

Management report to Council

Agenda item 6.4

African Australian Community Partnership Project

Council

Presenter: Graham Porteous, Acting Director City Communities

28 February 2017

Purpose and background

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the African Australian Community Partnership Project and to seek approval for funding of the Project in 2017-18.
2. On 29 April 2014, as part of Council's Long Term Funding – Community Grants recommendations, Council resolved (Attachment 2) to refer an allocation of \$150,000 to the 2014-15 budget process for the development of a collaborative strategic partnership with community organisations representing the newly arrived and migrant community. On 29 July 2014, Council endorsed (Attachment 2) a community engagement and project development approach for this initiative.
3. On 24 February 2015, Council resolved (Attachment 2) to fund the delivery of three community driven initiatives focussed on employment, empowering women and community participation within the local African Australian Community, for the period of 1 April 2015 to 30 June 2017. These initiatives are collectively known as the African Australian Community Partnership Project (AACPP), and are supported by the African Australian Community Partnership Project Officer (temporary position to 30 June 2018).

Key issues

4. The AACPP adopts a partnership approach with the African Australian community to address the complexities associated with the three priority initiatives. A phased project implementation approach was undertaken to ensure adaptability and local community commitment and active participation.
5. Significant time was also invested during the engagement and development phases of the Project to instil intercultural trust and transparent governance processes, and to ensure long-term sustainable outcomes.
6. The implementation phase for each of the priority areas commenced in 2016 and Council is working with key stakeholders within the community to build capacity and continuously improve organisational practices. Attachment 3 provides details on progress and outcomes against the objectives of the AACPP.
7. There is funding for the Project of \$150,000 in the 2016-17 budget. To further embed and support the AACPP initiatives within the African Australian community, it is proposed that Council continue the specific funding allocation of \$150,000 across the three priority areas for a further twelve months to 30 June 2018. A comprehensive evaluation of the Project and its various initiatives to determine any possible funding process beyond 30 June 2018 will be undertaken in 2017-18.
8. This one year extension will align funding for the AACPP with Council's Long Term Funding - Community Grants program cycle and enable the evaluation of the AACPP to review the impact the Project has had in the local community.

Recommendation from management

9. That Council:
 - 10.1 Endorses a pre commitment for a further twelve months funding of \$150,000 for the African Australian Community Partnership Project for 2017-18
 - 10.2 Notes that requested funding from African Australian Organisations (or their representatives) for community participation will be considered within the proposed funding for 2017-18.

Attachments:

1. Supporting Attachment (page 2 of 6)
2. Council Resolutions (page 3 of 6)
3. African Australian Community Partnership Project - Delivery (page 4 of 6)

Supporting Attachment

Legal

1. There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations made by management..

Finance

2. The recommendations contained in this report for the AACPP pre commits Council to an expenditure of \$150,000 (adjusted for CPI) for the 2017-18 financial year.

Conflict of interest

3. No member of Council staff, or other person engaged under a contract, involved in advising on or preparing this report has declared a direct or indirect interest in relation to the matter of the report.

Stakeholder consultation

4. The local African Australian community has been continually engaged with the Project through regular meetings and interactions with Council Project staff, Project meetings, email updates and information sessions.

Relation to Council policy

5. The AACPP aligns with the City of Melbourne's Cultural Diversity Statement: The City of Melbourne is a multicultural city. We are a City that values and respects our cultural, religious, and linguistic diversity and acknowledges there are vulnerable communities within our multicultural city who require our support.
6. The Project aligns directly to the following principles in the Cultural Diversity Statement
 - 6.1. The City of Melbourne will strive to support and deliver programs that aim to promote social cohesion, increase awareness and respect for difference and build trust and co-operation among diverse communities within the City.
 - 6.2. The City of Melbourne strives to reduce barriers and improve its processes so people from across our community can participate in the civic life of our city.
 - 6.3. The City of Melbourne will pursue policies and practices that enhance the cultural competency and capacity of our organisation and reduce barriers to the employment of people from a diverse range of backgrounds.

Environmental sustainability

7. The African Australian Project is primarily focussed on improving social and economic outcomes for the African Australian community, so in this regard there has been minimal consideration of environmental sustainability. However when programs and events are provided the Project officers work to the City of Melbourne Sustainability principles.

Council Resolutions

Meeting minutes of 29 April 2014

6.7.2.1 Long Term Funding – Community Grants Recommendations

1. *That Council:*

- 1.4 *Refers an allocation of \$150,000 to the 2014-15 budget process for the development of a collaborative strategic partnership between the City of Melbourne and various community organisations representing the newly arrived and migrant community.*

Meeting minutes of 29 July 2014

6.2 Support to newly arrived communities within the City of Melbourne

The purpose of this report was to propose further engagement with the newly arrived migrant community in the City of Melbourne to identify potential long term funding initiatives and services that could support priority needs within this community.

1. *That Council:*

- 1.1 *Endorses the proposal to host and facilitate a series of community roundtables of African Australian community leaders and other representatives of newly arrived communities within the City of Melbourne, for the purpose of identifying initiatives that address common issues and challenges experienced by newly arrived communities to the municipality.*
- 1.2 *Requests a briefing paper to Councillors from management by October 2014 with a summary of the roundtable outcomes and any recommendations in relation to identified strategic funding priorities or opportunities.*

Meeting minutes of 24 February 2015

6.10.1.2 African Australian Community – Proposed Strategic Partnership Agreements

The purpose of this report was to seek Council approval to enter into strategic partnership funding agreements with local African Australian organisations to deliver community driven initiatives focussed on employment, empowering women and community participation.

1. *That Council:*

1.1 *Enters into funding agreements with the following organisations:*

- 1.1.1 *iEmpower Ltd for the Empowering Women project for \$30,000 per annum (pro rata) for the period 1 April 2015 to 30 June 2017.*
- 1.1.2 *Melbourne Employment Forum Ltd for the Employment project for \$100,000 per annum (pro rata) for the period 1 April 2015 to 30 June 2017.*

1.2 *Notes the intention to include a resource submission to support the community participation initiative as part of the 2015-16 budget.*

1.3 *Approves the resolution being made public and requests management inform all unsuccessful submitters to the employment proposal process and local community leaders within the African Australian community.*

African Australian Community Partnership Project

Summary of progress of key initiatives

Employment Initiative

The African Australian Employment Project (AAEP), a community led initiative delivered by the Melbourne Employment Forum (MEF), aims to address the high levels of unemployment within the local African Australian community.

The MEF has a community and service agency partnership governance structure. The AAEP aims to provide a holistic support service to job seekers and engages employment information and services to reduce barriers to employment and link job seekers with employment agencies and potential employers.

Council has provided significant support in order to enable long term sustainability of the MEF, including: development of a business plan, development of annual plans, provision of accommodation for the service at Kensington Town Hall, joint recruitment of staff and informal mentoring during the establishment of the organisation.

2014 – 2015 Engagement Phase

Aim:

Community consensus was to establish an employment project that aimed to collaborate with the local African Australian community, public and private sector employers, industry and community organisations to develop initiatives to address barriers to employment and improve employment outcomes for refugee and migrant communities living in the City of Melbourne.

Primary outcomes delivered:

- A targeted Expression of Interest process was undertaken to secure a local African Australian organisation to implement the Employment initiative.
- The MEF was appointed and Council facilitated the development of a detailed project Business Plan in partnership with the MEF's community-based management committee.
- Negotiations were commenced with the MEF to develop the funding agreement.

2015 -2016 Development Phase

Aims:

1. Establish new project governance and service collaboration arrangements between agencies and community leaders.
2. Initiate project implementation and develop project control and evaluation documentation.
3. Recruit Project staff.
4. Identify and negotiate project accommodation.

Primary outcomes delivered:

- Strategic Partnership funding agreement negotiations finalised and signed with the MEF.
- MEF Management Committee and AAEP Steering Committee were constituted and became operational .
- All requisite documentation for the legal operation of the AAEP were completed: Annual Project Plan, organisational governance policies, other compliance/policy documents, together with evaluation templates created, agreed and accepted by both committees.
- Successful recruitment of two project staff and secured office accommodation - completed June 2016.

2016 - 2017 Implementation Phase

Aims:

1. Investigate disincentives to work and active participation in the Labour Market.
2. Enhance the service delivery process.
3. Increase business engagement and create real employment opportunities in Community Enterprise, Self-Employment, Apprenticeships, Traineeships, Labour Hire Services, and Social Procurement for African Australian communities.

Primary outcomes delivered as at December 2016:

- MEF presented the annual report and annual plan for 2016/17. Further work will be undertaken with the organisation to consolidate their achievements with the project.
- Community briefing sessions and employment forums held for the target population to identify gaps and address systemic issues.
- Partnerships brokered with agencies, providers, organisations and employers, jobseeker support and referral services.
- Industry body participation in providing preferential employment opportunities for African Australian communities.
- 280 individuals registered with the AAEP to assist their understanding of the job seeker process and available and support services.

2017 – 2018 Evaluation and Succession Planning Phase

Aims:

1. Consolidate understanding of the project planning, implementation and reporting obligations across the community-based committee of management and project staff.
2. Assist MEF to build competitive capacity to independently apply for long-term grant funding in 2018.
3. Evaluate the impact and outcomes of the employment project.

Primary outcomes to be delivered:

- Evidence of outcomes delivered.
- End of project evaluation report with recommendations for next steps regarding employment in the local community.
- It is intended the MEF has the capacity to deliver complex projects and independently apply for long term funding grants in 2018.

Empowering Women Initiative

African Australian women have indicated an empowered African Australian woman is a woman who is confident, knows her rights and responsibilities and has power to act on this, possesses high self-esteem, is independent and has an understanding of what is available to her in her professional and personal life. The Empowering Women's project involves a series of interactive skills development workshops with local African Australian women.

Given the broad community interest in the Empowering Women's project, communication with community leaders has been extensive and the project governance and auspicing arrangements have been modified accordingly. A project Steering Committee was established, as nominated by local community representatives, and a community development approach has been undertaken with the women to build skills and knowledge in the priority areas identified.

2014 – 2015 Engagement Phase

<p>Aim:</p> <p>To gain an understanding of what is important to local African Australian women, and identify key priority areas to focus the resources available to improve women's quality of life.</p>	<p>Primary outcomes delivered</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women community leaders met to discuss collaborative approaches to empower women and improve their quality of life. • Round table held with women leaders from across the local African Australian community. Sixteen women attended the round table and determined the need for a specific focus on empowering women. Key themes identified were: <i>Women's health, leadership and prevention of family violence.</i>
---	---

2015 -2016 Development Phase

<p>Aims:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The women determined their vision for the Empowering Women's Project as follows "<i>We envision a society in which all women have a voice and empowered through education, employment, trusted, given the opportunity, collaborate through community engagement, health mentally and physically and free of drugs, alcohol and violence.</i>" 2. Develop Empowering Women's Project Steering Committee with local leaders and other specialist organisations to guide the Empowering Women's project. 	<p>Primary outcomes delivered</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducted twelve meetings with women's groups to determine capacity to deliver the Empowering Women Project. • Two visioning workshops with 25 local African Australian women and RMIT. • Priority areas of focus were identified and included: women's leadership, women's health, family violence prevention, capacity building and financial literacy, and gender equality. • Appointment of representative steering group of five women from across the community. • Partnership with RMIT to work with the steering group to Co-design a Leadership Development program to meet the needs of local women.
---	---

2016 -2017 – Implementation Phase

<p>Aims:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Women's Health and Well-being and Family Violence Prevention was determined by the women as the areas of focus for 2016 -2017. 2. Develop an appropriate response for women living in the City of Melbourne Workshop through Family Violence Prevention workshop. 3. Further develop partnership with RMIT to research the impacts of Leadership development with African Australian women in the City of Melbourne. 4. Initial leadership research findings analysed to inform future planning. 	<p>Primary outcomes delivered as of December 2016:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 28 women commenced a Leadership Development course facilitated by RMIT and delivered by Leadership specialists. Upon completion of the course the women will receive a Leadership certificate from RMIT. • Improved confidence to advocate the rights of women in their community in particular related to gender equity and the prevention of violence against women.
--	---

2017 -2018 Evaluation and Succession Planning Phase

<p>Aims:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Deliver a workshop focusing on the final priority area of Financial Literacy. 2. Hold a planning workshop with the steering committee in early 2017 to determine the final year of funding priorities and succession planning beyond the current Council funding allocation. 	<p>Primary outcomes to be delivered</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future planning workshop with local African Australian women. • Deliver a second Leadership Development Program to 30 women. • Deliver an Advanced Leadership Development Program to 20 women. • Engage women leaders to collaboratively work with Council and Local service providers on the delivery of a Financial Literacy course. • Succession planning with the women.
--	---

Community Participation Initiative

The Community Participation component of the project arose from the community seeking more information about Council and access to services, facilities and programs to increase community participation.

Employment of the African Australian Community Partnership Project Officer has been instrumental in gaining an informed understanding of the local community and commitment from the community to work with Council.

2014 – 2015 Engagement Phase

Aim: **Primary outcomes delivered**

Build capacity both within the African Australian community and the City of Melbourne to develop community connectedness and participation in City of Melbourne programs, events, services and facilities.

- Introduction of regular information update emails to inform local African community leaders of programs, funding opportunities, events and services available to their communities.
- Recruitment of the African Australian Community Partnership Project officer commenced.

2015 – 2016 Development Phase

Aims: **Primary outcomes delivered**

1. Improve the planning and delivery of events and community programs currently funded by City of Melbourne specifically engaging the local African Australian community.
2. Partner with existing agencies and organisations to create opportunities for youth engagement, volunteering and capacity building with the local African Australian community.
3. Build internal and external partnerships to facilitate engagement with African Australian Communities.

- African Australian Community Partnership Project officer appointed in October 2015.
- Project officer has met with over 30 African Australian groups and organisations across the municipality and metropolitan Melbourne to provide pathways into the City of Melbourne.
- Facilitated presentation of the African Australian Community Leadership Forum (AACLF) Issues Paper to key stakeholders and State government decision makers.
- Initiated discussions with the Major Events Team to explore how African Australian community groups and organisations can be engaged.
- Future Melbourne Committee resolved to recognise 18 July as Nelson Mandela International Day.

2016 – 2017 Implementation Phase

Aims: **Primary outcomes delivered as of December 2016**

1. Facilitate active involvement of the local African Australian community in our services, programs, facilities and events.
2. Seek to create new culturally sensitive relationships with African Australian Groups.
3. Seek to gather intelligence on how best the COM could effectively engage with African Australian Communities.
4. Support the Internal and External communications and feedback within the African Australian Community Partners through regular updates and/or formal round tables.
5. Increase collaboration and accountability by providing a mechanism for local leaders and community groups to speak on behalf of their community with those organisations and strategic partners funded by Council to deliver services and programs into their community.

- Information session held in collaboration with Libraries and Recreation Branch to share information on what outdoor spaces are available for booking, when they are available for a particular sport and how to book them. 11 community organisations attended.
- Evidence of organisations being successful through the community grants program for 2017, which have not been successful in previous years.
- 2 Roundtables organised (and delivered?) to provide feedback and accountability.
- African Australian Community Events organisations collaborating on a joint showcase event for Cultural Diversity week in 2017.
- Collaborate with African Australian AACLF to compile a 'deep-dive' project plan based on the Focus areas to create a Final Project Plan.

2017 -2018 Evaluation and Succession Planning Phase

Aims: **Primary outcomes to be delivered**

1. To assess the impact of the African Australian Community Partnerships Program, and support new initiatives targeting the broader community participation, including youth and the elderly in Melbourne as a capital city.
2. Use the experience and knowledge gained to plan for City of Melbourne engagement and activities with local African Australian communities beyond 2018.

- New Baseline information available for future planning and updates provided regularly to our key stakeholders.
- A minimum of one round table / event that brings together all of the stakeholders involved in the African Australian Community partnership Project.
- Evaluation of the Community Participation component of the project completed with outcomes to be incorporated into succession planning.