

██████████
Convenor, RAR-Strathbogie Shire

Via email: ██████████

Dear ██████████

Thank you for your letter dated 27 April 2023, requesting support from Strathbogie Shire Council for the Shepparton and Northeast Victoria Afghan Community Sponsorship Proposal.

Strathbogie Shire Council is pleased to provide this letter of support.

In 2017, Strathbogie Shire become a Refugee Welcome Zone. A Refugee Welcome Zone is a Local Government Area which has made a commitment in spirit to:

- Welcoming refugees into the community
- Upholding the human rights of refugees
- Demonstrating compassion for refugees, and
- Enhancing cultural and religious diversity in the community.

Demonstrating Council's support to the Shepparton and Northeast Victoria Afghan Community Sponsorship Proposal is an opportunity to stand by this commitment. In addition, Council has a long-standing relationship with our local Rural Australian for Refugees (RAR) Committee, who are an informal network of regional and rural groups supporting and advocating for refugees and people seeking asylum.

Over the past five years (between the 2016 and 2021 census period), Strathbogie Shire experienced higher than forecast population growth, increasing by 1,007 residents at 1.9% p.a. (compared to previously forecast growth rates of 0.7% p.a.) If growth continues at historic rates, the population is expected to increase to 15,011 residents by 2036 (+3,647). As highlighted in the shire's demographics, 1,120 people who were living in Strathbogie Shire in 2021 were born overseas, and 12% arrived in Australia within 5 years prior to 2021.

Our economy is largely driven by industries including; agriculture, manufacturing, construction, rental hiring and real estate services, public administration and safety, health care, transport/postal and warehousing, accommodation and food services, and education and training. The growing nature of our shire will present further employment and social support opportunities.

Strathbogie Shire Council looks forward to the opportunity to continue to welcome Afghan families to our community.

Cr Laura Binks
Mayor
Strathbogie Shire Council

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