

POLICY



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Policy title: CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Directorate: COMMUNITY AND LIFESTYLE

Branch: OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

Policy objective: To provide a framework by which Council will be inclusive, equitable and culturally sensitive in its service development and delivery to people of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds in Logan City, including descendants of people born overseas and Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people. Council will do this through positive community relations and symbolic gestures.

Policy scope:

1. Preamble

Logan City Council's mission is to lead the development of a city for lifestyle, family and business. Council is therefore committed to the principles and practices that support the lifestyle and wellbeing of all residents, including residents and visitors from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, as integral to its mission.

Council upholds the universal principles established by the United Nations in relation to civil rights and supports the vision and aims of multiculturalism, as pursued by other levels of the Australian Government and the community at large. This means that, within Australian society all members, irrespective of personal characteristics such as age, gender, ability, marital status, sexuality, ethnicity or religious beliefs, are equally entitled to contribute to the cultural, social and economic life of the nation without prejudice or discrimination.

2. Principles and directions

According to 'Logan 2026 City Directions', Logan is an 'intercultural city' and that intercultural experience continues to enrich the community. Council is committed to multiculturalism and endorses the principles of social justice, which underpin the relationship between Council and its ethnically diverse community. These principles are:

- (a) Sustainability

Social sustainability is essential to build a harmonious and cohesive community, whereby all people's civil rights are upheld and that they are valued members of that community regardless of their heritage or ability. In order to achieve social sustainability within this highly diverse city, the corporate plan recognises that “the City of Logan is a young, dynamic, multicultural community” and it refers to “residents from 170 different cultures” calling Logan their home.
 - (b) Inclusion

This ‘Cultural Diversity’ policy provides a framework for inclusive service delivery and ensures access and equity. A major guiding principle is to provide excellence in services to external and internal customers. The ‘Cultural Diversity’ policy will be used to “facilitate improved, reliable and equitable access to services, facilities and information”. The city diversity strategy will be the primary vehicle by which these goals will be implemented throughout the organisation.
 - (c) Equity

Equity refers to ensuring that all people are provided the same service fairly and impartially. It is an important principle because it entails equality of opportunity to receive Council services and to participate fully in programs and services and to achieve equitable outcomes.
 - (d) Access

Access refers to the principle that services and information should be available to everyone who is entitled to them and should be free from any form of discrimination irrespective of a person’s country of birth, language, culture, age, gender, disability, race or religion. This means that any barriers to accessing services should be removed.
 - (e) Collaboration and consultation

Council recognises that its community services responsibilities can most effectively be exercised in collaboration and consultation with the community, other levels of government and a range of community organisations.
 - (f) Participation

This ‘Cultural Diversity’ policy is committed to fostering participation in services, programs, events and political mechanisms of the Council, through an inclusive, cohesive and open society and to developing strategies that promote equal rights and opportunities for all Logan residents, regardless of their cultural or religious background, gender, length of residence, age, disability and country of birth.
3. A culturally and linguistically diverse city

Council acknowledges the special role that residents of culturally and linguistically diverse origin play in the life of the city. Council is committed to working in partnership with organisations and individuals in the pursuit of the above stated vision and to

enhance the economic, social and cultural well being of the city's ethnically diverse community.

4. Policy definitions

(a) Cultural diversity and cultural identity

Logan is a culturally diverse community, its people coming from approximately 170 different ethnic identities, speaking more than 50 different languages and practising their unique cultures. A practical definition of culture is an integrated pattern of human behaviour that includes thoughts, communications, actions, customs, beliefs, values, and institutions of a racial, ethnic, religious, or social group.

People are considered to be of a cultural or linguistically diverse background if they are:

- (i) born overseas (citizens, residents, refugees)
- (ii) descendants of parents who were born overseas
- (iii) long and short term visitors from overseas (tourists, international students, delegations, people on working visas)
- (iv) Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people.

(b) Multiculturalism

The concept of multiculturalism builds on this diversity and represents a strategy for all Australians to express, share and appreciate each person's culture and cultural heritage. It ensures that within Australian society, all members irrespective of personal characteristics (such as age, gender, disability, marital status and religious beliefs) have equal opportunities to contribute to the cultural, social and economic fabric without prejudice and discrimination.

(c) Interculturalism

The intercultural approach goes beyond equal opportunities and respect for existing cultural differences. It does not recognise cultural boundaries as fixed but as in a state of flux and re-making. An intercultural approach aims to facilitate dialogue, exchange and reciprocal understanding between people of different cultural backgrounds. City governments should promote cross-fertilisation across all cultural boundaries, between 'majority' and 'minorities', 'dominant' and 'sub' cultures, localities, classes, faiths, disciplines and genres, as the source of cultural, social, political and economic innovation.

Definitions:

Not applicable.

Policy statement:

The following procedure is to be undertaken for this policy:

1. This policy will provide a framework for delivering inclusive and appropriate services and information to all residents regardless of cultural or linguistic background.
2. This policy will apply to Council's elected members, employees and consultants who deliver services or engage with groups and individuals, including international visitors from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
3. In respect of matters where there is an intention to proceed in a manner contradictory to this policy, the matter shall be referred to the Council for determination.
4. The 'Logan City Cultural Diversity Strategy' will provide implementation strategies for this policy.

Related policies/legislation/other documents:

DOC ID	DOCUMENT TYPE	DOCUMENT NAME