



# Draft Boroondara Multicultural Action Plan 2019-23

## Background Paper

**July 2019**

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# **Part One**

## **1.1 Introduction**

The City of Boroondara Cultural Diversity Plan 2014-18 articulates Council's approach to supporting and responding to the increasing growth of the City's culturally diverse population.

This Background Paper supports the development of Council's new Plan, its third Plan, which will build on the achievements of the existing Plan. The new Plan will continue to recognise that cultural diversity is at the heart of Boroondara's identity and that it is one of the City's greatest strengths. It will harness the benefits that cultural diversity brings to enhance our community's health and wellbeing.

The paper is divided into two parts. Part one outlines the background and policy context relating to cultural diversity and provides a snapshot of Boroondara's culturally diverse community. It also notes key achievements of the Cultural Diversity Plan 2014-18.

Part two outlines benchmarking, the consultation process and research methodology undertaken to inform the development of the new Plan, and highlights the key findings that will inform actions in it.

## **1.2 Definitions**

Cultural diversity promotes the shared values and benefits of our diverse backgrounds and cultural heritage. It provides all individuals with a legitimate right to be included and participate fully in community life without distinction of any kind. Fundamental to the concept of cultural diversity is that it applies to all of us.<sup>1</sup>

In Boroondara, our multicultural identity stems from the earliest era of its Indigenous heritage, with the existence of the people of Kulin Nation (including the Woi Wurrung and Boon Wurrung tribes) preceding European settlement. Our different cultural identities are intrinsic to the cosmopolitan society we live in - one made up of diverse peoples from diverse backgrounds. Owing to the City's long history of migration and cultural heritage, diversity is embedded in the social fabric that constitutes the Boroondara community today.

In this document and the new draft Plan, cultural diversity refers to the existence of a variety of cultural or ethnic groups within Boroondara.

The term multicultural (or many cultures) is used to reflect the title of policy documents about cultural diversity. It is proposed that the title of the new Plan be

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<sup>1</sup> Department of Immigration and Citizenship, *The People of Australia - Australia's Multicultural Policy*, 2011, p 2.

changed to the City of Boroondara Multicultural Action Plan to reflect the language used in the Australian and Victorian Government policy documents. Therefore, throughout this document, the new Plan is referred to as the draft Multicultural Action Plan (MAP).

### **1.3 Health and wellbeing approach**

Good physical and mental health starts in our community, through opportunities to connect, participate and access what we need in order to make healthy choices. Through the Boroondara Community Plan 2017-27, which is Council's key strategic document, Council is committed to enhancing the health and wellbeing for people who live, work, study or recreate in the municipality as an outcome of everything it does. The draft MAP is informed by this approach and will therefore be a guiding framework for creating supportive environments so that all members of the community can lead healthy, safe and fulfilled lives regardless of their background or language proficiency. The draft MAP will enable Council to effectively incorporate cultural diversity considerations into the design and delivery of programs, services and facilities to ensure they are accessible and inclusive for the wellbeing of the whole community.

For further information about the Boroondara Community Plan, please see 1.5.5 on page 15.

### **1.4 Community snapshot**

Victoria is home to one of the most culturally diverse societies in the world, and is also among the fastest-growing and most diverse states in Australia.<sup>2</sup> There is also broad diversity within Boroondara, with residents originating from more than 150 countries and speaking 119 languages. The changes observed in Boroondara's population reflect overall trends occurring across Melbourne, including an increase in residents born overseas and residents from places where English is not the first language. The following page shows a snapshot of Boroondara's diversity. This information is supported with more detailed information on the following pages.

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<sup>2</sup> Victorian Multicultural Commission, 2016 Census: A snapshot of our diversity, accessed March 2019, <https://www.multicultural.vic.gov.au/population-and-migration/victorias-diversity/2016-census-a-snapshot-of-our-diversity>

## Top 5 countries of birth other than Australia

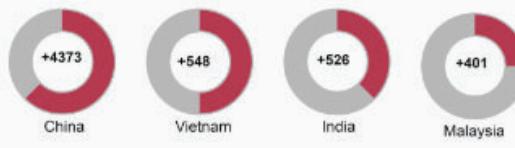


**30.9%**

of residents born overseas



Largest increase in place of birth  
between 2011-2016



**181,289**

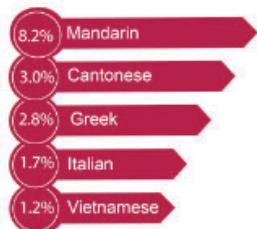
Population of the City of Boroondara in 2018

## Top 5 ancestries\*

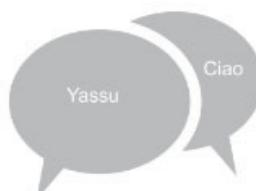
English	<b>29.6%</b>
Australian	<b>24.6%</b>
Chinese	<b>15.0%</b>
Irish	<b>12.6%</b>
Scottish	<b>9.9%</b>



Top 5 languages  
spoken at home other than English



**4.1%**  
of residents don't speak  
English well, or at all



**119**

languages are  
spoken in the  
City of Boroondara

**24.6%**

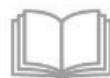
of the population was  
born in a country where  
English is not the main  
language spoken

**73.2%**

of residents agree that  
multiculturalism makes  
life in the area better

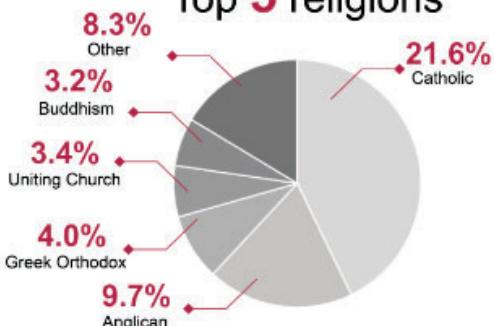


**27.2%**  
of residents speak a  
language other than  
English at home



**54.1%**  
of residents  
have a religious  
affiliation

## Top 5 religions



\*Ancestry defines the cultural association and ethnic background of an individual going back three generations. This data is derived from the 2016 Census question 'what is the person's ancestry?'.

**1841**



arrived by the skilled migration stream in 2017

**561**



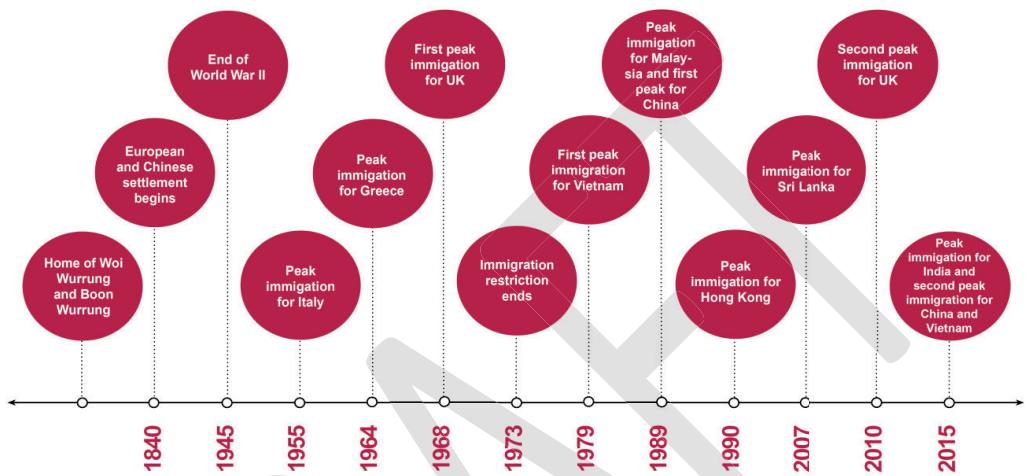
people arrived by the family migration scheme in 2017

**19**



have arrived on a humanitarian visa in 2017

### Waves of settlement and migration based on the 2016 Census



#### 1.4.1 Country of birth

In 2016, almost a third of the population was born overseas (51,656 residents, 30.9%), with a quarter of the population, or 40,169 residents, born in a country where English is not a main language (24.0%). The main overseas countries of birth in 2016 were China (6.6%), England (3.0%), and India (2.4%). The largest increase in birthplace countries between 2011 and 2016 were China (+4,373), Vietnam (+548), India (+526), and Malaysia (+401).

Within the Eastern Metropolitan Region, Boroondara has the fourth highest proportion of overseas born residents, and the fourth highest proportion of residents born in a country where English is not the main language. Among Victoria's 79 local government areas, Boroondara is ranked fourth for the highest proportion of Chinese born residents (after Monash, Melbourne and Whitehorse), and ranked fifth for the highest proportion of residents born in Malaysia and Hong Kong.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Victorian Multicultural Commission, 2016 Census: Community Fact Sheets, accessed March 2019, <https://www.multicultural.vic.gov.au/population-and-migration/victorias-diversity/community-fact-sheets>

**Table 1: Country of birth<sup>4</sup>**

<b>Country of birth</b>	<b>Boroondara No.</b>	<b>Boroondara %</b>	<b>Greater Melbourne</b>
<b>Born overseas</b>	51,656	30.9%	33.8%
<b>Non-English speaking background</b>	40,169	24.0%	27.1%
<b>China</b>	11,066	6.6%	3.5%
<b>England</b>	4,965	3.0%	3.0%
<b>India</b>	4,047	2.4%	3.6%
<b>Malaysia</b>	3,329	2.0%	1.1%
<b>New Zealand</b>	2,648	1.6%	1.8%
<b>Vietnam</b>	1,977	1.2%	1.8%
<b>Hong Kong</b>	1,766	1.1%	0.5%
<b>Greece</b>	1,606	1.0%	1.0%
<b>Italy</b>	1,529	0.9%	1.4%
<b>Sri Lanka</b>	1,237	0.7%	1.2%

Table 2 below shows country of birth by age group. As can be seen, the age group with the largest percentage of residents born overseas in a non-main English speaking country was 25-34 years (34.9% of all residents in this age group).

**Table 2: Country of birth by age group<sup>5</sup>**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Australia</b>	<b>Non-main English speaking countries</b>	<b>Main English-speaking countries</b>
<b>0-4 years</b>	6,826 (88.2%)	458 (5.9%)	168 (2.2%)
<b>5-11 years</b>	11,868 (82.1%)	1,449 (10.0%)	677 (4.7%)
<b>12-17 years</b>	10,703 (78.4%)	1,928 (14.1%)	619 (4.7%)
<b>18-24 years</b>	12,709 (69.7%)	3,977 (21.8%)	749 (4.1%)
<b>25-34 years</b>	11,930 (52.9%)	7,877 (34.9%)	1,435 (6.4%)
<b>35-49 years</b>	19,170 (58.0%)	9,530 (28.8%)	2,731 (8.3%)
<b>50-64 years</b>	18,700 (60.8%)	7,784 (25.3%)	2,768 (9.0%)
<b>65-79 years</b>	10,581 (57.3%)	5,026 (27.2%)	1,727 (9.4%)
<b>80 years and over</b>	4,920 (58.9%)	2,124 (25.4%)	618 (7.4%)
<b>Total</b>	107,409 (64.2%)	40,151 (24.0%)	11,488 (6.9%)

<sup>4</sup> ABS 2016 Census of Population and Housing, Table Builder

<sup>5</sup> Row percentages do not equal 100 as 'not stated' responses are not shown in the table, but included in the analysis. Main English-speaking countries are the UK, Ireland, New Zealand, Canada, USA and South Africa. Non-main English-speaking countries include all other countries of birth.

### 1.4.2 Language spoken

Over a quarter of the Boroondara population, 45,450 people, speak a language other than English (27.2%). The main languages spoken by the residents include two Chinese languages (Mandarin (8.2%) and Cantonese (3.0%)), followed by Greek (2.8%), Italian (1.7%) and Vietnamese (1.2%). Overall, 6,784 people (or 4.1%) do not speak English well, or speak it at all.

When compared to all 79 Victorian LGAs:

- Boroondara had the 13<sup>th</sup> highest number and 18<sup>th</sup> highest percentage of people who speak a language other than English
- Boroondara had the 14<sup>th</sup> highest number of people who speak another language and have low English proficiency.<sup>6</sup>

**Table 3: Top 10 languages spoken**

Language	Boroondara No.	Boroondara %	Greater Melbourne
<b>Speaks a language other than English</b>	45,450	27.2%	32.3%
<b>Speaks English 'not well' or 'not at all'</b>	6,784	4.1%	5.6%
<b>English</b>	113,891	68.1%	62.0%
<b>Mandarin</b>	13,700	8.2%	4.1%
<b>Cantonese</b>	4,946	3.0%	1.7%
<b>Greek</b>	4,753	2.8%	2.4%
<b>Italian</b>	2,779	1.7%	2.3%
<b>Vietnamese</b>	2,050	1.2%	2.3%
<b>Hindi</b>	1,397	0.8%	1.1%
<b>French</b>	1,032	0.6%	0.4%
<b>Spanish</b>	966	0.6%	0.8%
<b>Arabic</b>	906	0.5%	1.7%

### 1.4.3 Low English Proficiency

As noted above, 6,784 people in Boroondara did not speak English at all or not well (i.e. low English proficiency) at the 2016 Census. Table 4 shows the language groups that overall have higher percentages of their population reporting low English proficiency (> 10% not speaking English well or not speaking English at all).

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<sup>6</sup> Victorian Multicultural Commission, 2016 Census: Local Government Areas Report, accessed March 2019, <https://www.multicultural.vic.gov.au/population-and-migration/victorias-diversity/population-diversity-in-local-councils>

Table 4 shows that Mandarin speakers had the highest percentage of speakers with low English proficiency (24.9%) followed by speakers of Korean and Arabic (20.1% and 18.2% respectively).

**Table 4: Languages with high rates of low English proficiencies reported**

Language	Number of speakers in Boroondara	Number of speakers with low English proficiency	Percent of speakers with low English proficiency
All languages	45,608	6,784	14.9%
Mandarin	13,707	3,411	24.9%
Korean	716	144	20.1%
Arabic	910	166	18.2%
Cantonese	4,946	776	15.7%
Greek	4,761	579	12.2%
Vietnamese	2,043	238	11.6%
Japanese	552	61	11.1%

Table 5 shows English proficiency by age group. One in three residents aged between 25 and 44 years speak a language other than English, the highest rate among all age cohorts (33.7%).

Age groups with the highest rates of residents who spoke a language other than English and did not speak English well or at all, were found in the age groups over 45 years, with rates increasing to a high of 40.3% among residents aged 80 years and over.

**Table 5: English proficiency of age groups**

Age group	Speak a language other than English		Speaks another language and has low English proficiency	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent*
5-11 years	3,333	23.1%	253	7.6%
12-17 years	3,375	24.7%	175	5.2%
18 to 24 years	5,056	27.7%	325	6.4%
25 to 44 years	14,594	33.7%	1,256	8.6%
45 to 64 years	11,350	26.3%	1,973	17.4%
65 to 79 years	4,031	21.8%	988	24.5%
80 years and over	1,828	21.9%	736	40.3%
Total	43,554	27.3%	5,692	13.1%

\* of those that speak another language

#### **1.4.4 Ancestry**

Ancestry defines the cultural association and ethnic background of an individual going back three generations. It is an indication of the cultural or ethnic group people identify with most closely. It gives insight into the cultural background of both the Australian-born and overseas-born populations. The main ancestries people identify with are English (29.6%), Australian (24.6%), and Chinese (15.0%).

**Table 6: The top 10 ancestries**

Language	Boroondara No.	Boroondara %	Greater Melbourne
<b>English</b>	49,498	29.6%	26.6%
<b>Australian</b>	41,214	24.6%	24.0%
<b>Chinese</b>	25,049	15.0%	7.9%
<b>Irish</b>	21,148	12.6%	9.1%
<b>Scottish</b>	16,621	9.9%	7.3%
<b>Italian</b>	10,121	6.1%	6.7%
<b>Greek</b>	7,637	4.6%	3.6%
<b>Indian</b>	5,779	3.5%	4.4%
<b>German</b>	5,510	3.3%	3.0%
<b>Vietnamese</b>	2,479	1.5%	2.4%

#### **1.4.5 Religion**

At the 2016 Census, 54.1% of Boroondara's population reported affiliations with a religion, and 36.7% reported no religious affiliation. Between the 2011 and 2016 censuses there were decreases in most major Christian religions, including Anglican (-4,559 people), Catholic (-3,414), and Uniting Church (-2,129). This decrease in affiliation to Christian religions coincided with a 39.0% increase in the number of people who chose 'no religion' on the census form.<sup>7</sup> There was also an increase in people who nominated Hinduism (+728) and Islam (+418), as their religion. In the City of Boroondara, the main religions are Western (Roman) Catholic (21.6%), Anglican (9.7%), and Greek Orthodox (4.0%).

<sup>7</sup> In 2016 the 'no religion' response category was placed first on the census form which contributed to an increase in no religion responses. The ABS stated 'the previous question format held a perceived bias that suggested a potential underestimation of the number of people who stated they had no religion' and that 'the new question format makes the question more consistent with other questions and the order of their response categories, as well as making it consistent with the approach taken by a number of other countries.' (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2017; 2011.0.55.001 - Information Paper: Census of Population and Housing - Products and Services, 2016)

**Table 7: The top 10 religions**

Religion	Boroondara No.	Boroondara %	Greater Melbourne
No Religion, so described	61,341	36.7%	31.0%
Western (Roman) Catholic	36,163	21.6%	23.2%
Anglican Church of Australia	16,235	9.7%	7.6%
Greek Orthodox	6,690	4.0%	3.5%
Uniting Church	5,676	3.4%	2.3%
Buddhism	5,384	3.2%	3.8%
Hinduism	4,091	2.4%	2.9%
Christian, not further defined	2,885	1.7%	2.6%
Presbyterian	2,631	1.6%	1.5%
Baptist	2,469	1.5%	1.3%
Islam	1,848	1.1%	4.2%

#### 1.4.6 Settlement data

The majority of Boroondara residents who migrate to Australia come via the skilled migration stream. Of the 2,394 new Boroondara residents who permanently settled in Australia in 2017, 1,814 were skilled migrants (76%), 561 arrived via the family stream (23%) and 19 arrived on a humanitarian visa (1%).<sup>8</sup>

#### 1.4.7 Waves of settlement and migration

To understand how cultural diversity has come to underpin our identity, the City's history provides us with insight into the community we are today.

The area that is now Boroondara was originally home to the people of the Kulin Nation including the Woi Wurrung and Boon Wurrung tribes. Early European settlement in the Boroondara area began from 1840, with the first settlers arriving from England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland as well as China.

Immigration to Australia from Italy and Greece increased dramatically after World War II, with 89% of Boroondara's Italian and Greek communities arriving prior to 1975.

The end of immigration restrictions in 1973 saw increasing numbers of settlers from Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Malaysia and China.

Immigration has increased over the past 10 years and around four in 10 residents from China (38%) and from India (41%) arrived between 2011 and 2016.

<sup>8</sup> Commonwealth of Australia 2018, Department of Social Services Settlement Reports ([data.gov.au](http://data.gov.au))

### 1.4.8 Selected demographics

The table on the following page shows selected demographics for residents born overseas compared to those born in Australia. As shown and described below, there are notable differences between residents born in Australia and those born overseas from both main English speaking and non-main English speaking countries.

**Table 8: Selected demographics by overseas birth**

	Australia	Non-main English speaking countries	Main English speaking countries
<b>Education (Bachelor or higher degree)</b>	47.5%	51.4%	55.6%
<b>Employed (full or part-time)</b>	65.3%	54.5%	66.7%
<b>Unemployed and looking for work</b>	3.2%	4.9%	3.1%
<b>Residents 15-64 years not engaged in study or work</b>	11.7%	19.6%	12.6%
<b>Weekly individual income \$0-\$399</b>	26.6%	36.6%	20.1%
<b>Weekly individual income \$1,500+</b>	32.3%	22.5%	39.3%
<b>Volunteer work</b>	30.7%	18.9%	30%
<b>Disability (need for assistance)</b>	3.8%	4.6%	3.2%

#### Education levels

Residents born overseas are more likely to hold a Bachelor or higher tertiary degree compared to those born in Australia. This was more so the case if residents were from a main English speaking country (55.6%). Over three quarters of Indian residents held Bachelor of higher degrees (75.0%), the highest rate among the main overseas countries of birth.

#### Employment status

Residents born overseas in a main English speaking country were more likely to be employed (full or part-time), than those born in Australia or in a non-main English speaking country.

Of residents born overseas, those born in Sri Lanka, Vietnam and India were most likely to be unemployed and looking for work (7.2%, 6.5%, and 6.0% respectively).

### Engagement in Employment, Education and Training

Residents who were born in a non-main English speaking country were more likely to not be engaged in employment, study or training. Broken down by country of birth (for those countries of birth with a working age population of over 500 residents), the non-main English speaking countries with the highest proportion of residents who are not engaged in employment, education or training are Taiwan (27.4%), China (24.1%), and Korea (21.0%).

### Income levels

Residents born overseas and from a non-main English speaking country are more likely to earn less than \$400 per week (and less likely to earn over \$1,500 per week) compared to residents born in Australia and in a main-English speaking country.

A comparison of income levels of residents born in the top 10 countries shows that over half of all Chinese-born residents earned less than \$400 a week. Residents born in Greece, Italy, Vietnam, and Hong Kong were also more likely than residents from the other top 10 countries of birth to earn under \$400 a week. Residents born in the UK, India, New Zealand, Malaysia and Sri Lanka were more likely to earn over \$1,500 a week.

### Rates of volunteering

Just over a quarter of the total Boroondara population volunteers (26.0%). This rate is higher among people born overseas from a main English-speaking country (30.0%), and lower among people born overseas and from a non-main English speaking country (18.9%). Other factors should be considered when interpreting this data, including that residents born overseas from a main English-speaking country have generally been here longer, and are also more likely to be older (both of which may contribute to higher rates of volunteering).

Residents from the UK, China, and Vietnam recorded the highest rates of volunteering (30.5%, 28.4% and 26.4% respectively) while residents born in Malaysia and India recorded the lowest rates (7.0% and 9.7% respectively).

### Need for assistance

A higher proportion of residents born overseas in a non-main English speaking country need assistance in their day-to-day lives with core activities (e.g. movement, communication or self-care), compared to the overall Boroondara population (4.6% compared to 3.8%).

The rates of people needing assistance reflect the age profile of the communities, with more than one in five residents born in Greece and Italy requiring assistance with core activities (22.4% and 20.1% respectively).

#### **1.4.9 Attitudes to cultural diversity**

Attitudes to cultural diversity were measured in the Victorian Population Health Survey 2014. Respondents were asked if multiculturalism makes life in the area better.

Nearly three-quarters (73.2%) of Boroondara residents responded 'yes, definitely', which was higher than the rate of those in both the Eastern Metropolitan Region (60.7%) and Victoria overall (55.4%) who answered 'yes, definitely'. Boroondara also had the fourth highest rate out of the 79 Victorian LGAs.

#### **1.4.10 Health priorities data**

The Boroondara Community Plan 2017-27 identifies five health priorities that Council will focus on over the first four years of the Plan. Outlined below is a brief overview of data and research for the following three health priorities, which are relevant for the development of the draft MAP:

- promoting mental health and social connection
- preventing injury and violence
- promoting active living.

##### Mental health and social connection

Analysis of research and data indicates that culturally diverse communities, including asylum seekers, often have an increased risk of mental health problems due to social isolation and limited access to culturally appropriate services.<sup>9</sup> The table below presents data related to mental wellbeing from the 2015 VicHealth Indicators survey (of 300 Boroondara residents).<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) 2015, Victoria's 10-year mental health plan, State of Victoria, Victoria.

<sup>10</sup> VicHealth 2016, *VicHealth Indicators Survey 2015*, viewed 19 July 2017, <http://exploreyourdata.com.au/>

**Table 9: Data related to mental wellbeing from the 2015 VicHealth Indicators Survey**

Variable	Boroondara result	Result for people of a non-English speaking background
<b>Subjective wellbeing (range 0 to 100)</b>	78.8	76.8
<b>Satisfaction with life as a whole (range 0 to 10)</b>	8.0	7.9
<b>Resilience (self-reported ability to adapt to change or bounce back after hardship - range 0-8)</b>	6.4	5.6
<b>People around here are willing to help their neighbours (% who agree)</b>	69.1%	63.0%
<b>This is a close-knit neighbourhood (% who agree)</b>	51.7%	50.6%
<b>People in this neighbourhood can be trusted (% who agree)</b>	76.6%	69.1%

As can be seen, people from a non-English speaking background rated slightly lower on subjective wellbeing and resilience scores compared to all Boroondara residents. People from a non-English speaking background also had lower levels of agreement (when compared to the overall results for Boroondara) with the statements ‘people around here are willing to help their neighbours’ and ‘people in this neighbourhood can be trusted’.

#### Preventing violence and injury

In 2017-18, there were 810 family violence incidents recorded by Victoria Police in Boroondara. Victorian data shows that 76 per cent of family violence victims over the age of 18 years are females.<sup>11</sup> Data also shows that immigrant women experience much higher rates of male violence.<sup>12</sup> Women from culturally diverse backgrounds may face significant difficulties in accessing help including a lack of support networks, language barriers, and limited knowledge about their rights and Australia’s laws.

Data is not available about the rate of elder abuse in culturally diverse communities. However, according to local agencies, older people from culturally diverse backgrounds may have additional risks for elder abuse due to increased dependence on the immediate family, social isolation, lack of personal networks for support, limited knowledge of existing services and cultural or language barriers in

<sup>11</sup> Crime Statistics Agency, Family Violence Data Portal, retrieved June 2019, <https://www.crimestatistics.vic.gov.au/family-violence-data-portal/download-data-tables>

<sup>12</sup> VicHealth 2016, Preventing violence against women, VicHealth, Victoria, retrieved 1 July 2016, <https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/our-work/preventing-violence-against-women>

accessing mainstream services and/or culturally or linguistically appropriate residential aged care or home services.

#### Promoting active living

Council's Sport and Recreation Strategy notes that people who speak a language other than English have various differences in participation preferences to the general community, including frequency of participation, and barriers to participation. The Strategy notes that participation patterns of culturally and linguistically diverse residents should be taken into account when planning the provision and management of future sport and recreation activities.

### **1.5 Policy and legislative context**

The following section outlines the legislation, policies and plans at the International, Australian, Victorian and municipal level that are relevant to cultural diversity.

#### **1.5.1 International**

##### The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (the Universal Declaration) is an international document that states basic rights and fundamental freedoms to which all human beings are entitled. In particular, the Universal Declaration refers to the right for an adequate standard of living, education, health care, social and cultural participation and equality under law.<sup>13</sup>

##### The Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity

The Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity was adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO on 2 November 2001. It upholds the recognition of cultural diversity as the 'common heritage of humanity'.<sup>14</sup> It affirms the importance and benefits of exercising cultural rights, which is relevant to the draft MAP.

#### **1.5.2 Australia**

##### Multicultural Australia: United, Strong, Successful

Multicultural Australia – United, Strong, Successful, launched in March 2017, is the Australian Government's policy statement on multiculturalism. The policy sets the priorities and strategic directions for multicultural policy in Australia.

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<sup>13</sup> United Nations Documents, *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, viewed March 2019: <https://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/index.html>.

<sup>14</sup> UNESCO, *UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity*, 2012.

### **1.5.3 Victoria**

#### Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001

The *Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001* promotes racial and religious freedom; it promotes the right of all people to be treated with dignity and respect.

#### Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities 2006

The *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* is a Victorian law that sets out the basis rights, freedoms and responsibilities of all people in Victoria. It requires public authorities, such as local governments, and people delivering services on behalf of government, to act consistently with the human rights in the Charter.

The Act includes 20 fundamental human rights that are protected and Council must have regard to these when developing policies and planning and delivering services and activities for the community. Of particular relevance to the draft MAP are the following two fundamental human rights:

- freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief
- freedom to enjoy culture, to declare and practise religion and to use language.<sup>15</sup>

#### Equal Opportunity Act 2010

The objectives of the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010* include:

- promoting everyone's right to equal opportunity
- eliminating, as far as possible, discrimination and sexual harassment
- providing redress for people whose rights have been breached.

#### Multicultural Victoria Act 2011

The principles of multiculturalism enshrined in Section 4 of the *Multicultural Victoria Act 2011* include:

- mutual respect and understanding regardless of cultural, religious, racial and linguistic backgrounds
- promoting and preserving diversity and cultural heritage within the context of shared laws, values, aspirations and responsibilities
- working together to build a positive and progressive future to enhance Victoria as a great place to live
- equal entitlement to access opportunities, participation and contribution to social, cultural, economic and political life in Victoria
- responsibility to abide by Victoria's laws and respect democratic processes
- shared commitment to Australia and community service

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<sup>15</sup> Parliament of Victoria, *Charter of Humans Rights and Responsibilities 2006*

- recognising Victoria's diversity as an asset and a valuable resource benefiting Australia.<sup>16</sup>

#### Multicultural Policy Statement -Victorian and Proud of it.

*Victorian. And Proud of it.*, is the Victorian Government's multicultural policy statement, guided by the values outlined in the Victorian Values Statement:

- One law for all
- Freedom to be yourself
- Discrimination is never acceptable
- A fair go for all
- It is up to all of us to contribute to a Victoria we can be proud of.

#### **1.5.4 Local Government**

##### Local Government Act 1989

Local Government in Victoria is administered under the *Local Government Act 1989*.

There are a number of specific sections in the Act, which have guided the development of the draft MAP. Specifically, section 3C (2) states that in seeking to achieve its primary objective, a council must have regard to the following facilitating objectives:

- to improve the overall quality of life of people in the local community
- to ensure that services and facilities provided by the Council are accessible and equitable.

With respect to the role of a council, Section 3D (2) states that the role of a council includes:

- acting as a representative government by taking into account the diverse needs of the local community in decision making
- fostering community cohesion and encouraging active participation in civic life.

##### Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) Statement of Commitment to Cultural Diversity 2012

The MAV Statement of Commitment to Cultural Diversity 2012, which is currently under review, 'aims to promote and facilitate good multicultural practice and leadership within and across Victorian local government'.<sup>17</sup>

#### **1.5.5 City of Boroondara**

As shown in Figure 1, the Boroondara Community Plan 2017-27 (BCP) is Council's key strategic document and describes the community's 10-year vision and priorities. It guides Council's decision making, and directly informs the Council Plan including

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<sup>16</sup> Parliament of Victoria, *Multicultural Victoria Act 2011*.

<sup>17</sup> Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV), *Towards a New Multicultural Policy Framework - Building Better Partnerships with Local Government*, 2012.

the Strategic Resource Plan, annual commitments and strategic indicators, the Municipal Strategic Statement and Council's strategies, plans and policies.

The BCP is structured around seven themes the community told us were important to them and each includes a strategic objective describing the outcomes we are seeking to achieve. The BCP is operationalised by the Council Plan annual commitments, and actions in plans, strategies, policies and strategic business plans.



**Figure 1: City of Boroondara Corporate Framework**

The BCP also meets the requirements of a Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, and states Council's commitment to placing health and wellbeing at the centre of everything we do. It also identifies the following five health priorities:

- promoting mental health and social connection
- preventing injury and violence
- reducing harmful alcohol use
- promoting healthier eating
- promoting active living.

The vision, wellbeing commitment and priority themes of the BCP provide the foundation for the draft MAP. The draft MAP will address the following themes and strategic objectives of the BCP:

- Theme One: Your Community, Services and Facilities  
Strategic Objective 1: Community Services and Facilities are high quality, inclusive and meet a variety of needs now and into the future.

- Theme Six: Your Local Shops and Businesses  
Strategic Objective 6: A vibrant local economy and shops that are accessible, attractive and a centre of community life.
- Theme Seven: Civic Leadership and Governance  
Strategic Objective 7: Ensure that ethical, financial and socially responsible decision making reflects community needs and is based on principles of accountability, transparency, responsiveness and consultation.

It will also contribute to the following health priorities:

- promoting mental health and social connection
- preventing injury and violence
- promoting active living.

## **1.6 Achievements of the Cultural Diversity Plan 2014-18**

The Cultural Diversity Plan 2014-18 had 29 actions under four priority themes. Some of the achievements of the Plan include, but are not limited to:

- holding annual events, such as Harmony Day, to recognise and celebrate the City's diversity. In 2019, Council's Harmony Day event included musical performances, storytelling and a light supper of food from around the world
- receipt of an innovation grant under the 2018/2019 Seniors Participation Grants Program from the Department of Health and Human Services.  
Through a series of capacity building sessions, multicultural seniors clubs will co-design a tool kit, which they can utilise to coordinate and deliver a series of culture connection events/activities to be undertaken through the life of the project and in to the future.
- providing English language conversation groups and bilingual story time sessions in Boroondara's libraries
- producing translated materials for Council's materials on biodiversity
- holding a Community, Culture and Wellbeing Forum in May 2017 to celebrate Harmony Day with a panel of speakers and an interactive workshop to discuss the health and wellbeing issues for newly arrived and established communities in Boroondara. The forum was attended by 92 representatives from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, settlement and welfare services, international students, representatives for the tertiary sector, maternal and child health services and community groups.
- convening the Boroondara Interfaith Network and working with its members to organise regular events which included a community reflection on the history of interfaith to mark the 2015 Parliament of the World's Religions in Utah, a poetry and panel discussion about respectful relationships to mark the International Day of Non-violence, a forum on faith responses to natural disaster, a Reconciliation Week workshop for children, three 'Places of Worship Tours' around Boroondara and participation in the Inner East Interfaith Family Violence prevention project

- promoting Council's services and programs at the bi-annual welcome for international students hosted by the Swinburne University of Technology at the Hawthorn campus
- supporting community groups to undertake activities that promote cultural, linguistic and religious diversity through the Annual Community Strengthening Grants program. Activities funded include celebrations for the Chinese New Year, the Gangaur Mela Festival, the Vietnamese Mid-Autumn Festival, an Israeli Dance Program, and Harmony Day activities in Neighbourhood Houses and the production of a book on the stories of residents' experiences of migration to Australia
- the facilitation of connections between volunteers from the Welcome Dinner Volunteer Project, the Opening Doors Social Inclusion Project and the Hawthorn Rotary Club to host Welcome Dinners at the Auburn Bowls Club and the Balwyn Community Centre
- an ongoing supported playgroup (Parent Infant Mother Goose) with a trained Chinese-speaking facilitator
- holding a forum in July 2016 to build the capacity of member agencies of the Boroondara Volunteer Resource Centre to engage with volunteers who are from a culturally diverse background, and providing cultural competency training for volunteer managers in 2019
- working in partnership with Manningham and Monash City Councils, the Inner East Primary Care Partnership, Gamblers Help Eastern and Monash Link Community Health Services in 2016 on a project funded by the Victorian Government's Responsible Gambling Foundation Prevention Grants Program to raise community awareness and minimising the harm of problem gambling
- celebrating Boroondara's diversity by organising a community exhibition in 2015 capturing the stories of the City's culturally diverse communities. People from different cultural, linguistic and religious backgrounds were invited to work with a professional artist to capture the story of their family heritage and journeys that led them to Boroondara. The exhibition was displayed in the Camberwell Corridor Gallery space following the official launch of the Cultural Diversity Plan and is now housed in the Ashburton Community Centre
- developing, and promoting through local business networks, an online video in Mandarin, Cantonese, Greek, Vietnamese and Italian outlining information about starting and running a business in Boroondara
- encouraging culturally relevant sport and recreation activities and programs consistent with the Sport and Recreation Strategy 2014-19 by linking clubs with culturally diverse community groups and applying for funding
- consulting with culturally diverse groups in Balwyn and across Boroondara as part of the redevelopment of the Balwyn Library to ensure their aspirations for the redevelopment of the Library were captured

- providing opportunities to encourage culturally diverse communities to participate in arts and cultural activities through the Cultural Facility Access Grants and Community Project Wall exhibitions
- partnering with Neighbourhood Houses Boroondara and Chai Junction in 2015 to hold three tea tasting events to celebrate Neighbour Day and to link local residents from culturally diverse backgrounds with their local neighbourhood houses
- partnering with Swinburne University of Technology in 2015 on 'The Living in Melbourne' project, which was funded through an Australian Government grant, to identify safety issues that arise on and off the university campus and developing strategies to build resilience and reduce incidents of violence
- using the 'Community Conversations' approach, where community members were trained in facilitating consultations, as part of the development of the Sport and Recreation Strategy and the Balwyn Library redevelopment. This approach ensured that the views of the culturally diverse community members were captured as part of these consultations
- delivering a garden care workshop for culturally diverse residents, particularly, older residents, during Cultural Diversity Week in 2015.

## **Part Two**

### **2.1 Benchmarking**

The development of the *Multicultural Action Plan Background Paper* was further informed by a review of the relevant policies and action plans of the following 10 councils:

- City of Knox
- City of Monash
- City of Whitehorse
- City of Manningham
- Shire of Yarra Ranges
- City of Moonee Valley
- City of Stonnington
- City of Yarra
- City of Hobson's Bay
- City of Geelong

The names and focus of the policies and plans of the 10 councils benchmarked varied. Five have plans/policies with a specific focus on cultural, linguistic and religious diversity (Yarra Ranges, Stonnington, Yarra, Hobson's Bay and Geelong). The titles of the plans/policies are: the Stonnington Cultural Diversity Plan, the Yarra Ranges Cultural Diversity Policy, the Geelong Multicultural Action Plan, the Hobson's Bay Multicultural Policy, and the Yarra Multicultural Partnership Plan. Three councils focus on a number of specific groups such as people with a disability, older adults and culturally diverse communities under the title of either Access and Equity (Knox and Moonee Valley) or Inclusive Strategy (Manningham). Two councils have integrated a number of specific groups such as older adults, people with a disability and culturally diverse residents into the Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan (Whitehorse and Monash).

All of the above councils developed their plans/strategies/policies through a consultation process, which incorporated various methods including research and review, public consultations, focus groups, surveys, demographic analysis, advisory and reference groups.

The majority of the plans/policies/strategies include accompanying action plans with both a community and organisation focus. Some policies do not have accompanying action plans, but note that action plans will be developed annually as part of business planning. The majority of action plans do not include measurable and/or expected outcomes. Common actions included: capacity building for staff through activities such as cultural awareness training, reviewing or developing communications strategies, holding events to celebrate diversity and encourage interfaith dialogue, and translating information and providing interpreters.

The lifespan of most policies and plans ranged from three years to five.

## **2.2 Consultation**

Council consulted with our culturally diverse community as part of the community consultation for the development of the Boroondara Community Plan (BCP). Further targeted consultations for the development of the draft MAP were also held. Below is a summary of the findings from these consultations.

### **2.2.1 Boroondara Community Plan consultation**

During the consultations for the BCP, the largest community consultation ever undertaken by Council with 11,845 responses received, particular efforts were made to include the voices of the culturally diverse communities. This was done by:

- inviting the community to respond in their own language using translated versions of the BCP postcards, which were produced in simplified Chinese, Mandarin, Korean, Greek, Vietnamese and Italian
- delivering the postcards to places of worship, culturally diverse community groups, English as a second language conversation groups/classes and to members of the Boroondara Interfaith Network.

The consultation included a representative sample of people from culturally diverse backgrounds, with 1,318 of the respondents born in a country where English is not a main language and 52 of the responses submitted in a language other than English.

The BCP consultation asked the community “What is important to you in Boroondara?” The responses were analysed and seven main priorities were identified by the community, with the three main ones being ‘community, services and facilities’, ‘community’, and ‘parks and green spaces’.<sup>18</sup> Although residents who were born in a non-main English speaking country and those born in Australia or a main English speaking country shared the top three priorities, the order of importance differed slightly as shown in Figure 2.

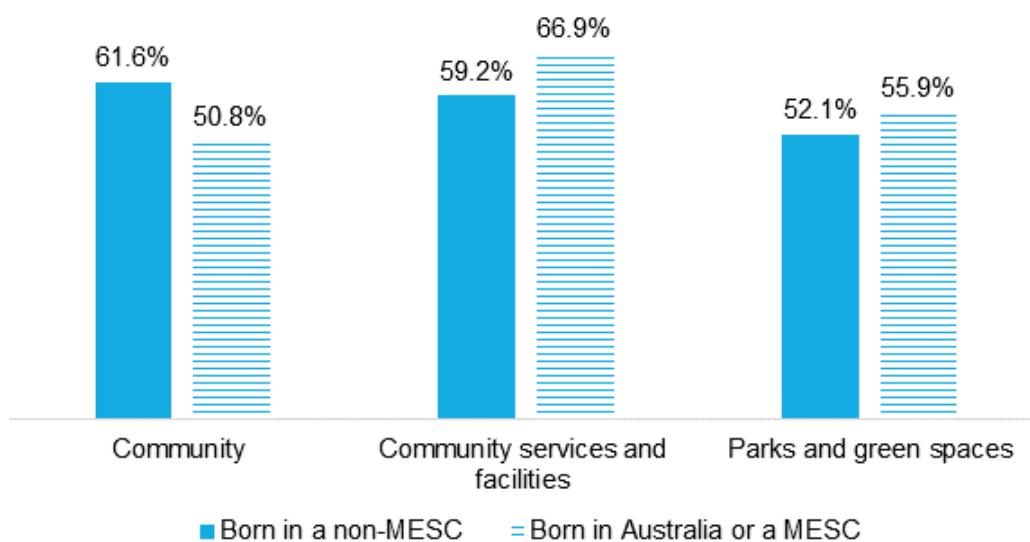
The theme ‘community’ was identified as the main theme for residents from a non-main English speaking country (whereas for the remaining population it was the third most important). Under this priority personal safety and security was the key aspect that was important for people coming from a non-main English speaking country and it was considerably more important when compared to people born in Australia and main-English speaking countries (27% compared to 17%). The other main aspects within this theme identified as being important to residents born in non-main English speaking countries was respect, diversity, and a strong sense of community (11%, the same proportion as the rest of the community).

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<sup>18</sup> The final priority themes in the Boroondara Community Plan were informed by the analysis and are: Your community services and facilities; Your parks and green spaces; The environment; Neighbourhood character and heritage; Getting around Boroondara; Your local shops and businesses; Civic leadership and governance.

Within the ‘community services and facilities’ theme, residents from non-main English speaking countries were more likely to state that life-long learning opportunities were important to them than main English speaking country born residents (21% compared to 11%).

Within the parks and green spaces theme, residents talked about the importance of parks, gardens and green spaces (37% of residents from a non-main English speaking country), and public amenities within parks and gardens (e.g. seating, toilets, drinking taps, BBQs, playgrounds, areas for dogs, and walking trails) (15% of residents from a non-main English speaking country).



**Figure 2: Main three themes identified in the consultation for the Boroondara Community Plan for residents born in a non-main English speaking country and born in Australia or a main English speaking country (% of respondents)**

A search for words and terms related to cultural diversity was undertaken on the 11,845 verbatim comments from both stages of the BCP consultation. Responses that are relevant to the development of the draft MAP were identified and are summarised below if they were mentioned by five or more people. The issues raised mainly align to the BCP Theme ‘Your Community, Services and Facilities’:

- multiculturalism is good and/or important and/or we need more of it (n=49)
- support services and activities for culturally diverse residents is important (n=26)
- a society inclusive of cultural diversity is important (n=23)
- more multicultural events (n=13)
- equity of service access is important (n=11)
- welcoming/supporting refugees is important (n=8)
- other cultures should assimilate (rather than Council catering to them) (n=8)

- safety for culturally diverse residents is important (n=7)
- reduce migration (n=6)
- the need for a translator to help with correspondence or for information to be provided early because time is needed to understand it/have it interpreted (n=5).

As noted above in paragraph 4 of 2.2.1, an issue that stood out as being more important to residents from a non-main English speaking country compared to the residents born in a main English speaking country was personal safety and security. Further analysis of the verbatim comments from both stages identified the following safety issues, which relate to the BCP Theme 'Your Community, Services and Facilities' as being important to people from a non-main English speaking country:

- safety/a safe community is important (little/no elaboration) (n=117)
- safety for children (n=25)
- safer places/streets (n=18)
- low/less crime (n=14)
- adequate/more police presence (n=14)
- safety from burglary/in own home (n=14)
- safety at night (n=12)
- safe parks (n=7).

As part of the development of the BCP, a forum was held in May 2017. The forum was attended by 92 people including representatives of settlement and ethno-specific welfare services, local tertiary education providers, the Boroondara Interfaith Network, culturally diverse community groups and international students. Attendees were asked to provide their feedback on the issues and priorities for newly arrived and established culturally diverse communities in Boroondara that aligned with the themes of the BCP. The key issues from the forum are noted below under the relevant BCP themes.

- Your Community, Services and Facilities
  - Educating new arrivals and existing residents from culturally diverse backgrounds about Council's services and programs is important so they can participate in community life and feel included.
  - Meaningful employment is good for the community and economy and for mental health.
  - Children born overseas can miss out on Council's Maternal and Child Health Services as they may not be aware of it.
  - Interfaith activities can be used to bring communities together to create understanding and respect.
  - Community education about safety is important as perceptions of community safety are low for some new migrants and they may not be aware of Australian laws. For example, new migrants may not be aware that it is illegal to ride bikes on footpaths or that dogs need leads.

- Providing assistance to groups that support culturally diverse residents is important.
  - Making new arrivals feel welcome is important so that they have a feeling of connectedness and belonging.
  - Accessibility to services is important for people with a disability (including culturally diverse residents), as lack of access can lead to social isolation and mental health issues.
  - Residents from culturally diverse backgrounds can be at risk of social isolation. Identifying ways to build social connections is important.
- Your Local Shops and Businesses
    - Small business support for new arrivals would be useful to assist with knowledge of running businesses.
  - Civic Leadership and Governance
    - Language support services are important in assisting culturally diverse communities to participate in the community.
    - Promoting Council's services to newly arrived migrants in ways that are accessible (for example through a welcome pack and/or online or face to face forums in multiple languages) would be helpful.

### **2.2.3 Targeted consultations with the community**

Further targeted consultations were undertaken to ensure the key issues and areas for action had been captured. While the participants in these sessions were not representative of all cultural groups in Boroondara, and therefore the sample size was not statistically representative, the findings provided useful insights to inform the development of actions in the new Plan.

The further seven focus groups undertaken in June 2018 were with the following:

- representatives from the Boroondara Interfaith Network
- members of a Vietnamese community group
- members of the Shirdi-Sai Temple
- international students from Swinburne University of Technology
- members of a Chinese new-parent group
- staff from across Council.

Two of the focus groups were conducted in-language with the assistance of an interpreter. The groups focussed on levels of community awareness and participation in Council's services and programs, explored best practice examples, what Council was doing well in this area and any opportunities for improvement.

In January 2019, feedback was also obtained from the seniors groups representing the Chinese, Vietnamese, Italian and Greek speaking communities during the community consultations, as part of the review of the Creating an Age Friendly Boroondara Strategy.

Feedback from both targeted consultations about what the participants appreciated about Boroondara included:

- the safe and welcoming feel of Boroondara
- close proximity to services, amenities and a range of educational institutions
- cleanliness of the streets and open spaces like parks
- opportunities available to connect
- positive experiences some had when they contacted Council
- the natural environment and recreation areas.

Outlined below are the key issues identified in these consultations, which have been grouped under the relevant BCP theme.

- Your Community, Services and Facilities
  - A low awareness of Council services teamed with low English language proficiency means that new arrivals are less likely to be involved in community and Council events.
  - The language barrier is of particular concern for older, more isolated members of some communities. Social groups and activities catering to the needs of older people are important for addressing isolation and encouraging greater participation.
  - Building connections between similar cultures and between different cultural groups and communities are equally important in establishing community wellbeing.
  - Establishing lasting connections with other local residents and communities can be difficult even amongst well-resourced groups.
  - Access to in-language information could encourage people to use services.
  - Self-funded groups face financial challenges due to increasing costs of transport or access to venues to meet or hold cultural events.
  - Activities and programs for communities to connect are important and were appreciated, as they provide an opportunity to socialise and create friendship networks. They can also be a bridge to involvement in the broader community.
  - Local groups and individuals from culturally diverse backgrounds appreciate Council attending their events or meetings and this could be an opportunity for increasing engagement between Council and culturally diverse groups.
  - Encouraging all members of the community to participate in celebrations for ethno-specific festivals and culturally significant times

of the year in libraries, events, arts and cultural programs is a good way of increasing awareness of the cultural, linguistic and religious diversity in the municipality.

- Attending Council run programs, activities and events was seen as a good way to become involved in the broader community.
  - Continuing to address the needs of grandparents, older people and new parents including those experiencing social isolation due to cultural or language barriers is important.
- Civic Leadership and Governance
    - The provision of relevant information about Council's services, programs and facilities in languages other than English would be useful to increase knowledge of Council's services, as the lack of in-language communication and face to face engagement can be a barrier to participating in services and programs.
    - There is a wide range of communication needs of culturally diverse communities and broader communication channels could be explored to complement Council's existing methods and to target different age groups (i.e. ethnic media, newsletters, radio, face-to-face and social media).
    - In some groups, there is a low level of awareness of Council services and how to engage with Council.
    - Increasing engagement with under-represented groups who face language or cultural barriers to participation is important.
    - Guidelines on the use of language services and inclusive customer service practices across Council would assist staff in providing culturally appropriate services.
    - It is important to advocate on behalf of Boroondara's culturally diverse communities about issues affecting them to increase their health and wellbeing.
    - Staff confidence in planning and delivering programs and services for culturally diverse communities could be strengthened.
    - A workforce, which reflects the diversity of the community, could assist in meeting the needs of our culturally diverse community.

## **2.3 Identification of key areas for action**

The information gathered during the community consultation for the BCP and the further targeted consultations for this Plan were analysed along with the findings from the research, benchmarking and demographic profile to identify key areas for action in the draft MAP. As the BCP is Council's key strategic document, the areas for action have been grouped under the relevant BCP priority theme, as shown below.

### Priority Theme 1: Your Community, Services and Facilities

Key areas for action:

- Acknowledge and celebrate the City's cultural diversity through programs and activities for the whole community to create a welcoming and inclusive community.
- Ensure the diverse needs of the community are considered when planning Council's services, programs and facilities so that all community members can participate.
- Work with our community and partners to develop community safety initiatives to enhance perceptions of safety among culturally diverse communities.
- Support opportunities for intercultural engagement to build social connections.
- Encourage participation by multicultural communities in volunteering, sport and recreation activities, the libraries, and arts and cultural programs.
- Provide support to enhance the capacity of culturally diverse residents and groups to apply for grants and lead projects.
- Encourage and facilitate partnership opportunities to enhance social connections and participation in the community life.
- Increase engagement with culturally diverse communities to build greater connections with Council and the community.

### Priority Theme 6: Your Local Shops and Businesses

Key areas for action:

- Provide support to small business owners who speak English as a second language to assist them to participate in local business networks, mentoring and trader associations.

### Priority Theme 7: Civic Leadership and Governance

Key areas for action:

- Increase awareness of Council services, programs and facilities among culturally diverse communities in Boroondara so that they are able to participate.
- Review how Council communicates and engages with culturally diverse communities and develop protocols.

- Provide relevant information in languages other than English to encourage greater participation by culturally diverse groups.
- Advocate to the State and Federal Government on behalf of culturally diverse communities and ensure the diverse needs of the community are reflected in Council's advocacy.
- Increase the cultural competency of the workforce to create a welcoming environment.
- Promote opportunities to participate in Council's advisory committees and in community consultations.
- Support the development of a workforce profile that is reflective of the community.

## **2.4 Conclusion**

The Background Paper has been developed to inform the draft Boroondara Multicultural Action Plan 2019-23. The draft MAP will continue to recognise that the City's diversity is embedded in the social fabric that constitutes the Boroondara community today. The findings of this paper will inform the development of actions in the draft MAP that are consistent with Council's role to improve the health and wellbeing of all people in the community. The draft MAP will enable Council to effectively incorporate cultural diversity considerations into the design and delivery of programs, services and facilities to ensure they are accessible and inclusive for the whole community.