



MANNINGHAM



ACCESS EQUITY AND DIVERSITY STRATEGY 2014 - 2017



A strategic framework
to support Council in
addressing diversity,
access and social
inclusion issues within
Manningham

Adopted October 2014

1. INTRODUCTION

Overview

It is a fundamental right of every individual to have the opportunity to participate equally in society.

Manningham City Council's *Access, Equity and Diversity Strategy 2014 - 2017* provides the strategic framework for how Council will promote and celebrate diversity and address access and social inclusion issues over the coming three years.

Council will aim to remove language, cultural, religious, racial, gender, sexual orientation, disability-based and age-based barriers from interactions with and within the Manningham community; and wants all local people to 'receive a fair go and a fair share', regardless of their background.

This is a strategic document that represents Council's commitment to Human Rights and its values of freedom, respect, equality and dignity.

In particular, the strategy targets the following key access, equity and diversity areas:

- Cultural diversity
- Religious diversity
- Linguistic diversity
- Age
- Gender equity
- Sexual identity
- Disability

The **aims** of the *Access, Equity and Diversity Strategy* are to:

- Provide an integrated framework to support Council in addressing and incorporating access, equity and diversity goals in a coordinated manner
- Maximize the benefits of this coordinated delivery to improve opportunities for all local people to participate equally in local community and civic life; and to be treated with respect, equality and dignity.

Definitions

A **socially inclusive society** is defined as one where "all people feel valued, their differences are respected, and their basic needs are met so they can live in dignity"¹.

Access – Local government services should be available to everyone who is entitled to them and should be free of any form of discrimination on the basis of a person's ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, English language skills, ability or age.

Equity – Local government services should be developed and delivered on the basis of fair treatment of those who are eligible to receive them.

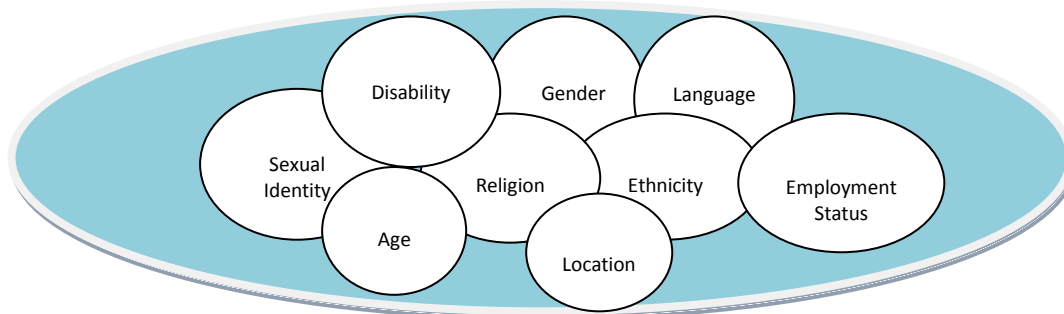
The concept of **diversity** includes acceptance and respect. It means understanding that each individual is unique, and recognising our individual differences. These can include race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs or other ideologies. It is about understanding each other and moving beyond simple tolerance to embracing and celebrating the rich dimensions of diversity that are contained within each individual (and community).²

¹ Cappo, D Monsignor, 2002, Quoted in VicHealth Research – *Social inclusion as a determinant of mental health & wellbeing 2005*

² University of Oregon, Definition of Diversity

Figure 1 (below) depicts an example of diversity i.e. types of identities and background. It is important to consider that every person and community is unique and that a person's identity is made up of a variety of identities. For example it is one thing to have a disability, but another to be a woman with a disability and yet another to be a migrant woman with a disability. The size of each bubble will be different for everyone and denotes the importance of an identity, which can vary across individuals, groups and even the same individual over time.

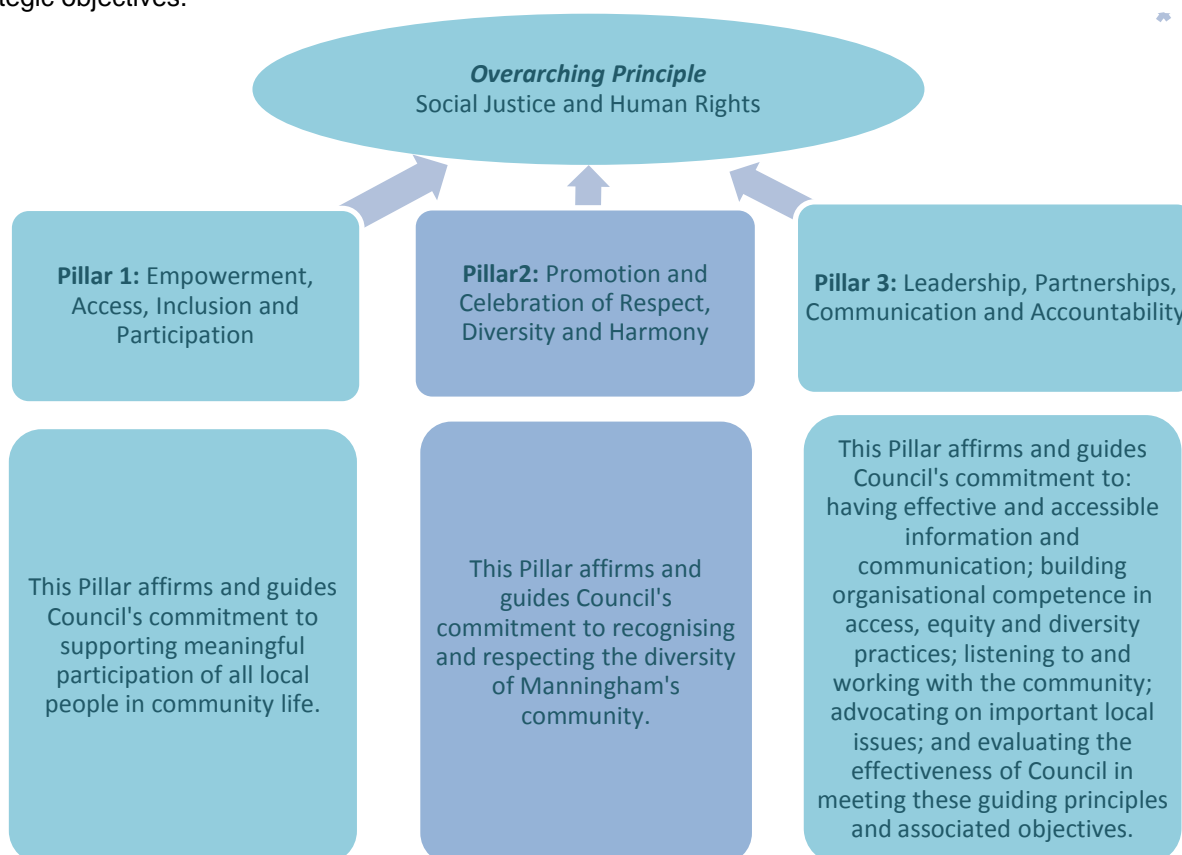
Figure 1: Diversity - People have multiple, intersecting identities and backgrounds³



2. INTEGRATED ACCESS, EQUITY AND DIVERSITY FRAMEWORK

Manningham City Council's commitment to access, equity and diversity is reflected in the following overarching principle of social justice and human rights and the associated pillars which form the framework of this strategy.

The social justice and human rights overarching principle affirms and guides Council's commitment to actions which address and advocate for equitable access to local services and which affirm the inherent right of all people to be treated with respect, equality and dignity. This overarching principle will guide Council in implementing its strategic objectives.



The Strategy focuses on access, equity and diversity in order to achieve a socially inclusive society; one in which people are not excluded from community life because of their identity or background. This is because exclusion can lead to lower social standing, often accompanied by lower outcomes in terms of income, social capital, health, access to employment, access to services, voice in decision making and quality of life⁴.

3. POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

All spheres of government respond to the growing diversity of the Australian population by developing appropriate legislation and policies to ensure equality of treatment for all members of the community. The fundamental principle underlying all these laws and policies is that regardless of race, religion, language, gender, ability, age or other attributes, all residents must be guaranteed equal opportunity and equal access to services.

Manningham's *Access, Equity and Diversity Strategy* and its ongoing implementation is guided by the following Australian legislation and policy:

Federal Government	State Government
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Racial Discrimination Act, 1975 Sex Discrimination Act, 1984 The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Act, 1986 Disability Discrimination Act, 1992 Racial Hatred Act, 1995 Age Discrimination Act, 2004 Sex Discrimination Amendment (Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Intersex Status) Act, 2013 National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Act, 2013 National Anti-Racism Partnership and Strategy 2011 - 2015 The People of Australia, 2011 - The Federal Government's Multicultural Policy Multicultural Access and Equity Policy: <i>Respecting Diversity. Improving Responsiveness</i> National Disability Strategy 2010 – 2020 The Gender Equality Blueprint, 2010 National Strategy for Young Australians, 2010 National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex Ageing and Aged Care Strategy, 2012 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Government Act, 1989 Racial and Religious Tolerance Act, 2001 Child, Youth and Families Act, 2005 Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act, 2006 Victorian Disability Act, 2006 Victorian Equal Opportunity Act, 2010 Victorian Multicultural Act, 2011 Carers Recognition Act, 2012 Public Health and Wellbeing Act, 2008 Commission for Children and Young People Act, 2012 Victoria's Advantage: Unity, Diversity, Opportunity, 2014 – Victoria's Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship Policy The Victorian State Disability Plan 2013 - 2016 Future Directions – Action agenda for young Victorians Plan Melbourne, 2014 Priorities for Victorian Women's Health 2014 - 2018

^{3, 4} World Bank, 2013, *Inclusion Matters*

Council's Role

Council has an important role to play in the development of a socially inclusive community where all people, irrespective of their ability, ethnicity, gender, age or socio-economic background can fully and fairly participate in civic and community life.

As such, Manningham City Council has adopted a whole-of-Council approach to ensuring that the principles of access, equity and diversity are incorporated into all areas of community service provision.

This focus is consistent with Council's *Generation 2030 Community Plan* (long-term community led strategic framework) and *Council Plan 2013 - 2017* goals of having:

- An inclusive and harmonious community that celebrates our diversity and draws strength from our differences;
- A community that is involved and well connected, strengthening community spirit;
- Accessible services and facilities for people of all ages and abilities.

4. DIVERSITY IN MANNINGHAM⁵

Overview

Manningham has a unique combination of city and country lifestyles. With a population of approximately 117,000 people (ABS 2013), Manningham includes the suburbs of Bulleen, Doncaster, Doncaster East, Donvale, Nunawading (part), Park Orchards, Ringwood North (part), Templestowe, Lower Templestowe, Warrandyte, Warrandyte South and Wonga Park.

Gender Male: 48.6%; Female: 51.4%

Culture and language

Manningham has a diverse multilingual and multicultural community. Our residents come from over 140 countries worldwide and speak 106 languages. 36.5% of residents (40,629 people) were born overseas and 39% speak a language other than English at home. Furthermore, over 50% of our residents had at least one of their parents born overseas.

Traditionally, the largest migrant populations in Manningham have been Italian and Greek communities. However in 2006 China became, and continues to be, our dominant migrant country-of-origin. Immigration from countries with Chinese affiliations such as Hong Kong, Singapore and Malaysia also continues to increase. Manningham is also home to Victoria's largest Iranian community.

The top five overseas countries of birth are now China, Italy, United Kingdom, Malaysia and Greece.

The top five languages spoken are English, Cantonese, Greek, Mandarin and Italian. 6% of our residents (7,020 people) are not fluent in English or do not speak English at all.

Volunteering

The level of volunteering can indicate the cohesiveness of the community and how readily individuals are able to contribute to that community. Factors impacting the level of volunteering in Manningham include our age structure, level of proficiency in English, income and education levels. 18% of the Manningham population reported doing some form of volunteering in 2011.

SEIFA Index of Disadvantage

In 2011, Manningham scored 1,071.4 on the SEIFA Index of disadvantage. This indicates a low level of socio-economic disadvantage.

Disability

Disability can occur at any stage throughout life. While it can be present at birth, the vast majority of people acquire their disability as an adult. Some disabilities occur suddenly while others may develop over time. Some are permanent, others episodic or temporary in nature. A disability can be physical or intellectual. Some are obvious while others are hidden; and a person can have more than one disability.

Approximately 20% of Victorians have some form of a disability. Within Manningham, 5,026 people report needing a high level of assistance in their day-to-day lives with self-care, body movements or communication. Many more people requiring less daily assistance face challenges due to their disability. Our ageing population will increase these numbers. The Victorian Government projects that the number of people with a disability will rise by 47% over the next 12 years (2011-2023). Furthermore, 11,150 people in Manningham provide unpaid assistance to a person with a disability.

Sexual and Gender Identity

While many GLBTI (Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex) people live healthy, connected, happy and positive lives, the GLBTI population is known to have poorer wellbeing outcomes than other Victorians across a number of areas. Social factors, such as experience of discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity and reduced access to appropriate services, can directly contribute to poorer health and wellbeing outcomes.

Religion

Over 25 faiths are practiced in Manningham.

Age / Life Stages

The age structure of Manningham provides key insights into the level of demand for age based services and facilities. Manningham's population is ageing.

Babies and preschoolers (0-4): 4.9%
School children (5-17): 15.4%
Tertiary education and independence (18-24%): 9.3%
Young workforce (25-34): 10.4%
Parents and homebuilders (35-49): 20.9%
Older workers and pre retirees (50-59): 13.5%
Empty nesters and retirees (60-69): 12.1%
Seniors (70-84): 11.3%
Elderly aged (85+): 2.3%

⁵ All data from ABS 2011 Census unless otherwise indicated

5. ACCESS, EQUITY AND DIVERSITY STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Pillar 1: Empowerment, Access, Inclusion and Participation

The empowerment, access, inclusion and participation pillar affirms and guides Council's commitment to supporting meaningful participation of local people in community and civic life.

Council will:

1.1	Seek to identify and reduce barriers experienced by people because of their identity or background (e.g. their ability, culture, faith, language, age, gender, sexual identity)
1.2	Enhance participation by people with diverse identities and backgrounds in Council services, programs, activities and events
1.3	Strengthen opportunities for people with diverse identities and backgrounds to participate in civic life and decision making
1.4	Continue to increase community awareness of the full range of Council services and facilities available
1.5	Continue to improve access for all to Manningham's built environment, transport, facilities, events and services
1.6	Support initiatives that create or strengthen pathways that create better outcomes for vulnerable people
1.7	Support the varying needs of people at different life stages (age) and with different abilities
1.8	Encourage local community organisations to be accessible and inclusive of people with different identities and backgrounds

Pillar 2: Promotion and Celebration of Respect, Diversity and Harmony

The promotion and celebration of diversity affirms and guides Council's commitment to recognising and respecting the diversity of Manningham's community, and achieving an inclusive and harmonious community that celebrates our diversity and draws strength from our differences.

Council will:

2.1	Support activities that strengthen, acknowledge and promote the diversity of Manningham's community
2.2	Continue to develop connections between diverse communities within Manningham
2.3	Acknowledge and celebrate the valuable contributions that people with diverse identities and backgrounds bring to the community

Pillar 3: Leadership, Partnerships, Communication and Accountability

Leadership, partnerships, communication and accountability affirm and guide Council's commitment to having effective and accessible information and communication; building organisational competence in access, equity and diversity practices; listening to, and working with the community; advocating on important local issues; and evaluating the effectiveness of Council in meeting its guiding principle and objectives.

Council will:

3.1	Embed access and inclusion measures and values as a priority across Council
3.2	Increase awareness of the human and legal rights of people with different abilities and backgrounds across Council
3.3	Advocate to State and Federal Government on measures that will increase social, civic and economic participation and reduce local disadvantage
3.4	Actively involve Manningham's diverse communities (people of different identities and backgrounds) when considering how Council services and facilities are to be prioritised, designed and delivered
3.5	Ensure that infrastructure, service provision and facilities planning takes account of demographic change
3.6	Provide Council officers with the information, tools and systems to communicate services, projects and issues with diverse communities in a more targeted manner
3.7	Ensure that Council information is accessible to everyone and create awareness of its availability
3.8	Continue to enhance connection and integration between Council services
3.9	Continue to strengthen collaborative and organisational partnerships across services and programs
3.10	Support community stakeholders to engage with and support at risk and vulnerable community members
3.11	As an employer, lead by example through inclusive and flexible recruitment and employment practices
3.12	Monitor and evaluate Council's strategic plans to measure progress being made in achieving equitable access to local services; and in respecting the inherent right of all people to be treated with respect, equality and dignity.

The process of fostering equity and inclusion is incremental. It requires time and unwavering commitment⁶.

⁶World Bank, 2013, *Inclusion Matters*

6. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACCESS, EQUITY AND DIVERSITY STRATEGY

Manningham's *Access, Equity and Diversity Strategy 2014-2017* provides the opportunity for social justice and human rights issues to be considered strategically, in a coordinated manner, across a broad range of social policy areas.

Previously, a suite of specific strategies and action plans have been developed, each focusing on different social policy areas. There are currently four Council documents with associated action plans that have been endorsed by Council over recent years that will be honoured and delivered upon in a coordinated manner within this new Access, Equity and Diversity Framework. These include:

- Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2013 - 2017
- Early Years Plan 2013 - 2018
- Youth Policy and Action Plan 2012 - 2017
- Multicultural Communications Strategy 2011 - 2014

In addition, the Framework also incorporates social policy areas that are not addressed by current policies or strategies. These include:

- Cultural and religious diversity
- Volunteering
- Sexual identity equity
- Gender equity

Two associated strategies have recently expired and are being replaced by this Strategy and its Action Plan (*Multicultural Strategy 2009 - 2013* and *Volunteer Policy 2009 - 2013*). The issues of gender equity and sexual identity are new areas of focus for Council.

Access, Equity and Diversity Action Plan

An Action Plan accompanies this document. It addresses the principles and strategic objectives of the *Access, Equity and Diversity Strategy 2014 - 2017* and coordinates its delivery (i.e. it specifies how Council will achieve the objectives of this document within the scope of available resources). The Action Plan will be reviewed regularly to ensure that it remains relevant and targets emerging issues as well as longer term strategic issues.

The Action Plan will guide the way forward for Council on delivering actions that will address and advocate for equitable access to local services and that will affirm the inherent right of all people to be treated with respect, equality and dignity.

7. EVALUATION OF THE ACCESS, EQUITY AND DIVERSITY STRATEGY

Evaluation will enable Council to measure its effectiveness in influencing ongoing positive change. The findings of the evaluation processes will inform the development of ongoing action plans.

Outcome Evaluation	• Are the targeted medium-long term benefits being achieved?
Impact Evaluation	• Are we having the influence we expected?
Process Evaluation	• Have we done what we said we would?