1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Policy is to guide Council in relation to the aged and community care system and the planning, delivery and evaluation of aged and community care services to Hume residents.

This Policy describes:
- Underpinning principles;
- The aged and community care system within Hume, its influences and drivers;
- Provision of aged and community care services to Hume residents, and
- Policy implementation.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

Council provides Home And Community Care services to the community within Hume. Council supports aged and community care services that enhance broader community outcomes provided by other agencies, including but not limited to, Community Service Organisations, Non-Government Organisations and Community Health Services.

3. DEFINITIONS

3.1. **The aged and community care system**: The broader system which supports the planning, delivery and evaluation of services and programs that enable frail older people and people with disabilities to remain living in their home and their community.
3.2. **Hume City Council Aged and Community Care Services**: A range of services provided by Council to frail older people and people with disabilities, their carers delivered in their home and community which aim to improve and enhance the physical, social, emotional wellbeing and independence of clients to allow them to remain living in their own home.

3.3. **Home and Community Care**: The Home and Community Care (HACC) Program provides funding for services which support frail older people and people with disabilities and their carers. These services provide basic support and maintenance to people living at home and whose capacity for independent living is at risk, or who are at risk of premature or inappropriate admission to long-term residential care.

4. **POLICY PRINCIPLES**

Principles which underpin and guide this Policy include:
- A strong sense of belonging and connection to the community in which one lives;
- Respect for all clients including those from diverse backgrounds;
- Responsiveness to disadvantage and difficulties that arise;
- A network of support systems;
- The active practice of neighbourliness and hospitality;
- A belief by the community in their capacity to influence decision makers;
- A sense of ownership and enjoyment of public space;
- Positive ageing for all individuals which includes:
  - Creating opportunities and choices for people;
  - Enabling them to maximise independence and control over their own lives;
  - Enhancing quality of life, and
  - Encouraging continued participation in all aspects of community life;
- An effective health service system which includes:
  - Access to information and culturally appropriate services to maintain wellbeing;
  - Sustainable workforce development to provide services across the continuum of care;
  - Infrastructure that supports the provision of care in the ‘best place to treat’,
  - Supportive and effective agency partnerships in the delivery of care and
  - Advocacy to address the challenges of the changing policy, social, workforce and community contexts in Hume City.
5. AGED AND COMMUNITY CARE SYSTEM WITHIN HUME

The aged and community care system within Hume is characterized, influenced and driven by:

- A growing and ageing population;
- Expansion of the municipality's population within Council boundaries;
- High rate of disadvantage and the relationship between increased level of disadvantage and poorer health outcomes;
- Level of people with severe disability;
- Increasing prevalence of chronic diseases;
- Expectations of people seeking and receiving aged and community care services;
- The policy positions of Federal and State government in relation to the provision and delivery of aged and community care services and the ability of funding received from these bodies to meet the direct and indirect costs of providing each type of service, and
- The need to support and effectively manage the diverse range of interfaces, relationships, networks, alliances and partnerships Council has with public and private service systems and agencies.

Council recognises it is not responsible for the provision and delivery of the entire range of aged and community services to the Hume community; however it will endeavour to provide leadership and foster innovation within the broader aged and community care system, utilising its organisational resources, comprehensive knowledge and understanding and its experience, expertise and skills.

Council’s objectives in relation to the aged and community care system within Hume are to:

- Provide aged and community care services designed and configured to respond to the needs of the community within the finite resources available;
- Ensure effective management and governance in relation to the planning, delivery and evaluation of all activities related to Council’s aged and community care services;
- Engage with policy and funding agencies to advocate for funding and resources to support the provision of aged and community care services to meet community needs;
- Maintain a current and comprehensive knowledge of the aged and community care system and use this knowledge to support service innovation and demonstrate leadership within the sector;
- Maintain a current and comprehensive knowledge of demographic trends within the municipality to support effective service planning and responsible management of Council’s aged and community care resources;
- Seek and utilise feedback from clients, their carers and the community including service providers and agencies, to understand expectations and identify opportunities to improve service provision and delivery;
- Seek and respond to opportunities to consult, collaborate and partner with other service providers and agencies to enhance and augment aged and community care service access and service options;
• Provide relevant data and information to other agencies and services providers to assist their planning and resource management in relation to aged and community care services, and
• Evaluate the impact and effectiveness of aged and community care services to ensure effective management and support continuous improvement.

6. HUME CITY COUNCIL AGED AND COMMUNITY CARE SERVICE PROVISION

Council will provide aged and community care services that:
• Are client centered, focusing on promoting client capacity, restorative care, independence and healthy ageing whilst contributing to improved physical, social and emotional wellbeing of clients, carers and communities;
• Are equity based and assessed on client-centred needs and individual circumstances. Services are only provided to people within the target group, subject to assessment and prioritised need in accordance with operational practice guidelines including priority of access tool. Eligibility does not confer entitlement to service provision;
• Facilitate and support efficient transition for clients into aged and community care services within the municipality, with particular attention to those unable to access Hume City Council services;
• Are dedicated to clients with highest need. Where episodes of service demand exceeds capacity for service provision, Hume City Council may develop and utilise robust systems for waiting list management, to ensure services are equitably provided to clients with highest need;
• Effectively utilise the expertise, knowledge and skills of our people who deliver aged and community care services;
• Avoid duplication of services, making the best and most efficient use of the resources available to Council to provide aged and community care services, and
• Where possible, offer and provide flexible service options within the limitations of Council’s budget and human resources.

Council provides the following service types:
• Assessment;
• Care coordination;
• Community transport;
• Delivered meals;
• Home care;
• Home maintenance;
• Personal care;
• Policy and planning;
• Respite care, and
• Social recreation programs.
7. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

7.1. Service Planning
Regular and ongoing aged and community care service planning will be undertaken to ensure Council has a current and comprehensive knowledge of:

- The Hume municipality which includes:
  - Demographics;
  - Population growth and projected growth;
  - Spread of the population within Council boundaries;
  - The cultural mix and changing diversity of the community;
  - Prevalence of chronic diseases, disability and carers within our municipality, and
  - Numbers and demographic of people within the municipality who are socio-economically disadvantaged
- Service utilisation and projected demand in relation to aged and community care services;
- Community expectations of aged and community care service offering and provision;
- Current and future plans of other service providers and agencies including other Local Government Authorities;
- Service innovations in the aged and community care environment, and
- Federal, State and Local government policy context and funding in relation to aged and community care.

Council will evaluate aged and community care service planning process to determine the effectiveness of the research methodology and approach and to inform changes to future service planning processes.

7.2. Service options and provision
The range of aged and community care services provided by Council will be reviewed and evaluated regularly as part of the service planning process to determine how effectively the range and provision of services are meeting the needs of the community and making best use of finite resources.

A formal business case, including service demand, establishment and operational budgets will be prepared for all proposals for new and/or alternative service options.

Opportunities to collaborate and/or partner with other agencies to develop service options not currently available will be actively sought.

7.3. Service innovation
Council will actively explore and investigate opportunities for service innovation within the aged and community care system. Opportunities for innovation may be initiated and driven internally or may be part of alliances, collaborations or partnerships with other agencies or services providers.
7.4. Advocacy
Council will utilise its knowledge and breadth of expertise and resources to advocate on behalf of its community and where agreed, other agencies and services providers external to Council. Advocacy activities may include but not be limited to:
- Seeking additional funds and resources;
- Seeking access to programs;
- Service innovation and service development;
- Contributing to government policy review and/or development, and
- Advocating on behalf of community groups agencies and / or other service providers.

7.5. Financial management
Council receives funding for aged and community care services from Federal and State governments. Council acknowledges funds received may not cover the full cost of providing and delivering each type of aged and community care service provided by Council. Council will ensure effective and responsible financial management in relation to the provision and delivery of aged and community care services by quantifying the full cost (direct and indirect) of providing each aged and community care service.

Cost considerations may include but not be limited to:
- Direct client hours;
- Staff induction;
- Occupational Health and Safety;
- Staff supervision and support;
- Meetings to support service provision;
- Consumables;
- Client administration;
- Physical infrastructure;
- Staff training;
- Case conferencing, and
- Unplanned leave.

Undertaking a comprehensive costing exercise for any aged and community care service provided, or is proposed Council may provide, will ensure Council has a complete understanding of the financial and human resource implications of service provision and the extent to which government funding does not cover the cost of services. This information will allow Council to make informed decisions regarding service provision and internal funding requirements of existing and proposed aged and community care services.
7.6. **Human Resources Management**
Council will engage a workforce suitably qualified and skilled to deliver safe and appropriate aged and community care services.

All staff will have a current and detailed position description.

Council will support the workforce so it has access to education and training to provide respectful, safe and appropriate services for frail older people, people with disabilities and people from diverse backgrounds within the municipality.

7.7. **Collaboration and partnering**
Council will seek to collaborate and partner with other service providers and agencies where there are opportunities to enhance and build on existing aged and community care service options and to ensure services are responsive to community needs including cultural diversity.

7.8. **Governance and management**
Council will implement mechanisms to support robust governance and effective management of aged and community care services. This will include:
- Reporting and accountability systems for individuals and teams;
- Procedures and guidelines to support safe and appropriate practice in relation to provision and delivery of aged and community care services;
- Information management and record keeping that is accurate, timely and secure;
- Utilisation of outcome and indicators to monitor activity, achievements and performance, and
- Responsive feedback systems for consumers of aged and community care services, staff and agencies and other services providers.

7.9. **Evaluation and continuous improvement**
In a timely manner to inform Council planning including budgeting, Council will monitor and evaluate the provision and delivery of aged and community care services using agreed outcomes and performance indicators as benchmarks which include but may not be limited to:
- Activity targets;
- Client feedback and satisfaction;
- Adverse events;
- Budget performance;
- Workforce engagement;
- Occupational Health and Safety outcomes;
- Feedback from other service providers and agencies, and
- Satisfactory achievement of accreditation processes.

A range of strategies will be employed to assess Council's performance against agreed outcomes and performance indicators. Ongoing monitoring of performance will be undertaken and reported on an annual basis. Implementation of continuous improvement strategies and initiatives will be actioned where required.
7.10. Communication of this policy
This policy will be communicated to all staff within Aged and Disability Services at orientation and following changes to the policy.

Interested parties / agencies / partners can access this policy through the council website or by directly contacting Aged and Disability Services.

7.11. Policy Review
This policy will be reviewed six months following initial ratification and every two years thereafter and as required.

8. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Victorian HACC Program Manual
- Aged and Disability Services operational guidelines
- .id Consultants, Hume Population Forecasts – April 2010
- Healthy ageing in Hume City Research Report – December 2006
- Hume City Council Plan 2009-2013
- The geography of disability and economic disadvantage in Australian Capital Cities - Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2009
- Hume City Council Social Justice Charter