2.1   RESTRUCTURING THE PREVIOUS ETHNIC SENIORS FORUM TO THE POSITIVE AGEING FORUM
(COM41:SM)

Responsible Director: Julie Salomon

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council:
1. *Recognises that the Positive Ageing Forum will incorporate what was previously known as 'the Seniors Forum'.*
2. *Acknowledges that the forum will now invite and include representatives from all seniors groups across Monash.*
3. *Endorses the Positive Ageing Forum as a networking and information sharing resource and not a formal advisory committee to Council.*
4. *Appoints a Councillor to the Forum as a Liaison Councillor.*
5. *Endorses the updated Terms of Reference.*

INTRODUCTION

The Seniors Forum, formally referred to as the Ethnic Seniors Forum, provided a platform to support and respond to the issues raised and faced by the ethnic/CALD seniors groups in Monash. This report outlines the shift in the intent of this group from a reference group to an information sharing group with a broader focus on all seniors, not just groups with a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse focus. This will provide an opportunity for all seniors groups to come together, to be inclusive and embrace positive ageing and age friendly practices with a holistic outlook irrespective of cultural backgrounds and other influencing factors.

BACKGROUND

In late 2017 a meeting was held with key internal staff from both Community Strengthening and Aged and Community Care to discuss the benefits and opportunities that presented with merging the Seniors Forum and the Positive Ageing Lifestyles (PALs) Forum. The Seniors Forum had previously been a formal advisory committee to Council, however it was apparent that this advisory role played a minimal part in the function of the committee, which was primarily focused on connected members of the various clubs and identifying practical options for the utilisation and sharing of resources.

On Monday 6 November 2017, the final Seniors Forum meeting for the year was held. Staff from Community Strengthening and Aged and Community Care presented to the group outlining the organisational changes and how the meeting format could progress in 2018. The members in attendance were happy with the meeting and the focus moving forward in 2018.

SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Seniors Forum has been an energetic and enthusiastic group who feel valued and respected by Council. The meetings have provided a platform for the groups to come together and discuss important and relevant issues as well as providing an opportunity to stay informed of Council decisions, policies and community engagement. These opportunities will continue to be supported, enhanced and broadened with the change to the Positive Ageing Forum.

CONCLUSION

The Seniors Forum will be moving forward as the Positive Ageing Forum, meeting three times per year. The aim of the meetings will be to provide an opportunity for groups to come together, to share information, develop relationships and to network. Council will continue to support these groups by facilitating the meetings and in doing so, demonstrating Council's commitment to community engagement.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Terms of Reference for Positive Ageing Forum.

POSITIVE AGEING FORUM

TERMS OF REFERENCE

March 2018

Name: Positive Ageing Forum

Scope: The primary aim of the Positive Ageing Forum is to bring together seniors to encourage and enable discussion, networking and information sharing. The group will provide advice and feedback to Council of the issues and barriers faced by seniors across Monash as well as highlight the success and opportunities gained through community strengthening grants and Council support.

Objectives:

- Be informed, engaged and provided with the opportunity to network with other seniors groups, Council staff and Councillors.
- Provide feedback on operational matters to Council officers that relate to their interactions with the various seniors groups and activities.
- Explore opportunities to develop relationships with other seniors groups and organisations in the Monash community.
- Act as a bridge between Council and the members of their local groups and gatherings.
- Encourage and support multicultural activities, positive ageing and age friendly activities across council and seniors groups as a means to promoting and encouraging social inclusion and cultural awareness.

Membership

Council will aim to achieve representation from different cultural groups, different geographical areas across Monash and have an age and gender balance.

The Positive Ageing Forum meetings will consist of representatives from all seniors groups who meet in Monash and wish to attend. It will also include representation as follows:
- A councillor/s as liaison councillor
- Residents
- Representatives from community organisations or groups who have a focus on provision of services to older people in Monash

All positions are voluntary positions and there is no limitation on the number of forum members.

Selection process

Attendance at the meeting will be voluntary and no selection process will be undertaken.

Meeting Frequency and Duration

- The group will meet three times per year for two hours. (Dates and times to be finalised once members have been appointed).
- It is expected that each member attend as many meetings as possible.
- In extraordinary cases (such as when a meeting is cancelled) a special meeting may be called.

Quorum

- No set quorum

Role of Councillor

- To act as liaison councillor
- To be the link between Council and seniors
- To table issues and concerns to Council on behalf of residents
- To nominate another Councillor to attend meetings in his/her absence

Executive Support

The Monash Aged and Community Care Unit will provide Executive Support to the Committee.

Accountability

- Attendees have an active role to provide feedback and advice to Council on issues relating to older persons within the municipality.
- Attendees participate in discussions at scheduled meetings.

Evaluation and Review

The Terms of Reference will be reviewed and evaluated as required.

Reimbursement of expenses

Not applicable.