Darebin Intercultural Centre Community Reference Group

Terms of Reference

Introduction and background

On 16 December 2019, Council resolved to relocate the Darebin Intercultural Centre from its current location at 59A Roseberry Avenue to the municipal building at 350 High Street, Preston.

At this new and exciting location, the Darebin Intercultural Centre will operate as a distinct program alongside other Council services. The Intercultural Centre will become a more visible and central expression of Council's commitment to a more just society, in the heart of Preston Central. The new approach to the program will see the Intercultural Centre programmed for, by and in partnership with Darebin's culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

Architect-led redesign and refurbishment work is required to enable a building that is both welcoming and fit-for-purpose, ensuring it meets the needs of Darebin's diverse communities.

Purpose of the Community Reference Group (CRG)

The purpose of the CRG is to provide advice and cultural considerations to the architectural team during the design phase of the relocation project of the Intercultural Centre.

Policy context

This process aligns to Council Plan Goal 5 - Involving our diverse community. We will lead on equity and recognise our diverse community as our greatest asset for solving future challenges. We will ensure our services, facilities and programs benefit all, including our most vulnerable.

Council's Human Rights Framework, Towards Equality, is a key document in the future of the Darebin Intercultural Centre. A renewed Centre provides the opportunity to put aspects of this framework into action. Reference is also made to Darebin's commitment to be a Welcoming City.

Critical to the Intercultural Centre model is recognition of Traditional Owners and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, as articulated in Council's Statement of Commitment.

Guiding principles

The guiding principles of the Darebin Intercultural Centre CRG are grounded in a social inclusion and human rights-based framework, affirming:

- The rights of all people in Darebin to equal access to services, projects and programs initiated by Darebin Intercultural Centre and to participate in all aspects of civic life.
- The rights of all people in Darebin to observe their cultural practices and beliefs without fear of discrimination or any form of social disadvantage.
- The need for continued awareness raising, advocacy and community-based action to address barriers to equality faced by members of Darebin communities.

Date of creation 8 January 2020 / Author Intercultural Centre Team Leader / Objectives reference A5387307

CRG membership

Composition of the Darebin Intercultural Centre CRG reflects Darebin's diverse community. Representation was sought from key stakeholder groups, local community groups and local community representatives for a total of eight members. No proxy is permitted to attend meetings on behalf of a Council endorsed member. Should a casual vacancy arise for the duration of the term, the Officer will fill the position based on the recommendations of the Intercultural Centre team, responding to the skills gap resulting from such vacancies should they arise. Every effort will be made to ensure a transparent and inclusive process is undertaken by officers in the spirit of the CRG and project.

Roles and responsibilities of the CRG

Chair

The CRG meetings will be chaired by the Coordinator Community Hubs. The role of the Chair is to chair the meeting, open meeting, welcome and introduce members and guests; keep individuals and the meeting focused on the topics being discussed and encourage all members to participate, ensure adequate opportunity is given to members who wish to speak; ensure correct meeting procedures are followed and control of the meeting is maintained, keeping track of time; make sure members are aware of decisions being made and that the minute taker has recorded decisions of the meeting; act impartially and uses discretionary powers in the best interests of members and in accordance with the meeting practices; ensures that the Code of Conduct is observed; and close the meeting after business at hand has been properly concluded.

Architect

The architect will work with the Chair and Senior Project Manager to develop briefing materials for CRG members, prepare detailed meeting agendas, support workshop facilitation and consolidate CRG input and content for inclusion in the meeting minutes.

Senior Project Manager

The Senior Project Manager will work with the architect and the Chair to support the development of briefing materials and agenda items relevant to key project milestones.

Guest speakers

Guest speakers with expertise that is relevant to the project may be invited to present to the group.

Secretariat

The secretariat will be responsible for all administration, communications and logistics including arranging meeting venues, supporting participants with access needs, arranging catering, and documenting and distributing minutes within one week following each meeting. The secretariat will also be responsible for distributing agendas and briefing notes to members of the CRG prior to any meeting at which they will be discussed.

CRG members

The CRG itself has no formal delegated or project decision making authority, rather it is an advisory committee. The CRG is responsible for advising on items listed in the agenda only. Agenda items will be determined by the Senior Project Manager, the Chair and the architect.

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The role of the CRG is to:

- Provide input into the concept design phase of the Centre ensuring it is a welcoming, inclusive, culturally safe and fit-for-purpose design that will meet community expectations
- Provide independent, honest and constructive advice on key design elements of the vision, mission and approach, such as:
    1. Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners and First Nations communities
    2. A place of welcoming
    3. Open plan and connectivity
    4. Flexibility – adaptability and future proofing
    5. Access – including physical, emotional and cultural access, and identifying features
    6. Equity embedded in design
- Advise on how design principles may inform programming for the newly relocated Centre
- Provide feedback at the fifth and final meeting on the CRG process, including key learnings to inform future projects

All members have general responsibilities in how they communicate information about the CRG in their day to day business. Provision of general information about the role of the CRG, and the role in bringing back any issues raised by other members of the public is a role CRG members can play in public life. They are not authorised to speak on behalf of the committee around issues that may be raised.

Term of appointment

The CRG will meet for a total of 5 times between August and November 2020 after which time the CRG will dissolve. Specific dates will align with key project milestones.

Meetings and procedures

- Face-to-face meetings will be facilitated where possible, and in accordance with social distancing requirements. These meetings will be based in Preston
- Where required, meetings will be held remotely using platforms such as Microsoft Teams, WhatsApp, phone calls and written submissions dependent on the preferences of the CRG members
- Members are required to attend all 5 meetings. If unforeseen circumstances arise, it is the responsibility of members to inform the secretariat of their inability to attend and to convey their view about any matter on the agenda
- There will be no quorum for meetings
- Minutes will be checked by the Chair and CRG members as a true and accurate record at the commencement of the following meeting
- Interpreters will be made available upon request
- City of Darebin will cover all meeting costs

Recommendations to Council

- The CRG will act in an advisory capacity to the Council only and has no delegated authority to make decisions.
- The CRG does not have an operational role and neither it, nor its members, may direct Council staff in the performance of their duties.

Conduct of CRG members

Code of Conduct

CRG members are volunteers. Following appointment by resolution of Council, CRG members will be required to sign a declaration that they will abide by any guidelines (to the extent applicable) approved in Councils' Code of Conduct 2020 (the Code). The Code must always be adhered to. The code covers interactions with fellow members, other volunteers, staff, contractors, consultants, Councilors, clients, residents, ratepayers and visitors to Council.

Complaints and breaches of the Code of Conduct

- A breach of the Code and/or the Terms of Reference may result in the termination of membership of the CRG member.
- If a member of the CRG feels another member is not adhering to the Code, this should be privately raised with the Chair. The Chair will decide what course of action to take.

Use of Information and Confidentiality

Members will not use any information disclosed at meetings or distributed to them in any way for personal purposes or gains for either themselves or others (including financial gains) and shall maintain confidentiality of all information provided unless specific consent is provided by Council. See the Code for further information.

Publicity

CRG members must not make statements to the media or on social media about Council business or items discussed by the CRG. Instead all media enquiries should be referred to council officers. A CRG member's term shall be terminated for making any statement to the media or on social media.

Conflict of Interest

Where there is conflict of interest by a member this needs to be disclosed prior to any discussions being held. The member will be required to complete a Conflict of Interest Declaration form. Once disclosed, the member is required to immediately leave the meeting for that agenda item, and the conflict disclosure noted in the minutes.

Review of the CRG

The fifth and final meeting will provide an opportunity for evaluation of the CRG, its performance, facilitation and the process undertaken. Key learnings will be used to inform future projects.

Contact Details

Chair

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Key Documents referred to in the Terms of Reference will be provided to participants within their induction package of related information.

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