

# MULTICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

Wednesday 23 March 22  
6pm – 8pm  
Queens Park Room – Council Chambers



## 1. Welcome and Acknowledgement of Country

Acknowledgement of Country was conducted by Councillor Masselos.

### Present

Councillors	
Clr Paula Masselos	Mayor of Waverley
Clr Ludovico Fabiano	Councillor
Council Officers	
Sharon Cassidy	Acting Director, Community Assets and Operations
Annette Trubenbach	Executive Manager, Community Programs
Madly Bodin	Community Development Officer, Diversity
Rebecca Rodwell	Manager, Community Planning & Partnerships
Community Member/Organisations	
Emily Bogue	Resident
Linda Deutsch	Resident
Tito Scohel	Resident
Margaret Teed	City East Community College
Patricia Jenkins	Expert
Rachel Tanny	COA Sydney
Robert Farotto	Resident
Valentina Bau	Resident
Sabrina Ramgobin	Guest (Volunteer)

## 2. Apologies

Clr Angela Burrell, Clr Tony Kay, Clr Leon Goltsman, Raphael Crowe, Rozy Dorizas

## 3. Acceptance of previous minutes & business arising

**Moved:** Valentina      **Seconded:** Margaret      **Carried**

### Business Arising

No business arising

#### 4. Activity in Pairs

The group divided into pairs to share a time when someone made them feel welcome, and discussed similarities and differences. These were then shared with the group.

#### 5. End of Year Feedback

Madly provided a summary of the feedback received through the end of year survey. 5 responses were received from committee members (summary available in the meeting presentation attached). Madly acknowledged that results may vary due to expectations. She noted that 2021 was an unusual year due to the extended lockdown and its impact on the local government elections.

Addressing some of the comments made in the survey:

- Madly explained that Council representatives were interested in the MAC's views but that MAC meetings were a forum for MAC members to express their views first.
- The Mayor also acknowledged that there was a strong focus on the development of the Cultural Diversity Strategy in 2021 and that the MAC should see more initiatives implemented in 2022.
- Madly explained that while MAC meetings are only held on a quarterly basis, MAC members who shared common interests were free to connect with each other independently.

MAC members did not have additional comments and were encouraged to provide feedback at any time. The MAC will be asked to review the MAC's Terms of Reference later in the year.

#### 6. Quarterly Update

A quarterly update had been sent to the committee prior to the meeting to briefly report on progress against the five focus areas in the Cultural Diversity Strategy.

Focus areas	Status update
Leadership & Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online launch held in October 2021</li> <li>• Participated in LGMN consultation on AHRC anti-racism framework</li> <li>• Provided feedback and case study for the Workplace Cultural Diversity Tool</li> </ul>
Connected & Welcoming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcome picnic with more than 30 newly arrived migrants (with SSI and Uniting)</li> <li>• Future welcome events being discussed</li> <li>• Bondi Room translations</li> </ul>
No place for racism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Street decal design being designed</li> <li>• Evaluation framework being refined</li> <li>• Communications &amp; engagement plan being finalised</li> <li>• Art competition – call for expressions of interest on 21 March</li> <li>• Council stall booked for Global Table on 15 May</li> <li>• Author talk – 11 June</li> </ul>
Inclusion & Equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training held in Jan for bilingual beach safety volunteers</li> </ul>
Enabling opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• House of Welcome used for Welcome picnic</li> <li>• In discussion with Social Traders for campaign prizes</li> </ul>

Margaret thanked Council for supporting the participants on the mentoring program by forwarding job opportunities that may be relevant for them. They would also like to explore internship and work experience opportunities. The Cultural Diversity Strategy does identify employment pathways as an action area for the future.

## 7. Anti-Racism Campaign

Madly provided a recap of the key messages from the campaign (summary available in the meeting presentation attached).

She also updated the committee on the following;

- The art competition which was launched on 21 March
- The evaluation framework progress. There are 4 domains within the framework which will support the collection and analysis of data and information. Existing benchmarks will be considered including the Waverley Community Survey and Human Rights Commission data.
- Activities planned including Global Table and the Library Author Talk
- Resource list in development
- Engagement with local organisations and business will be considered within the next quarter. The Chamber of Commerce will be a useful partner in creating change.
- Engagement with young people will be explored in the next quarter. Tito expressed his concerns around racism in schools.

Feedback/questions from the committee included;

- How will we share stories?  
Art, movies, books and providing people with the opportunity to share their personal stories. Council will provide the platform for stories to be shared in a safe way. We hope to share stories in a positive way allowing people to connect through feelings/emotions.
- Welcoming language is preferred to ensure people are not feeling judged.
- Should what's happening globally and in the community be reflected in the strategy?  
The strategy is a broad anti-racism campaign which will not focus on one group/issue/incident.
- What is the timeframe for the campaign?  
The campaign will be launched in early May, when the dedicated space on the website has been finalised with appropriate feedback mechanisms.
- It is important for Council to promote the consultation we have done to develop this campaign.

Madly asked for the committee to discuss recommendations around the #RacismNOTWelcome campaign, considering the feedback provided in the report.

The committee's response was varied. Feedback included;

- They offer a strong discussion point for community members
- Signs and visibility are important

- They are small and hard to see if you are in a car
- Signs should be in high foot traffic areas
- MAC member would be proud to see these in the Waverley area, however her friends from a diverse background didn't understand why we would display them
- Wording should be more positive
- The big NOT doesn't resonate

Two members were in support of having the street signs with the #RacismNOTWelcome branding. The general consensus from the committee however, was as follows;

*The committee believes there are other modes and messages which will be more effective in Waverley, including the use of more positive language and more visible locations including bus shelters and pavement decals.*

#### **8. Adoption of definition of antisemitism**

This is a resolution of Council, which has been adopted by the Australian Government and a number of other countries. The resolution requested that the MAC was consulted about how the adoption of this definition will be integrated into our work, and Council's position around harmony.

One of the MAC members acknowledged the clear structure of the definition, however had concerns about the examples that are connected to the definition that are critical of Israel which may impact people's freedom of expression and opinion. She has witnessed examples of people losing their jobs in institutions that had adopted this definition. She was also concerned as to why Council had circulated a letter to the MAC which excluded the afore mentioned examples. Council was unable to answer why these examples had been removed and the Mayor reassured that the definition would not be used to limit people's freedom of speech. One other MAC member agreed that the definition may be used as a tool for limiting people's voices.

Another member also reiterated that the denial of Israel advocates genocide and such statements are antisemitic.

There was consensus from the committee that the definition would be considered as part of the anti-racism campaign which is universal, and does not focus on specific groups of people, incidents or activities. Therefore, there are no changes required relating to the adoption of the definition, for the implementation of the anti-racism campaign or Cultural Diversity Strategy.

The campaign will focus on addressing all forms of racism including antisemitism, and Council will continue to share the voices of Jewish people.

The Mayor thanked the committee for discussing the issue in a calm and reasonable way.

## **9. Other Business**

### **Crisis unfolding in Ukraine**

Many people in the Waverley community have family and friends affected by the crisis in Ukraine, and Council wanted to hear from the MAC about how the local community has been impacted. Lana reported that 16 families have arrived in Sydney in the last week on tourist visas. People are waiting for the Government to offer humanitarian aid. Many people have relatives in both Ukraine and Russia, and the Russian people don't have a voice. Commonwealth countries are currently taking refugees. Lana attended a peaceful gathering in Martin Place in recognition of the crises, and was heartened that there were a group of Vietnamese people there to support them.

Other feedback suggested there are high level conversations with concerns about escalation if Putin goes further and gets support from other countries. Local businesses (Russian) are also being impacted with some community members choosing not to support them. Madly will speak with the Chamber of Commerce to understand further impacts to the business community.

Council has information available for people wanting to support organisations currently working in Ukraine.

## **10. Meetings in 2022**

**June, September, November**

## **11. Meeting closed 7:45 pm**