



# Minutes Multicultural Committee

16 February 2022

## Meeting details

<b>Date of meeting</b>	Wednesday, 16 February 2022
<b>Time</b>	6.00-7.30pm
<b>Venue</b>	Online
<b>Chair/Facilitator</b>	Cr Fiona Mitsinkos
<b>Minutes</b>	Lisa King

## Acknowledgement of the Traditional Custodians

“Our meeting is being held on the Traditional Land of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people and, on behalf of Banyule City Council, I wish to acknowledge them as the Traditional Custodians. I would also like to pay my respects to the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Elders, past, present and emerging, and to acknowledge other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Elders joining us today.”

## Inclusive Banyule Statement

“Our community is made up of diverse cultures, beliefs, abilities, bodies, sexualities, ages and genders. We are committed to access, equity, participation and rights for everyone: principles which empower, foster harmony and increase the wellbeing of an inclusive community.”

## Attendee

<b>Attendee name</b>	<b>Affiliation/Organisation</b>
Ginger Jiang	Community member
Jeyarajah Ramanathan	Community member
Linda Liwewe	Community member
Susan Zhou	Community member
Suzanne Crellin	Olympic Adult Education
Cr Fiona Mitsinikos	Banyule City Council Councillor
Leanne Horvath	Acting Manager, Health Aged & Community Planning
Lisa King	Community & Social Planner

## Apologies

<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation/Organisation</b>
Alaa Elzokm	Heidelberg Mosque
Louisa Ong	Community member
Baljit Singh	Community member
Albert Fatileh	Victoria Police
Ansam Sadik	Victoria Police

# Items

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## 1. Introduction

Cr Mitsinikos welcomed members of the Multicultural Committee back for the first meeting of 2022. The Acknowledgement to Country and Diversity Statement were read.

## 2. Multicultural Plan

Issue priority setting survey results were presented to the committee. To date, 13 issues were identified through consultations with the committee and stakeholders and the review of existing data and evidence. The top 6 priorities as voted by the Committee were:

1. Social inclusion
2. Employment
3. Racism and discrimination
4. Community safety
5. Mental health
6. Housing

### Discussion

The committee expressed they were happy to see there was a consensus around social inclusion as a priority area. A detailed summary of the discussion can be found in Multicultural Committee – Social Inclusion Summary – Feb 2022 Doc (attached).

## 3. Calendar of religious and cultural days of significance

A draft calendar (attached) was presented to the Committee for feedback.

The Committee was asked if the calendar reflects the days of religious and cultural significance celebrated by the Banyule community. The committee was asked to provide feedback on how it could be strengthened.

### Discussion

The Committee discussed the importance of consulting with the community to get feedback on this calendar and which days should be celebrated/acknowledged.

### Action

Lisa King to check which dates are included in the Banyule Calendar

Lisa King to investigate days which celebrate days of independence from colonisation for different African countries

## 4. Harmony Week

Following a discussion regarding recognising Harmony Week or Cultural Diversity Week, the Committee felt that there is stronger recognition and alignment with Harmony Week. Therefore, Council will recognise Harmony Week, 21-27 March 2022.

The theme for Harmony Week is “everyone belongs”. Harmony Week celebrates Australia’s cultural diversity. It’s about inclusiveness, respect and a sense of belonging for everyone.

### Discussion

Harmony Week 2022

Harmony Week will be acknowledged by Council through a series of social media posts where community members share stories. Members of Banyule’s multicultural community will be invited to submit a short story

and photo which will be published during Harmony Week. The purpose of these stories is to learn about people who live in Banyule and breakdown stereotypes that may exist.

This project will act as a pilot for a possible larger story telling project which could be broadened to include story telling and images of different members of Banyule's community.

#### Harmony Event

Members of the Committee expressed interest in celebrating inclusion and diversity through an event. This could include food, art, music and performance. The "Many Faces of Banyule Festival" was proposed. A working group of committee members could work together to plan the event for later 2022.

## 5. Advocacy

Cr Mitsinikos held a discussion around current policies affecting refugees and asylum seekers in Australia. Cr Mitsinikos discussed that she attended the Back Your Neighbour Federal Election Campaign Launch hosted by Local Government Mayoral Taskforce Supporting People Seeking Asylum. Banyule City Council is a member of this taskforce.

Cr Mitsinikos explained that she will be attending the next Montmorency Asylum Seeker Support Group meeting on 21 Feb to learn more about what can be done to support.

Cr Mitsinikos expressed her commitment to learning and understanding more about what Council can do to support and advocate for refugees and asylum seekers.

#### Action

Lisa King to engage with members of the Committee who have a lived experience as a refugee or asylum seeker to help drive this conversation

Lisa King to investigate inviting a guest speaker to attend the next Multicultural Committee. Suggestion to contact Greta Gillies who is an advocate and has been active in raising awareness of refugees and asylum seekers held at the Park Hotel

Lisa King to include the link to the Banyule City Council's 2021 Refugee Week online event

[This is home: A Refugee Story](#)

## 6. Grants

The announcement for the inclusion grants has been paused, an update will be provided as soon as possible.

## 7. AOB

None.

## 8. Close and date of next meeting

Next meeting: Wednesday, 20 April 2022