



GLEN EIRA MULTICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

MINUTES

Monday 13 November 2023 Caulfield Cup Room - Glen Eira Town Hall

The Multicultural Advisory Committee meeting commenced at 6.07pm

Present:

<i>Councillors:</i>	Cr Tony Athanasopoulos (Chair)	Glen Eira Councillor Committee Member
	Cr Li Zhang	Glen Eira Councillor Committee Member
<i>Community Representatives:</i>	Agnes Cheung	
	Ann Manning	Glen Eira Adult Learning Centre
	Deepa Mani	
	Dr Priyadharshini Mendis	
	Edward Xu	Bentleigh Chinese Community Association
	Elif Kurdoglu Sengoz	
	Janeca Gross	
	Monica Espinosa	
	Maureen Barton (proxy)	Progressive Judaism Victoria
	Nick Chalas	Let's Connect Club
	Tamara de Silva	Caulfield South Community House
	Rabbi Yaakov Glasman	
<i>Council staff:</i>	Harley Moraitis	Acting Director Community Wellbeing
	Jayde McBurnie	Acting Manager Community Development
	Lana Cari	Diversity and Inclusion Officer
	Ali Yaghobi	Diversity and Inclusion Officer
	Victoria Tanner	Coordinator Diversity and Inclusion
<i>Apologies:</i>	Cr David Zyngier	Glen Eira Councillor Committee Member
	Cr Simone Zmood	Glen Eira Councillor Committee Member
	Mark Saunders	Director Community Wellbeing
	Sharon Sykes	Manager Community Development
	Cesar Albarran Torrens	
	Sylvie Berchick	Good Vibes Society
	Renee Leighton	
	Pooja Gupta	
	Regina Atzil	
	Cassandra Barrett	Jewish Care
	Kaia Sun	
	Joshua Goodman	Jewish Community Councils of Victoria
	Dr Gamini Adikari	Sinhala Cultural and Community Services Foundation

1. Welcome and Acknowledgement of Country

2. Reminder to declare any conflicts of interest in any items on the agenda.

There were no conflicts of interest declared at the meeting.

3. Summary of the minutes of the previous meeting

Minutes from the meeting held on Wednesday 13 September 2023 were endorsed at the Ordinary Council meeting on Tuesday 17 October 2023.

The following items were discussed:

- Victoria University presented on the anti-racism project called 'Understanding Reporting Barriers and Support Needs of People Experiencing Racism', in collaboration with the Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria and the Islamic Council of Victoria. Interested committee members were encouraged to make direct contact with Victoria University.
- Council's Aboriginal Community Officer presented on the Voice to Parliament community information sessions.
- Key findings from the communications survey were presented.

4. Items for discussion

4.1. Reflections on the middle east conflict

- Cr Athanasopoulos thanked the Multicultural Advisory Committee members for their reflections and advice regarding the conflict in Israel and Gaza and highlighted the role and value of input provided by Council's Advisory Committees. He indicated that the Mayor had issued a statement on behalf of Council on 13 November 2023, recognising that many residents have family or friends affected by the conflict and highlighting that our focus is on supporting and strengthening the already strong ties in our community. The Committee agreed that the Mayor's statement was an appropriate reflection of community sentiment.
- Committee members were invited to offer their comments and reflections about the impacts on our community, which was then followed by one-minute silence in acknowledgement of current world conflict and loss of life.

4.2. Together We Stand Forum

- Committee members shared their support for the decision by Council to postpone the 'Together We Stand' Forum, which was scheduled to take place on Thursday 30 November 2023
- The forum is a key priority action of the Multicultural Advisory Committee to demonstrate our support for our diverse cultural and faith community. However, with many in our community feeling the immense weight of international events, it was agreed that the timing of the forum was not ideal and that it was appropriate to postpone.
- Committee members discussed the purpose of the postponed forum which is a focus on anti-racism and anti-discrimination. They agreed it would remain the same and the planning of the forum will be discussed further at the first Committee meeting of 2024.

4.3. Cultural Diversity Week March 2024

- Council officers shared information about local activities taking place during March 2024, including:
 - Glen Eira Adult Learning Centre to deliver a Harmony Day lunch.
 - In One Voice Jewish Cultural Festival.
- Council noted that the Community Grants Program funded 22 multicultural events and activities in the 2023-2024 funding round.
- Committee members asked questions about the Community Grants Program, seeking clarity on auspice arrangements and how to find out why grants may have been unsuccessful. Council officers will circulate further information to Committee members.
- Committee members discussed the shortage of performing arts spaces for hire in the Glen Eira area resulting in the need to look outside the municipality. Council officers noted that

there is consideration in the Grants Program Guidelines regarding hire of venues that are outside of Glen Eira if a specific need cannot be met locally.

- Committee members asked about the hire process for the Town Hall Gallery and Council officers agreed to circulate information following the meeting.
- The 2023 Cultural Diversity Week theme was discussed, and it was noted that the 2024 theme was not yet released.
- The proposal by Sylvie Berchick, Good Vibes Society, will be deferred to the next meeting when Sylvie will be in attendance.

ACTION: Proposal by Sylvie Berchick to be deferred to next meeting.

ACTION: Council officers to circulate information on Council Grants Programs and information on how to hire Town Hall Gallery space to Committee members.

5. General business

Committee members shared updates on behalf of their organisations and communities:

- Nick Chalas, Let's Connect Club, noted that the Senior Citizen's Club in Bentleigh East was currently planning its activities for 2024.
- Rabbi Glasman thanked Council and committee members for behaving so professionally during the recent international and local events.
- All Committee members reiterated their thanks, with appreciation to fellow members and Council.
- Newest committee member Tamara de Silva, Caulfield South Community House, shared that she looks forward to the opportunity to participate in the 2024 Committee meetings.
- Deepa Mani and Janeca Gross enquired about 'Services Summary Review'. Council officers noted they will continue to document what is happening at Council and across the Glen Eira municipality and bring back to the Committee for feedback and advice.
- Janeca Gross spoke on the Victoria University anti-racism project, noting she had shared the report with her networks to support gathering more data on racism, and that Welcoming Australia and the Scanlon Foundation has done a lot of research on racism.
- Edward Xu, Bentleigh Chinese Community Association, highlighted the importance of working with Victoria Police and Government to ensure community safety.
- Cr Li Zhang spoke to the opportunity of the Committee to be able to highlight multicultural activities, both within and outside of Glen Eira, to ensure events are shared. Council officers suggested general business is a good way to share, as well as the multicultural email address.
- Committee members suggested that Glen Eira News was a good avenue to share appropriate information, activities and events, via 'What's On' section or 'Community Diary'.
- Monica Espinosa raised an opportunity for reflection on the key priorities set out at the beginning of the year and progress to date. Committee members discussed achievements and agreed to review the priorities at the next meeting in early 2024.
- Chair, Cr Athanasopoulos thanked everyone for their participation in the committee and for representing their communities.

ACTION: Council officers to investigate opportunities for Committee members to lodge details of local events to share with the broader community.

6. Forward Meeting Schedule

Meetings for 2024 are to be scheduled following the Mayoral election period and appointment of Councillors to Advisory Committees.

7. Meeting closed: 7.13pm