

VC: JA

29 November 2011

Dear Councillor/Sir/Madam

You are invited to attend a **LOCAL INDIGENOUS, MULTICULTURAL AND ETHNIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE** of Ashfield Council, to be held in the Ashfield Civic Centre, Level 6, 260 Liverpool Road, Ashfield on **MONDAY 5 DECEMBER 2011 at 6:30 PM.**

Yours faithfully

VANESSA CHAN
General Manager

SEE ATTACHED AGENDA

LOCAL INDIGENOUS, MULTICULTURAL AND ETHNIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE - 5 DECEMBER 2011

AGENDA

- 1. OPENING**
- 2. APOLOGIES/REQUESTS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE**
- 3. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF LOCAL INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY**
- 4. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

Disclosures are to be made by any Councillors who have a pecuniary / non-pecuniary interest in respect of matters that are before the Committee at this meeting.
(05/12/2011)

- 5. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF COMMITTEE**

LOCAL INDIGENOUS, MULTICULTURAL AND ETHNIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE – 17/08/2011

- 6. STAFF REPORTS**

6.1 Update on matters relevant to the Local Indigenous, Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Committee

- 7. GENERAL BUSINESS**

- 8. CLOSE**

Subject	UPDATE ON MATTERS RELEVANT TO THE LOCAL INDIGENOUS, MULTICULTURAL AND ETHNIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
File Ref	Community - Ethnic issues
Prepared by	Gerard Howard - Manager Community Services
Reasons	To provide an update on access and equity measures for our multicultural community.
Objective	To seek feedback and advice from the Committee

Overview of Report

This report is to update Council on projects which relate to culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) residents and communities.

Background

Cultural Intelligence Training

Council's 2011/2012 Corporate Training Plan identifies the intention to conduct 'Cultural Intelligence Training' for staff. This training is to be held in December this year and is compulsory for all staff to attend, including Directors, Managers & Supervisors. Some of the expected outcomes from the training include:

- What cultural intelligence tell us is crucial to being effective across cultures
- Practicing the art of cultural intelligence: broadening your cultural repertoire
- Knowledge of cultural values and how they impact expectations of customer service
- Skills in reading and recognising cultural clues when interacting with others
- Gain skills in communicating in other cultural ways when needed, to build better relationships and provide excellent customer service

The facilitator of the training is Ms Charlotta Öberg from Prisma, Cross-Cultural Consultants.

Council supported initiatives outreaching to Families

A parenting seminar will be held for Mandarin-speaking families at the Red Bug playgroup in Ashfield Park on Monday 28 November 2011. The seminar will help Chinese families to learn about the importance of disciplining children and some child discipline strategies.

Update on matters relevant to the Local Indigenous, Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Committee

Council will be launching Ashfield Pedestrian & Road Safety Project at Council forecourt on 29 November 2011. This is a joint project between Chinese Australian Services Society and Ashfield Police and it is funded by NRMA Insurance. Ashfield's Mayor and other VIPs will unveil the project banner, which says 'Save Your Own Life. Follow the Road Rules' in 7 different languages.

Council will be running FREE Child Restraint Fitting Day at Ashfield Aquatic Centre car park on 1 December from 10am till 3pm. The event is supported by NRMA Insurance and run in partnership between Chinese Australian Services Society and Ashfield Police. The aim of this project is to improve the safety of Ashfield babies and children in vehicles by checking child occupant restraint fittings and to provide families with child restraint information in community languages.

Council has booked a swimming instructor from Communities NSW Sport & Recreation to run a Water Confidence program for women of all cultures. The program targets mothers and carers with young children who have little or no swimming experience and aims to provide them with socialisation and recreational opportunities. It will run for 8 weeks, from 16 Feb till 5 April, and there will be two one-hour sessions between 10:30-12:30pm.

Carnival of Cultures

The 2012 Carnival of Cultures is scheduled for Sunday 18th March. Whilst it is anticipated that the Carnival will be developed along similar lines to that which was planned for 2011, any suggestions or advice from LIMEAC as to content or features of the Carnival, would be valued.

Ashfield Youth Theatre

The Major Production for Ashfield Youth Theatre will take place in late March 2012 with a working title 'the Migrant Project'. This will be an interdisciplinary and inter-cultural site-specific performance. The performance will examine Ashfield and the Inner West as a centre based on a history of migration (whether it was 5 months ago or 50,000 years ago) through personal storytelling; investigating the exchanges between the first people of this place and those who have travelled here since. The performance will incorporate three strands of performance: Digital, (visual projections, film) Music and Physical (Dance, text-based acting).

Aimee Falzon, Director of AYT, is currently looking for individuals, groups and organisations interested in assisting with research, sharing their story and having a conversation about the project! She is also on the hunt for any historically and culturally layered spaces in the Inner West that would be suitable for the performance.

Auditions for people aged 13 - 25 will be taking place on the 13th - 15th December in Ashfield. Performers will be mentored by professional artists throughout the rehearsal process and will need to be available for rehearsals on Tuesday and Thursday evenings in February & March 2012.

Please contact Aimee Falzon in regards to auditions and discussions on 0408 629 658 or ayt@ashfield.nsw.gov.au

Aboriginal Consultative Committee

Council's Aboriginal Consultative Committee continues to implement the Reconciliation Action Plan. Current projects include pursuit of a Sister Community relationship with Peak Hill Aboriginal community in western NSW, planning for two 'gateway' art installations in the Municipality & the recruitment of Aboriginal people for various positions at Council.

Settlement Service

The service is funded by Department of Immigration and Citizenship for newly arrived migrant refugees and humanitarian entrants resident in the Inner West. The service comprises general case work and also community development in relation to a volunteer program. The volunteer program is partially designed to enable newly arrived migrants to obtain local work experience which will further their potential employment prospects and help with their integration into the broader community.

Council has undertaken extensive promotion of this service and the response has been most gratifying. The Council's website has been upgraded to include relevant information. Information flyers have been distributed to all neighbouring Councils in the Inner West, to Navitas English Burwood College and to Centerlink Burwood. Letters and flyers have also been distributed to 47 schools in the Inner West area & some have responded requesting further information both written and electronic. The information flyer will be distributed to local relevant community organisations and churches in the near future.

Up to date, a total of 22 individual cases have been assisted with various issues, such as education and training, Centrelink matters, family relationships and so on. One volunteer training seminar was held in October with 11 people attending.

A positive example of the Services work is that of young lady who came seeking help after 3 weeks of her arrival to Australia. She was tearful and depressed as she could not get a job. She had come as a skilled migrant having a Masters degree. After discussion it transpired that the problem was primarily to do with her spoken English, isolation and an understanding of the range of employment opportunities in her specialisation. She was encouraged to attend the English Conversation classes running at Council as well as the GreenWay bushcare activity. She was then encouraged "to look outside the box" and explore more options. She gained two interviews in the following two weeks. Her depression lifted as she now has great hope of finding a suitable job and feels far more confident in her life in the new country.

English Conversation program

Ashfield Council has inaugurated a new initiative run in the Civic Centre foyer each Friday morning from 10am until 12noon. This conversational English course has been designed for those members of the community for whom English is a second language.

Update on matters relevant to the Local Indigenous, Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Committee

The program is designed to provide students with a developing fluency in English, equipping them to deal with every day situations where it is essential to be able to clearly communicate their needs and meaning, and to understand the responses to their requests.

The course runs for ten weeks from 14th Oct until 16th of Dec. It concentrates on Spoken English used in every day situations. The goal is for students, on completion of the course, be able to ask for things they want, get people to respond to their requests, express themselves as an individual, more easily socialise with those around them, verbalise what they are thinking and exchange information.

The response to initial advertising was overwhelming with 56 people applying for the 15 available places. The students represent a very descriptive cross section of the local community, which include people from China, India, Indonesia, Sudan, Netherlands, Korea and Greece. English language fluency varies from absolute beginners English to quite fluent. Students range in age from early 20's to later 60's. To address the varying English linguistic proficiency levels, students have been divided into five groups whose tutor's tailor their teaching to the appropriate level.

The course includes an excursion to the Metro Migrant Resource Centre. The final week's activity will be a student presentation of their "Migration Story" which will be video taped and edited. Student reaction has been most supportive and feedback has been extremely positive. All enrolled students have expressed a desire to re-enrol in next year's proposed course and there is a waiting list of prospective students wishing to enrol next year.

This course has delivered a necessary service. It has shown the Council is aware of its multicultural constituency and their needs. The program was instigated after one-off funding was received from Wests Ashfield and Club Ashfield, under the Community Development and Support Expenditure (CDSE) program. Therefore, advice and guidance is sought from LIMEAC as to how Council can achieve ongoing funding towards this initiative.



Ashfield CBD Street Security

Council has liaised with local businesses in regard to shop security issues in Ashfield CBD. A meeting has been requested by the Chinese Business Association on Thursday 24 November. A verbal report on the outcomes of this meeting will be given to LIMEAC.

Culture and ageing

The Ashfield based Chinese Carefree group went to Campsie to visit a Chinese Nursing Home this month. A crowd of approximately 60 people were interested to go, however it ended up that 101 people actually participated in the visit! Apparently there were even more people who wanted to attend. This would appear to demonstrate a large need within the Chinese elderly community to have more information about aged care, nursing home options etc.

Ashfield Library

Friday 6th January - Dreamtime Story Time with Patricia Blackman, 11:00am – 11:45 pm Ashfield and 1pm – 1:45 pm at Haberfield. Gifted storyteller Patricia Blackman is returning to Ashfield and Haberfield libraries to present a special Dreamtime story time for pre-school and early primary school aged children. Patricia will also guide the children through an exciting craft activity.

GreenWay Festival CALD Walking Tours

As part of the 2011 Greenway Festival (which ran as a week long celebration from October 23rd – 29th 2011) Senior GreenWay Project Officer, Joanne McDonnell, worked with Ashfield Council Harmony Worker, Cathy Gao, to organise two pilot walks with the local Chinese community.

The GreenWay Biodiversity Walk was held on Monday 24th October. The walk was facilitated by GreenWay Landcare Supervisor, Sue Stevens and a Mandarin interpreter from the Ethnic Community Council. The two hour walk was attended by 14 community members and allowed participants an opportunity to learn about the local flora and fauna of the GreenWay.



Update on matters relevant to the Local Indigenous, Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Committee

The GreenWay local History Walk which started at Richard Murden Reserve in Haberfield and finished up at Cadigal Reserve in Summer Hill was well attended by a group of 18 active Chinese seniors. Local resident and historian Nick Chapman facilitated the two hour walk, along with Cathy Gao, from Ashfield Council, who interpreted for the group. Feedback from the group was very positive with one participant noting that 'she had lived in the area for 20 years and until now didn't know this beautiful area existed'.

The GreenWay Sustainability Project recommends partnering with Cathy Gao and the Community Services Department to run future GreenWay Walking Tours with the CALD community.

Financial Implications

No financial implications beyond existing budget allocations.

Other Staff Comments

Public Consultation

N/A

Conclusion

Council programs continue to aim towards cross cultural understanding and cultural exchange between communities in Ashfield Municipality. It is hoped that this report provides useful information to the committee so that Council's programs can be discussed & relevant feedback provided.

ATTACHMENTS

There are no supporting documents for this report.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1/3 That the information in the report be noted.**
- 2/3 That the Committee provide advice and guidance regarding options for ongoing external funding of the English Conversation group.**
- 3/3 That the Committee provide any relevant input relating to the 2012 Carnival of Cultures.**

NELLETTE KETTLE
Director Corporate & Community Services