporated by the MAC in the form of a new objective in the ToR.

- 5.3 An information session about the new to be established MAC was held during the Multicultural Forum meeting on the 20 June 2019. Forum members also provided detailed feedback about the ToR. The membership of the forum consists of over 30 multicultural senior's citizens groups in the municipality. Fifteen group representatives attended the session. The main concern of multicultural senior groups was how the MAC will be accountable to the multicultural community and how the needs of multicultural seniors will be represented. The MAC was satisfied that the community accountability is reflected in the updated ToR which stipulates that an Annual Report be presented to Council. The MAC will aim to create a working relationship with the Multicultural Forum.
- 5.4 Council administers a generic multicultural and multifaith mailing list with over 280 subscribers. The mailing list consists of interested residents, faith leaders and multicultural organisations. A survey was sent to the membership seeking feedback on the ToR.
- 5.5 The Diversity Officer consulted with the Victorian Local Government Multicultural Issues Network who have a wide reach to metropolitan and regional areas regarding Council practices that promote diversity and inclusion. Consultation also occurred with other Councils with similar committees to benchmark their ToR including: Moreland City Council, Yarra City Council, Monash City Council and Melton City Council. All four councils have established Multicultural Advisory Committees operating in their municipalities.

## **6. LEGAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 A key message that was conveyed during the interview process to MAC nominees is that the MAC is appointed as an advisory group to Council and does not make decisions on behalf of Council.

## **7. FINANCIAL IMPACT**

- 7.1 No sitting fees are applicable for the Advisory Committee.

## **8. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT.**

- 8.1 The consultative process was conducted via an online platform. Officers will work closely with the Advisory Committee to ensure that the Act and Adapt: Sustainable Environment Strategy 2018-28 is incorporated into the Committee's Actions.

## **9. COMMUNITY IMPACT**

- 9.1 The MAC provide direct civic engagement by Council with our Multicultural community, and facilitates community views, knowledge and advice being provided to Council and its officers.



- 9.2 Council can use Advisory Committees to seek expert advice to inform decision making. This approach can provide an effective way to involve stakeholders in Council's planning and policy functions.
- 9.3 There may be an opportunity to maximise the skills and expertise that exist in the MAC to complement the role of Council in planning and policy-making.
- 9.4 The MAC provides opportunity to test engagement techniques and audiences to improve community engagement outcomes on issues.
- 9.5 Through reference committees, Council recognises and encourages community leadership and seeks to maximise community feedback in its decision-making process.

## **10. ALIGNMENT TO COUNCIL PLAN AND COUNCIL POLICY**

- 10.1 The Multicultural Advisory Committee aligns with Direction one of the Council Plan 2017-2027: We embrace difference, and people belong, and it also meets the following Council priorities:
  - A. A safe and active community with strong social connections.
  - B. Access to services that support the health and wellbeing of our growing community.
  - C. Community diversity is valued and celebrated.

## **11. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY**

### **11.1 TIMELINE**

- 11.1.1 If Council resolves to adopt the ToR, it is proposed that MAC deliberate in January 2020 to develop the Committee's action plan.

### **11.2 COMMUNICATION**

- 11.2.1 If Council resolves to adopt the ToR, the endorsed ToR will be available on the Council's website.

## **12. OFFICER DIRECT OR INDIRECT INTEREST**

- 12.1 No officers involved in the preparation of this report have any direct or indirect interest in the matter.

**TRIM FILE NO:** 46/03/22

**ATTACHMENTS** 1. Multicultural Advisory Committee Terms of Reference