



K&DCCA response to Gympie Regional Council's Ageing in Place Progress Report 26 June 2024

Background

In 2020, the council established an Ageing in Place Project Working Group, of which the Association was a primary stakeholder representing the western district of the local government area, to explore ageing in place services, infrastructure, and community needs.

In 2022, council accepted the final report (*Investigation of Ageing in Place Services and Infrastructure in the Gympie Region*) from the working group with 22 actions that were included in its corporate planning to be reported on quarterly.

On 26 June 2024, council tabled a quarterly progress report on the 22 actions to 'provide councillors with an update on the status of actions undertaken this financial year' and for council to 'note'.

K&DCCA Summary and Response

As a long-term stakeholder of the Ageing in Place working group, the Association was disappointed in the level of accountability of the progress report.

Many of the action responses were vague and lacked detail.

In particular actions 10, 11, 19 & 20.

Action Details	Council's Progress Response	KDCCA Response
Action 10 Explore opportunities for a small-scale accommodation centre in the western district of Gympie region when a confirmed business case and feasibility study is submitted ...	GRC has approved a \$5000 grant towards the feasibility study.	This grant represents less than 25% of the cost of the feasibility study. GRC should provide sufficient grant funding or source grant funding for KDCCA to have a feasibility study prepared and fulfil this action.
Action 11 Undertake an EOI to establish a trial respite service from Kilkivan Hall premises	Not Commenced	This response is insufficient. There is no explanation as to 'why' the EOI was not commenced and whether the action will be followed up or will not be proceeded with due to other reasons.
Action 19 Provide community grants to support volunteers, to cover project work, and decrease volunteer burn-out and financial burden.	Council has a \$630K grants program and awarded grants that had a strong volunteering component.	Council's response did not include details as to what organisations dealing with Ageing in Place projects were funded by community grants and what those grants were used for.
Action 20 Partner with funded services, local community groups and other levels of governments to create community awareness about stereotypes, biases and social issues relating to older people.	More focussed activities are planned in 2024/2025 – particularly during Senior's Month.	The progress report did not articulate what activities took place in 2023/24 and how they relate to the action's objective.



The mayor mentioned that council had 'spent a lot of money working with the Kilkivan group and a lot of staff time'. The Association takes exception to this statement and its inference that K&DCCA is an impost on council resources.



The Association was pleased that Ms Andree Stark responded to a question by the mayor regarding Federal Government support for the Rise & Shine ageing in place project with a reminder that aged care support and services are the responsibility of all three levels of government.



New councillors appeared to be confused as to what their focus should have been during this agenda item. The report before them for consideration and noting was the progress report on actions from the 2022 report. However, the discussion centred around the original report and the progress report, which was severely lacking and unsubstantial, was not mentioned or scrutinised. The Association is most disappointed that councillors were sidetracked and failed to address the item as tabled on the agenda.



It was noted that many of the councillors were unaware of the 2022 Ageing in Place report. While it was encouraging that councillors were enthusiastic about attending a workshop to be educated as to its origins and intent, the Association is disappointed that a change in council represents yet another delay in action and advocacy.

Our Progress Report

In direct, glaring contrast our organisation, with less than a handful of volunteers and very little financial resource or government support, has managed to achieve the following:

- Set up Kilkivan Care to coordinate Trilogy home care packages with support workers from the Mable platform. In two years, we have built the client base to 35. This work directly facilitates ageing in place and has been valued at having a social impact of \$2.59M an injecting \$429K into the local economy.
- Delivered fortnightly social connectivity and awareness raising sessions through Seniors' Social Hub.
- Negotiate the purchase of the former St Kevin's catholic church on land adjoining council's land set aside in principle for ageing-in-place and commence a fundraising drive to enable fulfilment of the purchase obligations.
- Expand community transport services in the district with the KilkivAN that provides regular excursions for seniors for shopping and appointments, and entertainment venue visits.
- Publish a regular free local newsletter so all locals can access necessary information about services and activities and follow the progress of our Rise & Shine project.
- Commission a Social Return on Investment report of the Rise & Shine project, which is available to [download](#) from the website.

- Continued to actively explore partnership opportunities for the Rise & Shine small-scale accommodation project including working with the University of the Sunshine Coast to develop a precinct grant funding proposal, which continues to be stalled due to council's apparent reluctance to engage in preliminary discussions ostensibly due to a perceived conflict of interest with its own precinct funding application.
- Continued advocacy for ageing in place ambitions by liaising frequently with the media, and all levels of government.