

Cultural Diversity Policy 2006 - 2009

"Valuing Our Diverse Community"

June 2006

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1. POLICY PURPOSE

1.1. Background

The City of Warrnambool is experiencing changing demographics. The nationally acclaimed Warrnambool Migrant Relocation project has resulted in up to 100 additional people from the Horn of Africa being settled in the City in 2003 - 2005.

The 2001 census revealed that there were 290 indigenous people and 3,254 people who were born overseas in the Warrnambool City statistical division with up to 605 of these from a Non English Speaking Background (NESB); 482 people spoke a language other than English at home.

In addition a range of education and training providers in and around the City of Warrnambool have significant enrolments of international students. Skilled migration policies and programs are also attracting workers from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds.

This Cultural Diversity Policy 2006-2009 (including Action Plan), "*Valuing Our Diverse Community*" (*the Policy*) has been developed to build on the experience gained through supporting cultural diversity. The Policy recognises the benefits of diversity in sustaining the social, economic and cultural development of the community and aims to strengthen the capacity and standards in the planning and delivery of Warrnambool City Council ("Council") services towards this end.

1.2. Consultation

The Policy has been developed in consultation with key community stakeholders from diverse cultural backgrounds and an internal stakeholder working group to ensure a 'whole of organisation' approach is adopted in implementing the Policy over the next three years. The following groups and individuals will continue to be engaged in this process:

Gnatanwaar Multicultural Festival Planning Committee which currently has representatives of 12 diverse indigenous and cultural groups;

- Gunditjmara Aboriginal Cooperative;
- Framlingham Aboriginal Trust;
- Winda Mara Aboriginal Corporation;
- Worn Gundidj Aboriginal Cooperative;
- Sudanese Community in Warrnambool Inc;
- Staff Consultative Committee of Council;
- Diversity Unit of Council;
- Warrnambool and District Resettlement Advisory Group;
- Warrnambool Integrated Settlement Services Network and
- International Student Officer Deakin University Warrnambool

2. GUIDING VALUES

Multiculturalism is a broad concept that encompasses linguistic, cultural, ethnic and faith diversity. This document provides a framework for the planning and delivery of Council services to meet the needs of our growing culturally diverse community. Council will build on the strengths and success of increased cultural diversity and ensure that Council continues to be responsive and accountable to all citizens.

The Policy recognises that people come from diverse cultural, religious, racial and linguistic backgrounds, and have the same civic rights and obligations to contribute to the enrichment of the social, economic, and cultural development of the community.

This Policy also recognises that these rights are accompanied by responsibilities to accept the right of others to express their views and values. In acknowledging cultural diversity, Council accepts that '*all people living in Australia should have an overriding and unifying commitment to Australia and the basic structures and principles of Australian society*'. (Department of Immigration Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs, 1997). Council will continue to commit to recognising and encouraging diversity as a contributing factor that influences the social, economic and cultural development of the community.

3. POLICY FRAMEWORK

There is a range of legislation and policy which currently applies in both supporting cultural diversity and in ensuring that discrimination does not occur in accessing community services including those delivered through local government. Policy and legislation operates at a Commonwealth, State and local government level:

3.1. National Level

At a Federal Government level the Australian Government policy position is "The freedom of Australians to express and share their cultural values is dependent on their abiding by mutual civic obligations. All Australians are expected to have an overriding loyalty to Australia and its people, and to respect the basic structures and principles underwriting our democratic society. These are: the Constitution, parliamentary democracy, freedom of speech and religion, English as a national language, the rule of law, acceptance and equality". (Australian Government, DIMIA <http://www.immi.gov.au/facts>).

Commonwealth Government – Local Government Commitment:

The National Commitment agreed to by the Australian Local Government Association in 2002 on behalf of local governments throughout Australia confirms that the planning and provision of government programs and services to Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders is a shared responsibility and a legitimate policy interest of all spheres of government.

Under the National Commitment, the governments of Australia "recognise the expressed wish of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders for a commitment to change, and an acknowledgement of their rightful place in and right to contribute to Australian society and to share in Australia's land, wealth and resources". Australian Local Government Association.

www.alga.net.au/policy/indigenous/nationalCommitment.php

3.2. State Level - Legislation

At the Victorian State level relevant legislation includes the *Victorian Equal Opportunity Act (1995)*, the *Racial and Religious Tolerance Act (2001)* and the *Multicultural Victoria Act (2004)*.

Victorian Equal Opportunity Act (1995): covers discrimination in employment, partnerships, professional and other organisations, qualifying bodies, employment agencies, education, provision of goods or services, accommodation, clubs or community service organisations, municipal or shire councils on the basis of range of characteristics including race, colour, nationality and ethnic or national origin.

Racial and Religious Tolerance Act (2001): States that..."The people of Victoria come from diverse ethnic and Indigenous backgrounds and observe many different religious beliefs and practices. The majority of Victorians embrace the benefits provided by this cultural diversity and are proud that people of these diverse ethnic, Indigenous and religious backgrounds live together harmoniously in Victoria.

However, some Victorians are vilified on the ground of their race or their religious belief or activity. Vilifying conduct is contrary to democratic values because of its effect on people of diverse ethnic, Indigenous and religious backgrounds. It diminishes their dignity, sense of self-worth and belonging to the community. It also reduces their ability to contribute to, or fully participate in, all social, political, economic and cultural aspects of society as equals, thus reducing the benefit that diversity brings to the community". *Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001*.

The Multicultural Victoria Act 2004 is based on the following principals:

- All individuals in Victoria are entitled to mutual respect and understanding regardless of their cultural, religious, racial and linguistic backgrounds;
- All individuals and institutions in Victoria should promote and preserve diversity and cultural heritage within the context of shared laws, values, aspirations and responsibilities; and
- All individuals in Victoria are equally entitled to access opportunities and participate in and contribute to the social, cultural, economic and political life of this State.

State Level – Policy

The Victorian Government policy statement *"Valuing Cultural Diversity"* is based on four major platforms:

- Valuing diversity;
- Reducing inequality;
- Encouraging participation; and
- Promoting the social, cultural and economic benefits of cultural diversity for all Victorians.

3.3. Council Plan and Policy Framework

The Council 2005 - 2009 Plan identifies key strategic developments to be undertaken to meet the needs of Warrnambool's growing multicultural and indigenous community, providing the framework for the development of this policy and action plan.

Encompassing a 'whole of organisation' approach across Council the Policy is based on the following principles:

- Access & Equity;
- Service Delivery;
- Supporting Cultural Diversity; and
- Recognition and Respect

3.3.1. Council Plan 2005 - 2009

The 4 year Strategy 1.05 states the need to... *"Develop policies and plans which address relationships with indigenous people and meet the needs of Warrnambool's growing cultural diversity"*.

Strategic indicators given are:

- Effective organisational planning and co-ordination relating to both symbolic and practical steps towards reconciliation with indigenous peoples.
- Effective development and use of new material, which responds to cultural situations and needs.
- Cultural Diversity policy in place.
- Culturally appropriate community engagement.
- Inclusion of cultural diversity within organisational policies and processes.

3.3.2. Related Warrnambool City Council Policies

Related Council policies include: Equal Employment Opportunity Policy (2001) and the Community Engagement Policy (2005). The Policy adds another dimension to the Council Community Engagement Policy (2005) and provides practical additional strategies and actions aimed at realising *"respecting cultural diversity and supporting the needs of different cultural groups"*. The Action Plan for the Policy covers the areas of providing information and consultative and collaborative processes appropriate to the recognition and respect of Warrnambool's culturally and linguistically diverse community.

Summary of Policy Context: The underlying tenet of these three levels of Government policy is that sectors of the community (for example indigenous peoples, those with disability and peoples from

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds) are not marginalised groups outside the mainstream community or outside the government's core responsibilities.

4. POLICY OBJECTIVES

The Policy has the following objectives:

- Ensure that the access to Council's services is equitable; community members should not experience barriers to service access because the information on the service or the service itself does not address diversity needs;
- To effectively provide information on the range of Council services to all residents including those from Non English Speaking Backgrounds(NESB) and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse(CALD) backgrounds;
- To raise the profile of Council among residents from indigenous, NESB/CALD backgrounds and enhance their participation in the processes of local government;
- To increase the awareness and the ability of Council staff to respond to the needs of residents from a NESB;
- To collect information to enable Divisions and Branches within the Council organisation to cater for all residents including those from diverse backgrounds;
- To monitor and review the effectiveness of measures aimed at better servicing residents of a NESB;
- That a diversity management process is in place that ensures that the diversity of the community is reflected in the composition and values of Council staff;
- That Council's employment policy ensures that barriers do not exist in relation to the selection, recruitment, training and advancement of people from indigenous or NESB/CALD backgrounds; and
- Develop Council as a champion of diversity in the workplace.

5. MONITORING, REPORTING AND EVALUATION OF THE POLICY

The following procedures will apply to the monitoring, reporting and evaluation of the Policy:

- The Action Plan designates responsibility for the undertaking of actions and strategies to responsible Council Officers;
- The Action Plan will be placed on Council's DStrat reporting system inclusive of reporting time standards;
- A report on the implementation of the Action Plan will be incorporated into quarterly reporting to the Management Executive Group ("MEG") and to Council on an annual basis;
- Key activities will be incorporated into Council's annual resource planning processes; and
- An evaluation and review of the Policy and recommended actions will be undertaken annually with an overhaul of the Policy by March 2009.

6. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

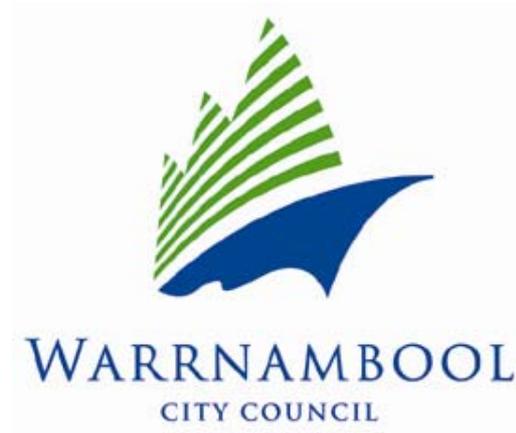
6.1. Requirements

To ensure the successful implementation of the Policy the Council is committed to:

- Valuing the economic, social and cultural benefits of diversity;
- Staff training, development and capacity building to enable greater access to services and civic participation by people from NESB/CALD backgrounds; and
- Seeking new and utilising existing resources and funding to support cultural diversity.

6.2. Action Plan

The attached action plan details the implementation strategies for the Policy, actions, responsible Council Officer and timeframe.



Cultural Diversity Policy 2006 – 2009

ACTION PLAN

June 2006

Objective	Strategies/Actions	Responsible Officer	Timeframe
1. Develop policies and plans which meet the needs of Warrnambool's growing multicultural community.	1.1. Integrate Policy actions into Council's Annual Resource and Activities Plan and report on an annual basis. 1.2. Develop a Multicultural Policy and Action plan for adoption by Council. 1.3. Develop a cultural diversity framework for adoption by Council in consultation with key cultural groups and networks. 1.3. Regularly review all relevant Council policies, including the Policy and strategic plans to ensure diverse community needs continue to be addressed.	Director Resident Services Executive Manager - Community Development Executive Manager - Community Development Chief Executive Officer	April 2006 March 2006 March 2007 Ongoing
2. Inclusion of cultural diversity within Council organisational policies and processes	2.1. Develop key cultural indicators for inclusion into Council's revised Best Value Program. 2.2. Monitor Best Value reporting for all services against cultural indicators.	Executive Manager - Community Development Executive Manager - Organisational Development	August 2006 September 2006 and quarterly thereafter
3. Promote and encourage the equitable distribution of Council resources.	3.1. Promote recognition of diversity within the Community Grants Program and include assessment criteria which address the needs of Indigenous, existing and emerging CALD communities.	Executive Manager - Recreation & Cultural Services	Biannually
4. Ensure diverse community needs are included within Council's strategic, social, economic and physical planning.	4.1. Undertake regular consultations to ensure that the needs of all groups in the community are considered in the preparation of key planning documents such as the Municipal Strategic Statement, Open Space Strategies, Playgrounds, Municipal Public Health Planning and other key strategies. Community needs include health, mental health and well being.	Director Physical Services	Ongoing
5. Ensure that planning and policy continues to be responsive to the needs of diverse cultural groups.	5.1. Establish and maintain a planning database on cultural profile, trends and projections of cultural and linguistic diversity. 5.2. Undertake population research, and study current	Executive Manager - Community Development Executive Manager - Community Development	March 2007 Annually

Objective	Strategies/Actions	Responsible Officer	Timeframe
	<p>emerging trend data to enable better planning and service provision.</p> <p>5.3 Review planning and policy processes to review their effectiveness in building the capacity of CALD communities to develop and implement their own strategies and solutions to identified issues including housing, employment, enterprise development and service responsiveness.</p>	Executive Manager - Community Development	Annually
<p>6. Encourage and facilitate participation of our CALD communities in civic life.</p>	<p>6.1. Continually publicly recognise the traditional custodians of the areas within the municipality.</p> <p>6.2. Invite speakers from indigenous/CALD backgrounds to citizenship ceremonies and other relevant civic functions.</p> <p>6.3. Provide culturally appropriate opportunities for people from diverse backgrounds to raise concerns and issues with Council.</p> <p>6.4. Investigate ways to increase knowledge and understanding of the role of local government amongst CALD groups by providing community education programs.</p> <p>6.5. Provide relevant translations of information on the functions and responsibilities of Council and key officer contacts.</p> <p>6.6. Investigate funding for the development of a leadership program to assist people from CALD backgrounds to develop community involvement and leadership skills.</p>	<p>Chief Executive Officer</p> <p>Chief Executive Officer</p> <p>Director Corporate Services</p> <p>Director Corporate Services</p> <p>Director Corporate Services</p> <p>Executive Manager - Community Development</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Annually</p> <p>Annually</p> <p>June 2006</p>

Objective	Strategies/Actions	Responsible Officer	Timeframe
<p>7. Ensure Council services are accessible to culturally and linguistically diverse groups.</p>	7.1. Undertake regular evaluation of services to ensure that the needs of CALD communities are being met.	Executive Manager - Organisation Development	Quarterly
	7.2. Include considerations of, and appropriate targets regarding, CALD communities in the revision of Best Value principles and practices.	Executive Manager - Organisation Development	Quarterly
	7.3. Collect minimum Indigenous and ethnic service use data across all services as specified by relevant funding bodies.	Executive Manager - Community Development	Annually
<p>8. Ensure that public contact services offer an efficient and appropriate service to all residents regardless of their cultural and linguistic background.</p>	8.1. Mandatory for all staff in public contact positions to receive training in the multicultural policy.	Executive Manager - Revenue and Property	Annually
	8.2. That public contact and information officers are aware of the translating and interpreting services available including the Telephone Interpreter Service or (TIS), or on-site through Accredited Language Aides or Interpreters.	Executive Manager - Revenue and Property	September 2006
	8.3. Identify existing resources to provide local language services including staff, community and government resources.	Executive Manager - Organisation Development Executive Manager - Revenue and Property	April 2007 & Ongoing
<p>9. Recognise and promote community diversity to build community spirit and pride.</p>	9.1. Actively promote the rich cultural diversity of the municipality at civic and community events.	Chief Executive officer	Ongoing
	9.2. Seek opportunities to promote community understanding and acceptance of the different cultures within the municipality.	Chief Executive Officer	Ongoing
	9.3. Protect indigenous cultural objects, sites and places(past, present and future)	Chief Executive Officer	Ongoing
	9.3. Encourage CALD groups to utilise Council facilities for culturally specific events.	Executive Manager - Recreation and Cultural Services	Ongoing
	9.4. Utilise culturally diverse catering for Council functions	Executive Assistant	Ongoing

Objective	Strategies/Actions	Responsible Officer	Timeframe
	where appropriate.		
10. Culturally appropriate community engagement - Access to information	<p>10.1. Review and update Council communication systems and publications to ensure that information meets the diverse needs of people from a NESB/CALD background. Including fostering ongoing consultation with Indigenous communities; elders, and agency representatives.</p> <p>10.2. Develop a directory of interpreter and translation services available for use in the delivery of information on Council services, when required.</p> <p>10.3. Encourage the participation of people from CALD backgrounds in the development and review of culturally appropriate information.</p> <p>10.4. Make available translated sections of the annual report, notice to ratepayers, resource and information guides and directories into key community languages.</p> <p>10.5. Maximise use of multilingual media.</p> <p>10.6. Install signage that is effective in communicating to those from diverse backgrounds including recognised international signs and pictograms.</p> <p>10.7. Provide key service information to specific language groups through educational talks, information sessions, and seminars.</p>	<p>Director Economic Development</p> <p>Executive Manager - Community Development</p> <p>Executive Manager - Community Development</p> <p>Director Corporate Services</p> <p>Communications Officer</p> <p>Director Physical Services</p> <p>Executive Manager - Community Development</p>	<p>June 2006 & ongoing</p> <p>April 2007</p> <p>May 2007</p> <p>August 2006 & annually</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
11. Culturally appropriate community engagement - consultation	<p>11.1. Meet with key cultural groups and networks on an annual basis to identify best practice and increase</p>	<p>Director Resident Services</p>	<p>June 2006</p>

Objective	Strategies/Actions	Responsible Officer	Timeframe
<p>Ensure that CALD community representatives and organisations are included in all Council consultations.</p>	<p>understanding of issues affecting CALD people.</p>		
	<p>11.2. Encourage the participation of CALD people in Council consultative processes, reference groups, and as detailed in the Community Engagement Policy November 2005.</p>	<p>Chief Executive Officer</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
	<p>11.3. Ensure that Council Officers have access to appropriate guidelines on how to consult with people from CALD backgrounds and that guidelines are implemented across all Council units.</p>	<p>Executive Manager - Organisation Development</p>	<p>December 2006 & ongoing</p>
	<p>11.4. Encourage representatives from CALD communities to actively participate on reference groups for events such as the Multicultural Festival, Fun4 Kids, WUNTA etc.</p>	<p>Executive Manager - Tourism & Major Events</p>	<p>March 2007 & ongoing</p>
	<p>11.5. Ensure interpreters are available in a variety of relevant community languages at all relevant consultations.</p>	<p>Executive Manager - Revenue and Property</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>12. Encourage and support activities and events that promote positive community partnerships and projects.</p>	<p>12.1. Actively seek opportunities for partnerships and joint projects with CALD groups and service providers.</p>	<p>Executive Manager - Community Development</p>	<p>May 2006 & ongoing</p>
	<p>12.2. Support locally based CALD groups and organisations in the development and implementation of programs that contribute to sustainability and community building.</p>	<p>Executive Manager - Community Development</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

Objective	Strategies/Actions	Responsible Officer	Timeframe
<p>13. Develop culturally sensitive and effective work practices that address access and equity issues.</p> <p>Develop Warrnambool City Council as a workplace which champions cultural diversity.</p>	13.1. Develop and implement a staff cultural awareness training program across all levels of Council Officers to elevate awareness and promote inclusive practices.	Executive Manager - Organisation Development	December 2006 & ongoing
	13.2. Ensure staff recruitment responds to cultural diversity in the community and does not pose a barrier to potential applicants from culturally diverse backgrounds.	Executive Manager - Organisation Development	December 2006 & ongoing
	13.3. Utilise Council as a training and work experience venue for international students; traineeship programs and mentoring strategies for people from indigenous and CALD backgrounds.	Executive Manager - Organisation Development	September 2006 & ongoing
	13.4. Include a component of CALD training in Council's induction program for new staff.	Executive Manager - Organisation Development	August 2006 & ongoing
	13.5. Ensure that employment policies, practices and resources are culturally inclusive and do not inadvertently discriminate.	Executive Manager - Organisation Development	Ongoing
	13.5. Ensure Cultural Diversity policy and practices are included as a component in Customer Service Training.	Executive Manager - Revenue and Property	September 2006 & ongoing