COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

REPORT

AGENDA ITEM 5.4

12 June 2007

A CITY OF OPPORTUNITY – A MULTICULTURAL STRATEGY
FOR THE CITY OF MELBOURNE 2005-2009 – YEAR TWO

ACHIEVEMENTS

Division Community and Places

Presenter Michael O’Hanlon, Manager Community Development

Purpose

1. To inform Council of the year two achievements and the emerging community development opportunities that has resulted from the implementation of the Multicultural Strategy - A City of Opportunity 2005–2009.

Recommendation from Management

2. That the Community Services Committee:


   2.2. Endorse the signing of the Community Accord by the Lord Mayor at a suitable occasion (at attachment 2).

   2.3. Work with local multi-faith networks to investigate funding under the newly announced State Government budget May 2007 to support tolerance and respect of different religions through the organising of peace-building and educational activities.

   2.4. Work with multi-faith networks to support the hosting of the Parliament of World Religions Event in Melbourne 2009.

Key Achievements

3. A detailed list of achievements is provided in Attachment 1.

4. The City of Melbourne’s Multicultural Strategy - A City of Opportunity 2005–2009 was endorsed by Council in March 2005 to support the City of Melbourne’s vision of a thriving and sustainable city. The Multicultural Strategy has four strategic directions. Below are the major achievements for year two within each strategic direction:


   4.2. Celebration – organisation of the inaugural Lord Mayors Welcome for International Students.

   4.3. Support - support given to enable capacity building initiatives for African and Middle Eastern refugee communities.
4.4. **Leadership** –

4.4.1. Support provided to the African community to research the needs of the Horn of Africa men and their communities in the Carlton area; and

4.4.2. progress made in relation to the development of the Melbourne Multicultural Hub with 506 Elizabeth St identified as the appropriate site.

5. The target audience for these key strategic directions include:

5.1. Newly arrived communities and international students;

5.2. hard to reach communities;

5.3. multi-faith networks; and

5.4. older culturally and linguistically diverse community residents.

6. In 2005 a Multicultural Projects Officer was appointed to develop pathways towards the implementation of the *City of Melbourne’s Multicultural Strategy - A City of Opportunity 2005–2009*. A permanent full time Cultural Diversity Officer position was appointed in April 2007.

7. Opportunities that have arisen since the Strategy was first adopted include:

7.1. Signing and commitment to the Community Accord. The *Community Accord* document was produced by the Victorian Multicultural Commission to emphasise respect for all ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic communities, and to promote respect for diversity across the community (attachment 2).

7.2. Working with local multi-faith networks to apply for funding under the newly announced State Government budget May 2007 to support tolerance and respect of different religions through the organising of peace-building and educational activities.

7.3. Working with multi-faith networks to support the hosting of the Parliament of World Religions Event in Melbourne 2009. The event is expected to attract up to 12,000 visitors to the city and will span six days.

**Timeframe**


**Relation to Council Policy**

9. The *Multicultural Strategy for the City of Melbourne A City of Opportunity 2005–2009* supports the delivery of Council’s overarching strategies laid out in *City of Melbourne Council Plan 2005–2009* and *City Plan 2010*. It is consistent with *City Plan’s* inclusive and engagement theme, specifically strategic direction 3.1 – welcome and facilitate all sectors of the community to participate in city life; strategic direction 3.2 – encourage social equity, inclusion and wellbeing; and strategic direction 3.3 – deliver and provide access to facilities and services to support those living in, visiting and working in the City.

**Consultation**

10. The *City of Melbourne’s Multicultural Strategy - A City of Opportunity 2005–2009* was developed following broad based community consultations with key stakeholders including residents, workers, international students, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse community groups and newly arrived migrants and refugees.
11. Community consultation in relation to the development of the Melbourne Multicultural Hub was undertaken by Success Works in 2005 during the development of the business plan as part of assessing different management models.

12. The City of Melbourne is represented on the following committees who provide regular information on the emerging needs of our diverse community and work with Council to implement the Strategy:

12.1. Inner City Refugee Brokerage Program.

12.2. Victorian Local Government Multicultural Communities Issues Network.

12.3. KUUSA Project Steering Committee.

12.4. Victorian International Students Summit.

12.5. Carlton Local Agencies Network.

13. The strategy originally included a recommendation to establish a Multicultural Advisory Forum. It is recommended this not proceed at this stage due to the operational demands of establishing the Melbourne Multicultural Hub and the need to work with interfaith groups on funding and the Parliament of World Religions.

Government Relations

14. As a commitment to a whole of government approach to working with culturally diverse communities, the City of Melbourne has worked closely with a number of government departments and agencies and with other organisations including:

14.1. Department for Victorian Communities.

14.2. Department for Immigration and Citizenship.


14.5. Municipal Association of Victoria.


14.7. Standing Committee on Local Government and Cultural Diversity, a committee facilitated by the Victorian Multicultural Commission to improve access to government services and coordinate action between the local government sector and the State government.

Finance

15. The recurrent budget provides for staffing of the strategy implementation with one staff member and associated costs.

16. A bid for capital funding is included in the 2007/08 capital works budget to address the immediate improvement requirements to the 506 Elizabeth Street building to progress the development of the Melbourne Multicultural Hub.
Legal

17. The matters detailed in this report are within the functions and powers of the Council under the Local Government Act 1989. Legal advice will be provided, as required, in relation to the implementation of the Strategy.

Sustainability


19. The implementation of these strategic directions has:

19.1. Increased opportunities for participation between culturally diverse communities and Council extended links between the new and emerging communities.

19.2. Developed new links with the multifaith networks, refugee communities, international students and mainstream communities.

Background


22. The implementation of the Multicultural Strategy has been developed in line with the four key strategic directions of Participation, Celebration, Support, and Leadership.
Year two achievements from the implementation of the Multicultural Strategy include the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Direction</th>
<th>Target Group</th>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Achievements/Outcomes</th>
<th>Further work required (across council)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Participation**   | International Students | Encourage increased participation in the life of the City for international students. | Established the City of Melbourne International Students Working Committee which achieved the following outcomes;  
  - development and distribution of the Lord Mayors Letter of Welcome to 4000 international students 2006. An electronic version of the letter is available to all universities providing an option to include it in student orientation packs for 2007;  
  - organised the inaugural Lord Mayors Welcome for International Students 2006 attended by 2000 international students;  
  - provided increased opportunities for Council Officers to engage/consult with international students that have resulted in supporting the development of the following projects;  
  - *The City of Melbourne Essential Services Guide for International Students and Skilled Migrants*;  
  - *City of Melbourne International Students Survey*;  
  - *City of Melbourne Altitude Project Team: Engaging International Students Project.* | Continue to engage with international students to ensure they remain connected and are able to participate in the life of the city. |
| **Celebration** | International Students | Increase the opportunity for international students to participate in events and programs run in the City by developing a targeted marketing process about events and activities in the City for this group. | • The inaugural Lord Mayors Welcome for international students was an event that was identified by international students as important for their communities. The event had the following outcomes;  
• 2000 international students attended the event providing increased opportunities for students to meet other students;  
• 80 international student ambassador volunteers recruited and received induction training for the event;  
• increased membership of international student associations at the event (Australian Federation of International Students reported a 50% membership increase as a result of the event);  
• celebration barbeque for volunteers hosted by RMIT and the City of Melbourne that brought together students from five universities within the city. | An annual event to celebrate and acknowledge the presence and the contribution that international students bring to the life of the city. |

| **Support** | Newly arrived communities | Seek to support the settlement needs of the newly arrived communities. | Participation on the Inner Region Refugee Brokerage Program which has achieved the following;  
• provides support to six African and Middle Eastern refugee communities to assist them towards capacity building within their communities. | Provide follow up for these communities by linking them into Council resources including the community grants; libraries; community forums; aged care services and increased access to community spaces. |

| Horn of Africa communities | • Participating on the steering committee for the KUUSA African Community Connections Project. This project is facilitated by Drummond Street Relationship Clinic and has been established amongst 4 African communities; the City of Melbourne; City of Moonee Valley; and Melbourne City | Continue to support the initiatives developed by the KUUSA Community Connections project and link these communities into Council resources including community grants, libraries; community forums; aged care services and increased access to community spaces. |
| Mission to build wellbeing and community capacity within African/Australian communities. |
|---|---|---|
| **Multifaith** | Established strong links with Interfaith Centre of Melbourne resulting in the following outcome:  
• Contributed to the submission from the Interfaith Centre of Melbourne towards the bid to host the Parliament of World Religions Event to be held in Melbourne in 2009. | Develop and publish a calendar of events of significance to the different cultures and faiths of the people who live, work, study and play in the City of Melbourne to respectfully allow the stories of these events to be told. |
| **International Students** | International students are newly arrived culturally, linguistically and spiritually diverse communities whose settlement needs should be viewed within this framework. They have demonstrated an ability to initiate and participate in capacity building for their communities. Supporting these initiatives has resulted in;  
• the organisation of three seminars in partnership with the Australian Federation of International Students and other government/non government agencies to support the health and wellbeing of international students;  
• capacity building initiatives for the Omani international student community;  
• nominations from international students to the 2006 Melbourne Awards program;  
• increased access to grant stream programs across Council by international students;  
• increased working relationship between Council and international students. | Provide ongoing support for the Australian Federation of International Students (AFIS) to promote opportunities for this organisation to continue developing initiatives identified by international students as being necessary to support their health and well being. |
| **Leadership** | Support development of leadership capacity within local communities and organisations so that problems can be solved and ideas generated and promoted  
• The development of the City of Melbourne Cultural Diversity Action Plan 2005–2009. | Workshop across Council to implement the distribution of the Interpreter Symbol Card to support equity and access to information about Council for... |
| Horn of Africa | Provided financial and in-kind support to the completion of the Horn of Africa Men in Carlton Their Awareness, Perceptions and Recommendations to Service Providers Report. | Outcomes of the report;  
- key recommendations for service providers when working with Horn of Africa men and communities in the Carlton area. | Support the implementation of the recommendations contained in the report. |
|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| International Students | Work with educational institutions to ensure that appropriate services required for the maintenance of the health and wellbeing of international students are available and accessible by students to support the health, safety and wellbeing of international students. | Partnerships formed with the following organisations and educational institutions;  
- Carrick Institute of Education and Learning;  
- University of Melbourne;  
- RMIT;  
- Victoria University;  
- Arrow On Swanson;  
- Deakin University  
- CQU (Central Queensland University)  
- AITE (Australian Institute of Technical Education)  
- Monash University  
- Swinburne University  
These partnerships have allowed opportunities for Council to deliver information relevant to supporting the health, safety and wellbeing of international students from Council to a significant number of international students when needed. | Continue to maintain these links with educational institutions to ensure an across community approach to meeting the needs of international students in the city. |
| Progress the development of the Melbourne Multicultural Hub. | Progress has also been made in relation to the development of the planned Melbourne Multicultural Hub with 506 Elizabeth St identified as the appropriate site, capital funds allocated for initial phase of the project and a strong candidate for the lead tenant role identified. | Seek Council endorsement of 506 Elizabeth Street as the preferred location for the planned Melbourne Multicultural Hub and to appoint the Adult Multicultural Education Services as the lead tenant of the Hub. | |
| Work with the State and Commonwealth | City of Melbourne represented on the Victorian | Ongoing representation on the Victorian | |
| Governments and the Municipal Association of Victoria and the Victorian Local Government Multicultural Issues Network to establish a consolidated website of translated materials and text for Victorian Local Councils. | Local Government Multicultural Issues Network; • website developed of generic translated materials that will be available to access by Councils and customised for use by individual councils. | Local Government Multicultural Issues Network. |
Community Accord

Reaffirming our faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, and in the equal rights of men and women.

Desiring to promote realisation of the principles contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief, as well as other relevant international instruments that have been adopted by our State, and inspired by the provisions of the Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001 concerning the rights of all Victorians and the principles enshrined in the Multicultural Victoria Act 2004.

Believing that promotion and protection of the rights of persons belonging to different ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic communities contributes to the political and social stability of this our State of Victoria.

Emphasising that promotion and realisation of the rights of culturally and linguistically diverse peoples within a democratic framework based on the rule of law, is integral to the development of our society and strengthens friendship and cooperation among our peoples within our State.

Recognising the need for effective implementation of international and State human rights instruments with regard to the rights of persons belonging to different ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic communities.

We Proclaim this Community Accord

In recognition of Victoria as a vibrant, diverse and progressive State in which all people live, work and prosper together we the undersigned representatives of Victoria’s varied communities undertake to:

- Respect all ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic communities
- Promote respect for diversity across our communities
- Seek opportunities to work together to reaffirm our similarities as human beings and the fundamental principles that unite us as Victorians
- Advocate for the elimination of racial and religious intolerance
- Reject all forms of racial and religious vilification, violence, harassment and unlawful discrimination

In endorsing this declaration, we (the undersigned) accept responsibility to comply with these principles.
FINANCE ATTACHMENT

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An amount of $100,000 has been included in the draft 2007/08 Annual Plan & Budget under grants toward the Parliament of Worlds Churches and $350,000 is included under project 07FM042 for the Multicultural Resource Centre Upgrade.

Joe Groher
Manager Financial Services
LEGAL ATTACHMENT

A CITY OF OPPORTUNITY – A MULTICULTURAL STRATEGY FOR THE CITY OF MELBOURNE 2005-2009 – YEAR TWO ACHIEVEMENTS

The matters detailed in this report are within the functions and powers of the Council under the Local Government Act 1989 (“the Act”). Ongoing legal advice will be provided in relation to the implementation of the Strategy.

Section 3C(1) of the Act provides that:

“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 decision.”

Section 3C (2) of the Act provides that in seeking to achieve its primary objective the Council must have regard to facilitating objectives including:

“(c) to improve the overall quality of life of people in the local community;
(e) to ensure the services and facilities provided by the Council are accessible and equitable;”

Section 3E of the Act provides that the functions of a Council include:

“(a) advocating and promoting proposals which are in the best interests of the local community;
(b) planning for and providing services and facilities for the local community;”.

Kim Wood
Manager Legal Services