

OFFICERS REPORT**ADVOCACY FOR THE EXPANSION OF THE COMMUNITY SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM**

Submitting Councillors: Cr Josh Fergeus & Cr Rebecca Paterson

MOTION

That Council:

- 1) *Notes Amnesty International's campaign 'My New Neighbour' to advocate for an expansion and improvement to the Commonwealth Government's Community Sponsorship Program.*
- 2) *Offers their support to Amnesty's advocacy efforts by writing to the Commonwealth Government, to request the future expansion and improvement of the Community Sponsorship Program, to assist refugees and people seeking asylum with their settlement in the City of Monash.*
- 3) *Writes to Amnesty International expressing their support for the My New Neighbour campaign;*
- 4) *Writes to Victorian Councils notifying them of their support for the My New Neighbour campaign*

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

No impact to Council's budget is anticipated as a result of support for this Motion.

IMPACT ON INTERNAL RESOURCES

No impact on internal resources are anticipated as a result of support for this Motion.

COUNCIL PLAN AND COUNCIL POLICIES

In 2017 Council adopted *A Healthy & Resilient Monash: Integrated Plan 2017-2021* as the guiding strategic document. This Plan provides context to Council's work in relation to the health and wellbeing of the Monash community, including those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

The City of Monash signed the Refugee Welcome Zone Declaration in 2002. A Refugee Welcome Zone is a local government area that has made a commitment to welcoming refugees into the community, upholding their human rights, demonstrating compassion and enhancing cultural and religious diversity in the community.

Monash Council has a strong commitment to its community, supports cultural diversity and values and respects the expression of difference. Monash Council has demonstrated significant leadership in the areas of multicultural policy development, service provision and support for culturally and linguistically diverse residents.

RELEVANCE TO WORK ALREADY UNDERTAKEN BY OFFICERS OR COMMITTEES

Monash Council has been a leading advocate on multicultural issues, including those relating to support for refugees and people seeking asylum and resettlement in Australia.

Monash officers work closely with a range of non-Government organisations and community service providers through formal networks such as the Monash Multicultural Settlement Services Network to ensure that refugees and asylum seekers living in the Monash area are well-supported.

FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

There are no further considerations to be raised in relation to this proposed advocacy.