

# Older Persons Advisory Committee

The Older Persons Advisory Committee (OPAC) has been appointed by the City of Port Phillip council to be its main advisory body on all issues affecting older residents living in the City of Port Phillip. Encompassing a wide range of backgrounds and views, the OPAC is accessible and engaged.

## ANNUAL REPORT January to December 2021

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## Introduction

This is the Annual Report of the City of Port Phillip Older Persons Advisory Committee (OPAC). The report covers the activities of the Committee for the period January to December 2021. The Committee was established in 2000 as an outcome of the International Year of the Older Person, celebrated in 1999.

In June 2021 Council endorsed the updated Terms of Reference including a name change to Older Persons Advisory Committee (OPAC). This report will refer to the committee as OPAC throughout.

## Message from the Chair



Welcome to the 2021 OPAC Annual Report. I am thrilled to be part of such a dynamic group of older citizens of the City of Port Phillip. What is our purpose? Betty Knight, one of the founders of the then Older Person’s reference group, summarises it well. ‘We would like the decision makers and the community to listen to and acknowledge the words of the Older Person’s Advisory Group.’ The work of OPAC follows from this (assisted by council officers) and we constantly strive to give advice, to focus Council’s attention on the needs, wants and special wisdom of Older people in the city.

You will find the details of our achievements in this report! Happy reading.

Freda Erlich  
OPAC Chair  
2022

## Snapshot of OPAC Key Achievements 2021

Feedback and Consultation on Council Activities	
Activity	Achievement
Draft Council Plan and Budget submission	Submitted to Council in June 2021
Digital Literacy and Older Persons Project – consulted and advised throughout the duration of the Project.	Final report with recommendations was presented to OPAC in July 2021. OPAC have advocated for Council to implement the recommendations.
Draft Library Action Plan consultation.	OPAC feedback was consider in the final Action Plan.
OPAC feedback on Council’s Community Facilities Hire included ensuring not for profit community groups supporting older residents receive free or greatly reduced community facilities rates.	Council supported OPAC feedback.

OPAC supported the establishment of an LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee	An LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee was established.
South Melbourne Structure Plan - Phase 1	OPAC feedback was considered.
New Customer Portal	OPAC's feedback on improvements and accessibility were considered.
OPAC are key subject matter experts and stakeholders in the development of the Positive Ageing Policy and provided advice and feedback on the questionnaire /survey.	OPAC's feedback was included in the final survey template.
<b>Information on matters affecting older persons</b>	
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Achievement</b>
OPAC continued to advocate to Council on Climate Change and submitted a request to Council.	Councillors met with Council Officers to progress request.
Seating and homelessness in Fitzroy Street	OPAC continues to advocate to Council Officers for seating to be reinstalled in Fitzroy Street and for Council to continue to have a role in supporting people who are homeless or at risk.
Public lighting in Port Phillip	OPAC continues to advocate to Council Officers to upgrade and audit public lighting.
Diversity hard copy - petition	At the May 5 May Council Meeting the Diversity Petition was accepted by Council with recommendations.
Advocate for South Melbourne Market (SMM) to be more aged friendly	OPAC members met with SMM Coordinator Customer Experience and Business Support to discuss issues. The summary of the SMM 10-year plan included most of OPAC requests. With additional requests being considered.
Fishermans Bend Urban Renewal Area	Cr Peter Martin continues to keep OPAC updated.
<b>Engagement with external stakeholders</b>	
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Achievement</b>
OPAC continue to advise on the Shrine to Sea Project, Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP).	Inclusion of public toilet upgrades and/or development as part of the project are being considered.
EveryAge Counts campaign leading the way to end ageism in Australia OPAC advocated for Council to pass a Notice of Motion to support the EveryAge Counts campaign which seeks to end ageism in Australia	The Notice of Motion was passed by Council on 15 September Council Meeting. On 1 October Mayor Cr Louise Crawford signed the EveryAGE Counts Campaign Pledge to end ageism.

### The stated purpose of the OPAC:

The Older Persons Advisory Committee will provide advice to Council and Council officers about policies, plans and services affecting older people.

### OPAC Terms of Reference Objectives (updated June 2021)

- To be the peak advisory and advocacy body on issues affecting the wellbeing of older people (55 years and over) within the Port Phillip municipality.
- To be representative and advocate on behalf of older persons from our diverse community including people with disabilities, people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex (LGBTI), people of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Island background, people experiencing financial disadvantage (including people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness) and our multicultural and multifaith communities.
- To provide advice to Council and its officers on policies, plans and services that affect older people and their interests, and encourage Council to advocate to other levels of government.
- To advocate to the Community and Council, on behalf of older people, reflecting the United Nations Aged Friendly Cities Framework and the principles of independence, participation, care, self-fulfillment, and dignity.
- To connect with other relevant internal and external community advisory committees. To liaise with other organisations and networks that have a direct interest in older persons in the City of Port Phillip and the wider community.
- To continue to advocate for and support significant events, activities and services relating to older persons, including Port Phillip Seniors Festival, Linking Neighbours Program and Seniors Register, information forums, aged care services and the like.

### Membership

Current Members	Locations
Mr Neville Aphoy	St Kilda East
Ms Judith Armstrong	Elwood
Ms Freda Erlich	St Kilda
Mr Neil Imlach	Elwood
Ms Betty Knight	Albert Park
Dr Coralie Ling	St Kilda
Mr Ian MacDonald	St Kilda
Ms Sue McGowan	Port Melbourne
Ms Mary Noall	South Melbourne
Ms Wendy Priddle	Elwood
Ms Sheila Quairney	Port Melbourne
Ms Rosemary Rule	Port Melbourne
Ms Liz Robson	Port Melbourne
Professor Georgina Tsolidis	Elwood

Office Bearers	Position
Ms Freda Erlich	Chairperson (appointed April 2021)
Dr Coralie Ling	Deputy Chairperson (appointed April 2021)
Past Members	
Mr Nicholas Green	Middle Park (August 2020 to November 2021)
Mr Jack Kagan	Port Melbourne (April 2021 to November 2021)
Ms Brigid McCoppin	Albert Park (October 2007 to February 2021)
Ms Aileen Rzesniowiecki	Middle Park (April 2021 to November 2021)
Ms Jose Simsa	Middle Park (February 2017 to March 2021) Chair Jan – March 2021
Council Representative	
Cr Peter Martin	Gateway Ward
Council Officer/s	Position
Laura Cattapan	Coordinator Grants and Community Building
Sherridan Green	Community Development and Liaison Officer
Cathy Horsley	Team Lead Community Building



Pictured, OPAC members December 2021.

**Top (from left to right):** Freda Erlich, Neville Aphoy, Ian McDonald, Sue McGowan  
Sheila Quairney, Judith Armstrong, Georgina Tsolidis, Neil Imlach

**Bottom (from left to right):** Coralie Ling, Mary Noall, Cr Peter Martin, Betty Knight, Liz Robson

**Absent:** Wendy Priddle, Rosemary Rule

## Membership Nominations

In March 2021 Council sought membership nominations for the Older Persons Advisory Committee by advertising the opportunity in 'CoPP This' Port Phillip's community sector newsletter, local newsletters including This Week in St Kilda and U3A Port Phillip and targeted emails sent to relevant sector agencies and community groups including Multicultural Seniors Groups and Victorian Pride Centre.

As part of the recruitment process current members were invited to renominate. All nine members renominated.

The response to the recruitment of new members attracted strong interest with nine community members nominating. Nominees were affiliated with a range of local services and community groups, with some also representing diverse communities. At the 3 May 2021 meeting the committee endorsed eight out of nine nominees due to their suitability, relevant skills, and community connections.

Refer to Appendix 1. Older Persons Advisory Committee Membership appointments June 2021.

## Retiring Members

Albert Park resident **Brigid McCoppin** was a member of OPCC from October 2007 to February 2021 and made a valuable contribution to the development of a number of OPCC flagship initiatives including the Phillip Seniors Festival, Linking Neighbours Seniors Register as well as contributing to the delivery of OPAC forums and participating in OPCC responses to governmental reviews. Brigid also contributed to the Committee's Objectives and Planning Working Group in 2017 and 2018 helping shape the Committee's objectives which are still relevant today.

Middle Park resident **Jose Simsa** was a member of the OPCC from February 2017 to March 2021 and made a valuable contribution as Committee Chair in 2020. Jose's provided input into the Ageism Training in 2018 and participated on the OPCC Objectives and Planning Working Group in the 2018 to 2020, and the 20-year Celebration Subcommittee in 2020. As a representative of the University of the Third Age Port Phillip, Inner South Community Health Service and Grandmothers Against Detention of Refugee Children in Melbourne Ports, Jose provided valuable knowledge and experience on the OPCC and significant links to the community.

Middle Park resident **Aileen Rzesniowiecki** was a member of the OPAC from April 2021 to November 2021. During Aileen's time on the OPAC she made a valuable contribution to ensure the Committee continued to be representative and delivering on their objectives.

Middle Park resident **Nicholas Green** was a member of OPAC from August 2020 to November 2021 and made a valuable contribution to the City of Port Phillip Seniors Festival Writing Awards as a member of the judging panel in 2020 and 2021. Nicholas also participated in the January 2021 OPAC Planning Meeting.

Port Melbourne resident **Jack Kagan** was a member of OPAC from April 2021 to November 2021. During Jack's time on the OPAC he made a valuable contribution ensuring the Committee continued to be representative and delivering their objectives.

In April 2021 the OPAC farewelled Council Officer Sherridan Green Community Development & Liaison Officer and thanked Sherridan for her contribution over the past eight years with her work with the OPAC, the Seniors Festival and Linking Neighbours Seniors Register.

### Updated Terms of Reference June 2021

In June 2021 the Terms of Reference (ToR) were updated to align with the new Council Plan. This also included changing the name of the committee to Older Persons Advisory Committee to better align with the role of the Committee and titles of other Council advisory committee. On 16 June 2021 Council formally adopted the updated Terms of Reference.

Attachment – City of Port Phillip - Older Persons Advisory Committee (OPAC) Terms of Reference.



Older Persons  
Advisory Committee 1

### OPAC Objectives and Plan January to December 2021

The OPAC Planning Subcommittee was established to develop the OPAC objectives and action plan for 2021. The Objectives and Planning Meeting was held on 11 January 2021 and was made up of the OPAC Chair, Deputy Chair and four members of the OPAC who nominated to participate. Council officers, Coordinator Grants and Community Building and Community Development and Liaison Officer and Manager Community Building and Inclusion also attended/contributed to provide relevant information and administrative support.

The 2021 Objectives and Plan was developed within the context and aligned to the following documents:

- OPCC Terms of Reference
- City of Port Phillip Council Plan 2017-27
- City of Port Phillip Health and Wellbeing Implementation strategy
- OPCC 2020 Objectives and Action Plan
- World Health Organisation (WHO) Age Friendly Cities (AFC) Framework

Seven Key Focus areas were identified and aligned to the Council Plan and AFC Framework; they were:

- Ageism
- Aged Care Reforms/Royal Commission
- Health and Wellbeing, Social and Physical Environment
- Housing
- Environmental Sustainability
- Communication/COVID-19
- Governance

The draft 2021 Objectives and Plan was endorsed by the OPCC at the 12 April 2021 meeting. Attachment 1 City of Port Phillip - Older Persons Consultative Committee (OPCC) Action Plan January – December 2021.



Older Persons  
Consultative Committ

In September 2021 an extraordinary meeting was held to review and update the 2021 Objectives and Actions to align with the new Council Plan 2021-31.

### Meetings

The OPAC continued to meet monthly. Meetings were held from February to June and August to December. The Committee attempted to meet in person whenever possible however to ensure OPAC continued to operate safely and in line with the Chief Health Officer's advice the meeting format was adjusted to online accordingly. As a result, the OPAC met at St Kilda Town Hall or online via the Microsoft Teams platform. The quorum at each meeting was upheld.

A total of eleven OPAC meetings were held in 2021:

- 8 February, 1 March, 12 April, 3 May – St Kilda Town Hall, Council Chamber
- 31 May - MsTeams
- 5 July – St Kilda Town Hall, Council Chamber/MsTeams (hybrid)
- 2 August, 6 September, 4 October, 8 November - MsTeams
- 6 December- St Kilda Town Hall, Council Chamber and Wominjeka Room

The OPAC members continued to consult on matters relevant to older people residing in the City of Port Phillip and deliberated on specific Council matters concerning older people and the broader community. Community trends relevant to Council were identified through OPAC meetings where reports were provided from OPAC representatives. The OPAC continued to maintain connections with relevant associations and participate in relevant networks and forums both within and external to Council.

### Subcommittees and Working Groups

The following OPAC working groups and subcommittees were maintained/established to progress the actions highlighted in the 2021 Objectives and Plan:

- 2021 Planning Working Group
- Seniors Festival Subcommittee
- 21st Anniversary Working Group
- Governance Subcommittee – established August 2021
- South Melbourne Market Working Group – established August 2021

#### About the OPAC Governance Subcommittee

The OPAC Governance Subcommittee was established to support the OPAC to develop guidelines and processes to ensure OPAC meetings are running effectively and efficiently. Where appropriate it has a role in implementing decisions taken by OPAC.

In 2021 the Governance Subcommittee has developed the following tools to assist with its stated aim of efficient and effective operations:

- OPAC Governance Sub Committee Guidelines
- Guidelines for the establishment of OPAC Working Group and Sub-Committees
- Agenda setting and meeting procedures
- Consultation guidelines for Council officers
- Process for introducing New Items for action by OPAC.



## Membership and Representation

OPAC members represented the following associations/networks and reported relevant activities at the OPAC monthly meetings.

### Council Advisory Committees/Networks:

- Linking Neighbours Leadership Group - Neil Imlach
- Port Phillip Multicultural Advisory Committee - Georgina Tsolidis
- Port Phillip Multifaith Network - Coralie Ling

### External Community Groups/Networks:

- Bicycle Users Group – Freda Erlich
- CasPA Care – Emerald Hill Residence - Mary Noall
- Council of the Ageing (COTA) Victoria - Betty Knight
- Elwood Croquet Club – Judith Armstrong
- Fishermans Bend Urban Renewal Area (FBURA) - Cr Martin
- Port Melbourne Yacht Club - Jack Kagan
- Port Phillip Citizens for Reconciliation – Rosemary Rule
- Port Phillip Lions Club - Sue McGowan
- University of the Third Age Port Phillip (U3APP) – Sheila Quairney

## Consultation

As part of the consultative role of the OPAC, Council Officers regularly sought advice and feedback on Council activities and initiatives relating to the needs, engagement, and inclusion of older people. In turn the OPAC brought to the meetings feedback and issues on Council business that were raised by the community.

### 2021 Council Business – OPAC consultations, feedback and information

#### **Council Plan Community Engagement process - Carol Chu, Coordinator Strategic Engagement (February meeting)**

Carol outlined the Community Engagement process for the new Council Plan (CP) and how the Committee will be consulted. Carol also provided some context regarding the new Local Government Act (LGA) 2020 advising that it is primarily principles based, and a key change is around community engagement and community have a broader voice.

#### **Feedback on Digital Literacy and Older Persons Project Survey Questions - Jenni Mazaraki Digital Literacy & Older Person Outreach Officer (February meeting)**

Jenni outlined that the project would assist Council to gain a more in depth understanding of the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on older Port Phillip residents, and their future needs, including digital literacy. Jenni explained that she will undertake direct engagement with residents on the Linking Neighbours Seniors Register and other Council age specific services. As part of this engagement she will contact Seniors Register members directly and ask a series of questions, however, will also provide a hard copy survey for people who prefer to fill it in independently. Jenni said she will engage the Committee throughout the project and asked the Committee to provide input on the draft survey questions.

**Feedback on Draft Library Action Plan - Gaye Stewart, Manager Community Services (March meeting)**

Gaye was keen to hear from the Committee regarding what they consider to be the good things the library service is currently doing now and should do into the future. The OPAC provided feedback on the draft plan noting that the plan is easy to read and provides a good overview of current and aspirational library services. Specific questions and themes from OPAC included increased digital literacy opportunities in libraries for older people, music sessions in the library, access to audio books in languages other than English, the importance of the home library volunteer service and potential for new partnerships to support greater inclusion.

**Council Plan Discussion - Teresa Parsons, Head of Community Service Planning and Review and (March meeting)**

Teresa provided the Committee some Council Plan context outlining the five strategic directions and asked the committee when providing feedback to consider how they would they like Council to look and operate in 10 years' time. The Committee articulated that loneliness, dementia, crime and safety, and inequalities are issues they would like to see addressed in the Council Plan. Other keys issues included young people not being able to own their home, lack of social connection for some older people, often activities/events run by Council don't cater or consider the interests of older residents and Council's messaging needs to be transparent, connected and inclusive.

**Council's hiring of Community Facilities - OPAC's response (April meeting)**

OPAC advocated for community based not for profit groups using facilities for community purposes to be charged at a significantly reduced rate or provided for free if groups were unable to afford a reduced rate. Eligibility criteria should be considered for the following groups to get access to free facilities:

- Older Multicultural community Groups
- Exercise, recreation, or arts groups that cater to older people
- U3A and other service groups

The OPAC felt that Council recently subsidised Live Nation for \$200K, this shows that Council values culture and art. Therefore, it needs to consider subsidising community groups for older persons. This investment would support older people to remain connected and stay healthy. This would be more viable option, as in the long run it would save community and Council economically.

**Establishment of an LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee - OPAC's response (April meeting)**

The Committee were supportive of the advisory group being established, however felt that as a community group they are a very effective lobby group and therefore Council should also consider other diverse groups who don't have a loud voice i.e. people with disabilities etc. They also advocated that Council however needs to consider the importance of intersectionality and that staff need to have a sensitivity to all minority groups and there needs to be opportunities for intersectionality to occur across the Organisation.

**OPAC Consultation on the South Melbourne Structure Plan (SMSP) - Help Create a Vision for South Melbourne - Jeremy Addison, Principal Strategic Planner and Sharon Prince Engagement Advisor (April meeting)**

The Officers provided some context and explained that Council is in the first phase of listening and gaining this feedback. As part of developing the Plan they are asking the community what is important to them about South Melbourne. OPAC provided responses to the 4 questions some of their themes included maintaining heritage value, South Melbourne Market to become more age friendly, celebration and acknowledgement of South Melbourne's multicultural community, more open spaces, and tree canopies.

**Consultation - OPAC Feedback on the draft Council Plan and Budget - Teresa Parsons Head of Community Service Planning and Review (3 May meeting)**

Teresa consulted with the Committee who provided feedback on the Draft Council Plan (CP) and Budget. Some of the themes that the Committee wanted the CP to focus on included:

- The impact of Ageism
- Aged Care Reforms/Royal Commission
- Communication and COVID-19
- Housing for older people
- Sustainability and Climate Change
- Community safety and accessible physical environment

The Committee documented this in a formal submission to Council.

**Digital Literacy Project update – Jenni Mazaraki Digital Literacy & Older Persons Outreach Officer (3 May meeting)**

Jenni updated the Committee on how the project was progressing, including amount of surveys conducted. Jenni will collate the information/data and draft a report with recommendations. The Committee will be asked to provide feedback on the report once it is drafted.

**Vaccination Discussion - Katrina Terjung, Manager of Community Building, and Inclusion (31 May meeting)**

Katrina provided an update on Council's support of the COVID 19 vaccination rollout. Council has been working with StarHealth to assist them to reach out to local services and community groups to get an understanding of any barriers people may be experiencing in gaining information or accessing vaccinations sites and asked the Committee for feedback.

StarHealth has asked Council for use of Council facilities for vaccination delivery. Katrina reported that Council has made sites available across the municipality.

**Digital Literacy Project Presentation - Jenni Mazaraki, Older Persons Digital Literacy & Outreach Officer (July meeting)**

Jenni presented the findings of the Digital Literacy Research Project that she conducted January – June in 2021.

**Q&A on the Access & Inclusion Plan 2019-21 and Status Report - Julia Wanhill Access & Inclusion Planner (August meeting)**

Julia provided an update on the current Access & Inclusion Plan and that it is legislative requirement for Council to have a Disability Action Plan (DAP). The aim of DAP's is to help to stop discrimination of people with disability in the community. Julia gave examples of how a DAP can achieve this, e.g., using the principles of universal design when designing public spaces, ensure there are sufficient accessible public toilets and installing accessible street furniture. Julia reported that in the current plan there are 46 actions, 44 of the actions have been delivered and/or are a work in progress. Julia shared the Access & Inclusion Plan Have Your Say page and advised that hard copy surveys are also available for people. The OPAC advocated for a Disability Advisory Committee to be established.

**Introduction of the new online Customer Portal - Fiona Symmons Customer Experience Design Specialist (August meeting)**

Fiona said that she has been working on Council's new customer portal - My Port Phillip. Fiona Provided background to the Project via a power point presentation which included information about frequency updates, the customer experience, customer feedback and the range of ways customers can interact with Council. OPAC provided feedback including their concern about the word customer being used to describe community.

**Older Persons Policy update – Teresa Parsons, Head of Integrated Community Service Planning and Review (October meeting)**

Teresa shared a powerpoint presentation which provided some background as to why the policy is going to be developed, the scope of the policy, the development process and establishment of a subcommittee. Teresa discussed the Gender Equality Act and Council's legislative obligation, which will be aligned with the older persons policy. Teresa said that the Policy will raise awareness and hopefully be a guide for when other policies/strategies are being developed. The Committees feedback included that the policy should be guided by the Age Friendly Cities (AFC) Framework, Council's aged care recipients and staff to be consulted, older multicultural communities and other diverse groups are consulted, there is benchmarking with other Council's, and residents of residential aged care are also consulted.

**Digital Literacy Project recommendations & discussion – Laura Cattapan Coordinator Grants and Community Building (October meeting)**

Laura presented the recommendations of the digital literacy report. Laura said the next steps are to map out the recommendations and put together an action plan.

**Update on Fitzroy Street and Homelessness - Katrina Terjung, Manager Community Building & Inclusion (November meeting)**

Katrina provided a powerpoint presentation on Homelessness highlighting the work Council is doing. This included that Port Phillip and City of Melbourne have more rough sleepers than other Local Government Areas. There are many services working in this homelessness space however there is a lack of affordable housing to be able to house people. Katrina highlighted Council's Housing and Homelessness service as having a specific focus on older people experiencing homelessness. In Our Backyard Affordable Housing Strategy, guides Council's work on housing and homelessness.

**Correspondence from Kylie Bennetts General Manager City Growth & Organisational Capability (December meeting)**

Kylie provided an email response to OPAC's request for a schedule of consultations/reviews. Kylie advised of upcoming topics for the remainder of the 2021/22 financial year that it will be important to get feedback from OPAC including the Rating Strategy Review; Asset Management Plan; Council Plan and Budget; Waste Strategy Review; Accessibility Action Plan; Events Strategy; Fishermans Bend Montague PIP; Positive Ageing Policy and South Melbourne Structure Plan.

**Peter Smith CEO City of Port Phillip (December meeting)**

Peter thanked the Committee for all the work they had done during the year. He highlighted that it is important as a modern organisation that Council has a broad diversity and inclusion framework that addresses intersectionality and that Council is seeking external advice on how to have an age friendly city and age friendly workforce. At the meeting the CEO provided responses to questions the OPAC provided prior to the meeting on Council's commitment to making Port Phillip an age friendly, addressing ageism with staff and the broader community, integrating of the older persons policy with the other Council policies and older people and digital literacy.

**Older Persons Policy Draft Survey Consultation - Teresa Parsons Head of Integrated Community Service Planning and Review (December meeting)**

Teresa explained that the data collated from the survey will be used to help shape Council's older persons policy. Teresa outlined next steps which will include getting the survey properly designed and invite OPAC to participate in a trial run of the survey in January 2022. The OPAC provided much feedback on the questions providing insights into how the questions could be more accessible and engaging.

**Update on Council's Climate Change current and future actions - Kathryn Pound Manager City Strategy, Design and Sustainability and Zoe O'Mahoney Coordinator Sustainable Policy (December Meeting)**

Zoe and Kathryn thanked the OPAC presented a powerpoint presentation on Climate Emergency in Port Phillip. Zoe sought advice from OPAC about the best way for Council to share information about climate emergency with older people. The OPAC raised the following issues including:

- Encouraging residents to create more greenery in their properties.
- Addressing the issues where developers pulled down house and build multi-residential buildings where gardens are being overtaken and destroyed.
- Concern about gardens on verges not being supported.
- Cost of insurance for older persons living in flood prone areas

## Matters affecting older residents highlighted to Council by the OPAC members

### **OPAC Action on Climate Change (March, September & October meetings)**

Both the Chair and Deputy Chair spoke at the 17 February Council meeting advocating on the impact climate change will have on older residents and the importance of Council maintaining its Climate Emergency Declaration and actions.

The OPAC adopted the Climate emergency request to Council drafted by the Chair and other members of the Committee. The request asked Council to complete a summary document of what council has done and is currently doing, and to develop a new document that sets up a 10-year climate emergency plan. The OPAC agreed for Cr Martin to raise this with Council. As a result, Councillors met with the Executive Leadership Team to discuss the OPAC's climate action request to progress OPAC's request and what the next steps will be.

### **Public Lighting (February to December meetings)**

Ongoing advocacy occurred in 2021 for Council to consider upgrading poor public lighting particularly in Barkly Street St Kilda. The OPAC through Georgina Tsolidis sent an email to the Mayor and Councillors recommending to Council that, as a matter of urgency, the following:

- Replace the lights along Barkly Street with new LED light, which can be monitored remotely.
- Council develop an appropriate, consistent, and transparent way of determining what are 'appropriate' light levels, for the safety of pedestrians.
- Urge Council to undertake an audit of lighting more broadly, particular in major streets where there is heavy foot traffic.

This issue is yet to be responded to and will continue to be progress by the OPAC in 2022.

### **Petition for Divercity to be provided in hard copy for people who are not online (3 and 31 May meetings)**

The OPAC Chair circulated the petition and invited OPAC members to sign. The Chair attended the Council meeting and spoke of the Committee's support of the petition.

At the May 5 May Council Meeting the Divercity Petition was accepted by Council with recommendations. Council agreed to provide a hard copy mailout of Divercity to anyone who requests it and hard copies will also be made available at the Town Halls and Libraries.

### **OPAC 2021-31 Council Plan and Budget Submission (31 May meeting)**

The Committee submitted a Council Plan and Budget Submission which was received by Council. The Chair spoke to the Committee's submission at the 8 June Council Meeting.

### **South Melbourne Market (July to November meetings)**

At the July meeting the OPAC established the South Melbourne Market (SMM) working group. Members of the working group subsequently attended the Market to investigate potential issues for older persons and found it to be relatively age friendly other than the markings for pedestrians. Feedback from OPAC members also highlighted concerns with the marking of the entry ramps to the car park and the issue with parking and pedestrians on the Coventry Street side.

Members of the working group met with SMM Coordinator Customer Experience and Business Support Erin Quin to discuss issues. Erin took back suggestions and was interested in the issues raised by the OPAC.

The working group members received a summary of the SMM 10-year plan and most OPAC actions were included. Additional requests will be considered.

Members of the SMM Working Group will be arranging a follow up meeting with SMM Council Officers in 2022.

#### **Seating in Fitzroy Street (August, September & December meetings)**

The OPAC have been pursuing this issue since February 2019. In 2021 the Team Leader Community Building followed up with different Council Departments in relation to the seating and was informed that the seats were removed and are being stored waiting for a date to be reinstated.

At the December meeting the CEO raised issues regarding Fitzroy Street and said that there is a direction for seating to be available for older people however public safety is also a responsibility given the anti-social behaviour of some people on Fitzroy Street. Fitzroy Street currently has people who are genuinely homeless, and then people who prey on them and other community members safety. There needs to be a deep engagement in relation to these issues and in the new year Council will engage with the police prior to any seating being replaced.

#### **Fishermans Bend Urban Renewal Area (FBURA) (October & November meetings)**

The OPAC are kept informed of any progress relating to FBURA through the OPAC Councillor representative Cr Peter Martin.

Cr Martin informed the Committee that in September Councillors had a confidential meeting on FBURA, and the Montague Precinct draft plan will soon be going out for community consultation. He encouraged OPAC to consider providing feedback on this as there may be some matters in the Plan that would be of interest to the OPAC.

As of December 2021, the Plan was yet to be published. The OPAC will progress with this in 2022 once the Plan is released.

### **OPAC activities and engagement with external groups and organisations**

#### **Correspondence - Shrine to Sea Project Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DWELP) (February meeting)**

Feedback from the Committee was to consider upgrading and developing new toilets as part of the Project. Amy Hidge Senior Engagement Officer, Shrine to Sea DELWP thanked the OPAC for raising this and it will be considered as part of their ongoing discussion.

#### **Update on the link between Ageism and Elder Abuse Project - Elder Abuse Prevention Action Group (EAPNAG), The Southern Melbourne Primary Care Partnership (31 May meeting)**

Team Leader Community Building kept the OPAC updated on the Project. The EAPNAG conducted research into effective values-based messaging. The research was focused on how to talk about ageism and related topics in ways that reduce ageist attitudes and behaviors. The outcome of the research was the Framing Age Message Guide. OPAC members received an invitation to the launch of the guide.

**EveryAge Counts campaign leading the way to end ageism in Australia (August – November meetings)**

The OPAC were forwarded an email sent to the Mayor by EveryAge Counts (EAC) inviting Council to participate in their campaign. Cr Martin consulted with the OPAC regarding the campaign and asked whether the Committee supported a Notice of Motion (NoM) proposed by EAC to be taken to Council. OPAC unanimously agreed for Councillor Martin to take the NoM to a Council meeting. OPAC agreed on actions to support the campaign. These actions were included as part of the NoM.

At the 15 September Council meeting the EAC NoM was adopted. As part of the NoM there were a range of actions identified and agreed to by the OPAC that needed to be completed. They included information/awareness raising sessions for Council staff, including the ELT and Councillors and letters drafted to relevant Members of Parliament highlighting Council's support of the campaign and the signing of the pledge. The letters were signed by the Mayor and cc'd to both Cr Martin and OPAC Chair.

On 1 October as part of the Seniors Festival Launch the Mayor presented the signing of the EveryAGE Counts Campaign Pledge to end ageism and join with others to create a society where every person is valued, connected, and respected, regardless of age. Other actions outlined in the NoM are scheduled to be completed in 2022.

**OPAC Events**

**The City of Port Phillip Seniors Festival 1-17 October 2021**

The OPAC continued to be involved with the planning and hosting of the Port Phillip Seniors Festival 2021 through the OPAC Seniors Festival Subcommittee. The subcommittee met bi-monthly with support from Port Phillip's Community Development and Liaison Officer and Team Leader Community Building.

In 2021 due to the COVID 19 pandemic the Seniors Festival was moved to an online event only. This decision was made in consultation with the Port Phillip Seniors Festival Subcommittee and was informed by the recommendation from the Office for Senior Victorians.

To generate a sense of community ownership of the Festival, each year Council conducts a Seniors Festival Grants program which supports local services and community groups to run events during the Festival. Given the changes to this year's event, grant recipients whose events were in person were offered the opportunity to either move their event online, or reschedule their event to be part of the City of Port Phillip Seniors Summer Series to take place in early 2022.

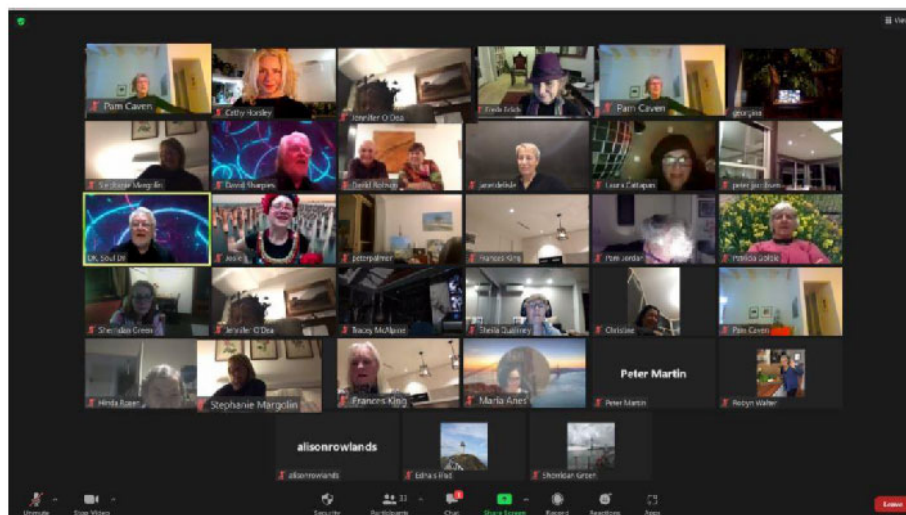
On 1 October the Mayor Launched the Festival which kicked off with a virtual disco hosted by local entertainer David Sharples. The event included karaoke style sing along with lockdown themed songs from the 60s-80s, music quizzes and music requests. Over 60 people joined online to dance, sing and celebrate, all without having to leave home. The launch coincided with International Day of Older Persons and the EveryAGE Count's Inaugural Ageism Awareness Day and included the Mayor's signing of the EveryAGE Counts Campaign Pledge to end ageism.



The Mayor closed the Festival on 17 October at the 17th Port Phillip Writes Seniors Festival Writing Awards. Over 50 people attended the afternoon of literature which included the announcement of the Judges Awards and readings of selected works by the Mayor and special guests, actor Robyn Arthur and actor, broadcaster and writer Susanna Lobez.

The 2021 Festival Program had 16 virtual events with over 2000 people attending. Events included:

- Nadezhda Russian Senior Citizens Club - Celebrating Russians Seniors in Community which included live streamed performance from young local Russian classical musicians.
- University of the Third Age Port Phillip held a seminar on Victoria's COVID-19 response with Health Minister Martin Foley as keynote speaker.
- Elwood St Kilda Neighbourhood Learning Centre held a virtual stroll around Elwood as part of a singing walking trail, led by singers from the Elwood Community Choir.
- Switchboard Victoria held a community forum aimed at connecting Lesbian/Bi+, Trans and Non-Binary people over 50 with each other and services.



Picture above: screenshot of the 2021 Seniors Festival Launch and Virtual Disco.

### Acknowledgement

The OPAC would like to acknowledge the support throughout the year of the Councillor nominated by Council to support the OPAC, Cr Peter Martin. This report was prepared by Cathy Horsley Team Leader Community Building and supported by Laura Cattapan Coordinator Grants and Community Building. It was confirmed by the OPAC Committee at the 4 April 2022 OPAC meeting.

Freda Erlich  
OPAC Chair  
2022

## Older Persons Advisory Committee

The Older Persons Advisory Committee (OPAC) has been appointed by the City of Port Phillip council to be its main advisory body on all issues affecting older residents living in the City of Port Phillip. Encompassing a wide range of backgrounds and views, the OPAC is accessible and engaged.

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### Appendix 1. New Older Persons Advisory Committee Membership appointments June 2021.

**Judith Armstrong** is an Elwood resident, a member of the Elwood Croquet Club and is also a tutor and member of The University of the Third Age Port Phillip (U3APP). Judith's focus on the committee is to advocate for suitable outdoor and sporting activities for older people. She believes that low impact and less competitive outdoor activities can help older people create and retain friendships as well as provide exercise and mental stimulation. Other issues she is interested in include the My Aged Care system, public toilets, public seating, and homelessness.

**Neville Aphony** is a St Kilda East resident who has lived in St Kilda for over 50 years when his family migrated from Burma. Neville is an active community member who volunteers for Christ Church Community Mission, Community Centre in the Grey Nomad Program, Port Phillip Community Group and St Colemans Catholic Church. Neville is also a member of Council's Linking Neighbours Seniors Register Leadership Group and attends Council's Social Inclusion programs. Neville is concerned about social isolation for older people.

**Neil Imlach** is an Elwood resident and was previously on the Older Persons Consultative Committee (OPCC) from 2011 to 2017 and has once again joined the committee. Neil has been an active member of Linking Neighbours Seniors Register since its inception in 2008. He would like to ensure older people continue to have a voice in Council. He would like to raise awareness of the proposed changes to My Aged Care away from being run by local services and Council. He is also concerned about issues experienced by older people regarding digital technology.

**Jack Kagan** is a Port Melbourne resident and was a commercial builder working in planning, project management and running his own company prior to retirement. He is currently on the Race Management Committee and Redevelopment Committee with the Port Melbourne Yacht Club and is a volunteer with the beach patrol group. Jack advocated for older people to have community spaces and opportunities to connect and would like to see more places where people can drop in and meet up, like the Men's Shed.

**Mary Noall** has been a resident of Emerald Hill CaSPA Care for the past three years and prior to that has lived and worked in Port Phillip since 1969. Mary established a successful local business 'Mary Noall' in Middle Park in the 1990's. Mary has a long history of volunteering including at the Children's Hospital in the 1940's, with the Red Cross in the 1950's, teaching English as a second language and being a member of the Heritage Council in the 1970's. Mary is currently a member of Emerald Hill Library book club. As a representative of CaSPA Care, she highlights issues/interests of the Residents and also has a focus on Council maintaining nature strips and footpaths.

**Wendy Priddle** is an Elwood resident who has recently retired as a financial planner and now has time to give back to her local community. Wendy is currently a Hospice Volunteer with Very Special Kids. Wendy is interested in focusing on issues people may experience when transitioning to retirement. She also would like to focus on raising awareness of the difficulties older people may face managing finances where a partner who had previously handled the finances has passed away, and also the issues relating to older people who are financially help their adult children whilst juggling their own needs.

**Rosemary Rule** is a Port Melbourne resident and prior to retiring was a journalist for 50 years. Rosemary has been the Co-Chair of the Port Phillip Citizens for Reconciliation for the past decade and works closely with Port Phillip's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. Rosemary is an advocate for older people, not proficient in English, to become included in mainstream community activities, and have opportunities to participate in activities that are tailored to them. Rosemary would also like to foster meaningful interactions between the older Indigenous and non-Indigenous community.

**Aileen Rzesniowiecki** is a Middle Park resident. Aileen was also one of the founding members of the Port Phillip's Life Activity Club in which for several years she served on its committee and convened activities. Over the past few years ill health has curtailed Aileen's capacity to fully participate in and has given her more insight and empathy with older persons with similar mobility issues. Aileen is interested in advocating for pedestrian crossings to have adequate time for people to cross and is concerned that some of the new gutters that have been upgraded are prone to flooding, creating a safety issue for older people's mobility. Aileen is also concerned about the assumption that everyone is digitally literate and would like to read Divercity in hard form.