

## KNOX ACTIVE AGEING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**Thursday 14 September 2023**

**Time: 6.30pm to 8.30pm**

**Eastgate North Conference Room, Eastgate North Building,  
Knox City Council, 511 Burwood Hwy, Wantirna South**

### Attendees:

	Present		Present
Cr Nicole Seymour (Chair), Knox Councillor	Yes	Cr Meagan Baker, Knox Councillor	Yes
Catherine Balaz – Community Rep	Yes	Christine Pow – Community Rep	No
Diana Bossio – Swinburne University of Tech.	Yes	Eddie Atacardor – Community Rep	Yes
Fen Peng – Physiotherapist	No	Gary Cantwell – Community Rep	Yes
Geoff Deacon – Community Rep	Yes	Linda Lim - EACH	Yes
Lawrie Gaylard – Community Rep	Yes	Gerard Meagher – Outplacement & Transition to Retirement Coach	No
Luise Topma – Mountain District Learning Centre (proxy for Rachel Bast)	No	Marlene Franke – Martin Luther Homes	No
Peter Burns – Bridges Connecting Communities	No	Pranee Birch – Community Rep	Yes
Rachel Bast – Mountain District Learning Centre	No	Rosemarie Rambert – Community Rep	Yes
Shoua Liu – Community Rep	Yes	Gail Power - KCC Manager Community Access and Support	Yes
Linda Keenahan – KCC Age and Dementia Friendly Communities Project Officer	Yes	Sheridan Stone – KCC Program Lead Social Connections	Yes
<b>Guests</b>	<b>Present</b>		<b>Present</b>
Bruce Dobson – KCC Chief Executive Officer			Yes
Lisette Pine – KCC Coordinator Health and Safe Communities (Item 7.2)			Yes

### 1. Acknowledgement of Country

The Chair, Cr Nicole Seymour acknowledged that Committee members were meeting on the traditional land of the Wurundjeri and Bunurong people of the Kulin Nation and paid respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

## 2. Conflict of Interest Declaration

- Gary Cantwell requested clarification that his involvement as a paid contractor for the Living Our Best Life social prescription program, may be viewed as a Conflict of Interest when discussing the topic of Social Isolation.

However, the Chair, Cr Nicole Seymour advised that Gary's interest in social isolation did not mean there was a Conflict of Interest.

## 3. Welcome and Apologies

- Meeting commenced at 6.30 pm, the Chair Cr Nicole Seymour welcomed the Committee and introduced Bruce Dobson, Knox City Council's Chief Executive Officer who was in attendance.
- Bruce Dobson explained he is intending on participating in each of the Council Advisory Committees and thanked the committee for the opportunity.

## 4. Thank outgoing members and introduce new members

- Diana Bossio of Swinburne University of Technology (and Marlene Franke of Martin Luther Homes) concluded their two-year term in August 2023 and Cr Seymour thanked them for their contribution.
- Linda Lim of EACH (and Gerard Meagher, Outplacement and Transition to Retirement Coach) were welcomed as new KAAAC members.

## 5. Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meetings

- Minutes of the Previous meeting taken on Thursday 27 July 2023 were confirmed by Geoff Deacon as a true and correct record.

## 6. Business Arising and Previous Meeting Actions

All action items discussed and reviewed. Items of note listed below:

- Advocacy letter to the Minister for Housing of Victoria, will be considered following the completion of the Preventing Homelessness Among Older Women research project in November 2023. This is so the project outcomes, actions and next steps will be understood.
- Further planning and budgeting would be required if Council were to reactive the Oppy bike ride event.
- Walking Basketball proved to be too risky (due to high falls risk). Further planning and budgeting would be required if Council were to promote Walking Football again.
- The Westfield Walking Group may recommence under a revamped format in 2024, once the major development works have been completed in the Centre.
- A query was raised relating to the request for lighting at Carrington Park, because it was reported there is sufficient lighting around the carpark and walking path, though the oval side is dark.

**Action:**

Before a business case is considered as part of the 2024/25 Budget development process, further clarity is required to identify what the lighting issues are at Carrington Park.

**7. Items for Discussion**

**7.1 KAAAC Work Plan 2024**

Facilitator: Gail Power, KCC Manager Community Access and Support

KAAAC members were asked to identify their top three preferred topics for KAAAC discussion throughout 2024. Social Isolation was identified as the for KAAAC discussion throughout 2024.

Refer to Appendix 1 to view the full list of topics proposed.

**Action:**

**A mission statement for social isolation and sub-categories for the 2024 Social Isolation theme to be developed at the November 2023 meeting.**

**7.2 Alcohol Use and Seniors Health**

Facilitator: Lisette Pine, KCC Coordinator Healthy and Safe Communities

The ‘Developing a Community Alcohol Harm Profile’ presentation is attached with these Minutes.

Refer to Appendix 2 to view the feedback provided during this session.

The new Australian alcohol guidelines developed by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) advise: ‘while there’s no safe level of drinking, a framework to stay healthy and protect yourself and your family from alcohol harm recommend that:

- to reduce the risk of harm from alcohol-related disease or injury for healthy men and women, drink no more than 10 standard drinks per week and no more than 4 standard drinks on any one day
- anyone under 18 should not drink alcohol to reduce the risk of injury and harm to the developing brain
- women who are pregnant or breastfeeding should not drink alcohol to prevent harm to their baby.’



## 8. Other Business

- The Knox Dementia Friendly Launch and Mini-Expo is scheduled to coincide with Dementia Action Week on Tuesday 19 September 2023 from 10.30 am to 1.30 pm.
- The Knox Seniors Festival launch will take place on Monday 2 October 2023 at Carrington Park. The Festival will conclude with a dance event at Rowville Community Centre on Friday 27 October 2023. For details see the Spring edition of the Zest4Life booklet.
- To coincide with Dementia Action Week (18-24 September 2023), Your Library has also scheduled a variety of activities throughout Knox.
- Stringybark will take place at Rowville Community Centre on Sunday 15 October 2023.
- There was feedback relating to the new Food Organics Garden Organics (FOGO) bins.

**Action:**

**A member of the Waste Team to be invited to the November 2023 meeting.**

## 9. 2023 Meetings held in Eastgate North

**Thursday 30 November 2023 – 6.00 pm – catering service, Meeting: 6.30 pm to 8.30 pm**

Action	Who	Status
<p>A mission statement for social isolation and sub-categories for the 2024 Social Isolation theme to be scheduled for discussion at the November 2023 meeting.</p>	<p>Linda</p>	
<p>A member of the Waste Team to be invited to the November 2023 meeting.</p>	<p>Linda</p>	
<p>Advocacy letter to be sent to the Minister (for Housing of Victoria, The Honourable Colin Brooks MP) requesting consideration be given to enable people to rent out a room, without the extra money having an impact on their income (there was a suggestion to refer to the international /exchange student framework that enables people to supplement their income without being taxed).</p>	<p>Camille</p>	<p>To commence: Advocacy to occur at completion of the project (November 2023) to maximize impact and have support from Knox City Council.</p>
<p>Before a business case is considered, as part of the 2024/25 Budget development process, further clarity is required to identify what the lighting issues are at Carrington Park.</p> <p>Develop a business case to improve the lighting at Carrington Park within the carpark and walking path.</p>	<p>Linda</p> <p>Gail/Leisure Team</p>	<p>To commence: business case to be considered as part of the 2024/25 Budget development.</p>

The following topics were proposed:

## **Social isolation and loneliness**

- Social isolation x 3
- Programs addressing social isolation and loneliness across the lifespan
- Social isolation – how do we encourage lonely people to mix or stay in contact with others?
- Connecting with others/friendship
- Accessing supports and help (informal)
- There also needs to be more “cafes” run by Council for seniors to share good lattes
- World is moving very fast – people not keeping up – fearful etc. A group for discussion and coping might be good
- All older residents are isolated.

## **Health/physical activity**

- Health
- Increase in chronic disease and supporting people to understand how to manage and live independently
- Health and physical activity
- Physical activity.

## **Transport**

- Transport for the elderly to places of interest
- Transport – older people need to drive – but are incapable or banned. Bridges do a fantastic job for now
- Transport/walkability.

## **Dementia**

- Dementia x 3

## **Facilities**

- Could the new Knox Library have designated areas for vulnerable elderly (those with dementia for example) or just the elderly in general? As there is one already proposed for youth and children ie there will be a “youth hive”. What will there be for the elderly?
- We need a bigger venue than the small “Knox Arts Centre” for entertainment – this is always packed out
- Arts Centre Facilities.

## **Housing**

- Housing x 1
- Alternatives for affordable housing - options currently limited by planning scheme and policy.

## **Climate Change**

- Climate change x 2.

## **Technology**

- Cyber safety and sharing safely online
- Technology – compendium of technology and resources to access them.

## **Elder Abuse/Family Violence**

- Elder Abuse – greater understanding of what this means
- Family violence.

## **Other**

- Care Giver Care
- Reinforce Council program and awareness and communications
- Safety
- Staff and community advocates for accessibility (accessibility on all we do).

## **A further breakdown on the topic of Social Isolation included:**

- Demographic Men 35-40
- Connection across lifespan to avoid social isolation
- Infrastructure planning
- Intergenerational planning
- Barriers – physical, social and economic
- Broad topic – enabling people out of isolation – enabling connection.
- Loneliness
- Access to services for those that need them
- Opportunity to participate
- Mental Health considerations – social anxiety
- Find people and help to lead – how can libraries help out with connection?
- Dedicated and promoted space
- Living Our Best Life social prescription program
- Volunteers (eg KCC and Bridges) – we are here to chat!
- Phone access and scams – CALD communities consideration
- Connection through religious institutions – Knox Interfaith.

**(Items captured on the whiteboard)**

- Men's Health
- Community Health & Wellbeing Advisory Committee (alcohol, DV, co-dependent issues)
- KDAC
- Social Housing
- Barriers that limit ability to participate – health/ability/depression



The following questions were posed to KAAAC members:

- What are your observations surrounding alcohol harm in the community?
- What are the potential causes and contributing factors to alcohol harm?
- What could be the most effective actions to reduce alcohol harm in our community?

### Alcohol Harm

- **Drinking Culture**

- How people are “used” to interacting socially – pubs, bistros, pokies, bingo etc.
- ‘Social drinking’ – attitude to drinking – alcohol drinking is normalized. “It’s okay, I don’t get drunk” attitude.
- Reality shows – contestants are supplied with copious amounts of alcohol and are always drinking on TV.
- Peer pressure.
- Peer group – women - get-togethers.
- Social media.
- There needs to be positive role models, behavior change within drinking culture is difficult to change.

- **Education and Information**

- Promote health and wellbeing.
- Police and Health services talks are needed in high school regarding alcohol effects on the body, mind and judgement.
- Alcohol education is delivered in Year 8, but there is a need to education Year 10 and above.
- Do sporting clubs have lectures with young people?
- Police education attendance as part of fines for drink driving.
- Educate parents regarding the impact their behavior has on children and encourage them to role model to their children eg do you want to be present for your kids? Do you want to feel good?

- **Sporting Clubs**

- There is too much alcohol exposure at sporting clubs, larger venues and events.
- Sporting clubs need to role model good behavior.
- A drinking culture could deter some multicultural communities from participating in sport.
- How can Council influence clubs not to drink?
- Avoid alcohol at junior sporting events
- Council when developing a lease should make it conditional that alcohol education is mandatory.

- **Social Isolation**

- Loneliness at night time in particular – no partner, no night activities.
- Night time loneliness – nothing is organized by Council in the evening.
- Men 45-55 with young families are the highest risk of loneliness. We need to understand Men’s Health better and develop earlier interventions.
- Enhance skills (provide opportunities)
- Gambling addiction.

## **Policy/advocacy**

- Increase tax on alcohol.
- Reduce alcohol percentage.
- More alcohol free drinks need to be available.
- More dry zones.
- Networking with community service for collecting info.

## • **Support**

- Introduce a rehab program through Clinics.
- How can Council help people to stop?
- Can Council promote rehab centres, support groups, podcasts?
- Develop a KCC Health and Wellbeing Card, similar to the Mental Health card.

## • **Access**

- Reduce exposure.
- Limit hours/days to sell alcohol

## • **Other**

- What are the influences of parents drinking on children's habits as they get older?