

MEETING OF THE PORT PHILLIP CITY COUNCIL

16 NOVEMBER 2022



9.1 MULTICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE NEW APPOINTMENTS AND ENDORSEMENT OF TERMS OF REFERENCE

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: ALLISON KENWOOD, GENERAL MANAGER, COMMUNITY WELLBEING AND INCLUSION

PREPARED BY: SANDRA KHAZAM, DIVERSITY OFFICER

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To endorse the appointment of new community members to the Multicultural Advisory Committee for the period 2022 - 2024 (refer to confidential Attachment 1).
- 1.2 To endorse updated Terms of Reference for the Multicultural Advisory Committee (refer to Attachment 2).

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 The purpose of the Multicultural Advisory Committee (MAC) is to provide Council with advice and feedback on all issues and opportunities 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.
- 2.3 The MAC is comprised of up to thirteen members whose cultural and linguistic 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.
- 2.4 With the resignation of several serving Committee members over the past year due to other commitments, a recruitment process has been undertaken for new members in accordance with the MAC's Terms of Reference.
- 2.5 Expressions of interest for residents and members of local organisations to nominate for the Committee were called from 8 August to 18 September 2022. Six applications were received.
- 2.6 This report presents a recommendation for the appointment of four additional community members to the Multicultural Advisory Committee and two to the new MAC pool (refer to Attachment 1 – Confidential – Multicultural Advisory Committee Member Nominations 2022 – 2024).
- 2.7 This report also recommends endorsement of an updated Terms of Reference which better reflects the Council Plan, Council's commitment to the Welcoming Cities network, and allows for the establishment of a pool of people to support the work of the Committee for the remainder of the Council term to 2024.



3. RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 3.1 Appoints _____, _____, _____ and _____ to the Multicultural Advisory Committee.
- 3.2 Appoints _____ and _____ to the Multicultural Advisory Committee pool.
- 3.3 Endorses the updated Terms of Reference for the Multicultural Advisory Committee provided as Attachment 2 to this report.
- 3.4 Acknowledges the volunteer commitment of the outgoing MAC members.

4. KEY POINTS/ISSUES

- 4.1 The Multicultural Advisory Committee provides a significant service to Council through community consultation, programming and events, communication, and advocacy. It's representation in Council's planning, policies and strategies is part of the City of Port Phillip's inclusive practice as outlined in the Council Plan and aligned to Council's Community Engagement Policy 2021.
- 4.2 More than 33,000 people born overseas are now living in our municipality. They have brought their many cultures and faiths, stories and experiences, food, and festivals.
- 4.3 The 2021 Census records that 21 per cent of our community speak a language other than English at home (place of usual residence). The top five languages spoken at home (other than English) are Greek, Mandarin, Spanish, Italian and Russian. The largest non-English speaking country of birth was India with 2.1 per cent of the total population (or 2,131 people).
- 4.4 Speaking with local voices, the Committee provides grassroots advice and expertise, on behalf of our diverse community, around mental and physical health, celebratory and commemorative days, storytelling, and priorities for action. It has provided Council with valuable information on what has been happening for our local community members and multicultural organisations in the municipality.
- 4.5 Committee members attend monthly meetings and volunteer additional time on Working Groups. Since its establishment, the Committee has welcomed seventeen members and farewelled seven who had made important contributions but needed to move on.

Appointment of new Committee Members

- 4.6 Currently there are up to five vacant positions on the MAC. A new informal pool of community members will also be set up to support the ongoing work of the Committee, including through special projects, and may also replace outgoing members as required.
- 4.7 To be eligible for the MAC, nominees must work in, or be a resident of, the City of Port Phillip and be able to demonstrate:
 - Community networks and linkages within the local multicultural community.
 - Good knowledge and understanding of the local issues that are of relevance to multicultural communities in the City of Port Phillip.
 - Commitment to multiculturalism and the strengthening of a diverse community that encourages the participation and inclusion of all residents.



- 4.8 Advertising for nominees was undertaken through community networks, Council's electronic newsletters and social media (refer to section 5).
- 4.9 The standard of nominations was high, and applicants came from varying backgrounds and forms of professional experience.
- 4.10 Six applications were submitted and assessed through the SmartyGrants platform against the selection criteria. Five of the applicants were interviewed by Deputy Mayor, Councillor Tim Baxter, Professor Georgina Tsolidis (MAC Chair) and Sandra Khazam (Diversity Officer). One application did not meet the eligibility criteria.
- 4.11 Following the interview process, four additional members are recommended to Council for appointment to the Multicultural Advisory Committee for the period 2022 – 2024 (refer to confidential Attachment 1) and one to the pool. One current MAC member has requested to be a member of this pool as they are no longer able to attend meetings.
- 4.12 The applications recommended for appointment to the Committee showed a depth and breadth of community representation, experience and areas of interest.
- 4.13 Assessment of the nominees also considered complementing the broader skills, experience and knowledge required for the Committee to ensure diversity and intersectionality in the best interests of the communities represented.

Updated Terms of Reference

- 4.14 The MAC Terms of Reference has been updated reflecting the current Council Plan and the Welcoming Cities Standard, which Council endorsed in March this year.
- 4.15 Endorsement of the Welcoming Cities Standard is reflected by the inclusion of an additional 'purpose': "To actively support the value of Council's membership to The Welcoming Cities Standard - the national standard for cultural diversity and inclusion policy and practice in local government to create communities where everyone can belong".
- 4.16 The proposed updated Terms of Reference also provides for a pool of additional interested members to be established, "to help facilitate the work of the Committee through special projects and may also replace outgoing members". This provides for a more efficient and timely replacement of Committee members as required.

5. CONSULTATION AND STAKEHOLDERS

- 5.1 A communication strategy was developed to promote recruitment, which included information sharing with local organisations such as Space 2b Social Design, Brigidine Asylum Seekers Project, MiCare, Jewish Care, Australian GLBTIQ Multicultural Council, Victoria Police, STAR Health, Elwood St Kilda Neighbourhood Learning Centre, Study Melbourne, Port Phillip Community Group and other local networks.
- 5.2 The vacant committee positions were advertised via the Community Sector News newsletter, Council's website and social media channels, and through direct emails to key local multicultural groups, organisations, interested individuals and the multicultural and multifaith mailing lists. 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.
- 5.3 In language flyers were distributed through the Library Services to all branches.



- 5.4 The recruitment of members also occurred through current networks such as the Multicultural Network, Multifaith Network, Older Persons Consultative Committee and Friends of Suai/Covalima Reference Committee.
- 5.5 Assistance was made available for translation in any language and completion of the application form. Interpreters were made available during the interview process upon request.

6. LEGAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Due diligence was undertaken during the recruitment process which included the use of selection criteria to assess suitability for the Committee. Face to face interviews were also conducted.
- 6.2 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. Council's budget makes a provision of approximately \$5,000 for minor expenditure to support the operation of the Committee.

8. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

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

9. COMMUNITY IMPACT

- 9.1 The MAC provides a direct civic engagement opportunity for our multicultural community. It provides to Council and its officers relevant community views, knowledge and advice, and builds on local networks that keep people informed and connected.
- 9.2 The MAC addresses Council's Good Governance principles. 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 an opportunity to test engagement techniques and audiences to improve community engagement outcomes on issues impacting multicultural communities.
- 9.4 Due to the direct feedback from the Committee, Council was able to address emerging needs for multicultural communities directly related to the Covid-19 pandemic and to develop a well targeted recovery response through projects including translations of fact sheets, assistance in starting a local food delivery service and supporting successful grant applications for digital inclusion projects.

10. ALIGNMENT TO COUNCIL PLAN AND COUNCIL POLICY

- 10.1 The work of the MAC is aligned with the Council Plan 2021-31 through the community vision statement Proudly Port Phillip: A liveable and vibrant City that enhances the wellbeing of our community.



- 10.2 The MAC delivers on the Strategic Direction of 'Inclusive Port Phillip: 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 Relevant initiatives which support this include the strategy: 'We will partner with our Older Persons Advisory Committee, Youth Advisory Committee, Multicultural Advisory Committee, Multi-Faith Network, LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee and establish other committees, where relevant, to ensure the diversity of our community's experience is represented in decision-making'.
- 10.4 The Council Plan notes that Port Phillip has a proud history of inclusion and everyone is welcome here. Multiculturalism is an integral part of our City's history and success, with Station Pier the first landfall in Australia for many new arrivals. Almost one in three of Port Phillip's residents were born overseas and this cultural diversity is one of our greatest strengths.
- 10.5 The work of the MAC is aligned to the City of Port Phillip Community Engagement Policy as Advisory Committees are specifically identified in the 'Involve' level of engagement.
- 10.6 The MAC Annual Report 2021, which was presented to Council on 19 October 2022, reflects the Committee being active, innovative, informed and strategic, and comprising community members who are from diverse backgrounds.
- 10.7 The Committee delivers on the Community Programs and Facilities service profile through implementing initiatives to address health and wellbeing inequities for particular population groups (including indigenous, multicultural, LGBTIQ+). This has been demonstrated by the MAC's advocacy, such as communication and support for culturally and linguistically diverse communities during the lockdowns of 2020 and 2021, and the championing of the No To Racism campaign.
- 10.8 Council's Community Safety Plan 2019-23 priority "Build Resilience" references the importance of promoting diversity and inclusion through delivery of programs and events that celebrate our diverse communities, including multicultural and multifaith events, seniors events and the Pride March.

11. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

11.1 TIMELINE

- 11.1.1 Subject to Council's appointment of new members for the period 2022-24, the new members will be invited to attend a Committee induction session in November 2022.
- 11.1.2 All appointed members will then be invited to attend the next Committee meeting scheduled for December 2022.

11.2 COMMUNICATION

- 11.2.1 Within one week of this Council meeting all successful nominees and unsuccessful applicants will be advised of Council's decision.
- 11.2.2 Council's website will be updated, and communications shared with key internal and external stakeholders.
- 11.2.3 The outcome of this Council meeting will be recorded in the December 2022 Committee meeting minutes.

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11.2.4 If Council does not proceed to appoint new nominees, the nominees will be informed of this decision within the week.

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. **Confidential-** Multicultural Advisory Committee member nominations 2022_2024
2. Multicultural Advisory Committee Terms of Reference 2022
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