



# Growing and Thriving

## COMMUNITY MONITORING REPORT - YEAR ONE, 2022-23

### INTRODUCTION

*Growing and Thriving*, Melton City Council's guiding document for people of all abilities and all ages, is a four-year strategy that aligns Council's planning and service delivery for key life stages and support needs. The bringing together of priorities for people with disability, children, young people, older people, and carers, parents and guardians, enables a collective approach to life, development and ageing in the City of Melton with the integration of disability through the lens of each life stage.

The strategy is a framework to drive action, through implementation plans, across Council and in partnership with stakeholders, towards improved outcomes for people with disability, children, young people, older people, and carers and guardians.

### ACHIEVEMENTS AND HIGHLIGHTS – COMPLETED ACTIONS IN 2022-2023

#### Disability Implementation Plan

- Council is including alt text on images used on social media for increased accessibility per advice from Vision Australia around the use of alt text and/or captions for images and working to include closed captions on their videos as standard practice.
- Over 500 people came together to participate in Council's Harmony Day event on 18 March 2023 at the Willows Historical Park. Kirrip, our local Aboriginal organisation actively participated and engaged with the broader community. The event catered for all ages and all abilities and was packed with exciting cultural performance, activities, food and drinks. Promotional materials of the event highlighted a chill out/quiet space for people with additional needs and families with babies which was a new feature of the event. The event included extra accessible amenities and an accessible stage.
- Council continues to ensure universal access and inclusive play elements are key considerations when reviewing or developing park designs for all new capital works and developer-delivered parks and play spaces. This financial year Council delivered 3 and completed design work for an additional 9 park upgrade projects as part of its parks development program. Accessibility, inclusion, and amenity were key considerations with accessible seating, play equipment, infrastructure, and a range of passive and active play elements designed into all of these upgrades.
- The Melton Business Awards program featured the Disability Inclusion Award. The Council promoted businesses that are underpinned by or enable inclusive practices, for example the Inclusive Recruitment Workshop and promotion of collaboration opportunities with sector stakeholders.
- Australian Integrated Fijian Assoc. of Vic (All abilities sports day) were the recipients of a \$2,000 Bi-Monthly Grant (Responsive, Establishment and Resident Achievement

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Contributions). \$200 per person (ex GST), per calendar year is available to successful applicants of the FairGo4 Youth Fund who have an existing diagnosed disability.

- Council facilitated establishment of the “All Abilities Social Group” to delivering a series of Family Support Workshop sessions to support families of children with disability in Aintree.
- Council delivered 63 accessible physical health and wellbeing programs for all ages and abilities between 1 January and 30 June 2023.
- We published a community video celebrating International Day of People with Disability, featuring local residents with disability.
- We delivered 50 new accessible programs and events across six themes in the 2022 Melton Lifelong Learning Festival and we delivered 289 accessible programs from January 1 to June 30, 2023, for all ages and abilities including but not limited to physical health and wellbeing, digital literacy, social connection, life skills, arts and crafts.
- Eight Community Partnership Program proposals have been approved. These community groups are supported by Community Development Officer to implement their initiatives. The Community Training Calendar is on track and has delivered 10 workshops.
- Marketing collateral was reviewed to make it more inclusive for all ages and abilities and increase their participation. Two new programs for people with disability were trialed in the 2022 Lifelong Learning Festival.
- zones were included at all 2022 Council events. Council developed, 'Social Stories' for the Care Expo, DJ festival, Imaginations festival, and Carols by Candlelight. Social Stories are a learning/teaching approach for exchanging of information between parents, professionals, and people of all ages who have autism.

### Ageing Well Implementation Plan

- Council promoted information about current scams in October and November 2022 and hosted a session on avoiding scams at the Men's Shed in June 2023.
- We promoted awareness of Elder Abuse at workshops in September 2022 and June 2023.
- We held 17 events across the City of Melton, attracting 842 attendees to Victorian Seniors Festival events in locations including Melton, Diggers Rest, Taylors Hill, Fraser Rise, Strathtulloh, Kurunjang, Caroline Springs and Burnside.
- Professional photography shoots in October 2022 and May and June 2023 updated the image library of older people. A videography project to better share the stories of the services delivered by Community Care to seniors, carers and people with a disability was delivered.
- We submitted a nomination for Les Chitts to the Victorian Senior of the Year Awards and he was presented an Ageing Well Award in October 2022. He was also named the 2023 Citizen of the Year in December 2022.
- Council delivered 289 accessible programs for seniors focused on physical health and wellbeing, digital literacy, social connection and life skills.
- Men's Health events were delivered to men through Mens Sheds including:
  - Black Dog Institute presentation - Breaking Down Depression and Building Resilience
  - Black Dog Institute presentation and Prostate Cancer Foundation presentations of health information sessions
  - International Men's Day luncheon
  - Advanced Care Planning Australia presentation

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- Two Council on the Ageing Presentations.
- Council delivered 457 accessible programs for all ages and abilities focused on mental health and social connection and 63 accessible programs for all ages and abilities focused on physical health and wellbeing from January 1 to June 30, 2023.
- We delivered accessible exercise programs for seniors, including Tai Chi for Arthritis with an average of 12 participants in sessions, Chair Based exercise averaging 11 participants per session, Nordic Walks averaging seven people per session and a Walking Group with an average of 14 participants.
- Melton City Council delivered 231 accessible programs for all ages and abilities focused on physical health.
- The Connecting Our Communities Outdoors initiative held a number of initiatives delivered including Lucky Loops Bike Event, Cultural Colour Event, Food Garden, Walking Groups and Blooming West.
- Seniors have participated in a number of community consultations to inform Council decision making. Consultations included the Ageing Well Consultation Forum for seniors across the Western suburbs, led by the Commissioner for Senior Victorians in October 2022 and the development of the Growing and Thriving Strategy.

### Early Years Implementation Plan

- Two free Children's Week events with a variety of activities including; arts and crafts, sports, sensory play, an animal farm, a story time session, and musical performances were attended by an estimated 800 people.
- The Mt Atkinson Children's and Community Centre and Thornhill Park Children's and Community Centre were licensed and kindergarten services fully operational for the 2023 kindergarten year.
- The "Read Sing Chat" program provided free baby book bags to every family seen by the Maternal Child Health service. In addition, a selection of 60 Arabic/English and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander bilingual picture books were provided to families engaged in the Enhanced Maternal and Child Health program.
- A library of curated books that celebrate our diverse and inclusive community and encourage new parents to engage with their local library and early literacy programs were placed in each of the 28 Maternal and Child Health offices across the City of Melton.
- Libraries provided regular early years programs in the form of new parent talks, Baby Bounce, Toddler Time, Storytime and parent/carer information sessions across both library venues. Due to increasing attendance, additional sessions have been planned for 2023 to meet the growing demand.

### Young Communities Implementation Plan

- The Space program (LGTBIQ+ Youth Program) continues to meet on a weekly basis. The group was involved in the planning and delivery of IDAHOBIT day.
- The Trade Training Centre was delivered in May in partnership with the Western Edge Cluster. A total of 108 students from across four local secondary schools visited the local Trade Training Centres.

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- Young people and their contribution to the local community of Melton were recognised through the Western Bulldogs Community Foundation Leadership 2023 program; Freeza Committee; Youth Advisory Committee; Volunteers' Week; Young Citizen of the Year Award; and Fair Go 4 Youth Fund and Council delivered the Business Excellence Award for Entrepreneurs.
- The Youth Forum event was delivered with a focus on Inclusion and Accessibility. These two themes were explored with 50 young people from across four schools within the municipality, one of which was Melton Specialist School. The June School Holiday program delivered a specific holiday activity targeting young people with disability.
- Council facilitated delivery of Come and Try sessions at local clubs targeted at women and girls, with a reach of 105 participants, for the "This Girl Can" campaign. Council developed a reusable promotional video for the campaign to be displayed across clubs and centres in the City of Melton.
- Five vaping educational sessions have been delivered to primary and secondary schools (year 6 to year 10 students) in the City of Melton in partnership with Western Health's Health Promotion team and community nurses. Four co-design workshops have also been delivered with primary and secondary schools to develop values-based anti-vaping messaging.
- Council successfully partnered with Western Bulldogs Community Foundation (WBFC) and local Syriac community group to deliver the Syriac Community Sons of the West pilot program and supported the WBFC to deliver the Uбора Sons of the West program which is aimed at African youths.
- Over 356 accessible programs and initiatives were delivered between the months of Jan and June 2023. These programs were specifically designed to cater and meet the needs of young people of all ages and abilities, physical and mental health, social connections, life skills, arts and leadership.
- Council delivered 402 accessible programs for all ages and abilities including but not limited to physical health and wellbeing, digital literacy, social connection, life skills, arts and craft.
- Grants of \$200 per person (ex GST), per calendar year are available to successful applicants of the FairGo4 Youth Fund who have an existing diagnosed disability. FairGo 4 Youth is a newly developed fund for young people between the age of 8-16 years from low-income households to get involved in extracurricular activities such as sports, hobby groups and clubs.