INTERCULTURAL PLAN 2017–2021

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MELTON CITY COUNCIL

CITY OF

MELTON

Contents

**Acknowledgement of the
people of the Kulin Nation**

Melton City Council acknowledges that
the municipality is sited on land with a
human history that began with the
Aboriginal communities of the Kulin Nation.
Council pays its respects to the Kulin
Nation peoples and their Elders and
descendants past and present.

Foreword from the Mayor

It is with great pleasure that I present this, Melton City Council's Intercultural Plan 2017-21. The plan outlines Council's commitment and the activities we will undertake over the next four years, in order to contribute to, and foster, a harmonious, welcoming community where everyone belongs.

The City of Melton is proudly diverse, speaking many languages, celebrating many and varied festivals, and enjoying the world's cuisines in local homes and restaurants. As our community grows, we welcome new groups from around Australia, and the globe. These groups bring skills and aspirations that contribute to our community moving forward with pride into the future.

Council itself represents the richness of cultural diversity within the City of Melton, with many Councillors, including myself, proudly embracing our family origins in Greece, Italy, Scotland, and other countries around the world. We hope to lead by example in demonstrating our commitment that all members of our community, regardless of their national origin, their preferred language, or their cultural heritage, are encouraged and able to participate fully in all levels and all layers of community life.

Melton City Council is proud of its achievements to date in embracing, celebrating, and encouraging diversity in our community, providing successful programs, events and services for all.

In a rapidly changing world however, it is increasingly important that we come together as a community and celebrate each others' cultures. The Intercultural Plan embraces themes that focus on embracing cultural diversity, strengthening community; enhancing organisational responsiveness, and supporting leadership and advocacy, enabling us to collectively build on the strengths of individuals and community groups from all backgrounds, and ensure our community grows in its understanding and recognition of cultural diversity and its benefits.

There is beauty and strength in diversity; and it is our differences make us robust, vibrant and stronger as a whole. Council looks forward to working in partnership with each of the unique cultural groups that call our City home to deliver the outcomes of this plan and work together to create relationships and a supportive environment where everyone feels welcome and encouraged to share their own cultural experiences with others in the community.

Sophie Ramsey
Mayor, Melton City Council

Executive Summary

Melton City Council has actively promoted and celebrated our community's cultural diversity for many years and is continually striving to improve awareness and understanding of the economic, educational, social and cultural benefits of diversity and to mitigate the effects of discrimination and cultural isolation. This Intercultural Plan forms the basis of Melton City Council's commitment and strategy to ensure that our community is best served to meet its diverse needs, and enable the meaningful participation of all its members.

Multiculturalism is a term which describes the cultural and ethnic diversity of contemporary Australia which is, and will remain, a multicultural society.

'Intercultural' doesn't only mean recognising and valuing diversity. It focuses on the relationships between different groups – working towards a community where we can freely and safely express ourselves and share our cultures.

To deliver the intercultural plan and ensure alignment of outcomes, the plan has four key themes. These themes and their associated initiatives emerged following consultation with community and key stakeholder agencies, and are aligned with the principles of promoting social cohesion through intercultural practice. The four themes guide the associated Action Plan, and complement each other to provide a cohesive approach in achieving a harmonious and inclusive community.

The Intercultural Plan themes are:

Embrace Cultural Diversity

The key to an inclusive and healthy society is how individuals feel about belonging to their community. In embracing and celebrating cultural diversity, we work towards achieving a sense of belonging for people from all cultural and religious backgrounds, allowing all members to feel a connection and sense of place.

Strengthen Community Participation

With genuine community participation, people can achieve mutually beneficial relationships and feel empowered to take ownership and be involved in decision-making that affects their lives. It increases people's access to resources and enhances individual and communal dignity and wellbeing.

Enhance Organisational Responsiveness

Melton City Council is committed to supporting diverse communities to safely express and maintain their cultural identity. Council ensures responsiveness to the growing needs of its diverse community by building on existing policies and programs and developing the cultural competency of the organisation.

Support Leadership and Advocacy

Supporting leadership and advocacy allows Council and the community to together achieve better outcomes for people from all backgrounds. Through listening to the needs and desires of groups, involving them in the design and delivery of services, and supporting or advocating on their behalf, empowers groups to achieve their goals and extend their capacity and influence.

These collectively build on the strengths and self-determination of individuals and community groups from all backgrounds, to collectively ensure that our community grows in its understanding and recognition of cultural diversity and its benefits.

An associated Action Plan sets out specific and measurable key actions to provide culturally responsive and inclusive service delivery, increase participation and access to services and resources, and build skills and capacity in the community.

Introduction

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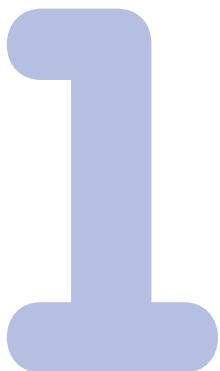
The City of Melton is one of the fastest growing municipalities in Australia. Between 2006 and 2011, the City's residential population growth was approximately 7 percent per annum, resulting in an additional 30,349 making our municipality their home. This was around five times that of Australian and Victoria's population growth for the same period.[1]

In 2016 the municipality's estimated population was 140,422 with an annual growth rate of 4 percent. The population in the City of Melton will continue to rapidly grow. By 2036, it is expected that the City will more than double to be in excess of 315,908 residents.

The municipality has a rich history of migration and cultural diversity, beginning with our Aboriginal heritage, and including migration over many decades from countries such as Malta, Italy and Macedonia. In recent years, our diversity has increased to include more than 30,000 migrants from over 130 nations. While our biggest overseas born population remains from the United Kingdom, the fastest increasing overseas-born communities are from India, Philippines, New Zealand and Vietnam.

Migrants and refugees, regardless of when and how they arrived, bring with them a rich array of cultures, languages, skills and experience that add important layers to the fabric of our community. Creating the framework for a harmonious community that recognises and values this diversity has significant social and economic benefits, and is a key commitment of Melton City Council.

Inclusive community participation is key to sustaining a strong and vibrant community, and ensuring that people of all faiths, cultures, languages and abilities are welcome and connected creates the framework for us to all contribute to our vision of a community that is prosperous and has opportunities for all.

At the same time, increased diversity through migration globally has raised anxieties about the emergence of divided communities with little sense of connection between settled groups and newcomers[2]. This reminds us of the need for increased focus on bridge-building initiatives to promote social cohesion between disconnected groups locally. To this end, Melton City Council's Culturally And Linguistically Diverse Advisory Committee (CALDAC), and award winning Community Partnership Program, among others, have already been effectively operating in this space for several years, however, additional activities included in this plan are required in order to ensure all members of our community feel welcome and safe.

Melton City Council has actively promoted and celebrated our community's cultural diversity for many years and is continually striving to improve awareness and understanding of the economic, educational, social and cultural benefits of diversity and to mitigate the effects of discrimination and cultural isolation. This Intercultural Plan forms the basis of Melton City Council's commitment and strategy to ensure that our community is best served to meet its diverse needs, and enable the meaningful participation of all its members.

[1] Melton City Council (2013), Council Plan 2013 - 2017

[2] European Foundation (2010) in Phillips, D., Athwal, B., Robinson, D., (2014) *Towards intercultural engagement: Building shared visions of neighbourhood and community in an era of new migration*

1.1
Aims of the Intercultural Plan

This Intercultural Plan contributes to Council's mission to support the growth, wellbeing and aspirations of our community through leadership, excellence and inclusion. It provides a roadmap for Council's work in the intercultural space.

The plan focuses on key actions to enhance Council's capacity to meet the needs and aspirations of people from diverse backgrounds, and stimulate social cohesion. It takes a multi-generational approach and links the needs of all generations by providing a safe and nurturing space for them to grow and contribute.

Fundamental to community wellbeing and inclusion, 'Social Cohesion' is determined by the levels of attachment and group identity, sense of belonging, participation, and shared vision. It requires shared universal values, mutual respect and common aspirations, and is not just an outcome, but rather a continuous process toward achieving social harmony[3].

According to the Scanlon Foundation's Mapping Social Cohesion Report 2016, key influences on this are:

> **Economic:** Levels of unemployment and poverty, income distribution, population mobility, health, life satisfaction and sense of security, and government responsiveness to issues of poverty and disadvantage.

> **Political:** Levels of political participation and social involvement, including the extent voluntarism, the development of social networks and trust that facilitate coordination and co-operation for mutual benefit.

> **Socio-cultural:** Levels of consensus on issues of local and national significance[4].

Building on Council's existing policies, plans and initiatives, the plan seeks to contribute to an inclusive community that embraces and values cultural diversity, celebrates our collective heritage, and promotes social cohesion through four key themes:

• Embrace Cultural Diversity

• Strengthen Community Participation

• Enhance Organisational Responsiveness

• Support Leadership and Advocacy

These collectively build on the strengths and self-determination of individuals and community groups from all backgrounds, to collectively ensure that our community grows in its understanding and recognition of cultural diversity and its benefits.

An associated Action Plan sets out specific and measurable key actions to provide culturally responsive and inclusive service delivery, increase participation and access to services and resources, and build skills and capacity in the community.

[3] Scanlon Foundation's Mapping Social Cohesion Report 2016

[4] ibid

What do we mean by 'Intercultural'?

2

The terms 'Intercultural' and 'Multicultural' sound very similar, but have different meanings and outcomes in the community.

Multiculturalism is a term which describes the cultural and ethnic diversity of contemporary Australia which is, and will remain, a multicultural society.

The Australian Government has identified the three dimensions of multicultural policy as:

- **cultural identity –** the right of all Australians, within carefully defined limits, to express and share their individual cultural heritage, including their language and religion

- **social justice –** the right of all Australians to equality of treatment and opportunity, and the removal of barriers of race, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, gender or place of birth and

- **economic efficiency –** the need to maintain, develop and utilise effectively the skills and talents of all Australians, regardless of background.[5]

Interculturalism adds a new layer by addressing the bi-directionality and mutuality needed in an authentic sharing of cultural contexts. This means that it recognises that all of us have a culture, we all have beliefs, and we all have a language. It is not only minority groups or recent arrivals who demonstrate rich cultural diversity – we all do. And when we interact with each other, we each share some of this diversity, both learning from the other person and also teaching them.

'Intercultural' doesn't only mean recognising and valuing diversity. It focuses on the relationships between different groups – working towards a community where we can freely and safely express ourselves and share our cultures.

> *"Interculturalism is the sharing and learning across cultures that promotes understanding, equality, harmony, and justice in a diverse society. With interculturalism, individuals learn from each other and engage in an ongoing exploration of the historical and cultural contexts that influence individual development. In an intercultural environment there are authentic and meaningful exchanges of information about each person's individual experiences that transform all involved."*
>
> **(Interculturalism: Addressing Diversity in Early Childhood Nov 2012).**

This plan applies intercultural principles and adopts an intercultural approach to working with communities focusing on enrichment and inclusion to promote social cohesion and removal of barriers. Council adopts the terms 'intercultural' and 'interculturalism' in our work to recognise that every person has a cultural background and that we are strengthened as a community when relationships are actively built between overseas born and Australian born Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.

[5] Department of Social Services (2014), Settlement and Multicultural Affairs

City of Melton Demographics

3

The City of Melton is one of the fastest growing municipalities in Australia. In 2016 its estimated population is 140,422 with an annual growth rate of 4%.[6]

The population projection indicates that by 2036 the City will have more than 315,908 residents, adding to the City's rich cultural diversity. The increase in population will bring with it additional needs as our City grows and changes to include new activity centres, more jobs, houses, industry and recreational facilities.

As suburbs develop, new residents will move into the area bringing with them the desire to express their cultural identity. Existing communities will grow and adapt to accommodate new interests and opportunities. This presents an ongoing opportunity for the City of Melton, and will allow us to continue into the future as an increasingly global community.

[6] Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2006 and 2011 (Usual residence data). Compiled and presented in profile.id by id, the population experts.

POPULATION GROWTH PREDICTION

52,029 — 2001

2016 — 140,422

2036 — 315,908
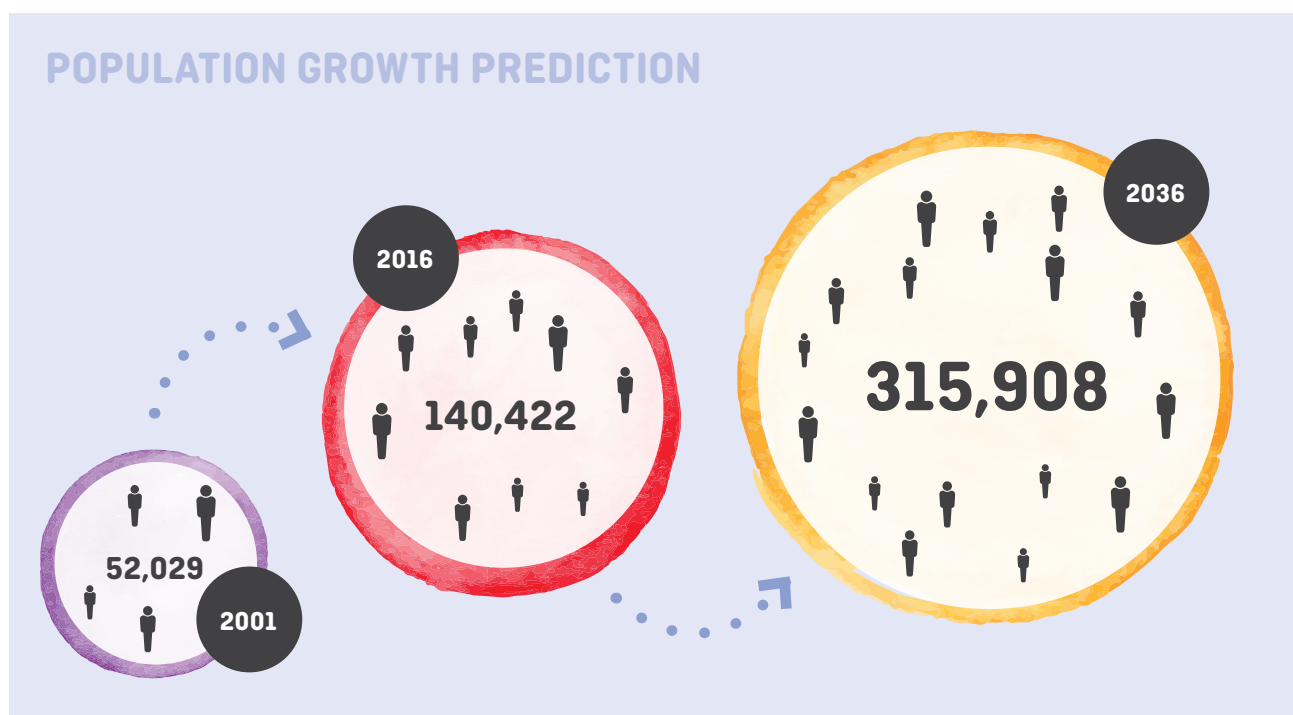
1.2
Country
of birth

According to the 2011 Australian Census, more than 28% of the City of Melton population (30,322 people) was born overseas. This represents many decades of migration to Melton from outside Australia, and also increasing migration from other parts of Victoria of people born overseas[7].

Melton has long been an attractive area for migrants, with a higher percentage of people from the Philippines, New Zealand, Malta, FYR of Macedonia and Croatia than Greater Melbourne[8].

BIRTHPLACE, 2011

Legend: City of Melton / Greater Melbourne

Y-axis: Country of birth (top 10 largest in 2011)
- United Kingdom
- India
- Philippines
- New Zealand
- Malta
- Vietnam
- Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
- Italy
- Sri Lanka
- Croatia

X-axis: % of the population (0 to 5)

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics
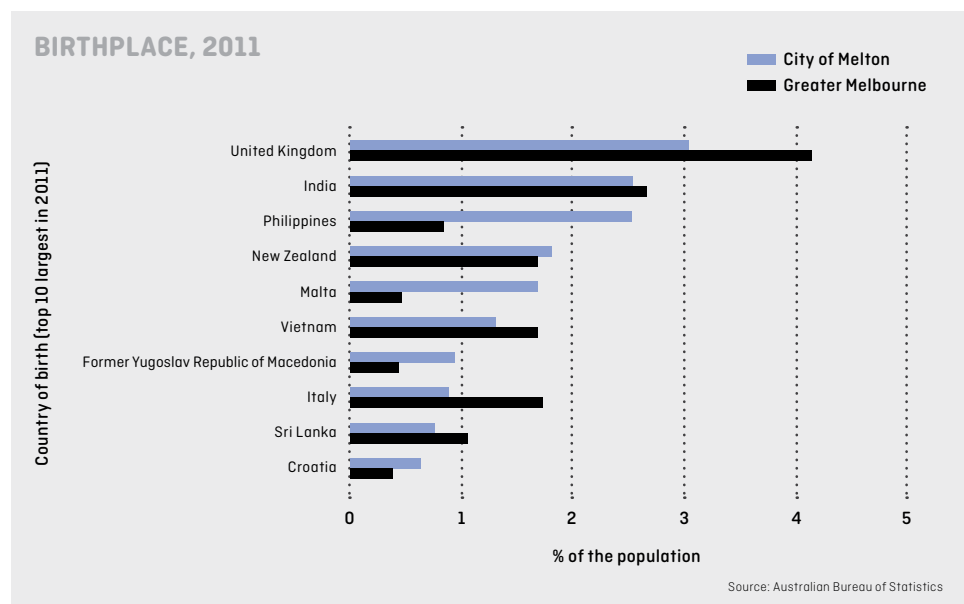
1.3
Emerging groups and settlement

Between 2006 and 2011, the number of people born overseas increased by 11,138 or 58.1 percent, and the number of people from a non-English speaking background increased by 9,526 or 64.7 percent in the City of Melton. The largest changes in birthplace countries of the population in this area between 2006 and 2011 were for those born in:

• India (+1,791 persons)

• Philippines (+1,191 persons)

• New Zealand (+1,001 persons)

• Vietnam (+742 persons)

In addition to these larger groups, a number of smaller, yet growing, communities are present in the municipality that require access to specialised language and/or health services. These include, but are not limited to, newly arrived migrants from Iraq and Sudan who have left conflict and now make the municipality their home. The Australian Government's commitment to provide an extra 12,000 humanitarian visas in response to the conflicts in Syria and Iraq may also involve settlement within the City of Melton. Settlement of different migrant streams involves different needs, with humanitarian migrants at increased risk of isolation, poverty and vilification, and typically requiring significant specialised local support services[9]. Melton City Council works closely with service providers to ensure access to healthcare for vulnerable groups, but increasing demand will require additional services.

Australian Government settlement data divides migrants into three broad streams:

> **Family**: those who are migrating to Australia to be with, or create a, family: usually partners, but also parents and children.

> **Humanitarian:** including refugees and trafficked people.

> **Skilled:** individuals who have been awarded their visas based on a 'points' system aligning individual skills with Australia's economic priorities.

Between 1 April 2010 to 31 March 2015, in the City of Melton there were 3,726 people settled in the Family stream, 603 in the Humanitarian stream, and 4,269 in the Skilled stream, with a total of 8,598 individuals[10,11]. This shows that the overwhelming majority of Melton's recent migrant community comes under the 'Skilled' or 'Family' categories.

[9] Australia s settlement services for refugees and migrants - E-Brief: Online Only issued 9 June 2006; updated 19 September 2006 Adrienne Millbank, Analysis and Policy Janet Phillips Catherine Bohm, Information/E-links Social Policy Group, http://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/Publications_Archive/archive/settlement

[10] Australian Government Department of Social Services, Settlement Reports: Local Government Areas by Migration Stream, 2015

[11] These numbers are limited in their accuracy, as they and do not include people who have transferred to other visa types, for example permanent residency, and rely on often outdated information such as reported addresses.

1.4
Languages spoken

In the City of Melton, 29% of residents (31,588 people) spoke a language other than English at home in 2011[12]. These include people who were born outside Australia, with 80% (24,259 people) of people born overseas speaking English as a second language. Many others who were born in Australia live in homes where another language is primarily spoken, reflecting the multigenerational nature of Melton's cultural diversity.

Between 2006 and 2011, the number of people who spoke a language other than English at home increased by 12,413 or 64.7%, and the number of people who spoke English only increased by 16,486 or 29.8%. The largest changes in the spoken languages of the population in the City of Melton between 2006 and 2011 were for those speaking:

• Vietnamese (+1,092 persons)

• Filipino/Tagalog (+1,074 persons)

• Arabic (+830 persons)

• Punjabi (+675 persons)[13]

This reflects a shift from more prevalent European languages in previous decades, particularly Maltese, Italian, Macedonian and Spanish[14].

English proficiency is an important indicator for a diverse community's ability to connect with one another without assistance. In the City of Melton, 27,797 people spoke a language other than English, and English well or very well in 2011. This is higher than the equivalent figure for Greater Melbourne. An additional 3,802 of people were able to speak another language in 2011, and reported difficulty speaking English[15].

The number of people who are able to speak English well or very well also increased significantly between 2006 and 2011, as demonstrated by the figure below.

This reflects a number of characteristics of the Melton community. Firstly there are many people who speak another language, yet have spent much or all of their lives in Australia and thus have had the opportunity to develop a high level of English literacy. Secondly, the migration pathways of our community are relevant, as the largest cohort arrive in Australia through the skilled migration program, which has an English language ability requirement. Although these figures are positive, providing access to English language classes for the 3,802 people who reported difficulty speaking the language is critical to enable their full participation in economic and social community life[16].
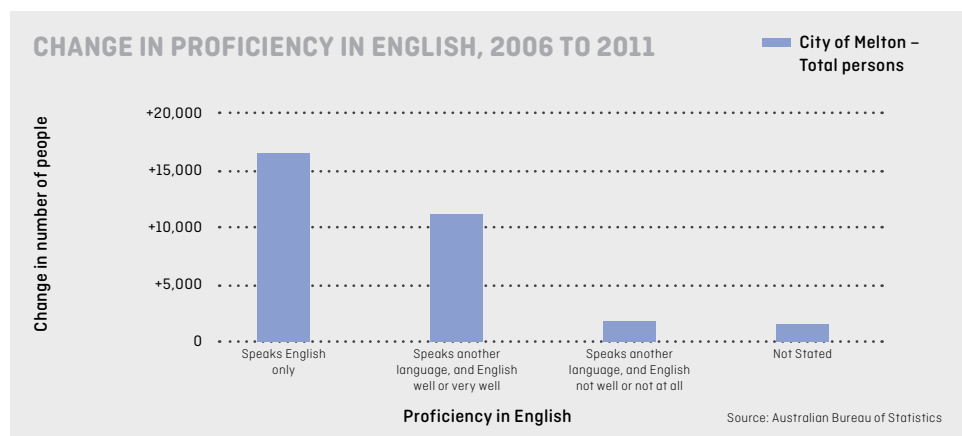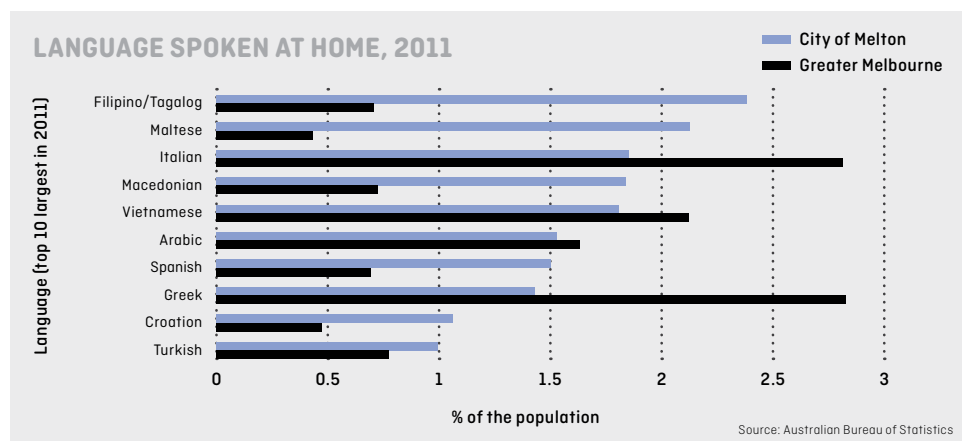
[12] ibid

[13] Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2006 and 2011 (Usual residence data). Compiled and presented in profile.id by id, the population experts.

[14] Ibid

[15] ibid

[16] Australia s settlement services for refugees and migrants E-Brief: Online Only issued 9 June 2006; updated 19 September 2006 Adrienne Millbank, Analysis and Policy Janet Phillips Catherine Bohm, Information/E-links Social Policy Group http://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/Publications_Archive/archive/settlement

LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME, 2011

City of Melton
Greater Melbourne

Language (top 10 largest in 2011): Filipino/Tagalog, Maltese, Italian, Macedonian, Vietnamese, Arabic, Spanish, Greek, Croation, Turkish

% of the population

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics

CHANGE IN PROFICIENCY IN ENGLISH, 2006 TO 2011

City of Melton – Total persons

Change in number of people

Proficiency in English: Speaks English only, Speaks another language, and English well or very well, Speaks another language, and English not well or not at all, Not Stated

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics

1.5
Religion

Christian religions were the largest collective religious group in 2011 with 45.9% (50,157 people). The largest increases between 2006 and 2011 were in Western Roman Catholic 36.7%(10,699 people), Islam 9.2%(1,893 people), Anglican 9.2% (1,744 people) and Buddhism 2.8% (1,489 people)[17]. Overall, 73.9 percent of the population nominated a religion, and 17.1 percent said they had no religion[18].

Religious adherence is a key factor in identity and culture, and increasing religious diversity can be challenging for any community. Melton City Council supports the Melton Interfaith Network, and is committed to promoting understanding, respect and harmony between religious groups locally.

1.6
Population forecast[19]

Based on the id. forecasts, strong migration gain to the City of Melton is expected throughout the 2016-2036 period. Substantial new housing opportunities across the City are expected to attract predominantly young couples, young and maturing families.

While it is difficult to predict global events and Australian Government policy that could impact migration flows from specific regions, most migration to the City of Melton currently comes from other parts of Victoria, and this trend should continue in the short term. It is also likely that this population growth will continue to bring with it increased cultural and religious diversity.

[17] Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2006 and 2011 (Usual residence data). Compiled and presented in profile.id by id, the population experts.

[18] Ibid

[19] Limitation and Review. Council acknowledges that the demographics section of this plan is based on Census data from 2011. It is a constantly changing space. We expect an increase in the number of people from diverse backgrounds making Melton their home in the new Census data to be released in 2017.

How the Plan was developed

4

1.7 Community and key stakeholder agencies consultation

To develop the Intercultural Plan, community members and key stakeholders were consulted, relevant literature was reviewed and Council's strategic directions were considered.

Melton City Council recognises that community participation and engagement are a vital part of local democracy. Consultations with community and key stakeholder agencies were held to give them a meaningful way to participate and contribute to the development of the plan.

Focus groups and individual interviews were the main ways information was collected. Where required, interpreters have been used to assist individuals and groups with limited English language skills.

Community and key stakeholder agencies consulted included local service providers, relevant state government bodies, local community and faith based networks and groups, community leaders and Council staff.

Themes covered during consultation included access and equity, community capacity, social cohesion, collaboration and service delivery.

Surveys were also completed by community members at the Melton City Council Engagement Expos, and two public workshops were held in Melton and Caroline Springs, for which interpreters were provided.

A review of current research and experience in the intercultural field was also conducted.

More details regarding community consultation can be found at *Appendix B*.

TIMELINE

APRIL 2016 · · · · **PLANNING AND CONSULTATION** · · · · **ANALYSIS AND LITERATURE REVIEW** · · · · **FINALISATION AND LAUNCH** · · · · **MAY 2017**

1.8
Policy
Context

1.8.1
International

Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (2001), UNESCO

Article 2 – From cultural diversity to cultural pluralism

In our increasingly diverse societies, it is essential to ensure harmonious interaction among people and groups with plural, varied and dynamic cultural identities as well as their willingness to live together. Policies for the inclusion and participation of all citizens are guarantees of social cohesion, the vitality of civil society and peace. Thus defined, cultural pluralism gives policy expression to the reality of cultural diversity. Indissociable from a democratic framework, cultural pluralism is conducive to cultural exchange and to the flourishing of creative capacities that sustain public life.

Article 3 – Cultural diversity as a factor in development

Cultural diversity widens the range of options open to everyone; it is one of the roots of development, understood not simply in terms of economic growth, but also as a means to achieve a more satisfactory intellectual, emotional, moral and spiritual existence.

Article 4 – Human rights as guarantees of cultural diversity

The defence of cultural diversity is an ethical imperative, inseparable from respect for human dignity. It implies a commitment to human rights and fundamental freedoms, in particular the rights of persons belonging to minorities and those of indigenous peoples. No one may invoke cultural diversity to infringe upon human rights guaranteed by international law, nor to limit their scope.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), United Nations

The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognises the inherent dignity of all members of the human family as the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.

Article 2 of the Declaration states that 'Everyone is entitled to all rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.'

1.8.2
National

Australian Human Rights Commission Act (1986), Parliament of Australia

Makes discrimination for reason of race unlawful.

Racial Discrimination Act (1975), Parliament of Australia

Enshrines equity in law, regardless of race, national or ethnic background.

The People of Australia – Australia's Multicultural Policy (2013), Commonwealth of Australia (Department of Social Services)

Commits the Australian government to respond to the needs of CALD communities.

Multicultural Access and Equity Policy (2015), Commonwealth of Australia (Department of Social Services)

Guides equitable access to government services.

National Anti-Racism Partnership and Strategy (2012), Australian Human Rights Commission

Aims to increase awareness and improve anti-racism practices.

Services for All: Promoting Access and Equity in Local Government (undated), Australian Local Government Association

Access and equity practice resource for local governments.

1.8.3
State

Multicultural Victoria Act (2011), Parliament of Victoria

A framework of cultural diversity principles

Victorian Charter of Rights and Responsibilities (2006), Parliament of Victoria

Provides a mechanism to measure actions and decisions made by an organisation.

Racial and Religious Tolerance Act (2001), Parliament of Victoria

Makes it illegal to vilify anyone on the grounds of race or religion.

Victorian Equal Opportunity Act (2010), Parliament of Victoria

Holistically protects people's rights to equal opportunities.

Victoria's Advantage: Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship Policy (2014), Victorian Government

A whole of government commitment to culturally diverse communities with details on objectives and commitments.

1.8.4
Local

MAV Statement of Commitment to Cultural Diversity (2012), Municipal Association Victoria

Outlines the commitment and support the MAV provides to local government actions to positively influencing cultural diversity.

Local Government Act (1989)

Outlines the role and responsibilities of Local Governments in Victoria.

Section 3C: Objectives of a Council

1) The primary objective of a Council is to endeavour to achieve the best outcomes for the local community having regard to the long term and cumulative effects of decisions.

2) In seeking to achieve its primary objective, a Council must have regard to the following facilitating objectives

   (e) to ensure that services and facilities provided by the Council are accessible and equitable.

Section 3D: What is the role of a Council?

1) The role of a Council includes

   a) acting as a representative government by taking into account the diverse needs of the local community in decision making;

   d) advocating the interests of the local community to other communities and governments;

   f) fostering community cohesion and encouraging active participation in civic life.'

Council Plan 2013–17

The Melton City Council Plan 2013-2017 outlines Council's commitment to a vibrant, diverse community.

Vision

A Proud Community Growing Together

Mission

Support the growth, wellbeing and aspirations of our community through leadership, excellence and inclusion.

Objective 3.5

Build an inclusive community that embraces and values cultural diversity and celebrates our collective heritage:

3.5.1   Celebrate diversity and generate awareness, understanding and appreciation of indigenous and other diverse communities through support, information, activities and networks.

3.5.2   Advocate to attract community service organisations that can coordinate service options for resident settlement and integration support.

3.5.3   Engage multicultural and faith leaders to enhance communication between cultural and linguistically diverse residents and community organisations.

3.5.4   Deliver programs and projects to increase community knowledge and appreciation of our collective heritage and development as a City.

Municipal Early Years Plan 2014–2017

Theme 5: Our Community

Outcome:

The City of Melton community is inclusive, connected and child friendly, providing opportunities for children and family to be active participants.

Strategies:

- Provide children with opportunities to value the diversity and significance of arts and cultural experiences.

- Create a sense of pride and build local community identity for children through the provision of events and celebrations.

- Support the provision of opportunities to learn about and celebrate the diversity of our community.

Youth Strategy 2014–2017

Theme: Engaging, Accessible and Youth Driven Services

2.4   Work in partnership with community groups to identify and address barriers to participation through co-created programs, services and projects

2.4.1   Work with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse, migrants, and/or refugee communities to design and deliver appropriate programs and services.

Libraries Strategic Plan 2015–2018

> Theme 1: Adaptable people and partnerships – we work to provide connections between people and organisations to deliver opportunities which support great service delivery and the development of a well connected, diverse and confident community

> Theme 2: Diverse information, resources and tools – we provide access to a wide range of information, physical and virtual resources and useful tools to enable the whole community to develop their knowledge and skills, satisfy their curiosity and learning needs and be able to enjoy a range of quality leisure experiences.

Key intercultural initiatives and achievements to date

5

5.1
Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Advisory Committee (CALDAC)

This advisory committee to Melton City Council is a key opportunity for leaders from diverse communities to play key leadership roles in influencing current and future Council priorities. The committee comprises 7 community representatives, as well as 2 Community Service providers alongside Council staff and Councilors.

This committee has overseen the development of the City of Melton's intercultural strategy, and associated actions since 2006.

5.2
Melton: I Belong

The 'Melton: I Belong' film project of CALDAC shares short stories of community leaders who come from all walks of life, and all call the City of Melton home. This positive showcase of diverse stories allows insight into the joys and challenges of lives that have spanned continents.

5.3
Harmony Day

The City of Melton has celebrated Harmony Day on March 21st of every year since 2004. During this time, it has grown into an outdoor festival, incorporating world cuisines, local and regional performances, market stalls, and activities for the whole family.

The message of Harmony Day is 'everyone belongs', and aims to engage people to participate in the community, respect cultural and religious diversity and foster sense of belonging for everyone.

5.4
Refugee Week

The City of Melton celebrates Refugee Week each year in June. This celebration of the positive contributions of refugees to Australian society is key to the City of Melton's understanding of its rich diversity of heritage, and acknowledgement of the benefits that refugee individuals and groups have provided to our community.

5.5
Community Partnership Program

Highly Commended in the National Local Government Awards 2015, this ground-breaking program brings together community organisations from different cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds to work in partnership on a joint project. Community groups partner with one or multiple organisations to work on a project to benefit the community, sharing skills and learning about one another in the process.

5.6
Melton Interfaith Network

Since establishment in 2014, Melton City Council has supported the Melton Interfaith Network to grow and develop from a small core group to a larger governance body and membership. This network seeks to promote understanding and harmony between religious groups in the community.

5.7
Culturally diverse workforce

Melton City Council is proud of its diverse workforce, reflecting the community we serve. With staff from every continent, Melton City Council employees speak 31 languages, adhere to 4 religions, and were born in 49 countries. We believe that understanding diversity it is an important part of serving local communities, and constantly strive to ensure we are skilled and informed about local and global issues affecting groups in our midst.

Intercultural plan themes

6

To deliver the intercultural plan and ensure alignment of outcomes, the plan has four key themes. These themes and their associated initiatives emerged following consultation with community and key stakeholder agencies, and are aligned with the principles of promoting social cohesion through intercultural practice. The four themes guide the associated Action Plan, and complement each other to provide a cohesive approach in achieving a harmonious and inclusive community.

The Intercultural Plan themes are:

Embrace Cultural Diversity

The key to an inclusive and healthy society is how individuals feel about belonging to their community. In embracing and celebrating cultural diversity, we work towards achieving a sense of belonging for people from all cultural and religious backgrounds, allowing all members to feel a connection and sense of place.

This theme and its associated actions provide a platform where individuals and community groups from diverse backgrounds can learn more about the values, beliefs and traditions of their neighbours, and also be supported to educate other residents about their own culture. This will promote further understanding and connection in the community.

"Put a diversity lens into different structures of Council to reflect diversity in your services and celebrate diversity"
Community organisation representative

Strengthen Community Participation

With genuine community participation, people can achieve mutually beneficial relationships and feel empowered to take ownership and be involved in decision-making that affects their lives. It increases people's access to resources and enhances individual and communal dignity and wellbeing.

Council meaningfully engages with and builds relationships within and between individuals and groups from all backgrounds and local service providers to facilitate their participation in the economic, social and cultural life of community by identifying, building and supporting their existing strengths.

"Partnership involving different community, faith groups and service providers to deliver joint programs – faith leaders are under ulitilised."
Faith Leader

Enhance Organisational Responsiveness

Organisational responsiveness to the needs of our diverse community improves access, trust, and can achieve improved collaboration and opportunities for learning and exchange of knowledge through dialogue.

Melton City Council is committed to supporting diverse communities to safely express and maintain their cultural identity. Council ensures responsiveness to the growing needs of its diverse community by building on existing policies and programs and developing the cultural competency of the organisation.

Support Leadership and Advocacy

Supporting leadership and advocacy allows Council and the community to together achieve better outcomes for people from all backgrounds. Through listening to the needs and desires of groups, involving them in the design and delivery of services, and supporting or advocating on their behalf, empowers groups to achieve their goals and extend their capacity and influence.

> *"Leadership from the Council and public statements on different issues affecting CALD communities are crucial."*
> **Peak Body Representative**

The theme of leadership and advocacy was repeatedly echoed in the consultation with key stakeholders. Advocacy to different levels of government is key in ensuring community aspirations are realised. Similarly, Council believes strong community leadership is a prerequisite for driving change and steering our future outcomes.

A detailed Action Plan aligning with each theme can be found at *Appendix A*.

EMBRACE CULTURAL DIVERSITY

STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

MELTON CITY COUNCIL INTERCULTURAL PLAN

ENHANCE ORGANISATIONAL RESPONSIVENESS

SUPPORT LEADERSHIP & ADVOCACY

6.1
Reporting and Review

The Melton Intercultural Plan contributes to Council's mission by supporting the growth, wellbeing and aspirations of our community through leadership, excellence and inclusion.

An annual report on progress made against each of the key actions within the Action Plan will be presented to Melton City Council's Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Advisory Committee (CALDAC), and through it to Council.

Based on this report and current community context, any adjustments to the following year's Action Plan will then be proposed by CALDAC for Council endorsement.

Annual reports will be made publically available to the City of Melton community.

At the end of the four-year term of this Plan, a comprehensive evaluation and review will be conducted to assess the implementation of the key actions, their outcomes and consider improvements in developing future plans.

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28. Intercultural Strategy 2010-2014 and Review and Recommendations

29. Youth Strategy 2014- 2017

30. Municipal Early Years Plan 2014 -2017

31. Libraries Strategic Plan 2015-2018

All available from http://www.melton.vic.gov.au

Appendix A: Intercultural Action Plan 2017-21

The following key actions have been identified as part of the Melton City Council Intercultural Plan 2017 – 2021.

EMBRACE CULTURAL DIVERSITY							
No.	**Initiative**	**Actions**	**Lead Unit**	**Partnership Opportunity**	**Timeframe**	**Resource Implications**	**Performance Indicators**
1.1	Provide public events that celebrate cultural diversity and embrace cultural expression	1.1.1 Councillors and Council staff to attend and support cultural and national celebrations organised by communities	Community Capacity	Communities and Council departments	Ongoing	Within existing resources	Number of events attended
		1.1.2 Continue to arrange community events: – Harmony Day – Refugee Week – Djerriwarrh Festival (multicultural programming)	Community Capacity	CALD Advisory Committee, Melton Interfaith Network and other communities	Annually	Subject to budget	Number of events and attendees
1.2	Showcase and celebrate the contributions of people from diverse backgrounds who live, work and study in the City of Melton	1.2.1 Develop initiatives to promote and profile success stories of active community members in the local media and through Council's media channels.	Community Capacity and Communications	All communities	2017-2021	Within existing resources	Number of initiatives
		1.2.2 Create and facilitate interactive opportunities for communities from diverse backgrounds to learn about each other's culture and way of life	Community Capacity and Communications	All communities	2017-2021	Subject to budget	Number of initiatives
1.3	Promote religious harmony, dialogue and cooperation between various faith groups	1.3.1 Support Melton Interfaith Network to develop and extend	Community Capacity	Communities and faith leaders	Ongoing	Within existing resources	Number of meetings and initiatives supported
		1.3.2 Create and promote a calendar of significant religious and cultural events	Community Capacity	Communities and faith leaders	Annually in January	Within existing resources	Calendar produced
		1.3.3 Develop City of Melton Interfaith Strategy to guide Council's direction in serving increasingly diverse faith communities	Community Capacity	Melton Interfaith Network	2017	Within existing resources	Deliver the Strategy
1.4	Connect with broader initiatives to embrace cultural diversity and advance social cohesion	1.4.1 Contribute to the establishment of the Welcoming Cities Program, with a view to joining.	Community Capacity	Welcoming Cities, Municipal Association of Victoria	2017-2018	Subject to budget	
		1.4.2 Utilise the Australian Centre for Excellence in Local Government's Building Social Cohesion in our Communities resource to guide current practice and future planning	Community Capacity	State Government Departments, Peak bodies	2018-2021	Within existing resources	Number of times resource utilised

No.	Initiative	Actions	Lead Unit	Partnership Opportunity	Timeframe	Resource Implications	Performance Indicators
2.1	Build civic understanding and encourage active participation of communities from diverse backgrounds	2.1.1 Develop civic education initiative to connect with diverse communities	Community Capacity	CALD Advisory Committee Victorian Electoral Commission	2019-2021	Within existing resources	Civic education initiative launched
		2.1.2 Organise community leaders' forum to discuss opportunities, issues and ways to improve collaboration and understanding	Community Capacity	State Government Departments, Peak bodies	Bi-annual forum 2018 2020	Subject to budget	Number of workshops, forums and information sessions
2.2	Financially support capacity-building of communities and facilitate their participation and contribution to the wider community	2.2.1 Encourage and support community groups from diverse backgrounds to access funding through Council's Community Funding Program by proposing a funding category focusing on diversity	Community Capacity	Diverse communities and service providers	Ongoing	Subject to budget	Number of successful grant applications
2.3	Facilitate intercultural connections between different community groups by supporting collaborative projects	2.3.1 Encourage and support community groups to participate in Council's Community Partnership Program	Community Capacity	All communities and service providers	Annually	Within existing resources	Number of successful partnership ventures
2.4	Promote awareness of the local services and events	2.4.1 Facilitate the orientation session Know Your City to help build connections between Council staff, community service providers and leaders of community groups from diverse backgrounds	Community Capacity	Internal departments, service providers and diverse communities	One session per annum	Within existing resources	Number of attendees
		2.4.2 Tailor communication to diverse groups to ensure awareness of local events and services.	Events and Culture, Communications, Community Capacity and Neighbourhood Participation	Internal departments and communities from diverse backgrounds	Ongoing	Within existing resources	Number of tailored initiatives
2.5	Promote a sense of belonging through citizenship ceremonies	2.5.1 Support, encourage and welcome individuals through provision of citizenship ceremonies	Governance	Internal departments	Ten events annually (approx)	Within existing resources	Number of new citizens welcomed through citizenship ceremonies
		2.5.2 Organise intercultural activities/ performance on the citizenship ceremony day	Community Capacity	Governance	Annually on 26 January	Subject to budget	Number of intercultural activities and performances

No.	Initiative	Actions	Lead Unit	Partnership Opportunity	Timeframe	Resource Implications	Performance Indicators
2.6	Promote and facilitate greater access of communities from diverse backgrounds to access Council programs and facilities	2.6.1 Ensure culturally responsive processes to broker short and long term access to Council owned facilities.	Neighbourhood Participation,	Internal departments and communities from diverse backgrounds	2017	Within existing resources	Number of bookings from diverse groups
		2.6.2 Create opportunities to facilitate participation of diverse community groups and individuals in Neighbourhood House and Community Centre programs	Neighbourhood Participation	Community groups and individuals	2017-2021	Within existing resources	Number of people and groups accessing programs
2.7	Facilitate participation of communities from diverse backgrounds in local sports clubs and activities	2.7.1 Develop relationships with and invest in building local sport clubs' intercultural capacity	Recreation and Youth and Community Capacity	Local sport clubs and communities from diverse backgrounds	2017-2021	Subject to external funding	Number of engagements and initiatives
		2.7.2 Develop initiatives to link people from diverse backgrounds with local sport clubs and sporting activities happening in the municipality	Recreation and Youth and Community Capacity	Local sport clubs and communities from diverse backgrounds	Ongoing	Subject to external funding	Number of new connections made
2.8	Encourage entrepreneurship and participation in the workforce by individuals of diverse backgrounds	2.8.1 Investigate opportunities to support Social Entrepreneurship in diverse communities	Community Capacity, Engagement and Advocacy	Internal departments, Communities, Peak bodies	2018-2021	Subject to external funding	Number of initiatives supported
		2.8.2 Engage with local business owners and future business owners to understand the needs and opportunities seen by those from diverse backgrounds	Community Capacity, Engagement and Advocacy	Internal departments, Communities, Peak bodies	Annually	Within existing resources	Number of engagements
		2.8.3 Partner with external providers to increase workforce readiness and participation of diverse communities	Community Capacity	Internal departments, Communities, Peak bodies	2017-2021	Subject to external funding	Number of initiatives

No.	Initiative	Actions	Lead Unit	Partnership Opportunity	Timeframe	Resource Implications	Performance Indicators
3.1	Increase understanding, support and utilisation of the Melton City Council diverse workforce	3.1.1 Utilise Workplace Cultural Diversity Tool from Diversity Council Australia	Community Capacity, People and Culture	Internal	Annually	Within existing resources	Tool utilised and recommendations developed
3.2	Support and strengthen local networks	3.2.1 Work with service providers, community groups and other stakeholders to share information, ideas, and resources	Community Capacity	Internal departments and external stakeholders	Ongoing	Within existing resources	Number of meetings, number of participants
3.3	Enhance customer service and increase service access and awareness of communities from diverse backgrounds	3.3.1 Develop and implement Language Services Policy and Procedure	Community Capacity,	Internal departments	2017	Within existing resources	Policy and Procedure endorsed and implemented
		3.3.2 Ensure relevant Council staff are trained and aware of culturally appropriate practices	Community Capacity and Customer Service	Communications	Annual program	Within existing resources	Number of training sessions and attendance
3.4	Visually demonstrate Council's commitment to valuing and welcoming people from diverse backgrounds	3.4.1 Install signage, messages and images reflecting Melton's diverse community at Council's facilities	Community Capacity and Customer Service	Communications	2019-2020	Subject to budget	Number of displays
3.5	Ensure organisational awareness of issues and opportunities facing diverse communities	3.5.1 Provide annual briefing to Councillors and Executive on intercultural matters, latest trends and challenges facing the community	Community Capacity	Communications and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Advisory Committee	Annual	Within existing resources	Number of briefings
		3.5.2 Provide semi-annual briefing to staff on intercultural matters	Community Capacity	Communications and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Advisory Committee	Semi-annual	Within existing resources	Number of briefings and attendees
		3.5.3 Provide snapshot of diverse community statistics, trends and forecasts for staff use	Social Planning and Wellbeing	Community Capacity	Annually	Within existing resources	Number of snapshots provided
3.6	Identify an Intercultural Champion at the Executive level	3.6.1 Empower a member of Executive to lead the Intercultural portfolio and represent Melton City Council externally.	Executive Team	Municipal Association of Victoria, Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria and Refugee Council of Victoria	2017-2021	Within existing resources	Number of meetings attended
3.7	Provide support to Council staff in their work with people from diverse backgrounds	3.7.1 Provide specialist intercultural input and advice into initiatives being developed and implemented by Council	Community Capacity	Internal departments	Ongoing	Within existing resources	Times advice provided

No.	Initiative	Actions	Lead Unit	Partnership Opportunity	Timeframe	Resource Implications	Performance Indicators
4.1	Support Community Leadership development	4.1.1 Encourage diverse community leaders to apply for the City of Melton Community Leadership Program	Community Capacity	Community Leaders	Annually	Within existing resources	Number of applications received
		4.1.2 Facilitate and promote participation of diverse communities in the City of Melton Leadership Network	Community Capacity	Community Leaders	Quarterly	Within existing resources	Number of attendees
		4.1.3 Ensure access to the City of Melton annual training program through tailored promotion and language services	Community Capacity	Community Groups	Annually	Within existing resources	Number of attendees
4.2	Support campaigns to promote and increase social cohesion	4.2.1 Promote inclusion and understanding by participating in national and state-level campaigns	Community Capacity, Communications	Peak bodies, CALD Advisory Committee and communities from diverse backgrounds	2017-2021	Within existing resources	Number of campaigns and initiatives
		4.2.2 Join the Intercultural Cities network to share resources and information with other cities globally	Community Capacity	Intercultural Cities network	2017	Subject to budget	Network joined
		4.2.3 Explore the feasibility of a research partnership for interculturalism and social cohesion in the City of Melton context	Community Capacity	Relevant government departments, Peak bodies and Universities	2017-19	Subject to external funding	Research report prepared
4.3	Strengthen Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Advisory Committee (CALDAC)	4.3.1 Facilitate CALDAC as per the Terms of Reference	Community Capacity	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Advisory Committee	Ongoing	Within existing resources	Number of meetings and attendance
		4.3.2 Facilitate interaction between the Advisory Committee and Councillors and other community leaders	Community Capacity	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Advisory Committee	Ongoing	Within existing resources	Number of opportunities and attendance
		4.3.3 Increase the community prominence and capacity of CALDAC	Community Capacity,	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Advisory Committee	Ongoing	Within existing resources	Number of initiatives

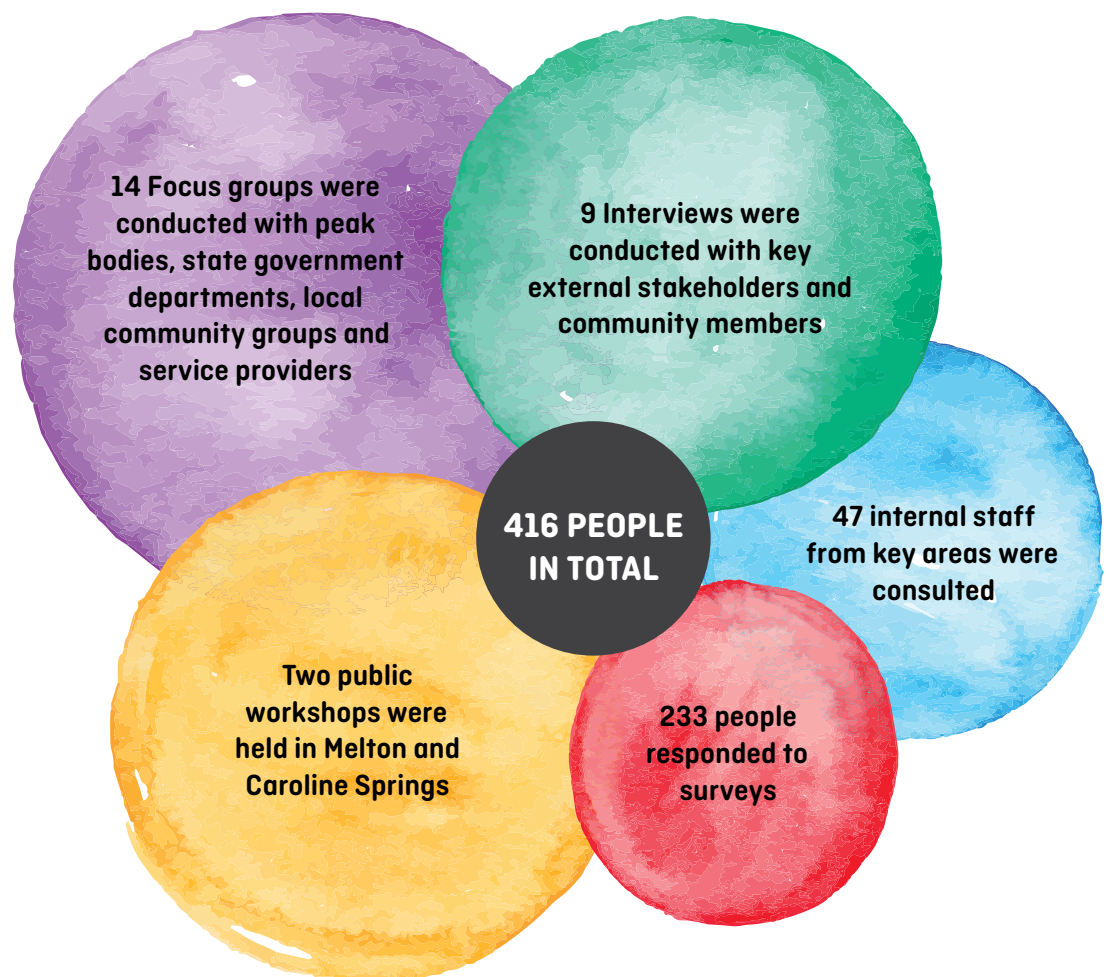| No.	Initiative	Actions	Lead Unit	Partnership Opportunity	Timeframe	Resource Implications	Performance Indicators
4.4	Advocate for and support specialist service providers to deliver programs and services for individuals and community groups from diverse backgrounds	4.4.1 Facilitate the establishment of new services by brokering partnerships between service providers, applying Council's Community Services Capacity and Attraction Framework	Social Planning and Wellbeing	Service providers and funding bodies	Ongoing	Subject to external funding	Number of new service providers and programs
		4.4.2 Advocate for the establishment of a Migrant Resource Centre and other specialised services locally	Social Planning and Wellbeing, Community Capacity	Service providers and funding bodies	Ongoing	Within existing resources	Value of successful grant applications and number of new providers
4.5	Provide targeted support to communities affected by challenging behavior	4.5.1 Initiate program to build capacity of affected communities to engage across generations	Community Capacity	Relevant communities and agencies	2017-20	Subject to external funding	Annual program report

Appendix B: Community Consultation Summary

To develop the Intercultural Plan, community and key stakeholder agencies were consulted including local service providers, relevant state government bodies, local community and faith based networks and groups, community leaders and Council staff from April to May 2016.

In addition, community members were invited to individually complete surveys or attend community workshops from June-August 2014 as part of continuous engagement in community to seek their input into the plan.
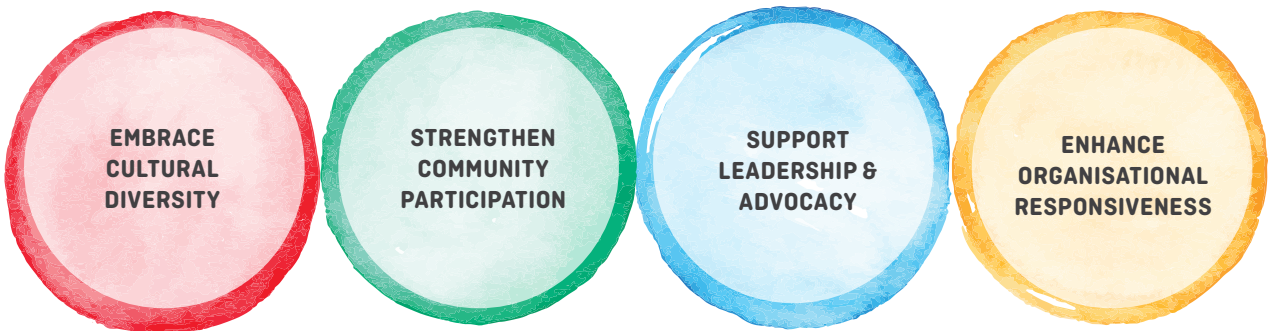
In total, 416 people participated in the consultation process.

Focus groups, surveys and individual interviews were the main ways information was collected. Where required, interpreters have been used to assist individuals and groups with limited English language skills.

14 Focus groups were conducted with peak bodies, state government departments, local community groups and service providers

9 Interviews were conducted with key external stakeholders and community members

416 PEOPLE IN TOTAL

47 internal staff from key areas were consulted

Two public workshops were held in Melton and Caroline Springs

233 people responded to surveys

Participants were asked to reflect on the following questions.

1. What are the key issues impacting culturally and linguistically diverse communities/ your community living in the City of Melton?

2. What do you think is needed to create a more inclusive and embracing community in the City of Melton?

3. What do you believe should be the key priority areas for Council to support culturally and linguistically diverse communities in the City of Melton?

4. What do you think fosters understanding and promotes social cohesion and how can the plan address that?

5. How could multicultural and faith leaders foster collaboration between CALD residents and City of Melton service providers?

6. The demographics in the City of Melton are changing and becoming more diverse. At the same time there is a growing need for more community service organisations, what can the City of Melton do to attract community service organisations to provide settlement and integration support services?

7. Broadly speaking what else would you like Melton City Council Intercultural Plan 2016-2019 to cover?

EMBRACE CULTURAL DIVERSITY

STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

SUPPORT LEADERSHIP & ADVOCACY

ENHANCE ORGANISATIONAL RESPONSIVENESS

AS OUR COMMUNITY GROWS, WE WELCOME NEW GROUPS FROM AROUND AUSTRALIA, AND THE GLOBE.

CITY OF

MELTON