

► MEDIA RELEASE

**UPDATED EMBARGO: EMBARGOED UNTIL 11.59PM ON THURSDAY 25 NOVEMBER 2021**

25 November 2021

## IN-PRINCIPLE DECISION TO TRANSITION FROM AGED & DISABILITY SERVICES

Hepburn Shire Council has made an in-principle decision to withdraw from delivering aged and disability services.

Council has been a long-term provider of aged and disability services for the community.

Mayor, Cr Tim Drylie said that Council will ensure that the interests of clients, families and carers, staff and the community is central to the process of investigating the cessation of service delivery.

"We have a proud history of delivering services to many vulnerable members of our community. However, significant and continuing reforms by the Commonwealth Government means that Council is now best positioned to transition from being a service provider.

The Commonwealth Government will be responsible for the selection and appointment of any new provider of services. However, Council will lead an Expression of Interest (EOI) process to identify and recommend an appropriate successor provider.

The timing of the transition is proposed to be six to 12 months from the date of final decision.

"The EOI process will be conducted on a confidential basis to identify and recommend a potential values-aligned future provider. Council will receive a further report in February or March 2022 where it will amend or confirm its decision and make a recommendation to the Commonwealth," said Cr Drylie.

While Council may cease direct service delivery, it will continue and enhance its roles in supporting the community and is in the process of developing a Positive Ageing Strategy.

► MEDIA RELEASE

Hepburn Shire Council CEO Bradley Thomas said that Council will continue to have a strong interest in understanding and responding to the needs of the community, especially older people, people living with a disability and vulnerable members of the community.

"We will continue to fund and deliver a range of programs and services and we are committed to the development of a Positive Ageing Strategy which is currently underway. We are also committed to working constructively with a potential new service provider during any transition period and into the future," said Mr Thomas.

"We will also ensure that vulnerable members of the community are protected and supported to maintain connection with the service system during and beyond any transition period, as well as providing support to our fantastic staff during their period," he said.

For more information on the decision, including a timeline and frequently asked questions, visit <https://participate.hepburn.vic.gov.au>.

- ENDS -