

ATTACHMENT TO AGENDA ITEM

Ordinary Meeting

15 March 2016

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Greater Shepparton City Council

Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan



2012 - 2015





Photographs taken by Lesley Poole



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Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

We, the Greater Shepparton City Council, acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land which now comprises Greater Shepparton. We pay respect to their tribal elders, we celebrate their continuing culture and we acknowledge the memory of their ancestors.

Message from the Mayor

For decades, Greater Shepparton has been the destination for thousands of migrants. Greater Shepparton City Council is proud of our immigration history and the resulting diverse community we now enjoy. Patterns of immigration are likely to continue as new emerging communities seek settlement in Australia.

This is the first Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Strategy for Greater Shepparton and forges the way for the coming years. The strategy provides platforms for how we will communicate, celebrate, advocate, and work in partnership with other sector leaders to improve service delivery for our culturally diverse community.

Council has consulted broadly in the development of this plan with the many emerging and established cultural communities. Sector organisations have also provided valuable input and ideas into the future directions for the region to ensure we have a welcoming, inclusive and vibrant community. Partnership with these local sector organisations will be critical in the delivery of many of these initiatives and we acknowledge their commitment and ongoing support.

We look forward to delivering the many initiatives outlined in this strategy and the positive benefits they will make for our whole community.



Cr Michael Polan

Mayor, Greater Shepparton City Council





Executive Summary

Greater Shepparton is a richly diverse region, with the 2006 Australian Bureau of Statistics Census revealing that 11% of the population, or 6,147 individuals, identified as being born in a country other than Australia.

The development of a Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Strategy is designed to build on the existing positive achievements of Greater Shepparton City Council and guide our commitment to supporting and celebrating cultural diversity through best practice. Its development will inform all future Council strategies and policies to further support the development of harmonious communities; inclusive of all.

Developed with extensive consultation with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities, CALD service providers and stakeholders and relevant Council staff, the strategy reflects the needs of the community and service providers. CALD communities expressed the importance of feeling a sense of belonging, while service providers identified areas where Council could strengthen partnerships with the sector for the benefit of our diverse communities. Council staff also contributed many ideas to improve services to meet the needs of our diverse community.

Our Vision

Greater Shepparton City Council's vision for this region is of a vibrant, cohesive society which celebrates and incorporates aspects of cultural diversity within daily life. It is essential that we continue to be a welcoming place for migrants into the future and provide appropriate services to CALD communities, many who have specific cultural needs.

Key Strategic Directions & Action Plan

Six key strategic directions have been formed to frame future action Council will take to support cultural diversity within the region. The Action Plan consists of identified activities we will undertake during 2012-2015 and is based around the six strategic directions. These include;

- Engagement; communicate and education
- Partnership
- Leadership
- Celebration
- Advocate
- Services

The Strategy and associated Action Plan is considered a living document which will be updated yearly by the Cultural Development Officer. Council is proud to take a leadership role in showing the positive influence of cultural diversity in all aspects of community and organisations.



Developing a New Strategy

Considering the cultural diversity of our region, it is imperative that Council highlight our commitment to diversity by developing a Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Strategy. In the past, Council has supported diversity through a range of means, the achievements of which have been provided below. This has increased in the past years, through involvement in the Localities Embracing and Accepting Diversity (LEAD) pilot project and the development of a Cultural Development Team, with a dedicated Cultural Development Officer.

The development of this Strategy is designed to build on the work already undertaken and to strengthen partnerships between Council and the regions CALD communities, service providers and other cultural stakeholders. It is inclusive of all members of CALD communities, including aged, socio economic status, sexuality, women and youth.

The Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Strategy is based on valuing community, including their opinions and perspectives, recognising and celebrating diversity and fostering social cohesion.

This Strategy is not intended to apply to Aboriginal communities in Greater Shepparton. Council is currently in the process of developing an Aboriginal Partnership Strategy which will outline our commitment to our indigenous communities and their culture.

Process

Council has undertaken a range of activities to engage with the CALD sector in the development of this Strategy. Initial consultations were held with CALD communities, CALD service providers and stakeholders and relevant Council staff. CALD communities expressed the importance of feeling a sense of belonging, while service provider consultations identified areas where Council could strengthen partnerships with the sector for the benefit of our diverse communities. Council staff also contributed many ideas to improve services to meet the needs of our diverse community.

In the development of this Strategy, Council has used information from the community, as well as a review of current demographics and legislation to inform the Strategy and Action Plan. The Strategy aligns with the strategic objectives of various Council policies and reflects current state and national legislation. Appendix 1 outlines how the Strategy relates to these.

The Action Plan associated with the Strategy, outlines the direct action Council will take to develop and support cultural diversity within the region during 2012-2015. It will be updated annually by the Cultural Development Officer, with corresponding consultation.

Community Consultations

The Residents

Consultations have occurred with CALD communities within Greater Shepparton. This has included four individual consultations with the Afghani, Congolese, Iraqi and Sudanese community leaders, as well as a general consultation with the Filipino, Indian, Italian, Macedonian, Maltese, Sri Lankan and Turkish communities. Local interpreters were used to ensure all community ideas were captured.

These consultations have covered numerous people and provided a wide variety of ideas on how Council can continue to support cultural diversity within the region. In particular there were noticeable differences between the needs of more established communities and new/emerging communities.

The Service Providers

Consultations have occurred with a variety of service providers and those whose work relates strongly to cultural diversity. This includes 1:1 consultations with Centrelink Shepparton, Ethnic Council of Shepparton and District Inc (Ethnic Council), FamilyCare, Family Relationships Centre, Shepparton Interfaith Network, Goulburn Valley Settlement Committee, Gotafe Multicultural Education Unit, Primary Care Connect, Relationships Australia, Shepparton English Language Centre and Uniting Care Cutting Edge.

These consultations provided valuable feedback on the positive actions Council is already completing and many ideas on how to build on this work and relationships with the sector.

Focus group questions included:

- What are your current perceptions of Council's role in cultural affairs?
- How could this be improved?
- What are we doing well?
- Do you consider the partnerships between organisations in this sector to be productive and open?
- What importance do you place on maintaining these relationships?
- Is there any needs or issues which CALD communities express to you that Council is equipped to assist with?
- Do CALD clients express particular opinions of Council, positive or negative?

Council Staff

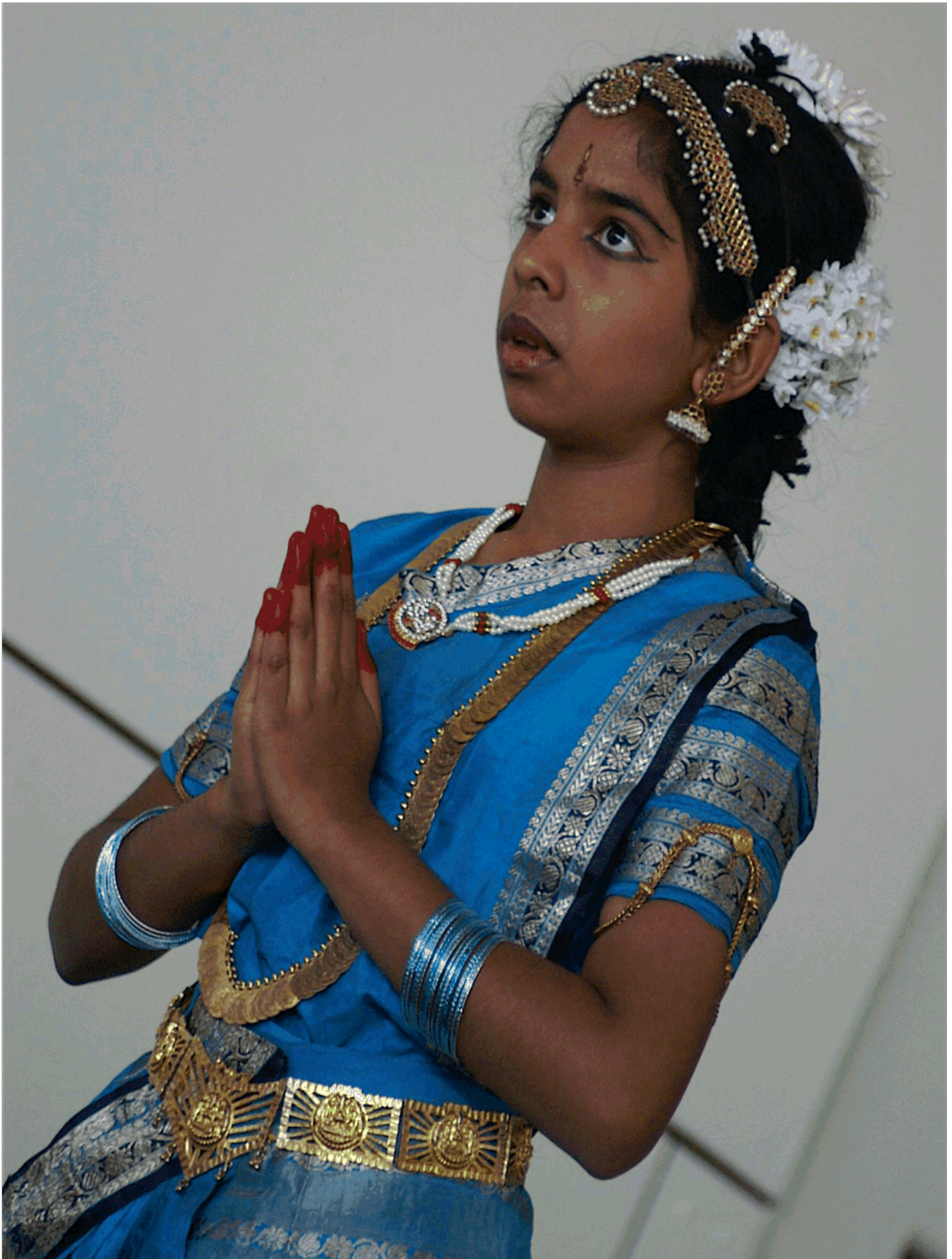
Council staff, across departments and management levels were consulted during the development of this strategy to gain an understanding of current relationships with CALD communities across the organisation. These consultations also provided an opportunity for staff to suggest possible positive actions and the capacity they have to achieve them.

Following the development of a draft strategy, further consultation was undertaken. The strategy was available for public viewing and feedback for two months, during which time copies were sent to service providers who assisted in its development. A public consultation forum was also held, allowing community members to liaise directly with Council staff about the directions and actions outlined in the strategy.

Current Achievements

During consultations with community and service providers, a variety of programs were identified as positive actions Council is already completing. These include:

- The LEAD project, especially the Social Marketing Campaign 'See Beyond Race'
- Identification of Cultural Development Officer position and recognition that Council needs to work in this area
- Support of cultural events during the past year, such as Harmony Day, Cultural Diversity Week, Refugee Week, Congolese Independence Day and South Sudanese Independence Day
- Skilled migration program
- Maternal and Child Health teams use of interpreters and development of relationships with CALD community
- Elf Program – the inclusion of books with multiple languages
- Family Day Care – around 50% of carers are of a CALD background
- Library – availability of books in different languages
- Art Galleries programs with communities
- Engagement in SheppARTon Festival
- Availability of public spaces – such as Kidstown, lake, parks and walking tracks



Cultural Diversity and inclusion Strategy and Action Plan

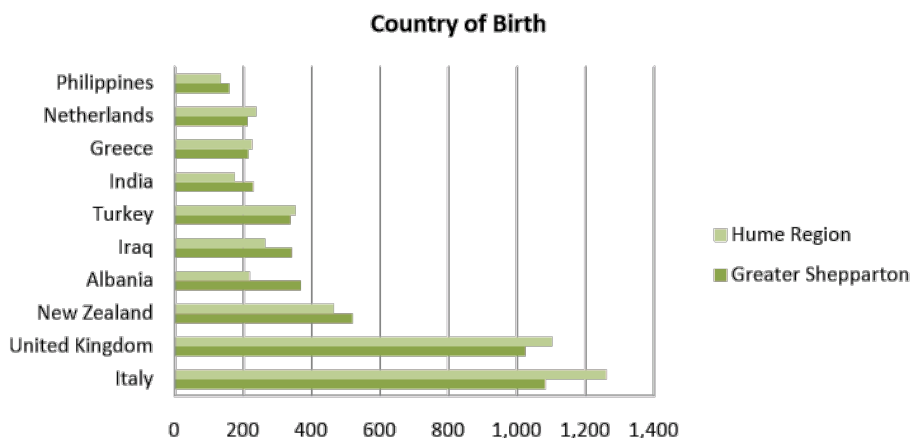


Our Diverse Community

In the 2006 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Census, 57,089 people resided in the Greater Shepparton region. This area comprises not only the major centre Shepparton, but also the smaller townships of Congupna, Dookie, Katandra, Merrigum, Mooroopna, Murchison, Tallygaroopna, Tatura, Toolamba and Undera.

The Census reveals that 11% of the population, or 6,147 individuals, identified as being born in a country other than Australia, with 7.8% of these in countries where English is not a first language.

The census shows the dominant non-English speaking country of birth as Italy, where 1.9% of the population, or 1,081 people, were born. High populations also originate from the United Kingdom and New Zealand, followed by Albania, Iraq, Turkey, India, Greece, the Netherlands and Philippines.



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006 Census of Population and Housing

The history of migration to Greater Shepparton is long, in particular beginning following World War I with the arrival of many immigrants from Southern Europe, in particular Greeks, Italians, Macedonians and Albanians. Post World War II, further migrants arrived from Europe, including large numbers of Turks around the 1960's. These populations are well established in the region and have further built the fruit industry which Greater Shepparton is well known for, through hard work and strong entrepreneurial spirits.

From the late 1980's Punjabi Indians and Pacific Islander populations began to arrive, and following the breakup of Yugoslavia in the 1990's, further European immigrants arrived. More recent arrivals from the mid 1990's include Afghani, Iraqi, Sudanese and Congolese populations.

Considering this more recent history, the 2006 Census doesn't adequately represent the visible breadth of diversity, in particular Sudanese, Congolese, Afghani, Iraqi, Samoan, Indian and Sri Lankan populations. Further, several of these populations arrived in the region following 2006. Many CALD communities don't understand the importance of a census and believe it could be used to discrimination against them if filled out accurately, for this reason census data may not be an accurate reflection of current population. In the 2006 Census, 3383 people did not state their country of birth, which could reflect those who were unwilling to provide these details. We believe the release of the 2011 census results may provide a more accurate reflection of our diverse communities.

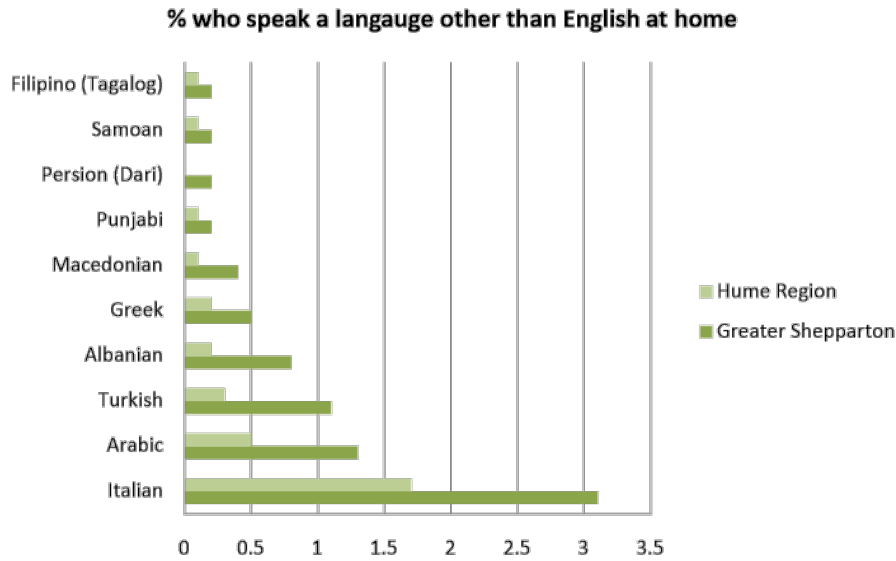
Recent studies undertaken by the Ethnic Council estimates the populations of our four newest and largest communities: Iraqi community numbering 3000-4000 individuals, Afghani community numbering 700 individuals, Sudanese as a community of 800 individuals and 140 Congolese individuals.

Greater Shepparton is an attractive place to a wide range of migrants for a variety of reasons. These include our history of migration and reputation of welcoming new arrivals, social factors such as family or community members already living in the region, the lifestyle of a country town with the economic and employment opportunities of a city and the agricultural industry.

The pattern of migration is anticipated to continue and in comparison to the Hume Region, Greater Shepparton continues to receive high levels of migration each year. In 2006 there was a 2.4% increase in the population in Greater Shepparton, in comparison to 1.8% in the Hume Region.

The census shows the majority of CALD communities are centred around the urban base of Shepparton-Mooroopna, although in the peripheral regions and towns percentages of the population include Italian (4.2%), Dutch (0.8%) and Turkish (1.3%). Newer populations of Iraqi and Afghani descent are more likely to live in south Shepparton; while Albanian, Italian and Turkish communities tend to be more evenly spread throughout the city.

In regard to language skills, those who identified as being born in a country other than Australia, 16%, or 1,021 people, stated that they spoke another language and English not well or not at all, while 41%, or 2,548 people, stated they spoke another language and English well or very well. These levels are 10% and 13%, respectively, higher than the Hume region.



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006 Census of Population and Housing

In regard to religious diversity, while 65% of Greater Shepparton still identify as Christians, the 2006 census showed an increase of 427 people who identified as Islamic. Making up 3.9% of the population in 2006, this is markedly higher than the Hume Region as a whole, 1.1%.

Refugee Settlement

Many recent arrivals to Greater Shepparton are of a refugee and humanitarian background. While there is not statistical evidence of these numbers, anecdotally it is believed to include 5,000 people in the past ten years; predominately from Afghanistan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq and Sudan. The lack of statistical evidence is a result of secondary migration, as individuals move to the region due to the family ties, employment opportunities and lifestyle.

Greater Shepparton City Council recognises that people who flee their countries due to war and other conflicts, have often experienced trauma and persecution and therefore required additional support during settlement.

As a Council we support the arrival of refugee’s to our region, and recognise the positive influence their skills, knowledge and culture bring. Considering the long term impact of an increasing population, we strongly advocate to State and Federal government for a well-funded, planned and coordinated settlement approach. This includes ensuring sufficient housing, employment, education, health and support services are available.



Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan



The Strategy

Our Vision

Greater Shepparton City Council's vision for this region is of a vibrant, cohesive society which celebrates and incorporates aspects of cultural diversity within daily life. Considering our strong history of migration, it is imperative that Council continue to engage with CALD communities and ensure their aspirations are met, along with the whole community. It is also essential that we continue to be a welcoming place for migrants into the future and provide appropriate services to this group of people, many who have specific cultural needs.

Greater Shepparton City Council is proud to take a leadership role within the community in showing the positive influence of cultural diversity in all aspects of community and organisations, such as the richness of community life, the opportunities for employers and positiveness of strong social cohesion.

Key Strategic Directions & Action Plan

The following Action Plan has been formed around the ideas and feedback gained throughout consultation. Six key strategic directions have been formed to frame the future action Council will take to develop and support cultural diversity within the region. These include;

- Engagement; communicate and education
- Partnership
- Leadership
- Celebration
- Advocate
- Services

The following Action Plan will be delivered throughout 2012-2015 and will be reviewed annually by the Cultural Development Officer, with consultation.

Budget Implications

Actions from the Action Plan requiring additional resources will be considered through Council's annual budgetary processes.

Key Strategic Directions 2012-2015**1. Engagement; communicate and educate**

Develop strong and meaningful relationships with CALD communities to provide opportunities to increase their understanding, engagement and participation within the wider community.

2. Partnership

Council will work in partnership with communities, services providers and government bodies to enhance settlement coordination and maximise collaborative efforts towards building inclusive communities.

3. Leadership

Greater Shepparton City Council is committed to building local leadership within the CALD community and supporting other initiatives that develop positive perceptions of diversity.

4. Celebration

Council will celebrate our cultural diversity in cultural and mainstream events within the region. We will actively acknowledge the real and positive influence, past and present, migrants have made to our region.

5. Advocate

Council will advocate for the improvement of settlement services for CALD communities. Council will also play an active role promoting positive opinions of CALD communities, including working to combat prejudices and race based discrimination.

6. Services

Greater Shepparton City Council will work towards ensuring our services are culturally appropriate and continue to address the specific cultural needs of our CALD communities.

Key Strategic Direction 1: Engagement: Communicate and Educate			
Develop strong and meaningful relationships with CALD communities to provide opportunities to increase their understanding, engagement and participation within the wider community.			
Action	Measure	Timeframe	Responsibility/Partners
Develop a communications policy to outline the best way to communicate with CALD community. Options explored will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scoped interpreting services • Define the approach for translation of Council publications and brochures • Explore the opportunity for bilingual community advocates • The use of online, visual mediums and pre-recorded information services. 	Communication policy developed.	June 2013	Communications Customer Service Cultural Development Team
Develop mechanisms for CALD consultation in partnership with CALD service providers.	Consultation processes defined and implemented.	December 2013	Cultural Development Officer CALD communities and service providers
Work in partnership with local services providers to deliver community information sessions about particular services related to ongoing settlement.	CALD community information sessions delivered quarterly or in response to settlement patterns.	Ongoing – Reviewed Annually	Council branches CALD community service providers Ethnic Council, Uniting Care Cutting Edge and Gotafe
Maximise participation in interpretation courses with Gotafe to provide more local interpreters.	Promote available interpreter courses locally as they become available.	Ongoing	Cultural Development Officer Gotafe
Promote volunteering opportunities to the CALD community.	Volunteer promotion in relevant agencies.	Annually	Community Development Officer Cultural Development Team Volunteer Managers Network Visitor Information Centre
Engage CALD communities in Council strategies specific to settlement.	CALD communities are targeted in consultation during the development and implementation of Council plans including Housing Strategy and Community Plans.	Ongoing	Planning Branch Cultural Development Officer

Key Strategic Direction 2: Partnership			
Council will work in partnership with communities, services providers and government bodies to enhance settlement coordination and maximise collaborative efforts towards building inclusive communities.			
Action	Measure	Timeframe	Responsibility/Partners
Develop a partnership with Shepparton Interfaith Network to promote events and cultural/faith information.	Network development with meetings bimonthly for event sharing and promotion.	December 2012	Cultural Development Officer Shepparton Interfaith Network
Improve networking between Skilled Migration Coordinator and CALD service providers.	Two bimonthly meetings.	June 2012	Skilled Migration Coordinator Manager Economic Development Cultural Development Officer Uniting Care Cutting Edge Ethnic Council Gotafe
Develop a plan for improved settlement coordination in partnership with key service partners in regard to community health services.	Settlement Coordination Plan developed.	December 2015	Maternal and Child Health Cultural Development Officer Senior Environmental Health Officer Community Connections Coordinator Uniting Care Cutting Edge Primary Care Connect GV Health
Create greater understanding of the important role of police among the CALD community.	Working partnership with Victoria Police Multicultural Liaison Officer to achieve an annual 80% attendance at cultural events.	December 2014	Cultural Development Officer Victoria Police

Key Strategic Direction 3: Leadership			
Greater Shepparton City Council is committed to building local leadership within the CALD community and supporting other initiatives that develop positive perceptions of diversity			
Action	Measure	Timeframe	Responsibility/Partners
As part of the review of the Communications Strategy for Council, implement initiatives that promote the positive benefits of cultural diversity to the broader community.	Communications Strategy renewed. Positive media stories exceed negative in local media.	March 2014	Communications Cultural Development Team Shepparton News Adviser WIN News Weeknights
Develop a leadership/mentoring program for CALD communities and upon completion support participants in applying for Council positions currently advertised.	Leadership/mentoring program developed for CALD community.	October 2013	Human Resources Cultural Development Team
Increase the diversity of Council staff by developing a culturally appropriate recruitment policy (linked to Human Resources policy in development).	Recruitment policy developed.	February 2013	Human Resources Cultural Development Team
Develop CALD communities' capacity to apply for funding from governments bodies.	Grant training provided to CALD community annually.	Ongoing	Cultural Development Officer Grants Officer CALD communities
Explore opportunities to assist communities in the establishment of Social Enterprises to support the concept of cultural precincts through entrepreneurship.	Grant opportunities explored and an appropriate social enterprise model developed for submission where possible.	Ongoing	Culture and Community Strengthening Branch Economic Development CALD communities

Key Strategic Direction 4: Celebration			
Council will celebrate our cultural diversity in cultural and mainstream events within the region. We will actively acknowledge the real and positive influence, past and present, migrants have made to our region.			
Action	Measure	Timeframe	Responsibility/Partners
Council publications represent, recognise, and celebrate our diverse society.	Imagery used in all Council plans will represent the regions cultural diversity.	Ongoing	Communications Cultural Development Team
Create greater cross cultural representation and participation in community events to increase social inclusiveness and cohesion.	Mainstream events including Australia Day, Anzac Day, Queens Gardens markets, Unity Cup and Mayoral Ball have cultural diversity representation in programs. These events are advertised to CALD communities through emailing flyers to CALD service providers. Cultural events such as Festival of Lights and Ramadan are promoted to mainstream community to welcome participation.	Ongoing	Culture and Community Development Branch Events Team Visitor Information Centre Performing Arts Branch CALD service providers CALD communities
Develop a Cultural Award program to recognise the achievement and contribution of migrants in mainstream awards.	Introduction of awards for migrants in Australia Day awards and/or civic awards.	June 2013	Governance Team Cultural Development Team Communications Team
Develop a Council calendar that indentifies cultural celebrations throughout the year eg. Ramadan, Chinese New Year, Festival of Lights.	Council Cultural Calendar developed and circulated.	December 2012	Communications Cultural Development Team
Support cultural festivals throughout the year to promote cultural celebration and harmony.	Council participation in: Harmony Day Cultural Diversity Week Refugee Week Emerge Festival CALD Ladies Pampering Day	Ongoing	Performing Arts Branch Events Branch Cultural Development Team CALD and mainstream service providers and regional schools

Key Strategic Direction 4: Celebration			
Celebrations of the range of cultures which make up our region provide opportunities to connect and learn about other cultures. It also provides an opportunity to acknowledge the contribution that migrants make to our region.			
Action	Measure	Timeframe	Responsibility/Partners
Work with youth agencies to promote greater inclusion of CALD young people in events and committees to showcase and share their culture.	Greater numbers of CALD young people involved in community events and consultation processes.	Ongoing	Youth Officer Cultural Development Officer Word and Mouth Uniting Care Cutting Edge
Develop opportunities for citizenship ceremonies to be celebratory, public events for educational and acknowledgement purposes.	Ensure two citizenship ceremonies are conducted each year that are open to the broader public (including schools) and have a celebratory theme.	Ongoing	Organisation Performance Cultural Development Officer Shepparton English Language Centre
Explore opportunities for public/community art to assist in creating inclusion.	Initiatives in proposed Community Arts Policy include opportunities for cultural representation.	June 2013	Culture and Community Strengthening Branch Performing Arts Branch

Key Strategic Direction 5: Advocate			
Council will advocate for the improvement of settlement services for CALD communities. Council will also play an active role promoting positive opinions of CALD communities, including working to combat prejudices and race based discrimination.			
Action	Measure	Timeframe	Responsibility/Partners
Proactively work with key industries to reduce race-based discrimination in policy and practice.	Working partnership with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Retail organisations - Education providers - Sporting bodies and - Real estate agents - Media organisations to develop policy and practice approaches to reduce race based discrimination.	December 2014	Cultural Development Team
Encourage the regions Community Centres to promote their facilities to the CALD communities.	MOU and funding agreements with Community Centres outlines shared agreement to promote use of the facilities by the CALD community.	December 2012	Cultural and Community Strengthening Branch Mooroopna Education and Activity Centre North Shepparton Community and Learning Centre South Shepparton Community Centre Tatura Community House

Key Strategic Direction 6: Services			
Greater Shepparton City Council will work towards ensuring our services are culturally appropriate and continue to address the specific cultural needs of our CALD communities.			
Action	Measure	Timeframe	Responsibility/Partners
Introduce elements of cultural diversity into the Council foyer to create a more reflective and welcoming environment.	Cultural diversity is represented in imagery within the Council foyer.	December 2013	Cultural Development Officer Customer Service Manager Corporate Services
Increase Council staff knowledge and skills in liaising with CALD clients by providing cross cultural training.	80% front line staff are trained in cultural awareness.	December 2012	Cultural Development Team Human Resources Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission
Develop a multi faith/contemplation room within the Welsford Street and Doyles Road offices for staff and visitors.	Faith spaces are created in Welsford St and Doyles Rd that are private and culturally appropriate.	December 2012	Human Resources Cultural Development Team Performing Arts Branch Eastbank Operations Manager Asset Development
Create opportunities for CALD communities to participate in sport.	Support the Sports Without Borders Program and LEAD Project. Conduct annual information sessions on the projects.	December 2014	Park and Recreation Leisure Facilities Cultural Development Officer Valley Sport and sports leagues
Develop a Welcome Kit for new arrivals regarding Council services relevant to settlement.	Welcome kits developed.	December 2013	Communications Cultural Development Officer Skilled Migration Coordinator Customer Service
Continue to work with Leisure Facilities and Ethnic Council to increase CALD women's use of mainstream swimming and leisure centres.	Two information sessions held to educate community on swimwear standards. Cultural dress code alternatives outlined to new patrons, with interpreted documents.	December 2012	Leisure Facilities Cultural Development Officer Ethnic Council Uniting Care Cutting Edge
Build on existing culturally appropriate library services	Hold two bilingual story times yearly and develop a young women's engagement program.	December 2013	Library Community Liaison Officer Cultural Development Officer



Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan



Appendix 1: Strategy Context

The Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Strategy aligns with the strategic objectives of the Greater Shepparton Council Plan 2009-2013, Community Development Framework, Community Engagement Strategy, Municipal Public Health Plan 2009-2013 and Customer First Commitment. It also reflects current challenges with respect to cultural diversity at a state and national level.

Greater Shepparton Council Plan 2009-2013

It is a requirement of the Local Government Act 1989 that all Councils develop a Council Plan. This plan outlines the strategic objectives and directions over the life of an elected Council. One of the key strategic objectives in the current Council Plan relates directly to this Strategy:

- Community Life - Greater Shepparton City Council will enhance social connectedness, physical and mental health and well being, education and participatory opportunities in order to improve livability and a greater range of community services.

The sixth goal in this section is to *Embrace and strengthen cultural harmony and diversity*. Included in this is:

- A commitment to develop a Cultural Diversity Plan for Greater Shepparton and pursue implementation of any outcomes there from
- Elimination of discrimination in all activities and services
- The promotion of cultural festivals and activities
- Increase understanding and appreciation of cultural difference to improve the community's connectedness, including recognising and valuing our Aboriginal heritage

Community Development Framework

Adopted in 2010, this framework outlines Council's commitment to implement a community development approach in working with the community. This approach aims to positively shape our future by developing connected, resilient communities through initiatives that benefit the community for the long term.

People is outlined as Focus Area 1 of the Framework and aims to provide accessible and inclusive communities for all to ensure individuals and families feel connected, safe and supported within the community. This includes a strong focus on honouring and celebrating our cultural heritage and diverse communities.

Community Engagement Strategy

Adopted in 2009, this strategy recognises the importance of community input in developing and delivering better services. It commits Council to the involvement of community, community based agencies and local business in Council's decision making processes so that decisions will be more likely to reflect community issues and interests.

Associated with the strategy is a toolkit to assist Council staff in engaging hard to reach groups, such as people from CALD backgrounds.

Municipal Public Health Plan 2009-2013

Developed every four years, the Municipal Public Health Plan identifies existing and emerging priority areas of public health that need to be addressed during the term of a Council. Two sections in the current Public Health Plan are particularly relevant to the Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Strategy:

Objective 2 – Participation in decision making – developing and promoting initiatives to increase involvement of migrants in Council and community decision making.

Objective 6 – Our Diverse Community – supports the development of a cultural diversity policy and plan and will act to ensure all activities and programs delivered by Council actively promote the inclusion of people from all backgrounds.

Customer First Commitment

Developed from a committee consisting of 60 staff and councillors, this commitment outlines specific targets to ensure Council customer service meets the expectations of the residents of Greater Shepparton. In particular it states that Council will:

- Ensure all Council brochures and publications are accessible and easy to understand
- Interpreter services are available

State and Federal Legislation and Policies

Federal and state legislation and policies inform and influence local government work in regard to cultural diversity.

Victorian Legislation

Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001 – Prohibits the vilification of a person on the ground of race, religious belief or activity, with the aim to promote racial and religious acceptance.

Multicultural Victoria Act 2004 (including Multicultural Victoria Amendment Act 2008) – enshrines principles of multiculturalism including mutual respect and understanding regardless of background, the duty of all Victorians to promote and preserve diversity and that strengthening multiculturalism will be a core goal of every Victorian Government Department.

The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 – Aims to ensure basic human rights have clear legal protection, such as freedom, respect, equality and dignity. All government departments and public bodies, such as local government, must observe these rights during their day to day activities and development of policies.

Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (replaces the Equal Opportunity Act 1995) – Acts to promote, recognise and develop acceptance of everyone’s right to equal opportunity and the elimination of discrimination on the basis of specific attributes. It also outlines that such discrimination is against the law.

Victorian Policies and Reports

The Municipal Association of Victoria: Statement of Commitment to Cultural Diversity 2007 – advocates for local governments which include inclusive communities and outlines how the Municipal Association of Victoria will support local government to nurture, promote and celebrate cultural diversity.

All of Us: Victoria’s Multicultural Policy 2009 – Builds upon the Multicultural Victoria Act 2004 and outlines that supporting multiculturalism is a whole of government and whole of community approach. It sets out a framework for strengthening and promoting cultural, linguistic and religious diversity throughout Victoria.

Federal Legislation and Policy

Racial Discrimination Act 1975 – Under the Act it is against the law to harass or treat someone unfairly because of their race, colour, descent or national or ethnic background.

The People of Australia – Australia’s Multicultural Policy 2010 – developed from recommendations from the Australia Multicultural Advisory Council, this policy highlights the federal government’s commitment to a multicultural Australia and their plan to support communities to continue to embrace our different cultural traditions.

Develop strong and meaningful relationships with CALD communities to provide opportunities to increase their understanding, engagement and participation within the wider community.		
Action	Measure	Actioned
<p>Develop a communications policy to outline the best way to communicate with the Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) community.</p> <p>Options explored will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scope interpreting services • Define the approach for translation of Council publications and brochures • Explore the opportunity for bilingual community advocates • The use of online, visual mediums and pre-recorded information services. 	<p>Communication policy developed.</p>	<p>The Languages Services CEO Directive was adopted by the Executive Team in February 2014. The directive was developed in conjunction with Citizen Services and provides guidance to staff on how to use MILS, interpreters, translators, Auslan Services National Relay Service and Easy English.</p> <p>Council launched MILS a Multilingual Information Line Service in November 2014. MILS is an interactive communication package that has pre-recorded messages in Arabic, Dari, English and Sudanese Arabic on a range of Council information. It also offers direct connection to a Citizen Service Officer and interpreter in up to 140 languages.</p> <p>Interpreting cards and signage is now being displayed in Council's customer services buildings as well as Maternal Child Health venues and Childcare facilities.</p> <p>Council has a centralised budget for interpreting and translating services. Council department have utilised this budget to translate immunisation documents, information for promotion and events to amongst other things.</p>
<p>Develop mechanisms for CALD consultation in partnership with CALD service providers.</p>	<p>Consultation processes defined and implemented.</p>	<p>Greater Shepparton City Council's (GSCC's) Cultural Development Officer is currently appointed, for the period of 28 May 2014 to February 2015, as a local government representative on the Victorian Multicultural Commission's (VMC) Regional Advisory Council (RAC) for Hume. The RAC have up to 13 appointed members including residents and representatives from service providers, community organisations, businesses and local government. The members provide advice on settlement, multicultural affairs, service delivery and citizenship issues for the VMC to advocate on behalf of communities as well as advocacy around the benefits of cultural and religious diversity at a local level.</p> <p>GSCC's Cultural Development Officer attends the local Goulburn Valley Integrated Settlement Planning Committee (GVISPC), which is attended by local services providers and organisations to</p>

		<p>have a holistic approach to a broad strategic view on settlement issues locally.</p> <p>Municipal Association of Victoria hosts the Multicultural Committee and the Victorian Local Government Multicultural Issues Network (VLGMIN). GSCC's Manager of Neighbourhoods attends the Multicultural Committee whose purpose is to inform and progress multicultural policy issues impacting on local government. GSCC's Cultural Development Officer attends the VLGMIN meetings which is an information sharing opportunity between Council's, a platform to advocate of behalf of councils and promotes best practice in cultural diversity.</p> <p>GSCC's Cultural Development Officer chaired two committee in 2014 and 2015 for Cultural Diversity Week (Harmony Day) and Refugee Week. The committee is attended by a number of organisations, service providers and local businesses that have an interest in celebrating cultural diversity for these identified weeks. For the past two years a calendar of events for both weeks have been compiled to showcase the events run by the committee, local organisations and service providers and distributed to the public.</p>
Work in partnership with local services providers to deliver community information sessions about particular services related to ongoing settlement.	CALD community information sessions delivered quarterly or in response to settlement patterns.	<p>Greater Shepparton City Council partnered with the Reconciliation Group and the Ethnic Council Shepparton & District in June 2014 to host a Respecting Difference Forum. The forum discussed experiences of discrimination, provided factual information to address these concerns and informed the community of the proposed changes to the <i>Racial Discrimination Act</i>.</p> <p>In March in partnership with Ethnic Council of Shepparton & District, Greater Shepparton Women's Charter Advisory Committee, Victorian Police and GOTAFE, multicultural women gathered at GOTAFE to celebrate International Women's Day. The 'Conversations with Women' event was about inspiring and empowering local women in a safe environment with leading women in Shepparton. It highlighted social inclusion, was a platform for understanding rights and was also a networking opportunity.</p>
Promote volunteering opportunities to the CALD community.	Volunteer promotion in relevant agencies.	Greater Shepparton City Council adopted its first Volunteer Strategy and Action Plan 2014-2018 at the August 2014 Council Meeting. The strategy provides a framework for how Council promotes, recruits, retains, supports, celebrates and recognises volunteers across the municipality. A quick reference guide for volunteering has also been developed and distributed to community members, service providers and organisations. Volunteering through CALD communities is always encouraged especially with newer arrived communities as this allows people to obtain experience in Australia and local referees. Information has been distributed throughout the Cultural Diversity

		Officers networks to help organisations as service providers encourage volunteering.
Engage CALD communities in Council strategies specific to settlement.	CALD communities are targeted in consultation during the development and implementation of Council plans including Housing Strategy and Community Plans.	<p>Consultation for the Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan 2015-2018 included various methods of direct and indirect consultation. This was through a survey that was developed and made available online and in hard copy at service providers, local organisations, education, different levels of government and to the community specifically in multicultural precincts. A public notice was placed in the Shepparton News and advertised on Council's website and group consultations sessions with service providers and collected responses from individuals in person.</p> <p>Planning has also started for the St George's Rd Community Plan and will have a focus on the multicultural precincts and multicultural community groups.</p>

Council will work in partnership with communities, services providers and government bodies to enhance settlement coordination and maximise collaborative efforts towards building inclusive communities.		
Action	Measure	Actioned
Develop a partnership with Shepparton Interfaith Network to promote events and cultural/faith information.	Network development with meetings bimonthly for event sharing and promotion.	Greater Shepparton City Council and Shepparton Interfaith Network have a well established relationship and have worked on a number of projects throughout the last 18 months. Some of the projects included Harmony Day events, Our Community Our Culture Calendar and the Social Cohesion project. Shepparton Interfaith Network also promotes Council events on their website.
Develop a plan for improved settlement coordination in partnership with key service partners in regard to community health services.	Settlement Coordination Plan developed.	<p>Council has participated in the development and review of the 'My Health in Shepparton' handbook co-ordinated by Goulburn Valley Health. This guide helps new residents and refugees navigate their way through our local health services and includes an explanation of what to expect at each service. The handbook has been printed and distributed in Arabic, Dari, English and Swahili in 2014. The handbook has become available online in 2015. Contents are reviewed annually by eight partner organisations and supported by a local Trust.</p> <p>The Greater Shepparton Health and Wellbeing Advisory Committee (HWBAC) members consider vulnerable, disengaged and new refugees when developing an annual Health and Wellbeing Action Plan and considering health prevention models most suitable for our community. There are a number of targets that reflect the cultural diversity and challenges within our community. The expansion of the MILS to include immunisation was welcomed to promote the importance of eliminating the spread of preventable illnesses within all age cohorts.</p> <p>The focus of the GV Rural Health Career Day is to promote health career options and meet rising employment demands for our ageing population of 'baby boomers'. The annual career day enables over 150 secondary school students to explore health career options with local health professionals working in each related field to inform them of what to expect in a typical work day. Student feedback has confirmed that understanding the health careers has enabled students to make more informed subject choices in their final years, which greatly impacts on their potential tertiary opportunities. In 2015 the inclusion of students from ASHE and Sirius College expanded our coverage to both the aboriginal and Turkish population groups.</p>

<p>Create greater understanding of the important role of police among the CALD community.</p>	<p>Working in partnership with Victoria Police Multicultural Liaison Officer to achieve an annual 80% attendance at cultural events.</p>	<p>Victoria Police have now appointed a full time Multicultural Liaison Officer (MLO). The MLO is regularly involved in multicultural events throughout the Greater Shepparton, organises inclusive sporting activities, attends meetings and speaks at information sessions.</p> <p>The MLO organised a soccer event for the 2014 St George's Rd where we brought all emergency services together to play soccer with the community, this broke down barriers. Sport is an unbiased and widespread activity throughout the world, where language is not an issue. Rules are generally the same throughout the world and having people of authority or in uniform, that can be confronting in many countries, interact with communities in a fun way helps to break many barriers down and work towards a mutual trust.</p> <p>The police have a regular Friday segment on community radio 'The Beat', Council's Cultural Development Officer has been a guest on the program with the Manager of Ethnic Council of Shepparton & District.</p> <p>Victoria Police was a member of the panel for the Respecting Difference Forum. The forum discussed experiences of discrimination, provided factual information to address these concerns and informed the community of the proposed changes to the Racial Discrimination Act.</p> <p>The MLO and other Victoria Police Officers has exceeded the 80% attendance at cultural events and would be closer to 95%.</p>
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Greater Shepparton City Council is committed to building local leadership within the CALD community and supporting other initiatives that develop positive perceptions of diversity		
Action	Measure	Actioned
As part of the review of the Communications Strategy for Council, implement initiatives that promote the positive benefits of cultural diversity to the broader community.	<p>Communications Strategy renewed.</p> <p>Positive media stories exceed negative in local media.</p>	<p>Council has continued to work with local media and service providers to highlight positive stories of our community and events. Within the last 18 months there has been a number of positive stories over a number of mediums including the Shepparton News, The Advisor, Win TV, Weeknights (TV News), ABC Radio, One FM Radio and included stories around Refugee Week events, Cultural Diversity Week and Harmony Day events and the Respecting Difference Forum</p> <p>A great example of this is when GSCC partnered with Greater Shepparton Women's Charter Alliance Advisory Committee for a Refugee Week event, where we showed the movie 'The Good Lie'. An inspiring story of the Lost Sudan Boys, where more than 20,000 children of Sudan made the journey from Sudan to find safety. The event made the front page of the Shepparton News as well as a full page story on page 4 about Thon Thon, a local Sudanese boy who was a lost boy, personal journey.</p>
Develop a leadership/mentoring program for CALD communities and upon completion support participants in applying for Council positions currently advertised.	Leadership/mentoring program developed for CALD community.	<p>Greater Shepparton City Council's Community Leadership Program (CLP) is run by Council and runs from May to November. The CLP was a successful pilot project in 2014 and Council agreed to fund it for a further 3 years. The program is aimed to develop active and engaged community members within the Greater Shepparton municipality who wish to increase their leadership potential and influence within the community from a grass roots level. Each participant is paired with a Mentor to assist them throughout the program. The program was promoted to multicultural communities through the Cultural Developments Officer's networks and has received a number of multicultural participants.</p> <p>One of the CLP groups decided on a project to showcase Greater Shepparton's diversity and came up with the 'People of the Goulburn Valley' mural which consists of 26 photos of different cultures within our area and now hangs in Greater Shepparton City Council's foyer.</p>
Increase the diversity of Council staff by developing a culturally appropriate	Recruitment policy developed.	Greater Shepparton City Council have adopted the Recruitment and Selection CEO Directive that outlines how Council ensures that people appointed are the most suitably qualified and experienced to ensure high quality services are provided throughout the community. The recruitment and

recruitment policy (linked to Human Resources policy in development).		<p>selection process is based on merit and conducted free of discrimination.</p> <p>Council's uniform policy is currently being reviewed and consideration has been taken into account for any cultural dress requirements.</p>
Develop CALD communities' capacity to apply for funding from governments bodies.	Grant training provided to CALD community annually.	Council's Grants Officer and Cultural Development Officer have been working with a number of multicultural communities to understand the process of applying for Council's grants. This work has seen a rise in the number of grants going to local multicultural organises.
Explore opportunities to assist communities in the establishment of Social Enterprises to support the concept of cultural precincts through entrepreneurship.	Grant opportunities explored and an appropriate social enterprise model developed for submission where possible.	Further investigations are still being undertaken regarding the specific need of Greater Shepparton's multicultural communities to establish, operate and maintain successful businesses. Once information has been received from communities about what opportunities can be addressed for their specific needs for social enterprises and small business Council will be able to organised appropriate information sharing that will embrace cultural needs.

Council will celebrate our cultural diversity in cultural and mainstream events within the region. We will actively acknowledge the real and positive influence, past and present, migrants have made to our region.

Action	Measure	Actioned
Council publications represent, recognise, and celebrate our diverse society.	Imagery used in all Council plans will represent the regions cultural diversity.	Council had established a substantial imagery library that is representative of Greater Shepparton's community from workshop, forums and events and also for promotional items. The collection is available for all of Council to use with the correct permissions
Create greater cross cultural representation and participation in community events to increase social inclusiveness and cohesion.	<p>Mainstream events including Australia Day, Anzac Day, Queens Gardens markets, Unity Cup and Mayoral Ball have cultural diversity representation in programs. These events are advertised to CALD communities through emailing flyers to CALD service providers.</p> <p>Cultural events such as Festival of Lights and Ramadan are promoted to mainstream community to welcome</p>	<p>The Cultural Development Officer regularly advises networks about events and activities currently running in the area.</p> <p>Greater Shepparton's two major Multicultural festivals each year are advertised to the community through networks, flyers, TV, newspapers, radio and word of mouth. Both events are well attended by both mainstream and multicultural communities.</p> <p>Greater Shepparton City Council partnered with Shepparton Buddhist community and Ethnic Council to put together an event to celebrate Wesak. This event was an opportunity for anybody and everybody a chance to celebrate the day and learn more about Buddhism.</p>

	participation.	
Develop a Council calendar that identifies cultural celebrations throughout the year e.g. Ramadan, Chinese New Year, Festival of Lights.	Council Cultural Calendar developed and circulated.	In 2014 and 2015 a calendar containing cultural and religious significant days was developed. Each year 12 significant days are showcased, one each month. Every year Council reviews the calendar to update ensuring the calendar is reflective of Greater Shepparton's community. Council works with local communities to try and make sure it has a local flavour and also giving the opportunity to for communities to get involved and enjoy sharing their culture with other members of our great community
Support cultural festivals throughout the year to promote cultural celebration and harmony.	Council participation in: Harmony Day Cultural Diversity Week Refugee Week Emerge Festival CALD Ladies Pampering Day	Council supported, promoted, organised and/or attended cultural festivals held throughout the year. Some of the celebration included Harmony Day, Cultural Diversity Week, Refugee Week, Emerge festival, Citizenship Ceremonies, Wesak, multicultural soccer match, #illridewithyou - Candlelight Vigil, Emerge and St George's Rd Festival.
Work with youth agencies to promote greater inclusion of CALD young people in events and committees to showcase and share their culture.	Greater numbers of CALD young people involved in community events and consultation processes.	Word and Mouth, The Bridge and Headspace have joined with Council on a number events including Emerge and St George's Rd Food Festival and events throughout Refugee Week and Cultural Diversity Week. These were great ways to introduce their services to CALD young people and explain ways that they would be able to volunteer.
Develop opportunities for citizenship ceremonies to be celebratory, public events for	Ensure two citizenship ceremonies are	Council continues to conduct bi-monthly citizenship ceremonies. Australia Day is the main themed event for the year. Themes for future ceremonies will continue to be investigated.

educational and acknowledgement purposes.	conducted each year that are open to the broader public (including schools) and have a celebratory theme.	
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Council will advocate for the improvement of settlement services for CALD communities. Council will also play an active role promoting positive opinions of CALD communities, including working to combat prejudices and race based discrimination.

Action	Measure	Actioned
Proactively work with key industries to reduce race-based discrimination in policy and practice.	Working partnership with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Retail organisations - Education providers - Sporting bodies and - Real estate agents - Media organisations to develop policy and practice approaches to reduce race based discrimination.	Greater Shepparton City Council provided evidence-based training for reducing race-based discrimination to volunteer and volunteer managers and a second session for local organisations. Greater Shepparton City Council resigned on to the Racism. It Stops With Me campaign. The objectives of the campaign is to ensure more Australians recognise that racism is unacceptable in our community, give more Australians at an individual and organisational level the tools and resources to take practical action against racism and empower individuals and organisation to prevent and respond effectively to racism where it may happen. These objectives are meet by promoting the campaign logo, promoting and distributing information about the campaign and material through our networks and distributing information and material via social media. Council's Cultural Development Officer has worked with Goulburn Murray AFL to provide information for packs to go to sporting clubs around cyber bullying and respecting racial and religious difference
Encourage the regions Community Centres to promote their facilities to the CALD communities.	MOU and funding agreements with Community Centres outlines shared agreement to promote use of the facilities by the CALD community.	Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) were signed in June 2015 by the local Neighbourhood Houses for the next three years. The MOU outlined the requirements for funding and included a focus on providing opportunities that promote an active, accessible, and inclusive community that provides social, economic, educational, sporting, recreational and cultural opportunities for families and individuals to ensure they feel connected, safe and supported within the community. South Shepparton Community Centre offer conversational classes twice a week on a Tuesday and Thursday for those who would like to learn English words and phrases or practice thier English

		speaking skills. The classes a friendly and informal which caters for all levels of language South Shepparton Community Centre has also partnered with Council for the 2014 and 2015 Refugee Week Launches. They have provided information of their services and also highlighted their conversational classes. They also bring clients with them to celebrate the day.
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Greater Shepparton City Council will work towards ensuring our services are culturally appropriate and continue to address the specific cultural needs of our CALD communities.

Action	Measure	Actioned
Introduce elements of cultural diversity into the Council foyer to create a more reflective and welcoming environment.	Cultural diversity is represented in imagery within the Council foyer.	The signed Refugee Welcome Zone Declaration is now a permanent document that is hung in the Council Foyer. Throughout Refugee Week we had two Refugee Week paintings hung in the foyer. They were replaced after Refugee Week with one of the Greater Shepparton City Council's Community Leadership Programs project 'People of the Goulburn Valley'. The project involved taking photos of people from of an array of cultures within the Greater Shepparton region which was then printed as a mural. The aim of the project was to show an example of how a multicultural society can live and work together in harmony and the benefits to our region.
Increase Council staff knowledge and skills in liaising with CALD clients by providing cross cultural training.	80% front line staff are trained in cultural awareness.	Council continues to include the Localities Embracing and Accepting Diversity (LEAD) training in its compulsory online training for new employees. The LEAD training is evidence-based, innovative and interactive training designed to increase and improve participants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understating of rights and responsibilities under the equal opportunity law • Capacity to address race-based discrimination and support diversity in the course of everyday roles.
Develop a multi faith/contemplation room within the Welsford Street and Doyles Road offices for staff and visitors.	Faith spaces are created in Welsford St and Doyles Rd that are private and culturally appropriate.	Council launched its Multifaith Prayer and Contemplation Room at Welsford St officers in March 2014. This is room that has been set aside for religious, spiritual and reflective thought for Council employees, consultants and visitors. A CEO Directive was adopted and People Performance manages the booking system.

<p>Create opportunities for CALD communities to participate in sport.</p>	<p>Support the Sports Without Borders Program and LEAD Project. Conduct annual information sessions on the projects.</p>	<p>Council partnered with AFL Goulburn Murray and Victoria Police and other organisations in inviting the multicultural communities to travel to the MCG and watch an AFL match. The day allowed that communities to gain some exposure to Australian football whilst also familiarising themselves with key agencies in the community.</p> <p>Council supported the Victorian Police who organised a game of soccer between multicultural communities and police officers. The success of this event led to sporting activities being a part of the activities at the St George's Rd Food Festival in both 2014 and 2015 and incorporated cricket, soccer and AFL. Other Emergency Services such as the CFA, Search and Rescue and Paramedics also got involved.</p>
<p>Build on existing culturally appropriate library services</p>	<p>Hold two bilingual story times yearly and develop a young women's engagement program.</p>	<p>Goulburn Valley Region Library currently offers rhyme and story times that are suitable for all cultures. They have specifically themed activities including craft throughout Refugee Week, Chinese New Year, etc. Bi-lingual story times are held through specific weeks. Sessions are provided to the CALD community that incorporate a library tour, membership, access to the library, how to ask for a book, how to borrow a book and sharing spaces. The library also provide assistance for getting a licence, downloading immigration forms, finding a job and information about English classes. The Library has also partnered with Council for Refugee Week, Cultural Diversity Week as well as being involved with Kidsfest.</p>