



9.1 **MULTICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE 2021 ANNUAL REPORT**

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: **ALLISON KENWOOD, GENERAL MANAGER COMMUNITY WELLBEING & INCLUSION**

PREPARED BY: **SANDRA KHAZAM, DIVERSITY OFFICER**

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To present the Multicultural Advisory Committee Annual Report 2021, provided at Attachment 1: Multicultural Advisory Committee Annual Report 2021.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 The purpose of the Multicultural Advisory Committee (MAC) is to provide Council with advice and feedback on all issues that affect multicultural, refugee and asylum seeker communities in the City of Port Phillip.
- 2.2 The Committee was established by Council in late 2018 and the first Committee members were appointed in 2019. The Committee members' cultural, linguistic, and religious backgrounds, as far as possible, represent the diversity within the Port Phillip community, including representatives from established communities, newly emerging communities, people seeking asylum, former refugees, and young people.
- 2.3 This report represents the second full year of activities of the Multicultural Advisory Committee, the delivery of their action plan, and highlights the breadth and depth of their work and achievements.
- 2.4 Highlights of the MAC's achievements in 2021 include:
- 2.4.1 Advocacy leading to Council's commitment to the 'Welcoming Cities Standard'.
 - 2.4.2 Advice on the impacts, support for and engagement with multicultural communities during the Covid-19 pandemic.
 - 2.4.3 Delivery of events for Cultural Diversity Week and Refugee Week.
 - 2.4.4 Piloting a First Nations cultural walking tour for newly arrived migrants.
 - 2.4.5 Oversight and implementation of Council's participation in the 'All One Together Anti-Racism Campaign'.
 - 2.4.6 Input into a range of Council policies/plans, including the Council Plan 2021-31.

3. RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 3.1 Receive the Multicultural Advisory Committee's (MAC) Annual Report 2021.
- 3.2 Acknowledge the work undertaken by the Committee and formally recognise their advocacy and contribution to the City.

4. KEY POINTS/ISSUES

- 4.1 The 2021 Census records that 33.1 per cent of our residents were born outside of Australia and 21 per cent speak a language other than English at home (place of usual residence). Further characteristics of Port Phillip's multicultural community include:



- 4.1.1 The city is home to people from 163 different birthplaces speaking 114 different languages.
- 4.1.2 The top five languages spoken at home (other than English) are Greek, Mandarin, Spanish, Italian and Russian. The largest non-English country of birth is India with 2.1 percent (or 2,131 people) which is similar to 2016.
- 4.1.3 The proportion of our residents who are Australian citizens increased from 73 to 78 percent from the years 2016 to 2021.
- 4.1.4 More than 35,000 people born overseas are now living in our municipality. They have brought their many cultures and faiths, stories and experiences, food, and festivals.
- 4.2 The Multicultural Advisory Committee provides a valuable sounding board to Council through community consultations, programming and events, communication, and advocacy. Their representation in Council's planning, policies and strategies is part of the City of Port Phillip's inclusive practice and aligned to Council's Community Engagement Policy 2021.
- 4.3 During 2021, the Multicultural Advisory Committee provided grassroots advice and expertise, on behalf of our diverse community, around mental and physical health, and addressing isolation as an impact of Covid-19. The Committee has become an important stakeholder in mapping vulnerable persons in the municipality. They have provided Council with valuable information on what has been happening for our local community members and multicultural organisations in the municipality. Information provided has informed Council's local COVID relief and recovery efforts.
- 4.4 The MAC also advocated for new initiatives, including Council's commitment to the Welcoming Cities Standard. Welcoming Cities sets the national standard for cultural diversity, inclusion policy and practice and helping to create communities where everyone can belong. There are over 250 member municipalities across the world with fifty-one in Australia. The MAC's advocacy acknowledges that a local council's understanding of the complexity and diversity of its residents can play an important role in creating welcoming communities.
- 4.5 The MAC Action Plan 2021 also delivered events for Cultural Diversity Week and Refugee Week including a social media campaign featuring short films of MAC sharing their experiences, and participation in story-time sessions at the St Kilda Library.
- 4.6 Other key achievements of the year included piloting a First Nations cultural walking tour for newly arrived migrants, and oversight and implementation of Council's participation in the 'All One Together' Anti-Racism Campaign.

5. CONSULTATION AND STAKEHOLDERS

- 5.1 The MAC comprises thirteen residents from diverse backgrounds and representatives of cultural organisations which provides a range of cultural and linguistically diverse voices and experiences.
- 5.2 In July 2021, following the Committee's inaugural two-year term, Council re-appointed seven current members and appointed four new community members.
- 5.3 Council was represented by Councillor Tim Baxter throughout 2021.



- 5.4 The 2021 Annual Report is provided at Attachment 1 and outlines in more detail the contribution and advice provided to Council by the MAC, along with external parties, on issues impacting multicultural communities in the City of Port Phillip.
- 5.5 The Committee provided specific input into the following Council policies/plans:
- Council Plan and Budget 2021/22
 - Community Engagement Strategy
 - Draft Library Action Plan
 - Future South Melbourne Plan
 - Accessibility Action Plan
- 5.6 Key issues affecting culturally and linguistically diverse communities arising from Covid-19 were highlighted to Council by the Committee to inform our approach to engagement and information provision, including on testing and addressing vaccination hesitancy.
- 5.7 General feedback was provided to Council regarding work directly related to Council business including translations and interpretation services and the featuring of diverse narratives in Council's communication.

6. LEGAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no known legal or risk implications.

7. FINANCIAL IMPACT

- 7.1 There is no expense, other than officer time, associated with the production of the Annual Report which is drafted and produced internally.
- 7.2 Council's operational budget makes provision to support the running of the Multicultural Advisory Committee, including administration, light refreshments, events production, and translation/interpretation as needed.

8. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 8.1 Multicultural Advisory Committee meeting documentation is produced, circulated, and presented digitally.
- 8.2 Events are run with recycled or biodegradable materials.

9. COMMUNITY IMPACT

- 9.1 The Multicultural Advisory Committee provides a direct civic engagement opportunity for our multicultural community. It provides Council and its officers with relevant community views, knowledge, and advice, and builds on its local strengths to keep people informed and connected.
- 9.2 The MAC addresses Council's Well-Governed Direction. Through the Committee, Council recognises and encourages community leadership, and seeks to maximise community feedback in its decision-making process. It improves public confidence through demonstrating active community participation in the decision-making process.
- 9.3 The MAC provides community engagement outcomes on issues impacting Council and multicultural communities.



- 9.4 The Annual Report demonstrates community engagement with issues faced by our multicultural communities around health, education, public safety, and human rights.
- 9.5 Due to the direct feedback from the Committee, Council has been able to address some emerging needs for multicultural communities directly related to Covid-19 pandemic and implement targeted recovery responses.
- 9.6 The Annual Report further shows engagement with a culturally vibrant community and works to create a sense of belonging and sharing of cultural experiences through events, arts, and storytelling.

10. ALIGNMENT TO COUNCIL PLAN AND COUNCIL POLICY

- 10.1 The work of the Multicultural Advisory Committee delivers on the Council Vision: *Proudly Port Phillip: A liveable and vibrant City that enhances the wellbeing of our community.*
- 10.2 The Committee aligns primarily with the Council Direction of *Inclusive: A City that is a place for all members of our community, where people feel supported and comfortable being themselves and expressing their identities.*
- 10.3 The Annual Report demonstrates the work of the Committee through their own eyes and how the community across the City benefits from their activity.

11. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

11.1 TIMELINE

- 11.1.1 The outcome of this report will be presented to the November meeting of the Multicultural Advisory Committee and recorded in the minutes.
- 11.1.2 An Annual Report on activities undertaken in 2022 will be presented to Council in 2023.

11.2 COMMUNICATION

- 11.2.1 The outcome of this Council report will be communicated to the Committee and the 2021 Annual Report will be published on the Council website.

12. OFFICER DIRECT OR INDIRECT INTEREST

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

ATTACHMENTS

1. Multicultural Advisory Committee 2021 Annual Report