

12.7	Communicating with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities
Directorate	People, Partnerships and Performance
Director	Georgie Hill
Manager	
Attachment(s)	Nil

Purpose

For Council to consider this report in response to Notice of Motion 28/23 outlining the ways in which Council communicates with culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities.

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

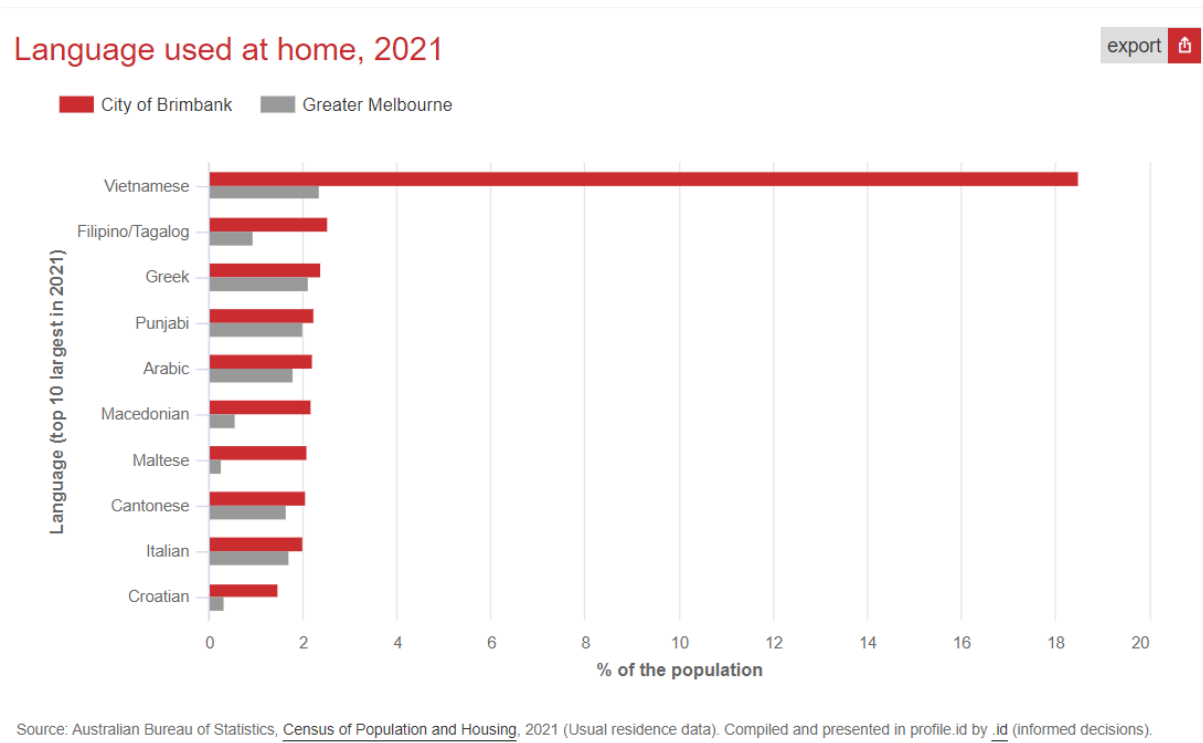
- a. **Receives this report in response to Notice of Motion 28/23 from the Council Meeting on 17 October 2023.**
- b. **Notes the various ways Council officers currently communicate with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities across Brimbank.**
- c. **Notes that officers will continue to work closely with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities to improve and tailor our communications to these communities.**

Background

Brimbank is one of the most culturally diverse areas in Australia with 48.2% of residents born overseas.

More than 160 languages are spoken in Brimbank, and more than half (57.3%) the residents speak a language other than English at home. About one-in-seven residents (13.6%) do not speak English well or do not speak English at all.

According to the ABS 2021 Census, Vietnamese is by far the most common language spoken at home other than English in Brimbank, with 18.5 per cent of the community using Vietnamese at home (see chart below). Other languages are less than 2.5 per cent, including Filipino/Tagalog (2.5%), Greek (2.4%), Punjabi (2.2%) and Arabic (2.2%).



At the Council Meeting on 17 October 2023, Cr Thomas O’Reilly tabled Notice of Motion 28/23 relating to ‘Communicating with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities’. The motion was:

That Council:

- a. Acknowledges that Brimbank is home to one of the most culturally diverse communities in Australia with about 48% of residents born overseas, and one-in-five residents who do not speak English well or at all.
- b. Receives a report outlining the ways in which Council currently communicates with its CALD community, and future opportunities for consideration as part of a future budget process.

Matters for Consideration

Analysis

Communication with the community is tailored based on the target audience, channel/s being used, timing, available budget, and operational influences.

Brimbank City Council makes every attempt to share information with CALD communities and in languages other than English, as summarised in this table.

Brimbank City Council website	Information about core services and select programs is available in 14 languages on Council’s website, including in audio. The language selection was based on Census and migration data. Our website also offers screen reading functionality for anyone who needs help with reading in English.
Your Say Brimbank website	In March 2024, Council began a pilot of a multilingual tool on the Your Say Brimbank website offering whole-of-website automated translations to better enable more residents to participate in consultation opportunities. Translations are available 10 languages

	other than English.
Brimbank News newsletter	Each edition of our community newsletter, Brimbank News, is fully translated into Vietnamese and made available online.
Written translations	Council provides translated information relating to select programs, services and events to the community using NAATI (National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters) translators as needed. Council's standard for sourcing translated materials is to include a community check as part of this process.
Audio translations	In-language audio translations have been used on our website and to help share information on some programs with community members, this includes in English.
In-person translators	Council makes available in-person translators on request to help community members to communicate with Council and participate in events/programs and consultations. Multilingual staff have also supported translation.
National Translation and Interpreting service (TIS) line	The National TIS line is available to all community members to use. We promote the availability of the TIS line to all residents who would like to speak with Council in their preferred language. Information on how to access the TIS line is made available across our services and is included as standard in our publications.
Ethnic media	Media releases and news stories are shared with ethnic media publications, and Council advertises some programs, services and events in these publications to reach as wide an audience as possible.
Multilingual staff and face-to-face communications	Council employs multiple multilingual staff across various service areas including: • Customer Experience – multiple multilingual Customer Service Officers who work in Council's call centre, on live chat and at customer service centres in Keilor and Sunshine. • Leisure services – in customer service, member admin, health and fitness, and learn to swim areas • Community groups for specific CALD communities (Bosnian, Croatian) • Early Years – there is a dedicated CALD Outreach Officer, 12 multilingual staff, and five Smalltalk Playgroup groups delivered in Vietnamese and Burmese each week • Maternal and Child Health has a Vietnamese Family Support Worker • Brimbank Youth Council • Youth Services partners with specialist CALD youth stakeholders such as the Centre for Multicultural Youth, Australia African Foundation for Retention and Opportunity, and Charis Mentoring • Community Support has a range of multilingual staff across all services

Collaborating with community leaders	Council works and collaborates with local community leaders, including faith leaders, to engage and communicate with residents. This includes through the provision of tailored activities and programs that address residents' needs focussed on social inclusion, education, arts and culture, employment pathways, and fostering a sense of belonging. Through these efforts, Council can bring people together to connect, learn, and actively contribute to their neighbourhoods. We also communicate directly with active members of newly arrived migrant groups, through interpreters where necessary, to link residents with community and welcoming infrastructure.
Community events	Council actively participates in events organised by CALD community groups, many of which are funded through Council's community grants program. Council is also ensuring translated materials and interpreters are available at Brimbank community events.
Social media translations	Social media platforms such as Facebook allow users to select their preferred language which then translates the copy on our posts.
Translated materials	Other translated materials includes: - Maternal and Child Health has feedback forms available in Vietnamese, Arabic, Burmese, Hakha Chin and Dari. Customers can provide feedback in their language and we have it translated. - Early Years collateral, including the Kindergarten EOI and registration forms and promotional materials, are all translated into five languages: Burmese, Hakha Chin, Vietnamese, Arabic and Dari. - Community Support translated marketing materials.

Council aims to ensure all communications produced for the community are written in Plain English where possible. In some instances, information is provided in Easy English, and the use of icons, infographics and imagery help to communicate visually.

In 2023, Council undertook a research project to better understand the community's awareness, needs and preferences for Council's communication channels. This data is now guiding how we deliver our communications to the community, including CALD communities.

Council will continue to ensure that communications aimed at CALD communities and suburbs with strong multicultural representation such as St Albans are tailored for those specific audiences.

We will continue gathering data through available channels, such as Google Analytics, Profile ID, Sprout Social (social media monitoring tool), MVA, other local governments, feedback forms, Your Say consultations, internal stakeholders and other channels to inform an evidence-based approach to CALD communications.

Resource And Risk Implications

There are no resource implications associated with this report.

Community: potential impact on community, including public trust and customer service impact

- Yes – Our community relies on Council to remain informed and to be provided with the

opportunity to engage and be involved in various opportunities. Understanding how to best communicate and engage with community members who don't speak English well, or at all, is vital to allow this to happen.

Legislation/Council Plan/Policy Context

This report supports the Council Plan 2021-2025 strategic direction and objective of:

4. Leadership and Governance - A high performing organisation that enacts the vision and decisions of Council through the delivery of quality and innovative services - A fairer place for all.

- Engaged and Responsive - Community insights are valued to enhance connection and engagement with Council.

This report complies with Brimbank's Community Engagement Policy.

Council officers contributing to the preparation and approval of this report, have no conflicts of interests to declare.