

**Management report to Council**

**Agenda item 6.2**

**Support to newly arrived communities within the City of Melbourne**

**29 July 2014**

**Presenter:** Ian Hicks, Manager Community Strengthening

**Purpose and background**

1. This report proposes further engagement with the newly arrived migrant community in the City of Melbourne (CoM) to identify potential long term funding initiatives and services that could support priority needs within this community.
2. At the Council meeting held on 29 April 2014, Council resolved that it:
  - 2.1. Authorises the Director, Community Development to engage with the most appropriate organisations within the City of Melbourne, including the Victorian Police, Eritrean Community in Australia, iEmpower and Football Federation Victoria to deliver collaborative programs and services that would address priority service gaps and needs within the African Australian community.
  - 2.2. Requests management provide a report back to Council in July 2014 with recommendations on the most appropriate arrangements to address the needs of the newly arrived migrant community, consistent with the Community Funding Policy.
3. In regard to the newly arrived community within the CoM, the African Australian community primarily arrived in the era 1991 through to 2005 and on humanitarian visas. Population data indicates that a significant number of this newly arrived community settled within the municipality.

**Key issues**

4. Management has met with leaders of the African Australian community and associated organisations, including representatives from the Eritrean Community of Australia, the Somali Australian Council of Victoria, the Australian Oromo Community, African Think Tank, iEmpower, Football Federation Victoria and the Victorian Police.
5. Those consulted have identified that the common issues and challenges facing the newly arrived communities include barriers to employment, empowering women, community participation and settlement support.
6. Further to this, they confirmed their interest in working with Council and other organisations to address long term systemic issues affecting the African Australian community living within the CoM as a platform:
  - 6.1. to better understand and address chronic and systemic issues of common interest within the local African Australian community
  - 6.2. for collaboration at a local (municipal) level between various community organisations to jointly identify initiatives targeted at improving the common challenges facing newly arrived communities within the municipality.
7. It is proposed that Council hosts and facilitates a series of community roundtables commencing in August 2014 with key community leaders of newly arrived communities including the African Australian community. The purpose of these roundtables is to identify ideas and initiatives that could contribute to and influence the common issues of barriers to employment, empowerment of women, community participation and settlement support. The outcomes of the roundtables would be documented and presented to Councillors in October 2014 with recommendations to implement any potential initiatives or services in the form of strategic partnerships, consistent with the 2014 Community Funding Policy.

**Recommendation from management**

8. That Council:
  - 8.1. Endorses the proposal to host and facilitate a series of community roundtables of African Australian community leaders and other representatives of newly arrived communities within the City of Melbourne, for the purpose of identifying initiatives that address common issues and challenges experienced by newly arrived communities to the municipality.
  - 8.2. Requests a briefing paper to Councillors from management by October 2014 with a summary of the roundtable outcomes and any recommendations in relation to identified strategic funding priorities or opportunities.

**Attachment**

1. Supporting Attachment

## Supporting Attachment

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### Legal

1. There are no legal implications from this report.

### Finance

2. In 2014–15 the administration of the roundtables will be supported through existing resources. This will be reviewed within 12 months of Council endorsing recommendations from the roundtables.
3. An amount of \$150,000 has been allocated in the 2014–15 budget for potential development of strategic partnerships arising from the roundtables and focussed on supporting the local African Australian community, consistent with the 2014 Community Funding Policy. It is envisioned the distribution of this money will be determined when initiatives to address priority areas have been confirmed.

### Conflict of interest

4. No member of Council staff, or other person engaged under a contract, involved in advising on or preparing this report has declared a direct or indirect interest in relation to the matter of the report.

### Stakeholder consultation

5. Management has met with leaders of African Australian community and organisations, including representatives from the Eritrean Community of Australia, the Somali Australian Council of Victoria, the Australian Oromo Community, African Think Tank, iEmpower, Football Federation Victoria and Victorian Police.

### Relation to Council policy

6. This report relates to recommendations resulting from a revision of the Community Funding Policy 2014.

### Environmental sustainability

7. No environment sustainability issues or opportunities have been considered in the establishment of the roundtable as the focus is on priorities related to social matters within these communities. The roundtable has potential in the future to evolve into areas related to environmental sustainability, if identified as a focus by the representatives.