

Multicultural Policy

1 Purpose

To guide Council's work in service provision, planning, advocacy and community development for its culturally and linguistically diverse community.

This Policy provides a platform for collaboration and partnerships between Council, business, service providers, other tiers of government and the community where multiculturalism is accepted, respected and appreciated.

Councils are required to exercise their functions in a manner that is consistent with and actively promotes the 'Principles of Multiculturalism'. Under the *Community Relations Commission and Principles of Multiculturalism Act 2000*, General Managers of NSW local councils are charged with ensuring these principles are implemented within their local government area.

These Principles are as follows:

- a) the people of New South Wales are of different linguistic, religious, racial and ethnic backgrounds who, either individually or in community with other members of their respective groups, are free to profess, practise and maintain their own linguistic, religious, racial and ethnic heritage
- b) all individuals in New South Wales, irrespective of their linguistic, religious, racial and ethnic backgrounds, should demonstrate a unified commitment to Australia, its interests and future and should recognise the importance of shared values governed by the rule of law within a democratic framework
- c) all individuals in New South Wales should have the greatest possible opportunity to contribute to, and participate in, all aspects of public life in which they may legally participate
- d) all individuals and institutions should respect and make provision for the culture, language and religion of others within an Australian legal and institutional framework where English is the common language
- e) all individuals should have the greatest possible opportunity to make use of and participate in relevant activities and programmes provided or administered by the Government of New South Wales
- f) all institutions of New South Wales should recognise the linguistic and cultural assets in the population of New South Wales as a valuable resource and promote this resource to maximise the development of the State.

2 Policy

The Multicultural Policy is designed to support and celebrate Coffs Harbour City Council's multicultural community, inform the quality of and access to Council services for multicultural communities and commits Council to working internally with its own staff and systems, and externally by engaging meaningfully with the community. Coffs Harbour City Council's Multicultural Policy aims to achieve the following objectives in order to help facilitate the implementation of the 'Principles of Multiculturalism':

Objective 1: Leadership

Council actively promote and are accountable for the implementation of the Principles of Multiculturalism both within the organisation and to the wider community.

Objective 2: Community Harmony

That Council work with communities and stakeholders to develop and deliver activities and initiatives that promote social inclusion and inclusiveness.

Objective 3: Access and Equity

That Council endeavour to ensure its information, programs, services and facilities are accessible and all community members have opportunities to enhance their overall social, cultural and economic wellbeing.

Objective 4: Economic and Cultural Opportunities

That Council in collaboration with community and stakeholders seek to develop innovative models of promoting the benefits of cultural diversity as a social, cultural and economic asset for the LGA.

Objective 5: Planning and Engagement

That Council’s approach to integrated planning and community engagement embraces our community diversity and ensures inclusivity.

3 Definitions

Multiculturalism: A term which describes the cultural and ethnic diversity of contemporary Australia. We are, and will remain, a multicultural society.

(As a public policy multiculturalism encompasses government measures designed to respond to that diversity. It is a policy for managing the consequences of cultural diversity in the interests of the individual and society as a whole. Department of Social Services, Australia)

Principles of Multiculturalism: The principles of multiculturalism, as set out in the Community Relations Commission and Principles of Multiculturalism Act 2000, provide guidance to all public authorities, including councils, on recognising and promoting the benefits of cultural diversity in NSW.

Cultural inclusiveness: A culturally inclusive environment requires mutual respect, effective relationships, clear communication, explicit understandings about expectations and critical self-reflection.

Community Harmony: Show cohesion and inclusion and promote a tolerant and culturally diverse society.

Culture: Culture is the characteristics and knowledge of a particular group of people, defined by everything from language, religion, cuisine, social habits, music and arts.

CALD: Culturally and Linguistically Diverse

Access and Equity: Ensuring that all Australians, regardless of racial, religious, cultural or language backgrounds enjoy full access services to which they are entitled.

(Australia’s Multicultural Access and Equity Policy: Respecting diversity. Improving responsiveness acknowledges that we live in a multicultural society and there is an obligation on Australian Government departments and agencies to provide equitable access to services regardless of the cultural or linguistic background of clients. Department of Social Services, Australia)

4 Key Responsibilities

Position	Directorate	Responsibility
Mayor	Council	To lead Councillors in their understanding of, and compliance with, this policy and guidelines.
General Manager	Executive	To lead staff (either directly or through delegated authority) in their understanding of, and compliance with, this policy and guidelines.
Directors	All directorates	To communicate, implement and comply with this policy

		and related guidelines.
Group and Section Leaders	All directorates	To plan, action, communicate, implement and comply with this policy and related guidelines as it impacts your areas of responsibility.
All Council officials	Council	To comply with this policy and related procedures.

5 References

- Community Relations Commission and Principles of Multiculturalism Act 2000
- Implementing the Principles of Multiculturalism Locally – A planning framework for Councils
- Multicultural Policies and Services Program: Multicultural Planning: A resource for practitioners

6 Details of Approval and revision

- **Approval date: 27/07/2017**
- **Responsible Section: Community Planning & Performance**
- **Superseded policies/procedures:**
- **Next review date: 27/07/2021**

Table of amendments

Amendment	Authoriser	Approval ref	Date