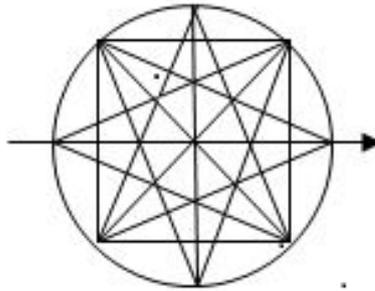


**Chairs:**

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**MIGRANT SETTLEMENT COMMITTEE (Eastern Region)**

Standing Committee of the Communities' Council on Ethnic Issues (Eastern Region) Inc.

Reg. No. A0017562S

**Minutes**

**December 3, 2021**

**Zoom 9:30 am – 11:00 am**

**Chair: Ken Pang and Sam Navarria**

1. **Welcome – Ken Pang** welcomed MSC members and thanked them for their participation in 2021.
2. **Acknowledgement of Country - Chris Cosgriff** noted that participants may be joining the MSC from various indigenous lands and acknowledged past and present elders, and emerging leaders of the Kulin nation. He also acknowledged elders and emerging leaders connected to CCOEI and the MSC meetings. On behalf of MMIGP he wished all a very happy and safe Christmas.

**3. Attendance**

**Present**

Sally Brooks	MIC
Iresha Buthgamuwa	ECLC, Community Development Coordinator
Gitta Clayton	Croydon Hills Community Care
Megan Cook	Services Australia, MSO Glen Waverley/Oakleigh
Chris Cosgriff	CCOEI, Mullum Indigenous Gathering Place Ambassador
Heather Cosgriff	CCOEI, Mullum Indigenous Gathering Place Ambassador
Paul Croft	Eastern Regional Libraries, Team Leader Digital Literacies
Mervat Dahdoule	MIC
Sarah Martinelli	City of Whitehorse, Community Development Officer – Diversity, Community Development and Engagement
Sam Navarria	CCOEI, MSC
Daniele Noel	CCOEI
Saarah Ozeer	Bounce, CCOEI
Con Pagonis	CCOEI, ECCV Senior Volunteer
Ken Pang	CCOEI
Carole Pondevie-Lay	Melbourne Polytechnic Community Liaison and Engagement Manager
Vicki Selimi	Services Australia, Multicultural Services Officer
Cynthia Shaw	CCOEI, MSC
Sui Ting Tse	CCOEI President
Emma Wilknison	City of Boroondara
<b>Apologies</b>	
Dilnaz Billimoria	Whitehorse Interfaith Network and CCOEI
Krishiani Dassanayake	CCOEI
Jenny Mitchell	Whitehorse/Manningham Libraries, CALD Branch Manager
Bec Patterson	Foundation House

4. **Minutes - MSC November 5 2021 meeting.** Minutes circulated by Ken. No changes required.

5. **Business Arising** – Incorporated in the meeting agenda.
6. **Correspondence** – Circulated by Ken Pang.
7. **MSC 2021 Calendar (Sam Navarria)**. The 2021 calendar concludes with this meeting which reviews the MSC 2021 program and plans the 2022 calendar. The 2021 MSC activity has been delivered. See agenda item 10 for the new MSC 2022 calendar.
8. **“Cooee!” (Con Pagonis)**: The last Cooee! 2021 will be published on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> December and will include information about the MSC review and the 2022 calendar, and the CCOEI AGM on 8/12. At the beginning of the pandemic the newsletter was published weekly, then fortnightly and now monthly. The first issue in 2022 will be in mid-January. Deadlines for contributions: Friday before publication.

## 9. Agency reports and information

### 9.1 Services Australia (Megan Cook, Multicultural Services Officer - MSO)

**449 Visa Holders:** Medicare entitlement has been extended until 30/11/2022. Customers must update their address for both Centrelink and Medicare, so that they receive their card (MSO's checking addresses at Seminars).

Exemption from Mutual Obligations has been extended for this cohort for 12 months from date of arrival. Most will not have Mutual Obligations until August 2022, allowing them to focus on their settlement. They will still receive review forms every 3 months and need to report via MyGov (or phone) from a date to be advised.

**Scam:** the AFP advised on 2/12 of a scam targeting Afghan Evacuees. Individuals calling members of the Afghan Community claiming to be from Services Australia and asking for Bank Account details. Let all your contacts know of this scam and remind them never to give out their bank account details over the phone.

**Servicing Arrangements:** SA is at Status level 2, which will be reviewed on 10/12/21. SA have moved from restricted entry to controlled entry in Metropolitan Melbourne. Booked appointments have recommenced in the service centre for mainstream appointments. Appointments for Specialists have not yet started. Customers are advised to call prior to attending the service centre.

**9.2 Croydon Hills Community Care (Gitta Clayton)** Winter Shelter program housing homeless men during winter could not take place due to Covid lockdowns. Providing regular meals to homeless from two venues, and supplying meals to motels where homeless people have been accommodated, some women and children and families.

Started a Karen seniors group in partnership with the Yarrunga Community Centre in Croydon Hills and Foundation House. Every Tuesday the group is brought to Yarrunga for activities such as bushwalking, craft, storytelling and lunch, i.e. have a time for themselves.

### 9.3 Migrant Information Centre – Eastern Melbourne (Mervat Dahdoule)

Offices will be open throughout the festive season (except for public holidays): Box Hill office (Suite 2, 27 Bank Street) is open Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday; Ringwood office (18 Bond Street, Ringwood) is open Monday, Tuesday, and Friday.

- Face-to-face programs have resumed, provided that COVID-safe procedures can be implemented.
- Holding two multicultural fishing days over the next two Saturdays (4<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> December) as part of a grant from Victorian Fishing Authority. The days will include a smoking ceremony, meet and greet, bush walking and fishing with attendance from fire rescue Victoria and Victoria Police.
- Launch of Strengthening Family Relationships animations next Friday 10 Dec, 10am on Zoom in support of the 16 days of activism – flyer has been circulated.

**9.4 Manningham Council (Katrine Gabb)** *Strength Through Connection* Forum – held in September has resulted in the creation of the online Manningham Multicultural Network, whose purpose is to strengthen relationships between Council and multicultural communities. People interested to join contact Katrine. Manningham focusing on anti-racism activities, working with ECLC, Whitehorse and Boroondara.

**9.5 ECLC (Iresha Buthgamuwa)** Community Democracy project: funded by Victorian Government to encourage multicultural communities to be involved in the process, is coming to the end of its second year.

Creating a tool kit for CALD communities how to understand and be involved in the democratic process. Toolkit will be available in February 2022 in different languages.

**9.6 MMIGP (Chris Cosgriff)** Yengali singing group has received a grant that includes the production of a CD – *Cultural Affinity*, which will be launched early 2022. CCOEI provided support for the grant. A second grant to acquire a property that MMIGP has been using in Patterson Street Ringwood, also successful. Building starts in 2022. During works, which could be for up to two years, MMIGP will operate from Yarra Valley Water in Mitcham. MMIGP is grateful to Yarra Valley Water, and to CCOEI for the support letter that helped with the grant submission.

#### **9.7 Melbourne AMEP (Carole Pondevie-Lay)**

A challenging year but one of strong engagement in the AMEP, including changes via the AMEP reforms that allowed many students who had completed their AMEP entitlement to return to it to improve their English, including: people not yet at vocational English level needed for work and further study; women who have come back now as their children are at school and feel confident and have the time to re-engage and think about their own learning and pathway needs. Numbers in the AMEP have increased despite a pause in migration. Some AMEP providers are offering a Sumner program – for details contact local AMEP providers. DHA is reviewing the AMEP business model taking into account provider and community input.

#### **9.8 City of Whitehorse (Sarah Martinelli)**

Working on an internal guide on how to support multicultural communities – how council reaches residents using appropriate formats, media platforms, and translated material, as part of deliberative engagement. Working on an external guide, *Welcome to Whitehorse*, to navigate Council services and local communities. The Guide is also in key community languages.

Planning for Lunar New Year: supporting communities hosting activities in the Box Hill Mall. People interested in offering activities and ideas re Lunar New Year, contact Sarah.

**9.9 CCOEI (Cynthia Shaw)** Congratulations to Ken Pang for successfully running all stages of the PRMC2 program. Thanks to the External Partners Working Group who supported Ken. The CCOEI AGM on Wednesday 8 December. Individuals and organisations interested in joining COEI contact Cynthia.

**9.10 City of Boroondara (Emma Wilkinson)** Afghan community have contacted council re accessing sporting opportunities, e.g. soccer. Council is considering their interest.

Lunar New Year – preparing for the event, line dancing, celebration of Chinese music, etc.

Boroondara Community Outreach has been established to better engage with residents especially those from vulnerable communities

### **10. Meeting Focus: Review MSC program 2021 and planning the MSC 2022 calendar**

The meeting reviewed the MSC 2021 program and developed the 2022 calendar. Informed by input from its members, the calendar covers topics that address the interests of multicultural communities in the Eastern Region of Melbourne including the settlement of recently arrived Afghan refugees; strategies around deliberative engagement by local councils to engage culturally diverse communities; Welcoming Cities Accreditation to leverage the work with multicultural communities; social cohesion projects; anti-racism initiatives at local, state and federal levels; reconciliation and the work of the Yoo-rook Justice Commission; libraries reaching out to communities beyond traditional library settings; policies and services for older culturally diverse people; services in the disability sector that support culturally diverse people; developments that address family violence; education, training and volunteering to improve employment prospects.

The meeting strongly endorsement the hosting and chairing meetings, and these practices will continue in 2022. The calendar includes details of the meeting focus, organisations and speakers, the host organisation and chair, and the contact person for the meeting. The meeting host and chair will organise the agenda and prepare minutes to forward to Ken Pang who will circulate them to the MSC network, with Zoom meeting invitation details, a week prior to the meeting, or earlier. There may be opportunities during 2022 to have in person meetings if conditions allow.

Hosts have access to three points of contact for their MSC hosting and chairing queries: Ken Pang, Cynthia Shaw and Sam Navarria – via [chair.msc@gmail.com](mailto:chair.msc@gmail.com). Their mobile numbers will also be provided.

2022 MSC	Focus, organisations and speakers	Host organisation & chair	Confirmations & contact person(s)
07 Jan	No meeting		
04 Feb	<p>1. <b>Re-settlement of Afghan refugees (visa 449): perspective of entrants and service providers of settlement.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jawad Shirzai, Afghan recent arrival, Orientation Guide, AMES Settlement</li> <li>Claudia Thoms, Foundation House –, Project Leader, Afghan Community Response</li> <li>Merilyn Spratling, Refugee Health Nurse Coordinator, Clinical Services, EACH</li> <li>Megan Cook/Vicki Selimi, Services Australia, Multicultural Services Officer(s)</li> </ul> <p>2. <b>Knox Council - <i>How not to engage with migrant communities</i> Lessons learnt from research findings on communicating and engaging with migrant communities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Joan Pepi, Community Development Officer Access and Equity, Knox City Council</li> <li>Dr Wilfred Wang, Knox Multicultural Advisory Committee; Lecturer Media and Society, Culture and Communication, University of Melbourne.</li> </ul>	CCOEI - Cynthia Shaw, Ken Pang, Sam Navarria	Cynthia Shaw, Ken Pang and Sam Navarria
04 March	<p><b>MIC's Employment program; the Community Visitor's scheme for older people; and other programs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sally Brooks and Mervat Dahdoule, and other MIC staff delivering projects and programs</li> </ul>	MIC – Sally Brooks. Mervat Dahdoule	Sally Brooks and Mervat Dahdoule
01 April	<p><b>Knowing your Council - a snapshot of Boroondara's community and Council, focusing on local community programs and exploring opportunities and barriers to access and engage with Council</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emma Wilkinson and Council staff</li> </ul>	Boroondara Council – Emma Wilkinson	Emma Wilkinson
06 May	<p><b>Anti-racism initiatives</b> - presentations from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Victorian State Government (Anti-Racism Strategy)</li> <li>Australian Federal Government (Anti-Racism Framework)</li> </ul>	Whitehorse Council – Sarah Martinelli	Sarah Martinelli
03 June	<p><b>Pathways to employment via education, work placement and volunteering.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Carole Pondevie- Lay</li> <li>Barbara Reeckman</li> <li>Education and employment service providers</li> <li>Clients</li> </ul>	Melbourne Polytechnic – Carole Pondevie-Lay	Carole Pondevie-Lay
01 July	No meeting		
05 Aug	<p><b>Yoo-rook Justice Commission</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Speakers from the Commission (TBC)</li> </ul>	MMIGP – Chris Cosgriff (TBC)	Chris Cosgriff
02 Sept	<p><b>Libraries engaging communities: Eastern Regional Libraries - Knox Boroondara, Yarra Ranges – and Whitehorse Manningham libraries.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paul Croft and nominated speakers and users from libraries (TBC)</li> </ul>	Eastern Regional Libraries – Paul Croft	Paul Croft
07 Oct	<p>1. <b>Manningham Welcoming Cities Accredited Standard: how it can leverage engagement with multicultural communities.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Katrine Gabb</li> <li>Welcoming Cities Accreditation staff</li> </ul> <p>2. <b>Monash Council - <i>Social cohesion projects</i> innovative work with international students, faith groups, and the Monash Community Ambassadors/ Hello Neighbour project (emphasis on partnerships)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pamela Kosij</li> </ul>	Manningham Council – Katrine Gabb	Katrine Gabb

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project participant(s)</li> </ul>		
04 Nov	<p><b>1. The older multicultural person – rights and needs, and access to services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Centre for Cultural Diversity in Ageing;</li> <li>Manningham Women’s Friendship Group (Helen Jurgevic TBC),</li> </ul> <p><b>2. People from multicultural backgrounds with a disability: support services and issues.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ADEC</li> <li>Input from one LGA: Katrine Gabb (Manningham)</li> </ul>	CCOEI - Danielle Noel	Danielle Noel
02 Dec	<p><b>Prevention of family violence and assisting victims of family violence:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>16 days of activism campaign and celebrating Human Rights Day.(ECLC)</li> <li>In Touch and/or EDVOS</li> </ul> <p><b>Review of 2022 MSC program and develop the MSC 2023 calendar.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MSC members and CCOEI</li> </ul>	Eastern Community Legal Centre – Iresha Buthgamuwa.	Iresha Buthgamuwa

**11. Next MSC meeting: Friday February 4 2022.**

- Focus: (1) Re-settlement of Afghan refugees (visa 449): perspective of entrants and service providers of settlement.  
(2) Knox Council - *How not to engage with migrant communities* Lessons learnt from research findings on communicating and engaging with migrant communities

**NOTE:** To contact Ken Pang, Cynthia Shaw or Sam Navarria email [chair.msc@gmail.com](mailto:chair.msc@gmail.com)