

ATTACHMENT TO AGENDA ITEM

Ordinary Meeting

17 June 2014

Agenda Item 7.2	Review of the Cultural Diveristy and Inclusion Strategy's Action Plan - March 2012 - December 2013	
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Greater Shepparton City Council

Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan



2012 - 2015





Photographs taken by Lesley Poole



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Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

We, the Greater Shepparton City Council, acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land which now comprises Greater Shepparton. We pay respect to their tribal elders, we celebrate their continuing culture and we acknowledge the memory of their ancestors.

Message from the Mayor

For decades, Greater Shepparton has been the destination for thousands of migrants. Greater Shepparton City Council is proud of our immigration history and the resulting diverse community we now enjoy. Patterns of immigration are likely to continue as new emerging communities seek settlement in Australia.

This is the first Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Strategy for Greater Shepparton and forges the way for the coming years. The strategy provides platforms for how we will communicate, celebrate, advocate, and work in partnership with other sector leaders to improve service delivery for our culturally diverse community.

Council has consulted broadly in the development of this plan with the many emerging and established cultural communities. Sector organisations have also provided valuable input and ideas into the future directions for the region to ensure we have a welcoming, inclusive and vibrant community. Partnership with these local sector organisations will be critical in the delivery of many of these initiatives and we acknowledge their commitment and ongoing support.

We look forward to delivering the many initiatives outlined in this strategy and the positive benefits they will make for our whole community.



Cr Michael Polan

Mayor, Greater Shepparton City Council





Executive Summary

Greater Shepparton is a richly diverse region, with the 2006 Australian Bureau of Statistics Census revealing that 11% of the population, or 6,147 individuals, identified as being born in a country other than Australia.

The development of a Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Strategy is designed to build on the existing positive achievements of Greater Shepparton City Council and guide our commitment to supporting and celebrating cultural diversity through best practice. Its development will inform all future Council strategies and policies to further support the development of harmonious communities; inclusive of all.

Developed with extensive consultation with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities, CALD service providers and stakeholders and relevant Council staff, the strategy reflects the needs of the community and service providers. CALD communities expressed the importance of feeling a sense of belonging, while service providers identified areas where Council could strengthen partnerships with the sector for the benefit of our diverse communities. Council staff also contributed many ideas to improve services to meet the needs of our diverse community.

Our Vision

Greater Shepparton City Council's vision for this region is of a vibrant, cohesive society which celebrates and incorporates aspects of cultural diversity within daily life. It is essential that we continue to be a welcoming place for migrants into the future and provide appropriate services to CALD communities, many who have specific cultural needs.

Key Strategic Directions & Action Plan

Six key strategic directions have been formed to frame future action Council will take to support cultural diversity within the region. The Action Plan consists of identified activities we will undertake during 2012-2015 and is based around the six strategic directions. These include;

- Engagement; communicate and education
- Partnership
- Leadership
- Celebration
- Advocate
- Services

The Strategy and associated Action Plan is considered a living document which will be updated yearly by the Cultural Development Officer. Council is proud to take a leadership role in showing the positive influence of cultural diversity in all aspects of community and organisations.



Developing a New Strategy

Considering the cultural diversity of our region, it is imperative that Council highlight our commitment to diversity by developing a Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Strategy. In the past, Council has supported diversity through a range of means, the achievements of which have been provided below. This has increased in the past years, through involvement in the Localities Embracing and Accepting Diversity (LEAD) pilot project and the development of a Cultural Development Team, with a dedicated Cultural Development Officer.

The development of this Strategy is designed to build on the work already undertaken and to strengthen partnerships between Council and the regions CALD communities, service providers and other cultural stakeholders. It is inclusive of all members of CALD communities, including aged, socio economic status, sexuality, women and youth.

The Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Strategy is based on valuing community, including their opinions and perspectives, recognising and celebrating diversity and fostering social cohesion.

This Strategy is not intended to apply to Aboriginal communities in Greater Shepparton. Council is currently in the process of developing an Aboriginal Partnership Strategy which will outline our commitment to our indigenous communities and their culture.

Process

Council has undertaken a range of activities to engage with the CALD sector in the development of this Strategy. Initial consultations were held with CALD communities, CALD service providers and stakeholders and relevant Council staff. CALD communities expressed the importance of feeling a sense of belonging, while service provider consultations identified areas where Council could strengthen partnerships with the sector for the benefit of our diverse communities. Council staff also contributed many ideas to improve services to meet the needs of our diverse community.

In the development of this Strategy, Council has used information from the community, as well as a review of current demographics and legislation to inform the Strategy and Action Plan. The Strategy aligns with the strategic objectives of various Council policies and reflects current state and national legislation. Appendix 1 outlines how the Strategy relates to these.

The Action Plan associated with the Strategy, outlines the direct action Council will take to develop and support cultural diversity within the region during 2012-2015. It will be updated annually by the Cultural Development Officer, with corresponding consultation.

Community Consultations

The Residents

Consultations have occurred with CALD communities within Greater Shepparton. This has included four individual consultations with the Afghani, Congolese, Iraqi and Sudanese community leaders, as well as a general consultation with the Filipino, Indian, Italian, Macedonian, Maltese, Sri Lankan and Turkish communities. Local interpreters were used to ensure all community ideas were captured.

These consultations have covered numerous people and provided a wide variety of ideas on how Council can continue to support cultural diversity within the region. In particular there were noticeable differences between the needs of more established communities and new/emerging communities.

The Service Providers

Consultations have occurred with a variety of service providers and those whose work relates strongly to cultural diversity. This includes 1:1 consultations with Centrelink Shepparton, Ethnic Council of Shepparton and District Inc (Ethnic Council), FamilyCare, Family Relationships Centre, Shepparton Interfaith Network, Goulburn Valley Settlement Committee, Gotafe Multicultural Education Unit, Primary Care Connect, Relationships Australia, Shepparton English Language Centre and Uniting Care Cutting Edge.

These consultations provided valuable feedback on the positive actions Council is already completing and many ideas on how to build on this work and relationships with the sector.

Focus group questions included:

- What are your current perceptions of Council's role in cultural affairs?
- How could this be improved?
- What are we doing well?
- Do you consider the partnerships between organisations in this sector to be productive and open?
- What importance do you place on maintaining these relationships?
- Is there any needs or issues which CALD communities express to you that Council is equipped to assist with?
- Do CALD clients express particular opinions of Council, positive or negative?

Council Staff

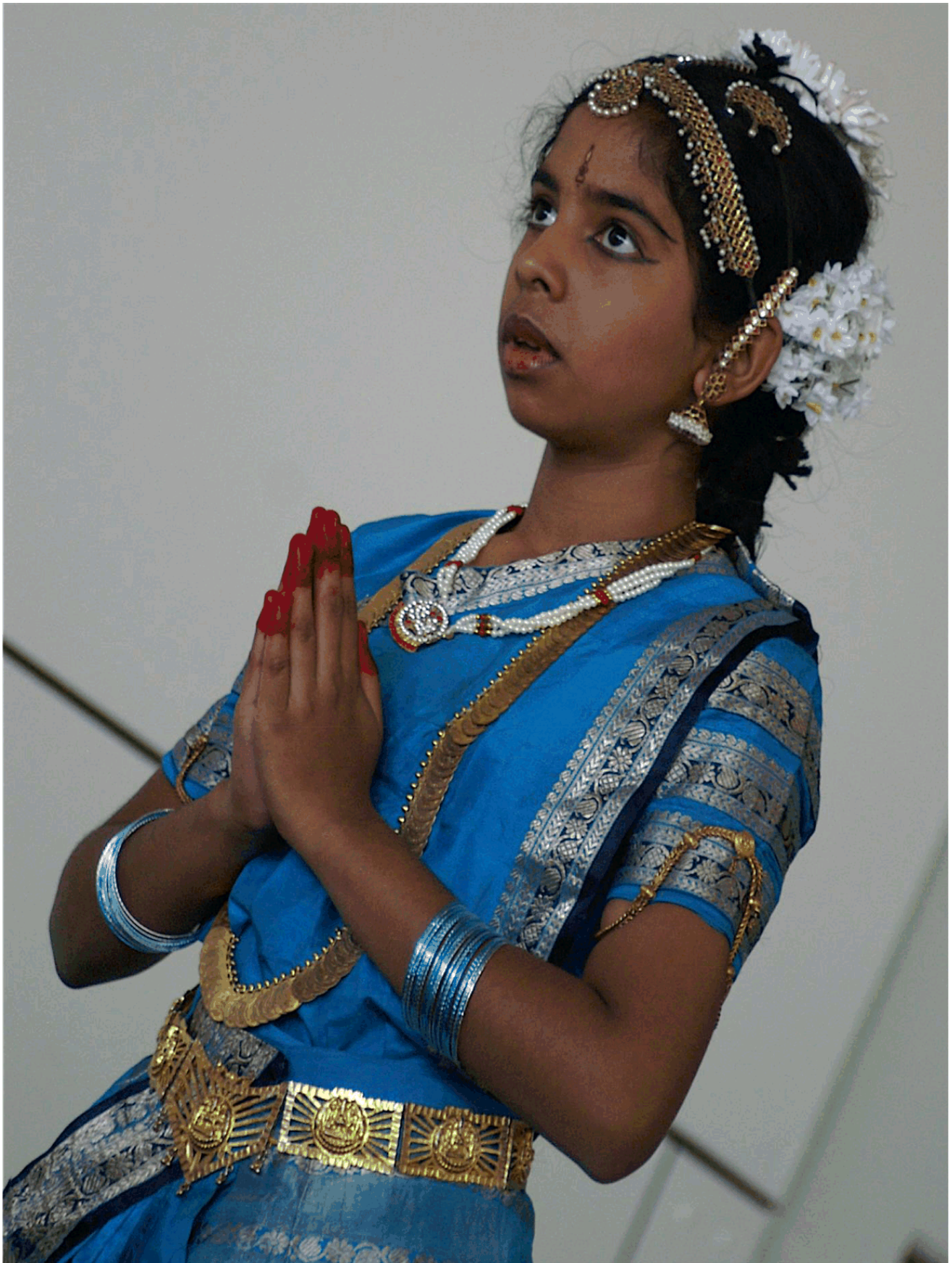
Council staff, across departments and management levels were consulted during the development of this strategy to gain an understanding of current relationships with CALD communities across the organisation. These consultations also provided an opportunity for staff to suggest possible positive actions and the capacity they have to achieve them.

Following the development of a draft strategy, further consultation was undertaken. The strategy was available for public viewing and feedback for two months, during which time copies were sent to service providers who assisted in its development. A public consultation forum was also held, allowing community members to liaise directly with Council staff about the directions and actions outlined in the strategy.

Current Achievements

During consultations with community and service providers, a variety of programs were identified as positive actions Council is already completing. These include:

- The LEAD project, especially the Social Marketing Campaign 'See Beyond Race'
- Identification of Cultural Development Officer position and recognition that Council needs to work in this area
- Support of cultural events during the past year, such as Harmony Day, Cultural Diversity Week, Refugee Week, Congolese Independence Day and South Sudanese Independence Day
- Skilled migration program
- Maternal and Child Health teams use of interpreters and development of relationships with CALD community
- Elf Program – the inclusion of books with multiple languages
- Family Day Care – around 50% of carers are of a CALD background
- Library – availability of books in different languages
- Art Galleries programs with communities
- Engagement in SheppARTon Festival
- Availability of public spaces – such as Kidstown, lake, parks and walking tracks



Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan

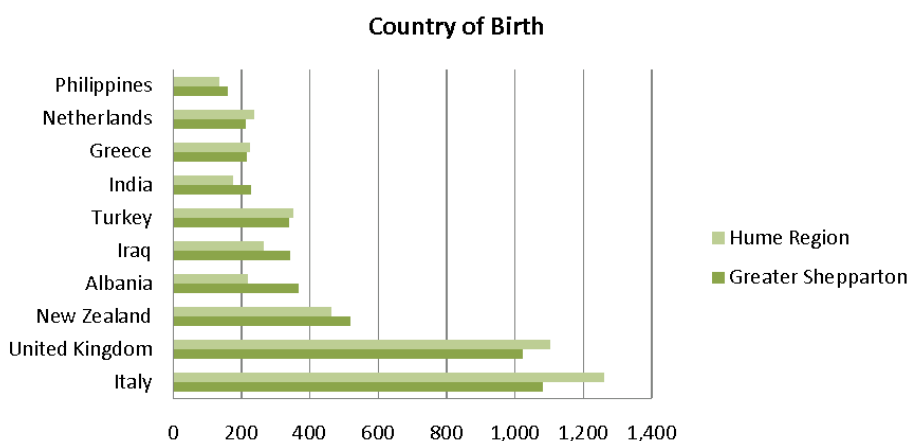


Our Diverse Community

In the 2006 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Census, 57,089 people resided in the Greater Shepparton region. This area comprises not only the major centre Shepparton, but also the smaller townships of Congupna, Dookie, Katandra, Merrigum, Mooroopna, Murchison, Tallygaroopna, Tatura, Toolamba and Undera.

The Census reveals that 11% of the population, or 6,147 individuals, identified as being born in a country other than Australia, with 7.8% of these in countries where English is not a first language.

The census shows the dominant non-English speaking country of birth as Italy, where 1.9% of the population, or 1,081 people, were born. High populations also originate from the United Kingdom and New Zealand, followed by Albania, Iraq, Turkey, India, Greece, the Netherlands and Philippines.



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006 Census of Population and Housing

The history of migration to Greater Shepparton is long, in particular beginning following World War I with the arrival of many immigrants from Southern Europe, in particular Greeks, Italians, Macedonians and Albanians. Post World War II, further migrants arrived from Europe, including large numbers of Turks around the 1960's. These populations are well established in the region and have further built the fruit industry which Greater Shepparton is well known for, through hard work and strong entrepreneurial spirits.

From the late 1980's Punjabi Indians and Pacific Islander populations began to arrive, and following the breakup of Yugoslavia in the 1990's, further European immigrants arrived. More recent arrivals from the mid 1990's include Afghani, Iraqi, Sudanese and Congolese populations.

Considering this more recent history, the 2006 Census doesn't adequately represent the visible breadth of diversity, in particular Sudanese, Congolese, Afghani, Iraqi, Samoan, Indian and Sri Lankan populations. Further, several of these populations arrived in the region following 2006. Many CALD communities don't understand the importance of a census and believe it could be used to discrimination against them if filled out accurately, for this reason census data may not be an accurate reflection of current population. In the 2006 Census, 3383 people did not state their country of birth, which could reflect those who were unwilling to provide these details. We believe the release of the 2011 census results may provide a more accurate reflection of our diverse communities.

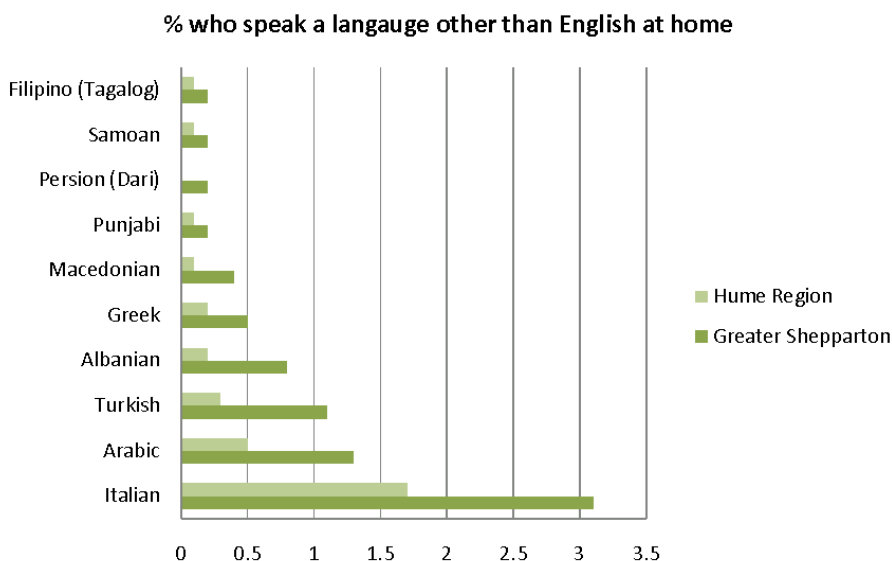
Recent studies undertaken by the Ethnic Council estimates the populations of our four newest and largest communities: Iraqi community numbering 3000-4000 individuals, Afghani community numbering 700 individuals, Sudanese as a community of 800 individuals and 140 Congolese individuals.

Greater Shepparton is an attractive place to a wide range of migrants for a variety of reasons. These include our history of migration and reputation of welcoming new arrivals, social factors such as family or community members already living in the region, the lifestyle of a country town with the economic and employment opportunities of a city and the agricultural industry.

The pattern of migration is anticipated to continue and in comparison to the Hume Region, Greater Shepparton continues to receive high levels of migration each year. In 2006 there was a 2.4% increase in the population in Greater Shepparton, in comparison to 1.8% in the Hume Region.

The census shows the majority of CALD communities are centred around the urban base of Shepparton-Mooroopna, although in the peripheral regions and towns percentages of the population include Italian (4.2%), Dutch (0.8%) and Turkish (1.3%). Newer populations of Iraqi and Afghani descent are more likely to live in south Shepparton; while Albanian, Italian and Turkish communities tend to be more evenly spread throughout the city.

In regard to language skills, those who identified as being born in a country other than Australia, 16%, or 1,021 people, stated that they spoke another language and English not well or not at all, while 41%, or 2,548 people, stated they spoke another language and English well or very well. These levels are 10% and 13%, respectively, higher than the Hume region.



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006 Census of Population and Housing

In regard to religious diversity, while 65% of Greater Shepparton still identify as Christians, the 2006 census showed an increase of 427 people who identified as Islamic. Making up 3.9% of the population in 2006, this is markedly higher than the Hume Region as a whole, 1.1%.

Refugee Settlement

Many recent arrivals to Greater Shepparton are of a refugee and humanitarian background. While there is not statistical evidence of these numbers, anecdotally it is believed to include 5,000 people in the past ten years; predominately from Afghanistan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq and Sudan. The lack of statistical evidence is a result of secondary migration, as individuals move to the region due to the family ties, employment opportunities and lifestyle.

Greater Shepparton City Council recognises that people who flee their countries due to war and other conflicts, have often experienced trauma and persecution and therefore required additional support during settlement.

As a Council we support the arrival of refugee’s to our region, and recognise the positive influence their skills, knowledge and culture bring. Considering the long term impact of an increasing population, we strongly advocate to State and Federal government for a well-funded, planned and coordinated settlement approach. This includes ensuring sufficient housing, employment, education, health and support services are available.



Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan



The Strategy

Our Vision

Greater Shepparton City Council's vision for this region is of a vibrant, cohesive society which celebrates and incorporates aspects of cultural diversity within daily life. Considering our strong history of migration, it is imperative that Council continue to engage with CALD communities and ensure their aspirations are met, along with the whole community. It is also essential that we continue to be a welcoming place for migrants into the future and provide appropriate services to this group of people, many who have specific cultural needs.

Greater Shepparton City Council is proud to take a leadership role within the community in showing the positive influence of cultural diversity in all aspects of community and organisations, such as the richness of community life, the opportunities for employers and positiveness of strong social cohesion.

Key Strategic Directions & Action Plan

The following Action Plan has been formed around the ideas and feedback gained throughout consultation. Six key strategic directions have been formed to frame the future action Council will take to develop and support cultural diversity within the region. These include;

- Engagement; communicate and education
- Partnership
- Leadership
- Celebration
- Advocate
- Services

The following Action Plan will be delivered throughout 2012-2015 and will be reviewed annually by the Cultural Development Officer, with consultation.

Budget Implications

Actions from the Action Plan requiring additional resources will be considered through Council's annual budgetary processes.

Key Strategic Directions 2012-2015

1. Engagement; communicate and educate

Develop strong and meaningful relationships with CALD communities to provide opportunities to increase their understanding, engagement and participation within the wider community.

2. Partnership

Council will work in partnership with communities, services providers and government bodies to enhance settlement coordination and maximise collaborative efforts towards building inclusive communities.

3. Leadership

Greater Shepparton City Council is committed to building local leadership within the CALD community and supporting other initiatives that develop positive perceptions of diversity.

4. Celebration

Council will celebrate our cultural diversity in cultural and mainstream events within the region. We will actively acknowledge the real and positive influence, past and present, migrants have made to our region.

5. Advocate

Council will advocate for the improvement of settlement services for CALD communities. Council will also play an active role promoting positive opinions of CALD communities, including working to combat prejudices and race based discrimination.

6. Services

Greater Shepparton City Council will work towards ensuring our services are culturally appropriate and continue to address the specific cultural needs of our CALD communities.

Key Strategic Direction 1: Engagement: Communicate and Educate			
Develop strong and meaningful relationships with CALD communities to provide opportunities to increase their understanding, engagement and participation within the wider community.			
Action	Measure	Timeframe	Responsibility/Partners
Develop a communications policy to outline the best way to communicate with CALD community. Options explored will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scoped interpreting services • Define the approach for translation of Council publications and brochures • Explore the opportunity for bilingual community advocates • The use of online, visual mediums and pre-recorded information services. 	Communication policy developed.	June 2013	Communications Customer Service Cultural Development Team
Develop mechanisms for CALD consultation in partnership with CALD service providers.	Consultation processes defined and implemented.	December 2013	Cultural Development Officer CALD communities and service providers
Work in partnership with local services providers to deliver community information sessions about particular services related to ongoing settlement.	CALD community information sessions delivered quarterly or in response to settlement patterns.	Ongoing – Reviewed Annually	Council branches CALD community service providers Ethnic Council, Uniting Care Cutting Edge and Gotafe
Maximise participation in interpretation courses with Gotafe to provide more local interpreters.	Promote available interpreter courses locally as they become available.	Ongoing	Cultural Development Officer Gotafe
Promote volunteering opportunities to the CALD community.	Volunteer promotion in relevant agencies.	Annually	Community Development Officer Cultural Development Team Volunteer Managers Network Visitor Information Centre
Engage CALD communities in Council strategies specific to settlement.	CALD communities are targeted in consultation during the development and implementation of Council plans including Housing Strategy and Community Plans.	Ongoing	Planning Branch Cultural Development Officer

Key Strategic Direction 2: Partnership			
Council will work in partnership with communities, services providers and government bodies to enhance settlement coordination and maximise collaborative efforts towards building inclusive communities.			
Action	Measure	Timeframe	Responsibility/Partners
Develop a partnership with Shepparton Interfaith Network to promote events and cultural/faith information.	Network development with meetings bimonthly for event sharing and promotion.	December 2012	Cultural Development Officer Shepparton Interfaith Network
Improve networking between Skilled Migration Coordinator and CALD service providers.	Two bimonthly meetings.	June 2012	Skilled Migration Coordinator Manager Economic Development Cultural Development Officer Uniting Care Cutting Edge Ethnic Council Gotafe
Develop a plan for improved settlement coordination in partnership with key service partners in regard to community health services.	Settlement Coordination Plan developed.	December 2015	Maternal and Child Health Cultural Development Officer Senior Environmental Health Officer Community Connections Coordinator Uniting Care Cutting Edge Primary Care Connect GV Health
Create greater understanding of the important role of police among the CALD community.	Working partnership with Victoria Police Multicultural Liaison Officer to achieve an annual 80% attendance at cultural events.	December 2014	Cultural Development Officer Victoria Police

Key Strategic Direction 3: Leadership Greater Shepparton City Council is committed to building local leadership within the CALD community and supporting other initiatives that develop positive perceptions of diversity			
Action	Measure	Timeframe	Responsibility/Partners
As part of the review of the Communications Strategy for Council, implement initiatives that promote the positive benefits of cultural diversity to the broader community.	Communications Strategy renewed. Positive media stories exceed negative in local media.	March 2014	Communications Cultural Development Team Shepparton News Adviser WIN News Weeknights
Develop a leadership/mentoring program for CALD communities and upon completion support participants in applying for Council positions currently advertised.	Leadership/mentoring program developed for CALD community.	October 2013	Human Resources Cultural Development Team
Increase the diversity of Council staff by developing a culturally appropriate recruitment policy (linked to Human Resources policy in development).	Recruitment policy developed.	February 2013	Human Resources Cultural Development Team
Develop CALD communities' capacity to apply for funding from governments bodies.	Grant training provided to CALD community annually.	Ongoing	Cultural Development Officer Grants Officer CALD communities
Explore opportunities to assist communities in the establishment of Social Enterprises to support the concept of cultural precincts through entrepreneurship.	Grant opportunities explored and an appropriate social enterprise model developed for submission where possible.	Ongoing	Culture and Community Strengthening Branch Economic Development CALD communities

Key Strategic Direction 4: Celebration			
Council will celebrate our cultural diversity in cultural and mainstream events within the region. We will actively acknowledge the real and positive influence, past and present, migrants have made to our region.			
Action	Measure	Timeframe	Responsibility/Partners
Council publications represent, recognise, and celebrate our diverse society.	Imagery used in all Council plans will represent the regions cultural diversity.	Ongoing	Communications Cultural Development Team
Create greater cross cultural representation and participation in community events to increase social inclusiveness and cohesion.	Mainstream events including Australia Day, Anzac Day, Queens Gardens markets, Unity Cup and Mayoral Ball have cultural diversity representation in programs. These events are advertised to CALD communities through emailing flyers to CALD service providers. Cultural events such as Festival of Lights and Ramadan are promoted to mainstream community to welcome participation.	Ongoing	Culture and Community Development Branch Events Team Visitor Information Centre Performing Arts Branch CALD service providers CALD communities
Develop a Cultural Award program to recognise the achievement and contribution of migrants in mainstream awards.	Introduction of awards for migrants in Australia Day awards and/or civic awards.	June 2013	Governance Team Cultural Development Team Communications Team
Develop a Council calendar that indentifies cultural celebrations throughout the year eg. Ramadan, Chinese New Year, Festival of Lights.	Council Cultural Calendar developed and circulated.	December 2012	Communications Cultural Development Team
Support cultural festivals throughout the year to promote cultural celebration and harmony.	Council participation in: Harmony Day Cultural Diversity Week Refugee Week Emerge Festival CALD Ladies Pampering Day	Ongoing	Performing Arts Branch Events Branch Cultural Development Team CALD and mainstream service providers and regional schools

Key Strategic Direction 4: Celebration			
Celebrations of the range of cultures which make up our region provide opportunities to connect and learn about other cultures. It also provides an opportunity to acknowledge the contribution that migrants make to our region.			
Action	Measure	Timeframe	Responsibility/Partners
Work with youth agencies to promote greater inclusion of CALD young people in events and committees to showcase and share their culture.	Greater numbers of CALD young people involved in community events and consultation processes.	Ongoing	Youth Officer Cultural Development Officer Word and Mouth Uniting Care Cutting Edge
Develop opportunities for citizenship ceremonies to be celebratory, public events for educational and acknowledgement purposes.	Ensure two citizenship ceremonies are conducted each year that are open to the broader public (including schools) and have a celebratory theme.	Ongoing	Organisation Performance Cultural Development Officer Shepparton English Language Centre
Explore opportunities for public/community art to assist in creating inclusion.	Initiatives in proposed Community Arts Policy include opportunities for cultural representation.	June 2013	Culture and Community Strengthening Branch Performing Arts Branch

Key Strategic Direction 5: Advocate			
Council will advocate for the improvement of settlement services for CALD communities. Council will also play an active role promoting positive opinions of CALD communities, including working to combat prejudices and race based discrimination.			
Action	Measure	Timeframe	Responsibility/Partners
Proactively work with key industries to reduce race-based discrimination in policy and practice.	Working partnership with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Retail organisations - Education providers - Sporting bodies and - Real estate agents - Media organisations to develop policy and practice approaches to reduce race based discrimination.	December 2014	Cultural Development Team
Encourage the regions Community Centres to promote their facilities to the CALD communities.	MOU and funding agreements with Community Centres outlines shared agreement to promote use of the facilities by the CALD community.	December 2012	Cultural and Community Strengthening Branch Mooroopna Education and Activity Centre North Shepparton Community and Learning Centre South Shepparton Community Centre Tatura Community House

Key Strategic Direction 6: Services			
Greater Shepparton City Council will work towards ensuring our services are culturally appropriate and continue to address the specific cultural needs of our CALD communities.			
Action	Measure	Timeframe	Responsibility/Partners
Introduce elements of cultural diversity into the Council foyer to create a more reflective and welcoming environment.	Cultural diversity is represented in imagery within the Council foyer.	December 2013	Cultural Development Officer Customer Service Manager Corporate Services
Increase Council staff knowledge and skills in liaising with CALD clients by providing cross cultural training.	80% front line staff are trained in cultural awareness.	December 2012	Cultural Development Team Human Resources Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission
Develop a multi faith/contemplation room within the Welsford Street and Doyles Road offices for staff and visitors.	Faith spaces are created in Welsford St and Doyles Rd that are private and culturally appropriate.	December 2012	Human Resources Cultural Development Team Performing Arts Branch Eastbank Operations Manager Asset Development
Create opportunities for CALD communities to participate in sport.	Support the Sports Without Borders Program and LEAD Project. Conduct annual information sessions on the projects.	December 2014	Park and Recreation Leisure Facilities Cultural Development Officer Valley Sport and sports leagues
Develop a Welcome Kit for new arrivals regarding Council services relevant to settlement.	Welcome kits developed.	December 2013	Communications Cultural Development Officer Skilled Migration Coordinator Customer Service
Continue to work with Leisure Facilities and Ethnic Council to increase CALD women's use of mainstream swimming and leisure centres.	Two information sessions held to educate community on swimwear standards. Cultural dress code alternatives outlined to new patrons, with interpreted documents.	December 2012	Leisure Facilities Cultural Development Officer Ethnic Council Uniting Care Cutting Edge
Build on existing culturally appropriate library services	Hold two bilingual story times yearly and develop a young women's engagement program.	December 2013	Library Community Liaison Officer Cultural Development Officer



Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan



Appendix 1: Strategy Context

The Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Strategy aligns with the strategic objectives of the Greater Shepparton Council Plan 2009-2013, Community Development Framework, Community Engagement Strategy, Municipal Public Health Plan 2009-2013 and Customer First Commitment. It also reflects current challenges with respect to cultural diversity at a state and national level.

Greater Shepparton Council Plan 2009-2013

It is a requirement of the Local Government Act 1989 that all Council's develop a Council Plan. This plan outlines the strategic objectives and directions over the life of an elected Council. One of the key strategic objectives in the current Council Plan relates directly to this Strategy:

- Community Life - Greater Shepparton City Council will enhance social connectedness, physical and mental health and well being, education and participatory opportunities in order to improve livability and a greater range of community services.

The sixth goal in this section is to *Embrace and strengthen cultural harmony and diversity*. Included in this is:

- A commitment to develop a Cultural Diversity Plan for Greater Shepparton and pursue implementation of any outcomes there from
- Elimination of discrimination in all activities and services
- The promotion of cultural festivals and activities
- Increase understanding and appreciation of cultural difference to improve the community's connectedness, including recognising and valuing our Aboriginal heritage

Community Development Framework

Adopted in 2010, this framework outlines Council's commitment to implement a community development approach in working with the community. This approach aims to positively shape our future by developing connected, resilient communities through initiatives that benefit the community for the long term.

People is outlined as Focus Area 1 of the Framework and aims to provide accessible and inclusive communities for all to ensure individuals and families feel connected, safe and supported within the community. This includes a strong focus on honouring and celebrating our cultural heritage and diverse communities.

Community Engagement Strategy

Adopted in 2009, this strategy recognises the importance of community input in developing and delivering better services. It commits Council to the involvement of community, community based agencies and local business in Council's decision making processes so that decisions will be more likely to reflect community issues and interests.

Associated with the strategy is a toolkit to assist Council staff in engaging hard to reach groups, such as people from CALD backgrounds.

Municipal Public Health Plan 2009-2013

Developed every four years, the Municipal Public Health Plan identifies existing and emerging priority areas of public health that need to be addressed during the term of a Council. Two sections in the current Public Health Plan are particularly relevant to the Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Strategy:

Objective 2 – Participation in decision making – developing and promoting initiatives to increase involvement of migrants in Council and community decision making.

Objective 6 – Our Diverse Community – supports the development of a cultural diversity policy and plan and will act to ensure all activities and programs delivered by Council actively promote the inclusion of people from all backgrounds.

Customer First Commitment

Developed from a committee consisting of 60 staff and councillors, this commitment outlines specific targets to ensure Council customer service meets the expectations of the residents of Greater Shepparton. In particular it states that Council will:

- Ensure all Council brochures and publications are accessible and easy to understand
- Interpreter services are available

State and Federal Legislation and Policies

Federal and state legislation and policies inform and influence local government work in regard to cultural diversity.

Victorian Legislation

Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001 – Prohibits the vilification of a person on the ground of race, religious belief or activity, with the aim to promote racial and religious acceptance.

Multicultural Victoria Act 2004 (including Multicultural Victoria Amendment Act 2008) – enshrines principles of multiculturalism including mutual respect and understanding regardless of background, the duty of all Victorians to promote and preserve diversity and that strengthening multiculturalism will be a core goal of every Victorian Government Department.

The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 – Aims to ensure basic human rights have clear legal protection, such as freedom, respect, equality and dignity. All government departments and public bodies, such as local government, must observe these rights during their day to day activities and development of policies.

Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (replaces the Equal Opportunity Act 1995) – Acts to promote, recognise and develop acceptance of everyone's right to equal opportunity and the elimination of discrimination on the basis of specific attributes. It also outlines that such discrimination is against the law.

Victorian Policies and Reports

The Municipal Association of Victoria: Statement of Commitment to Cultural Diversity 2007 – advocates for local governments which include inclusive communities and outlines how the Municipal Association of Victoria will support local government to nurture, promote and celebrate cultural diversity.

All of Us: Victoria's Multicultural Policy 2009 – Builds upon the Multicultural Victoria Act 2004 and outlines that supporting multiculturalism is a whole of government and whole of community approach. It sets out a framework for strengthening and promoting cultural, linguistic and religious diversity throughout Victoria.

Federal Legislation and Policy

Racial Discrimination Act 1975 – Under the Act it is against the law to harass or treat someone unfairly because of their race, colour, descent or national or ethnic background.

The People of Australia – Australia's Multicultural Policy 2010 – developed from recommendations from the Australia Multicultural Advisory Council, this policy highlights the federal government's commitment to a multicultural Australia and their plan to support communities to continue to embrace our different cultural traditions.

Key Strategic Direction 1: Engagement: Communicate and Educate		
Develop strong and meaningful relationships with CALD communities to provide opportunities to increase their understanding, engagement and participation within the wider community.		
Action	Measure	Actioned
<p>Develop a communications policy to outline the best way to communicate with the Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) community.</p> <p>Options explored will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scope interpreting services • Define the approach for translation of Council publications and brochures • Explore the opportunity for bilingual community advocates • The use of online, visual mediums and pre-recorded information services. 	Communication policy developed.	A Language Services CEO Directive is to be adopted in February 2014 by the Executive Team. The directive was developed in conjunction with Citizen Services who were identified as the key users of Language Services. This document will provide guidance to staff on the use of interpreters, translators and Auslan services to engage with the community. A contract with VITS will be recommended to provide the Multi Language Information Service to Council, to be implemented in mid 2014.
Develop mechanisms for CALD consultation in partnership with CALD service providers.	Consultation processes defined and implemented.	Relationships continue to strengthen between Council, CALD community members and local service providers. These stakeholders have been consulted on events such as Harmony Day, Refugee Week and Emerge. It is intended in future years that these relationships will be formalised to regular meetings between Council and the CALD Communities.
Maximise participation in interpretation courses with GOTAFE to provide more local interpreters.	Promote available interpreter courses locally as they become available.	GOTAFE were successful in applying for and receiving a grant through the Office of Multicultural Affairs to partner with RMIT to deliver an interpreter's course for Dari speakers. GOTAFE offered their facilities and the course was provided online and through videoconferencing. 17 students commenced the course in February 2013. 14 students completed the course.

Promote volunteering opportunities to the CALD community.	Volunteer promotion in relevant agencies.	Council will adopt a Volunteer Strategy in 2014. This will include consultation with the CALD community to ensure that the strategy will engage and support the CALD community to volunteer.
Engage CALD communities in Council strategies specific to settlement.	CALD communities are targeted in consultation during the development and implementation of Council plans including Housing Strategy and Community Plans.	The consultation for the Council Plan 2013/2017 included the Community Strengthening Branch targeting the Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) community through consultations with Uniting Care Cutting Edge, GoTAFE – Multicultural Education Unit and the Ethnic Council.

Key Strategic Direction 2: Partnership		
Council will work in partnership with communities, services providers and government bodies to enhance settlement coordination and maximise collaborative efforts towards building inclusive communities.		
Action	Measure	Actioned
Develop a partnership with Shepparton Interfaith Network to promote events and cultural/faith information.	Network development with meetings bimonthly for event sharing and promotion.	The Shepparton Interfaith Network has partnered with Council for Refugee Week, consultation of the content in the cultural calendars, and development of the Multi Faith Prayer and Contemplation room to be launched in early 2014. A link to the Interfaith Network's webpage is included on the Cultural Development page on the Greater Shepparton City Council website.
Improve networking between Skilled Migration Coordinator and CALD service providers.	Two bimonthly meetings.	Networking meetings were held three times from January – June in 2012 to establish the relationship between the Skilled Migration Coordinator and CALD service providers. However, as the Skilled Migration Coordinator's position no longer exists these meetings have now been replaced with the Integrated Settlement Planning meetings.
Develop a plan for improved settlement coordination in partnership with key service partners in regard to community health services.	Settlement Coordination Plan developed.	A representative from the Community Strengthening Branch has been attending the Integrated Settlement Committee since 2008. This committee has representatives from a number of agencies including Ethnic Council, GV Community Health, Goulburn Murray LLEN, La Trobe University, GoTAFE, GV Health and DHS.
Create greater understanding of the important role of police among the CALD community.	Working in partnership with Victoria Police Multicultural Liaison Officer to achieve an annual 80% attendance at	Through discussions at Integrated Settlement Planning Committee meetings, a partnership between the Ethnic Council, Greater Shepparton City Council and other agencies was established to deliver the Respecting Difference forum in November 2013. New arrival communities and service agencies were invited to exchange views and ideas on community connectedness, inclusion, information and engagement with a focus on reducing race based discrimination. Shepparton's Victoria Police branch were approached in the early stages of the planning. Melbourne based Eastern Region Community Engagement Inspector, Inspector Steve Noy, presented at the forum and provided

	cultural events.	advice to assist communities with expectations if they were to make a complaint with the Police. A representative from the Community Strengthening Branch sits on the Hume Region CALD Advisory Group which has had discussions about a need for a position to be created within the Victorian Police Shepparton branch as a Multicultural Liaison Officer.
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Key Strategic Direction 3: Leadership		
Greater Shepparton City Council is committed to building local leadership within the CALD community and supporting other initiatives that develop positive perceptions of diversity		
Action	Measure	Actioned
As part of the review of the Communications Strategy for Council, implement initiatives that promote the positive benefits of cultural diversity to the broader community.	Communications Strategy renewed. Positive media stories exceed negative in local media.	Council have continue work with local media to highlight positive stories of local community events for events such as Harmony Day, Refugee week, Emerge festival and the Localities Embracing and accepting Diversity (LEAD) art project.
Develop a leadership/mentoring program for CALD communities and upon completion support participants in applying for Council positions currently advertised.	Leadership/mentoring program developed for CALD community.	A Cultural Leadership workshop was organised in partnership with MAV for the Emerge festival held in June 2013. The workshops provided training in both leadership and financial sustainability of local cultural groups. Strong feedback was received from CALD community members.

Key Strategic Direction 4: Celebration		
Council will celebrate our cultural diversity in cultural and mainstream events within the region. We will actively acknowledge the real and positive influence, past and present, migrants have made to our region.		
Action	Measure	Actioned
Council publications represent, recognise, and celebrate our diverse society.	Imagery used in all Council plans will represent the regions cultural diversity.	Council engaged a local photographer, Liz Arcus, to attend multiple Council events with the CALD community over 2013-2014 and compile a collection of photos available for future use in Council publications.
Create greater cross cultural representation and participation in community events to increase social inclusiveness and cohesion.	<p>Mainstream events including Australia Day, Anzac Day, Queens Gardens markets, Unity Cup and Mayoral Ball have cultural diversity representation in programs. These events are advertised to CALD communities through emailing flyers to CALD service providers.</p> <p>Cultural events such as Festival of Lights and Ramadan are promoted to mainstream community to</p>	<p>Council assisted, promoted and celebrated Greater Shepparton's diverse society by encouraging the participation of the CALD community in mainstream events such as Australia Day, Kidsfest and the Twilight Festival. This was achieved by working closely with stakeholders in the community who work directly with the CALD community.</p> <p>Council assisted with the promotion of cultural events such as Harmony Day, Refugee Week and Emerge Festival to the mainstream community and have welcomed the participation from all cultures at all events. Focus groups and community meetings have been crucial in these events along with seeking volunteers from CALD backgrounds to assist at the events.</p>

	welcome participation.	
Develop a Cultural Award program to recognise the achievement and contribution of migrants in mainstream awards.	Introduction of awards for migrants in Australia Day awards and/or civic awards.	Discussions have been held with the Events team who co-ordinate Australia Day and it was determined that awards are already inclusive and a segregated award for migrants would not be in keeping with the all-encompassing theme of the awards.
Develop a Council calendar that identifies cultural celebrations throughout the year e.g. Ramadan, Chinese New Year, Festival of Lights.	Council Cultural Calendar developed and circulated.	In 2013 a calendar of culturally significant events was developed and distributed to the community, there have been strong positive responses to the calendar from residents, service providers and the CALD community. With such positive feedback from 2013 a 2014 calendar is being designed. It will showcase different culturally significant days from the previous year and now includes Aboriginal culturally significant dates.
Support cultural festivals throughout the year to promote cultural celebration and harmony.	Council participation in: Harmony Day Cultural Diversity Week Refugee Week Emerge Festival CALD Ladies Pampering Day	Council supported, promoted, organised and/or attended cultural festivals held throughout the year. Some of the celebration included Harmony Day, Cultural Diversity Week, Refugee Week, Emerge festival, Citizenship Ceremonies and a CALD Ladies Pampering Day. Greater Shepparton City Council partnered with MAV to launch the inaugural Emerge festival in April 2012 which was a unique festival presenting the rich and diverse cultural heritage of Greater Shepparton and included music, dance, storytelling, visual arts, film, exotic foods, ancient crafts and ceremonies. The second Emerge festival in March 2013 included all the activities from the previous year and a few new activities and had an attendance of approximately 2500 people.
Work with youth agencies to promote greater inclusion of CALD young people in events	Greater numbers of CALD young people involved in	Word and Mouth and The Bridge have joined with Council and MAV to deliver the second Emerge festival. Youth from all backgrounds were involved in the entertainment and co-ordination of a youth stage at the 2013 event. Organising has started for the 2014 Emerge festival and Word and

and committees to showcase and share their culture.	community events and consultation processes.	Mouth have applied for funding through OMAC. The Bridge will again partner in the festival and the first community meeting was held in November.
Develop opportunities for citizenship ceremonies to be celebratory, public events for educational and acknowledgement purposes.	Ensure two citizenship ceremonies are conducted each year that are open to the broader public (including schools) and have a celebratory theme.	Council continues to conduct bi-monthly citizenship ceremonies. Australia Day is the main themed event for the year. Themes for future ceremonies will continue to be investigated.
Explore opportunities for public/community art to assist in creating inclusion.	Initiatives in proposed Community Arts Policy include opportunities for cultural representation.	The LEAD program saw the creation of road art foils by local artists that have been placed in the Maude St Mall and around some of the small towns to celebrate cultural diversity and challenge race based discrimination in the community.

Key Strategic Direction 5: Advocate		
Council will advocate for the improvement of settlement services for CALD communities. Council will also play an active role promoting positive opinions of CALD communities, including working to combat prejudices and race based discrimination.		
Action	Measure	Actioned
Proactively work with key industries to reduce race-based discrimination in policy and practice.	Working partnership with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Retail organisations - Education providers - Sporting bodies and - Real estate agents - Media organisations to develop policy and practice approaches to reduce race based discrimination.	Bunnings and Broker House were two businesses that undertook LEAD training in cultural diversity and awareness of race based discrimination. Both businesses successfully completed the staff training.
Encourage the regions Community Centres to promote their facilities to the CALD communities.	MOU and funding agreements with Community Centres outlines shared agreement to promote use of the facilities by the CALD community.	A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed in May 2013 by the local Neighbourhood Houses. The MOU outlined the requirements for funding and included a focus on providing opportunities that promote an active, accessible, and inclusive community that provides social, economic, educational, sporting, recreational and cultural opportunities for families and individuals to ensure they feel connected, safe and supported within the community.

Key Strategic Direction 6: Services		
Greater Shepparton City Council will work towards ensuring our services are culturally appropriate and continue to address the specific cultural needs of our CALD communities.		
Action	Measure	Actioned
Introduce elements of cultural diversity into the Council foyer to create a more reflective and welcoming environment.	Cultural diversity is represented in imagery within the Council foyer.	Work continues on investigating options to make the Council foyer more reflective of our diverse community. Recently the art work from the LEAD Art project was placed in the foyer, along with totems with the word 'welcome' in a number of languages.
Increase Council staff knowledge and skills in liaising with CALD clients by providing cross cultural training.	80% front line staff are trained in cultural awareness.	The People and Performance Department develop, maintain and coordinate all of Council employees training. Part of this includes Council's compulsory online training, North East Region Development Scheme (NERDS), for all new Council employees. One of the components of the NERDS is the LEAD training. This training gives staff the opportunity to increase their knowledge of cultural diversity and dealings with the CALD community. The training is a requirement for all new employees to complete within the first month of commencing.
Develop a multi faith/contemplation room within the Welsford Street and Doyles Road offices for staff and visitors.	Faith spaces are created in Welsford St and Doyles Rd that are private and culturally appropriate.	The development of a Multi Faith Prayer and Contemplation room at Welsford St offices has commenced after recent renovations. Plans have been completed for the DRC and work is ongoing to locate a suitable room.
Create opportunities for CALD communities to participate in sport.	Support the Sports Without Borders Program and LEAD Project. Conduct	Two local sporting clubs, Shepparton Touch Football Association and Shepparton Cycling Club, agreed to be involved in reviewing their policies and procedures and to participate in LEAD and Member Protection Information Officer (MPIO) training, to promote pro-diversity and implement anti-discrimination actions. Both clubs organised 'Come and Try Days' which resulted in an

Develop a Welcome Kit for new arrivals regarding Council services relevant to settlement.	annual information sessions on the projects. Welcome kits developed.	increase of members including members from the CALD community. Work with external stakeholders to create a Welcome Kit is in the initial stages. It will include information regarding services relevant to settlement including Council, welfare and health services. Goulburn Valley Health are currently finalising a Health Services booklet for the CALD community, Council along with service providers have assisted in the development of the booklet.
Continue to work with Leisure Facilities and Ethnic Council to increase CALD women's use of mainstream swimming and leisure centres.	Two information sessions held to educate community on swimwear standards. Cultural dress code alternatives outlined to new patrons, with interpreted documents.	Active Living have reviewed the learning's from previous individual gender swimming sessions and in consultation with Ethnic Council identified that general integration is a better option for the community. They will continue to look for opportunities to educate all communities on cultural dress code.
Build on existing culturally appropriate library services	Hold two bilingual story times yearly and develop a young women's engagement program.	Goulburn Valley Region Library currently offers rhyme and story times that are suitable for all cultures. They have specifically themed activities including craft throughout Refugee Week, Chinese New Year, etc. Bi-lingual story times are held through specific weeks. Sessions are provided to the CALD community that incorporate a library tour, membership, access to the library, how to ask for a book, how to borrow a book and sharing spaces. The library also provide assistance for getting a licence, downloading immigration forms, finding a job and information about English classes.