

## Attachment 1 - Asylum Seeker and Refugee Communities Action Plan Year Three Priorities Year 3

The following are actions agreed to be ongoing and specific to asylum seekers throughout the 2014-17 plan

| PLACE - Action Area 2 - Housing Accessibility  |  |                  |  |
|--|--|------------------|--|
| Advocate for adequate resource allocations and innovative approaches to Improve accessibility to short and long term local housing options for asylum seeker and refugee communities |  |                  |  |
| No.  | Action/Output  | Progress         | Comments   |
| 2.1.1  | Continuation of existing training and support to adults seeking asylum, in areas of sourcing short and long term accommodation, the Residential Tenancies Act and referrals to relevant housing support providers (as required). | <b>Completed</b> | <p><b>4 Activities and items was reported for this output</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wellsprings for Women have liaised with the Asylum Seekers Resource Centre (ASRC) to refer asylum seekers to their agency to support them in understanding their rights</li> <li>• 25 asylum seekers during 2016-17 participated in English, Computer, Sewing and Learning to live in Australia education programs held by the Wellsprings Centre</li> <li>• Through Springvale Monash Legal Service, Community Legal Education (CLE) sessions were delivered at ASRC and AMES Australia to educate people seeking asylum and refugees on Tenancy rights and responsibilities</li> <li>• Ongoing collaborative partnership established with ASRC to provide ongoing CLE to their classes.</li> </ul>  |
| 2.4  | Encourage the development of accessible, affordable, and suitable housing stock for vulnerable groups (including asylum seekers living in the community) with options including rooming houses.                                  | <b>Completed</b> | <p><b>3 Activities and items was reported for this output</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New residential developments in our activity centres are encouraged to provide a diversity of housing types to cater for various community needs. This includes supporting the development of affordable and varied accommodation options for aged residents, people with disabilities and people seeking asylum and refugees to ensure their comfort and wellbeing</li> <li>• Council will identify vacant and underutilised public and private sites with redevelopment potential and pursue partnership opportunities to deliver social housing outcomes for the community</li> <li>• Council will continue to offer rate rebates to vulnerable households in housing stress through Council's Rates and Charges Hardship policy.</li> </ul> |

|            |   |                  | <b>OPPORTUNITY - Action Area 5 - Opportunities for meaningful engagement, skills, education and integration within local communities</b>  |
|------------|---|------------------|---|
|            |   |                  | <b>Expand local volunteering, educational, and employment opportunities for asylum seekers and refugees, and maximise accessibility to the formal employment sector</b>   |
| <b>No.</b> | <b>Action/Output</b>  | <b>Progress</b>  | <b>Comments</b>   |
| 5.6.2      | Research and promote employment programs within Council for asylum seekers who have work rights including new potential opportunities.  | <b>Completed</b> | <p><b>3 Activities and items were reported for this output.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An Asylum Seeker Prototype Pilot under the South East Business Network (SEBN) commenced in February 2018 as part of the Community Revitalisation project – as recommended by the Asylum Seeker and Refugee working group and approved by the Asylum Seeker and Refugee Advisory Committee last year. The prototype will seek to improve the job readiness of people seeking asylum and lead to employment</li> <li>• South East Learning and Employment Network (SELLEN) together with the South East Business Network (SEBN) have hosted several events to assist recently arrived migrants to meet with employers and hear what they are looking for in staff</li> <li>• SELLEN hosted South East Careers and Try a Trade, which was attended by 4,000 individuals, many from culturally and linguistic diverse (CALD) backgrounds.</li> </ul> |
| 5.7.4      | Explore program opportunities (such as the 'Community Links Program') to provide support to adults seeking asylum, with training and referrals in areas of financial management, health and other wellbeing/lifestyle issues. | <b>Completed</b> | <p><b>4 Activities and items were reported for this output.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Councils grants program have provided \$156,632 in funding to 42 organisations supporting people seeking asylum and refuge</li> <li>• These programs have supported people seeking asylum and refuge to assimilate into the community and help support them in understanding their rights and financial obligations</li> <li>• The Arkan Rohingya Community of Australia Inc. received funding to provide an information session on Australian legal values and culture, and equal rights to all people of Australia</li> <li>• Springvale Monash Legal Service delivered a youth art project 'Express your rights' which was attended by approximately four asylum seekers.</li> </ul>  |
| 5.7.5      | Ensure that asylum seekers can access various fitness or recreational activities (such as the WaterSafe swimming lessons and low cost School Holiday Programs for children and young people).                                 | <b>Completed</b> | <p><b>3 Activities and items were reported for this output.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dandenong and District Netball association strive to provide low cost programs for all including asylum seekers and refugees</li> <li>• St Mary's Netball Club was involved in One Netball. The Australian Post One Netball program is about using the power of the sport to build better neighbourhoods through interaction</li> <li>• There are a total of 400 participants including those of migrant and refugee background who partake in the underage junior netball for players under 18 years old.</li> </ul>  |

|            |   |                  | <b>OPPORTUNITY - Action Area 6 - Local Community Engagement</b><br><b>Proactively respond to local asylum seeker and refugee advocacy priorities</b>   |
|------------|---|------------------|--|
| <b>No.</b> | <b>Action/Output</b>  | <b>Progress</b>  | <b>Comments</b>  |
| 6.2.1      | The Material Aid Network to focus on enhanced coordination and community based responses to local emergency relief issues.                                  | <b>Completed</b> | <b>1 Activity and items were reported for this output.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council attended the 'Right to Thrive' forum in the S.E to address the diverse needs and challenges of our community.</li> </ul> |
|            |   |                  | <b>OPPORTUNITY - Action Area 7 – Regional Leadership and Collaboration</b><br><b>Build platforms for regional leadership and action on asylum seeker and refugee issues</b>  |
| <b>No.</b> | <b>Action/Output</b>  | <b>Progress</b>  | <b>Comments</b>  |
| 7.1        | Take a proactive role in advocating for policy change and additional resourcing and support including education for asylum seekers living in the community. | <b>Completed</b> | <b>1 Activity and items were reported for this output.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council continues to advocate for people seeking asylum and refugee rights.</li> </ul>   |

**The following is the agreed priority action items for the 2017 year (by the Asylum Seeker and Refugee Advisory Committee) from the 2014-17 Plan**

|       |  |                  | <p><b>PEOPLE - Action Area 1 - Welcoming and Inclusive Communities</b></p> <p><b>Support the development of inclusive, respectful and equitable communities that foster health and wellbeing</b></p>   |
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| No    | Action/Output  | Progress         | Outcome  |
| 1.2.2 | Facilitate community events which influence greater understanding and recognition about refugee rights, journeys and experiences such as Refugee Week, Cultural Diversity Week and others. | <b>Completed</b> | <p><b>2 Activities and items were reported for this output.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Storytelling at the Dandenong and Springvale Library during Cultural Diversity week, encouraged people, including asylum seekers to come dressed in their traditional outfits– a way of expressing the different cultural backgrounds in the municipality</li> <li>• A Fashion Parade established by South Sudanese women to display their traditional African handmade clothing inspired by contemporary fashion was held at the Dandenong Market in August 2017. Some members were of asylum seeker background and a good example of the contributions they make to the community.</li> </ul>   |
|       |  |                  | <p><b>PLACE - Action Area 4 – Evidence Based Planning and Advocacy</b></p> <p><b>Develop and expand space for stakeholders to facilitate collaborative local research with asylum seeker and refugee communities</b></p>   |
| No    | Action/Output  | Progress         | Outcome  |
| 4.3.2 | The social enterprise initiative tailors mentoring programs for asylum seekers and refugees. Intensive business skill support programs are available.                                      | <b>Completed</b> | <p><b>3 Activities and items were reported for this output.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enliven have celebrated the work of local volunteers from refugee/asylum seeker backgrounds through stories in the local press, hosting of ceremonies attended by a Local MP, and by submitting a successful nomination for the Volunteering Victoria State Awards. All of which positively promote the contribution of these volunteers to the community</li> <li>• SELLEN reported at the Winners Event lunch, attended by 220 students, three of the four speakers were from a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) background</li> <li>• Springvale Monash Legal Service reported several clients seeking asylum received legal advice regarding tenancy rights, with some referred to Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT).</li> </ul> |
|       |  |                  | <p><b>OPPORTUNITY - Action Area 5 - Opportunities for meaningful engagement, skills, education and integration within local communities</b></p>  |

|                 |  |           | Expand local volunteering, educational, and employment opportunities for asylum seekers and refugees, and maximise accessibility to the formal employment sector   |
|-----------------|--|-----------|--|
| No.             | Action/Objective   | Progress  | Outcomes   |
| 5.1.1           | Promote volunteering among communities and encourage local businesses, agencies and not for profit organisations to host volunteers in roles that can expand social support networks and increase future employment opportunities.   | Completed | <p><b>1 Activity and items were reported for this output.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Volunteer Resource Centre ran a short-term pilot program called the Skilled Mentor Program which assisted people in gaining employment in their chosen field. The program assisted over 25 people, all of which were born outside of Australia and had worked in their professional field internationally.</li> </ul>   |
| 5.1.2           | Volunteer opportunities for people seeking asylum to gain experience which could lead to employment within Council or broader community employment opportunities.  | Completed | <p><b>3 Activities and items were reported for this output.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many new arrivals have gained experience and skills by volunteering with Council's Environmental Health Program, Community Care Program, Youth Services through FREEZA and Young Leaders and within Council's Library, Arts and Heritage programs</li> <li>Council's Volunteer Program provided information sessions to youth services Impact group which have many new arrivals seeking asylum, educating them on the topic of 'Volunteering – A Pathway to Employment'</li> <li>Council's Volunteer Program also participates annually at the 'Youth Active Citizenship through volunteering' Forum held at Chisolm TAFE. 50% of attendees at the forum were young people who were newly arrived and seeking asylum.</li> </ul>   |
| 5.4.2 and 5.4.4 | Enhance opportunities for a variety of English language skills and activities to occur such as formal language classes, conversational classes and informal language skills sessions. Literacy opportunities are pursued in a variety of community accessible locations and settings to maximize uptake. | Completed | <p><b>4 Activities and items were reported for this output.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Asylum seeker women at Wellsprings for women have participated in a diverse range of programs including English, Computers, Sewing and Mentoring, with some who are skilled volunteering as tutors in the homework support programs</li> <li>Enliven have offered volunteering and training opportunities to members of the local Afghan and Tamil communities which include people seeking asylum and refuge</li> <li>Volunteers at Enliven have been trained to deliver health literacy and health promotion messages to members of their community in language and in community settings</li> <li>Evaluation of this program indicates an increased understanding of health, mental health and self-reported confidence in accessing local health services and supports among participants in these information sessions.</li> </ul> |

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|-------|--|--|---|
| 5.5.2 | Promote case studies of employers who employ staff of refugee backgrounds. |  | <p><b>4 Activities and items were reported for this output.</b></p> <p>SEBN is actively working to strengthen employment opportunities for people experiencing disadvantage including asylum seekers through the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management of the State Government funded Community Revitalisation project which incorporates the 1% Project reported on last year and a new Career Education Association of Victoria (CEAV) employment project which will initially include a group of 10 Asylum Seeker jobseekers through a dedicated program which commenced in February 2018</li> <li>• Greater Dandenong Employment Taskforce which is a collaborative network of key organisations committed to improving employment outcomes across the region – focussing on the disadvantaged/ disengaged individuals including Asylum Seekers</li> <li>• Councils Economic Development Unit (EDU) produces a Social Enterprise Network Newsletter as social enterprises are a frequently used medium to engage with migrants and asylum seekers</li> <li>• Councils Activity Centres Revitalisation (ACR) team lead projects including engaging people of refugee and asylum seeker background through pre-design consultant and engagements. These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Indian Cultural Precinct</li> <li>○ Afghan Bazaar Cultural Precinct streetscape upgrade</li> <li>○ Springvale Road Boulevard Project</li> <li>○ Springvale Laneway project</li> <li>○ Enterprise Interpretive Signage Project.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
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