



Minutes Multicultural Committee

17 April 2024

Meeting details

Date of meeting	Wednesday, 17 April 2024
Time	6.00 pm – 7.30 pm
Venue	Clara Southern Room – Level 1 Ivanhoe Library and Cultural Hub
Chair/Facilitator	Cr Peter Castaldo
Minutes	Lisa King

Acknowledgement of the Traditional Custodians

“Banyule City Council is proud to acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people as Traditional Custodians of the land and we pay respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, past, present and emerging, who have resided in the area and have been an integral part of the region’s history.”

Diversity 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

Attendee name	Affiliation/Organisation
Cr Peter Castaldo	Banyule City Council
Cr Fiona Mitsinikos	Banyule City Council
Jeyarajah (Raj) Ramanathan	Community member
Louisa Ong	Community member
Martha Perilla Gomez	Community member
Pavithra Manivannan	Community member
Jerome (Jerry) Winston	Community member/Banyule Interfaith Network
Ansum Sadik	Victoria Police

Apologies

Name	Affiliation/Organisation
Ginger (Lan) Jiang	Community member
Samira Liban	Community member
Rekah Colaco	Community member
Alaa Elzokm	Elsedeaq Heidelberg Mosque
Albert Fatileh	Victoria Police
Bevan Toerien	Spectrum

Guest Speaker

Name	Affiliation/Organisation
Dr Franka Vaughan	Victoria University

Council Staff

Name	Affiliation/Organisation
Laura Cattapan	Acting Manager Resilient & Connected Communities
Lisa King	Community and Social Planner
Lee Hannah	Project Officer - Library of Things

Items

1. Introduction 6.00 pm – 6.10pm – Cr Peter Castaldo

Acknowledgement of traditional custodians

Diversity Statement

Due to attendance, a quorum was not reached for this meeting.

The committee farewelled Melina Linardatos and thanked her for her time and contribution on the Multicultural Committee.

The committee acknowledged the days of cultural and religious significance since the last meeting:

Zero Discrimination Day – 1 March

Celebrates the right of everyone to live a full and productive life—and live it with dignity.

Ramadan – 9 March

Ramadan is observed by Muslims worldwide as a month of fasting, prayer, reflection and community.

Holi – 25 March

Holi is known as the Festival of Colours and signifies the triumph of good over evil.

Easter – 29 March – 1 April

A principal holiday of Christianity- marks the Resurrection of Jesus.

Eid al Fitr – 10 April

Festival of breaking the fast at the end of Ramadan.

2. Minutes from previous meeting– Cr Peter Castaldo

Agenda Item	Action Arising	Progress
Understanding racism research project	Follow up opportunity for Victoria University to present at the April committee meeting	Presentation during meeting
Information sharing	Provide updates to committee regarding Council's position on the Palestine Israeli conflict	Raised as a General Business Item and read by Cr Melican on Monday 18 March 2024. A copy of the full statement has been included in the meeting minutes for 18 March 2024. See attachment for full statement.

Action:

Lisa King to attach letters to Prime Minister. Please note, the letter is shared as information for the committee members and should not be disseminated any further without prior consent.

3. Presentation – 6.15 pm – 6.30 pm – Dr Franka Vaughan, Victoria University

Dr Vaughan presented high-level results from the Understanding reporting barriers and support needs of people experiencing racism' research project.

Franka Vaughan is African living and working on unceded lands of the Kulin Nation. She is a Researcher for the Victoria University-led anti-racism project: 'Understanding reporting barriers and support needs of those experiencing racism'. Franka is also a Teaching Specialist in the School of Social and Political Sciences at the University of Melbourne. Her research focuses on race relations in settler states, global histories of race and colonialism, migration and diaspora and antiracism praxis in research and curriculum.

Discussion

- The research looked into barriers and supports needs for those experiencing racism. Wanted to see how the data can help improve existing reporting pathways and improve the anti-racism support services.
- Banyule hosted 4 community forums and collected 56 surveys.
- Most respondents had experienced racism in the last 12 months. In the research, racism was defined broadly including religion, vilification and exclusion.
- In Banyule, the majority of respondents reported experiencing racism at shopping centres and on public transport, this differs from other Local Government Areas where in workplaces was the most common response.
- In Banyule, respondents reported experiencing everyday racism, microaggression and the feeling of being looked down upon.
- Most people who have not experiences racism think they would report it. Only a minority of those who have experienced racism have reported. Therefore not reporting included feeling like nothing would change, no proof and not being taken seriously.
- Respondents reported they would prefer to report incidents in person and others just wanted to do it online. The reason for reporting was to raise awareness.

- People report looking for support and are looking for cultural safety, sensitivity.
- The Victorian Human Rights Commission has a strong focus on conflict mediation, this can be re-traumatising within an anti-racism intervention. Discussion item.

- A lot of people are unaware that supports existed.

Next Steps:

- Victoria University want to work with community networks and find training opportunities to build the capacity of local government staff.
- Investigate ways to work with public transport providers and shopping centres to identify interventions to reduce racism.
- Consider establishing a community-led anti-racism support and advocacy network.
- A lot of people were aware of reporting experiences of racism to Victoria Police but felt that their reports were not taken seriously. Investigate how we can equip community to fill in the reporting gaps.

Questions from the Committee:

- The committee was curious if the survey also collected information about the respondent i.e., age, how long they have been in Australia and whether this is different in findings and languages spoken at home. Dr Franka explained that demographic information was captured. A large amount of data has been captured and the Victoria University team are currently collating reports which will be made available.
- Experiences of racism in schools was captured through the focus group discussion. The older generation reported that things are better now but still microaggressions are still occurring. Racism in schools was one of the main areas where experiences of racism was noted.

4. Consultation – 6.30 pm-6.45 pm – Lee Hannah, Project officer – Library of Things

The Community Resilience and Health team are currently researching a 'Library of Things' model for the Banyule community. A Library of Things is a place you can go to borrow different types of items you may not use frequently.

Discussion

The committee were invited to comment on items they would be interested in borrowing from the library, other than books.

- Decorations – Christmas, Halloween etc
- Slow cooker – try one out before buying one
- Camping equipment
- Tools
- Victorian Aboriginal works of art and display in home for set periods of time – allow people access to rotating arts
- Seeing library running workshops – during COVID library use increased because the libraries introduced new things and products
- Bikes and bike parts
- Subscriptions to software programs
- Movie projectors

- Large pots that can be used for cooking at big events and celebrations
- Skiing equipment
- A 'people' library – examples exist in other places where you 'borrow' a person to learn more about their cultural, background, life. This could also include 'borrow a grandparent' for people in Australia who do not have grandparents close by.

Comments from the Committee:

- The Banyule Toy Library only catered for young children; a committee member thought it would be great to have options for older children.
- Local Scout groups own a lot of equipment that sits unused most of the time. Consider opportunity to partner with these organisation and share access to equipment. Consider challenges around how equipment is maintained.
- How do you consider and plan for damage/wear and tear to items borrowed. Does borrowing items incur a fee?
- Will the library allow for borrowing of items used for business to make money.

Action

Cr Castaldo encouraged members of the committee to continue to provide ideas for the Library of Little things to Lisa via email.

5. Inclusive Banyule – 6.45 pm – 7.15pm – Lisa King

Action 2.3 We will review and update the information on Council's website to ensure it is relevant and useful for multicultural communities.

Council's Multicultural and refugee and asylum seeker webpages will be updated as per an action within Inclusive Banyule. The committee feedback will be incorporated into the plan.

Action

Lisa King will present the proposed wireframe of the website to be shared with the Committee during the June meeting.

Action 2.6 We will promote participation in cultural-based older adults groups in Banyule.

Research into the current state of older adults groups in Banyule with specific emphasis on cultural-based groups has been undertaken.

Council continues to identify barriers and opportunities to support participation in groups.

Action

Lisa King will present the report with the committee during the June meeting.

Action 2.7 We will participate in a research project with Victoria University to understand reporting barriers and support needs of people experiencing racism.

Preliminary data report for Banyule has been received and the full data report will be made publicly available in July 2024.

Action 2.9 We will continue to elevate visibility and awareness of multicultural communities through events, advocacy and days of celebration.

Harmony Day

Was held on Saturday 20 April 2024 at the Ivanhoe Library and Cultural Hub. Updates to follow.

Action

Lisa King to speak to Council's Communications team regarding search navigation not linking directly to the Harmony Day event.

Lisa King to speak to VicPol for their inclusion in future events.

Refugee Week – Sunday 16 June – Saturday 22 June 2024

Discussion on ideas to acknowledge Refugee Week 2024.

See Briefing Paper for summary of results.

Committee will be presented with the report and invited to share further feedback.

6. Any other business – 7.15 pm – Cr Castaldo

Cr Castaldo raised recent media reports regarding drownings around Australia and what Council can do to improve access to learn to swim programs for members of Banyule multicultural committee.

Action

Lisa King to discuss this topic with Council's Sports and Recreation team and how this can be captured in the new plan.

7. Information share for Committee members 7.15 pm – 7.30 pm - All

The Committee discussed current community feelings following the incident in Sydney and how that impacts and creates tensions in local communities.

The Committee acknowledged that April 14 was Sri Lankan New Year. Puthandu, also known as Tamil New Year, is the first day of the year on the Tamil calendar and is traditionally celebrated as a festival by Tamil People across the world.

Action

Lisa King to discuss with relevant teams to include Puthandu, Tamil New Year, to be added to Council's days of cultural and religious calendar.

2024 Banyule Volunteers Celebration – all invited

This year's event will be held on **Wednesday 22 May between 6.00 and 10.00 pm at The Great Hall, The Centre Ivanhoe.**

Guests can enjoy a three-course meal with drinks and entertainment.

The evening will be hosted by comedian Monica Dullard with music provided by "The Jack and Jordan Band" and the Heidelberg Choral Society.

Action

Committee members interested in attending please contact Lisa King who will book on your behalf with any dietary requirements and any access needs.

8. Close and date of next meeting

- 19 June 2024
- 21 August 2024