



## Responses to the Draft Ageing Strategy

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft strategy. The following comments are collated out of discussion with Access Advisory Committee members, Access and Inclusion staff, additional submissions made by AAC members and included are extracted comments from a transcript of the meeting of 19 August where the strategy was considered.

### Attendance:

Clr McKenna	Clr Porteous	Cle Hesse
Hannah Solomons	Charlie Murray	Jamie De Paulo
Queenie Tran	Emily Dash	Kerrie Lorimer
Angelo Arulanandam	Meg Alwyn	Wendy Banfield
Glenn Redmayne	Julia Phillips	Johanne Gallagher
Naomi Bower		

### Overall elements to consider:

- Recognise that there is strong connection between both Healthy Ageing and Cultural Strategies regarding participation outcomes. This focus is also a key IAP focus so attention is needed on harmonising effectively, again without leaving anyone behind.
- Question regarding why no mention of disability beyond dementia
- Include reference to COVID and note how that may impact strategy going forward
- Note difference between safety and security, suggest security is a separate element to add.
- Suggesting welfare issues are separate from happiness
- Suggest an awareness campaign on older people and their contributions
- Noting issues and increased isolation when not digitally connected, need other means of staying connected outside of digital environment and over reliance on digital environment to address older people's needs. Phone options could improve – often a state and federal issue
- Financial issues go beyond financial literacy. Some people are poor because of ingrained environmental barriers including to employment
- Concern that the reality of service provision is not meeting need or addressing people's situations
- Wanted the situation related to accessibility of transport modes captured as it has a bearing on how effectively other aspects of the HAS can be delivered. While not Council responsibility we continue to lobby for improvements and have carriage in other strategies like the IAP and Integrated Transport Strategy
- Focus on keeping online services running, changes to existing waste service, and recognising choice needed rather than nursing homes being the only option for care
- Convenors note clarifying pool access: The Americans with Disability Act (ADA) has had much stronger legal reach into planning and building law than the Australian DDA. Until recently pools were not required to have access. Now new public pools over a certain size have compliance requirements. In IWC all our pools now have at least one access option into the water other than steps. Dawn Fraser Baths remains the exception.
- Confirming need for consistent levels of public access everywhere and consistent terminology

### Submission from Charlie Murray:

What about homeless elders? People will still slip through the cracks (especially if they are drug users, as many services prohibit their involvement without attempting to understand their needs) and we need to be getting creative about how to engage people who don't usually have their voices

heard by the community they do belong in, as much as many like to pretend they or their humanity don't exist.

Things like hostile architecture exist as passive social punishment for people's homelessness as well as presenting issues for disabled and elderly people.

Connect with and support orgs like NUAA, perhaps? (National Users and AIDS Association) - work with them to ensure literacy within the orgs and within council on needs of drug-using elders and community more generally.

Financial literacy and focus on employment is important to some but also often ignores material realities of others - some are forced to work well past their capacities for the sake of "staying involved" or just staying alive, some just don't have money and can't make it work. It's not just because we don't understand how to handle money. even programs aimed at the poor are often alienating & condescending and delivered by middle-class people who treat someone's position as a result of their own shortcomings. Needs people with extensive experience with poverty to work with community members to keep them afloat.

#### **Submission from Wendy Banfield:**

I think the Healthy Ageing Strategy generally needs to ensure things are not assumed in regard to mobility and ageing. I note there is mention of age-appropriate seating. I think there needs to be something that states allowing space for wheelchair usage and manoeuvring (and womanuvering too).

#### **Discussion taken from AAC meeting transcript:**

Note that some parts of the transcript were not clear, words were not recognisable or recorded correctly. Where these do not add to the feedback they have been left out. A summary of the key points made during the passage of the conversation is included above under overall considerations.

#### **Angelo Arulanandam**

Because the aging strategy mentions only dementia doesn't mention disabled here at all, so this is because there's a separate document.

#### **Kerrie Lorimer**

I was left behind trying to get in (to online meeting) and I felt like the document itself was leaving me behind as well, but I'm glad I got him to say that and I just agree with everything that was said. I just think there's so much left out of what it is to be aging and yeah, I was. I was really focused on the healthy aging thing and surprised that there wasn't any mention of COVID in it.

#### **Angelo Arulanandam**

(strategy focus) #4 talks about safety and I'm surprised security is not included in it. They are two separate things. Safety is damages, domestic violence or anything else, or something. Security is when a person goes out day or night and comes back home without any being manhandled or robbed or something completely different things. Security should be added into it for aging people.

#### **Angelo Arulanandam**

(strategy focus) #6 health and diversity. I know it's a (called?) workers Health and Safety Act 2011 talks about health, safety and welfare. I'm not talking about welfare, having champagne and other things. The very basic needs for aiding people you have. I think this covers housing and financial

strategy, but they also should be made contingent than happy. Some form of happiness will work out at the next level where I went into action plan comes up we can work out into that, but that should be included here as a welfare as another issue at the very basic level.

The last point is that awareness campaign is not mentioned. We should make the aging people as an important people in our society. When healthy they will be useful as grandparenting or yeah healthy. They save healthy expenses and that sort of thing. So there should be awareness campaign as well.

**Kerrie Lorimer**

I just think when I look at the healthy aging issue and look at the impact that COVID is having on that group in the community we have been more isolated and told to stay home, particularly because of, you know, the risk that we've got of dying for the last two years and this is just such a not that it is not impacting everybody in other ways, but for us we are literally being, you know, cocoon. And for a lot of people who are that good at electronic connections, unlike you know, I mean, I know people who can't, even I don't have Wi-Fi at home and can't use computers. And all that sort of stuff. There's nothing. There's nothing specifically about helping the older people find ways to connect. And you know, when there was the mention of dementia in the first paragraph, I just thought about all the other health issues that are involved in dementia with aging other than dementia, I just really wondered when they wrote this, did they really consult with elderly people?

**Charlie Murray**

I had a couple of points, but the main one that I've been thinking about is around Housing, employment and financial security. The third point, which was about financial literacy. Focus on employment, and that's important to some people and I can see why that's in there, but also wanted to note that it often ignores like the material realities of others. Like some people are forced to work well past their capacities for the sake of like staying involved in the community or just staying alive. Some don't have money and can't make it work. And I wanted to note that a lot of the programs that come up like financial literacy programs are often (from) experience and knowledge and know what's needed from people in those positions, 'cause like for me, being poor isn't because I don't have financial literacy. It's about my environment as much as anything. And just noting that often middle class interactions with poor people around finance feels very condescending. A lot of the time, and I can. I'm worried that that elements of that might be in there.

The other thought I had was just a quick one about I didn't see a lot of stuff that made me confident that the people who often fall into the cracks like homeless elders, maybe elders who use drugs even just like people who never have services quite readily available kind of still aren't incorporated into this, and maybe aren't then necessarily seen as part of Elder members of our community.

**Kerrie Lorimer**

Yeah, I'm in the middle of doing a program through, you know, the Council somehow on stepping up. It's about fall prevention and for example, the other day they had in a person who was presenting in week four of the program, who is from Sydney Council who spend an hour talking about pedestrian safety, made absolutely no acknowledgement that we're in lockdown, and nobody is really getting anywhere going anywhere. And I was thinking how it was so much of what we've had to translate by being locked down is not being addressed in a situation like this course I'm doing, and then it was also mentioned there was kind of advertising that you know these old ladies, of which I'm one, could get in touch with my Gov if they needed somebody to clean their gutters. They're using the Council course to help us just becomes a bit like when they started doing NDIS and came along to our meetings to tell us about how wonderful NDIS was. Well, you know, no, but there's no services available through my Gov either. If you try to ring them, but it just becomes like a

promotion for services that aren't present. And like the mention of dementia. I mean, we've known for a long time that the aging population is going to have lots of health problems, including dementia. But what are we actually doing about, you know the infrastructure to provide services for all these conditions that we are all obviously gonna be getting. I'm just yeah, I just think we're taking too long to have to speak about the reality of what's needed now or has been for the last 20 years as our services are being overwhelmed. But anyway, I'll shut up again.

### **Angelo Arulanandam**

It's saying intact getting around it has got bigger connotations. An accessibility is one thing which I always professed...there is access facilities at public transport problem terminals. To begin with, I want all the railway stations should have lifts or ramps, so escalators that's sort of the, but that is the next level. Let's say the working action level, but at least it should be captured clearly in this strategy document. Then we say getting around we are talking about transport (priorities?) or just meeting people, working and meeting people. No. We captured properly. We're talking about public transport, private transport as a terminal, facilities and possibilities for the disabled.

### **Kerrie Lorimer**

We can't use the gym in the pool, which is a big part of exercise for a lot of older people. We cannot go to the library to use the computers if we don't have one at home and the one thing that the Council has been providing has been some of these zoom meetings or activities which I've participated in, and I think that been fabulous, and I think we would be really pushing that we keep doing this because it's created for a start and it would employ some of the people in the community who do work in that sector that haven't got any other options there for employment. We got enough all people here to keep providing services from the council, I think I mentioned about we need to do something about garbage collection for the elderly. You know changing the size of the garbage bins or something. Yeah, I think it's a really important thing, and I don't think this document looks like it's taking it seriously. Like Angelo says we're not addressing the fact that the elderly in our community not recognized, it's just nursing homes for anybody. You know, when we get to that point...we can all get dumped in nursing homes. And it's a crisis and I don't think they're healthy. Aging strategy is recognizing that one of the big factors needs to be, you know, support to keep people in their homes, which is a bit of a farce from the federal government's funding.

### **Clr Rochelle Porteous**

I guess couple of things. One I would have liked to see a little bit more vision in the documents. Come and just sort of seeing what best practices overseas as well and incorporating some of that into it. I mean something that I went to Hawaii a few years ago, as one does, and the one thing that actually I was really pleasantly surprised to see was that every public pool was required to have a disabled access, so they had like hoists for people who are disabled to ensure that they were able to get in and out of every pool, and that include all the pools like the public pools. You know pools at apartment buildings, pools in hotels, and everywhere, and I think it's a small thing, but if you think about, I have never seen it ever on any pool in Australia, and I think that's crazy, you know, like we, we love our swimming and people that are disabled love doing as well, but we simply don't. We haven't got there, and I don't see why we can't try and do things like that.

### **Julia Phillips**

Hotels?

### **Clr Rochelle Porteous**

At least with their own pools, to enable people that is able to access them. So I would have liked to see some of that sort of more initiative. You know, innovative, but has been done overseas in there.

**Glenn Redmayne**

Ashfield.

**Julia Phillips**

Ashfield

**Glenn Redmayne**

Ashfield and more. We're working to get that in each of our pools, but it is true that you know we have been trying to pick that up over the last few years

**Meg Alwyn**

And I was going to say what Glenn said that like our pool has had a hoist for many years actually. Another thing I'd like to say in learning and sharing knowledge, promote ways to connect, not necessarily to volunteers. I would like Council for all sorts of pet places to think aged people where you've got people living to be 90 and 100 and they don't have any knowledge of computer skills at all. And yet when you ring government numbers, when you've got on to the government on the telephone and it says go to WW dot and I've got friends who say it is so violent. So frustrating that they ring and they keep getting this and nobody answers for ages. Somebody ought to do something and say a lot of aged people just won't have these computer skills and they need to think that their communication, especially with covid when they're told to stay home, is the telephone.

**Julia Phillips**

I think that's a very valid point about people having choice around digital literacy and being able to opt out and not be, you know, kind of cornered into that being the only way to connect. I think that's a very valid point.

**Angelo Arulanandam**

I just said, like you had something which follow on what Hannah said, access facilities we should actually have a proper discussion because access ... we're talking about access to parks, swimming pools, shopping centres, public transport terminals, you name it, all of libraries. All these things should have access facilities to encourage aging characters to go in and come out with they feel not confident or is this a bit of a hazard? Now I help the lady buying milk every Monday because she can't go to the shopping centre. The second point I'd like to mention is a very minor point is in the ageing strategy document it starts off by saying that defining the seniors as in the anyone about 50 and then they use the word seniors and some places they use older people and some places there called elderly elders. So there should be a consistency on that because some people may not like.

**Johanne Gallagher**

Yeah, that feedback came back before will fix that. Don't worry about it.

**Angelo Arulanandam**

Yeah, some people may not like called all older people or something. Alright, thank you.

**Kerrie Lorimer**

It was in the preamble... there was the usual welcome to country comments about, you know, acknowledging the people, the Aboriginal people and there wasn't any mention of the emerging leaders, and one of the reasons why that's an important part of that statement is because there is an understanding that there is a timelessness in that culture where we know that things are a continuum and that really places people like elders with some respect that it's that they pass on their knowledge and even though they may not be here. (if) they're giving that to you know that everybody who will listen to them, and I think with COVID and with the healthy aging strategy I really

hope that it's the local government level that is able to provide and recognize the needs of the people in in the Community because the other levels of government aren't doing that. And aren't acknowledging how the impact of what's going on and being going on for the last two years is impacting on the elderly and will continue to as potentially we're not going to be safe going out in the future, so we have to adapt and we have to be creative. And that's all part of being (a part of) country and being in the inner west. Not sipping lattes or being a Vietnamese drug dealer as Pauline Hanson called everybody.

#### **Glenn Redmayne**

If you could lend your thoughts to areas that you'd like to be involved in some element of co-design as we move forward and it's something we haven't probably done very well. We haven't had a chance to do it very well yet because of you know everything that's been happening, but it certainly an idea that there's some support for and to work with other groups internally and externally, and I see a lot of opportunity with the other advisory committees as well to kind of cooperate with how we design, spaces, places, systems, and supports. So I'm going to leave it at that, but if people want to throw in some ideas about that with a sense of moving forward, that would be great. Anyone?

#### **Johanne Gallagher**

So apologies for being late. I have some personal things going on and I knew that the cultural strategy was part of the first part of the meeting, so I came in and I didn't hear the beginning of this conversation. I've been working on the healthy ageing strategy and action plan for the best part of 2 1/2 years. I've put my heart, my blood, my sweat, my tears into this project. I didn't hear any positive comments, but it would be nice to hear some feedback. On that, if you have any as well, what is being done well and what could be done better? You know it is abroad. Healthy aging strategy based on social participation. There's a lot of areas that we haven't gone deep into. I know that. Which we may be covering in other ways, but this the first strategy of its kind in the council is covering next four years. It's a starting point. It's not perfect. I welcome your feedback about the social participation, because in this context of covid in that we weren't in that context when this work started. Now everything's changed.

#### **Emily Dash**

Yeah, just quickly, like I think that the feedback that's been given in this meeting, generally I agree with a lot of what's being said, and I don't think that you should take any work feedback discussion that focuses on what could be done better as like a blanket attitude of negativity. It's just it's feedback meetings, obviously, by their nature are sort of (*negative?*).

#### **Angelo Arulanandam**

Yeah, my summarizing comment is that this is two strategy reports a good one system very good reports to start with all that we are given this feedback, not criticism. And the other thing I didn't elaborate about security issue should be added because for example, an aging person walking up in the night with no street lighting or streetlight for street lighting. That sort of things, but they will come in the next level of action plan, but it should be captured somehow that an elderly person should be able to walk freely.