

# Terms of reference

## Resource



These terms of reference were developed for the Positive Ageing Advocacy Group, established under the auspices of Castlemaine Community House to provide input and advocacy on age-friendly initiatives in Mount Alexander Shire

## Purpose

The Positive Ageing Advocacy group will empower older community members to have a voice in the governance of their community.

The group is a platform for advocacy and collective action on issues related to the development of an Age Friendly community in Mount Alexander Shire.

The group will explore the issues of social exclusion, social isolation and general health and wellbeing, across sectors of the aged community in the Mount Alexander Shire.

The definition of advocacy is the act of speaking on the behalf of, or in support of, another person, place, or thing.

## Scope

The Positive Ageing Advocacy Group will be informed by community consultation outcomes, the Mount Alexander Age Friendly Declaration and may be guided by these eight key age-friendly themes<sup>1</sup>:

1. outdoor spaces and buildings
2. transport
3. housing
4. social participation
5. respect and social inclusion
6. civic participation and employment
7. communication and information
8. community support and health services

The Positive Ageing Advocacy Group will work in the Mount Alexander Shire area.

<sup>1</sup> Identified in *Global age friendly cities: a guide* produced by the World Health Organization

## Objectives

The Positive Ageing Advocacy Group will:

- advocate for improvements to universal access in local services and infrastructure, especially for hard-to-reach and vulnerable older people.
- inform government and other stakeholder organisations on matters concerning the health and wellbeing needs of older people.
- provide an independent consultative forum for government and other stakeholder organisations to engage the community regarding Positive Ageing policy and planning.
- communicate with the broader community about Age Friendly practises.
- discuss issues that may impact on the health and wellbeing of older people in the community;
- provide a platform for advocacy and shared planning for the creation of age friendly communities.
- develop relationships with local agencies so older people's voices are heard.

## Duration

The Positive Ageing Advocacy Group is ongoing.

Terms of Reference documents will be reviewed within the first six months of starting and every two years from then on.

Positive Ageing Advocacy Group members will be appointed for a period of two years.

## Membership

The Positive Ageing Advocacy Group will be made up of:

- 12 independent members, a minimum of six must be local residents, and the rest may be local residents or representatives of relevant service providers.

Membership of the Positive Ageing Advocacy Group is voluntary. All members must be over 18 years of age. The Manager of Castlemaine Community House or their representative will support the work of the Group.

## Auspice relationship

Castlemaine Community House will auspice the Positive Ageing Advocacy Group until June 2018. The Auspice agreement will be reviewed at this time.

## Skills and capabilities

Members of the Positive Ageing Advocacy Group should have the following skills and resources:

- understanding of local issues, values and goals relating to positive ageing
- ability to cooperate with others and work as a team
- willingness to attend and contribute to meetings in a fair and unbiased manner
- ability to value diverse perspectives
- community connections and networks
- availability of time.

These skills and resources will be used as the selection criteria to assess membership of the Positive Ageing Advocacy Group.

## Selection process

Membership will be sought by:

- advertisement in the local media
- relevant networks
- and by invitation.

The responses will provide a registration of interest in membership.

This will provide a basic level of information about the nominee and address the selection criteria.

The Age Friendly Communities Steering Committee will assess the nominations and endorse membership for the establishment of the Positive Ageing Advocacy Group. The Positive Ageing Advocacy Group will assess nominations and endorse membership after the establishment of the group. Nominations from diverse groups will be highly valued.

Upon acceptance of the nomination for the Positive Ageing Advocacy Group, each member will read and sign the Code of Conduct (outlined below).

If community or service provider vacancies arise during the life of the Advocacy group, these will be addressed through the process outlined above. Nominations will be endorsed by the Advocacy Group.

## Responsibilities of members

The members of the Positive Ageing Advocacy Group will:

- attend meetings of the Advocacy Group on a regular basis
- represent the diverse interests of the local community and services, rather than individual interests
- respect the views, ideas and beliefs of the other appointed members
- play an active role in the discussion and work of the Positive Ageing Advocacy Group.

## Meeting procedures

Office-bearers will hold their position for a period of two years.

### Chairperson

The Chairperson is responsible for the conduct of meetings, ensuring all voices and views are heard and that the process is consistent with the Terms of Reference. The Chairperson will be the public representative of the Group.

The Chairperson will be nominated by the Positive Ageing Advocacy Group.

### Vice Chairperson

The Vice Chairperson will support the Chairperson in their role and perform the role of Chairperson in their absence.

### Secretary

The Secretary will send and receive correspondence and be the primary contact for the group for administrative purposes.

## Agendas and minutes

All meetings will have an agenda with minutes recording attendees, apologies, decisions and outcomes. The Chairperson will oversee the preparation of the agenda in consultation with the Secretary. Any member can submit agenda items prior to the finalisation and distribution of the agenda.

A CCH staff representative will provide administrative support to the Positive Ageing Advocacy Group and will ensure timely preparation and distribution of agendas and minutes.

Minutes and agendas will be submitted to the auspice body in a timely manner.

## Quorum

Quorum will be at least six members of the group or over 50 per cent of the total number. Meetings will be deferred if quorum is not reached.

## Decision making

It is preferable that decisions of the Positive Ageing Advocacy Group are made by consensus however; there may be circumstances where a matter is decided by a vote. Each member is entitled to one vote. The Chairperson may exercise a casting vote if this is necessary.

## Meeting frequency

Meetings shall be held at least every second month throughout the life of the Positive Ageing Advocacy Group. A schedule of meetings shall be prepared in advance and distributed to all members. Under special circumstances a meeting may be postponed or cancelled.

## Meeting venue

A room at Castlemaine Community House (CCH)

## Conflict of interest

Any matter deemed by a member to represent a Conflict of Interest shall be reported to the Chairperson either prior to a meeting or before the specific item is discussed.

## Settlement of disputes

Any conflict or dispute shall be discussed and handled in good faith. In doing so, all parties will nominate a person responsible for liaising between parties with regard to the dispute.

The persons nominated by each party shall work together to attempt to resolve the dispute through negotiation, mediation or conciliation but not through arbitration or litigation.

Any costs associated with mediation or other alternative dispute resolution procedures shall be borne equally by both parties.

In the case that negotiation, mediation or conciliation is unsuccessful, the conflict or dispute will be elevated to the Positive Ageing Steering Committee for resolution.

## Member's code of conduct

I agree to:

- attend Advocacy Group meetings and provide apologies in advance where attendance is not possible
- act in an advisory capacity by distributing authorised information within the community and provide insight and advice into community perspectives of access and inclusion
- seek at all times to obtain and represent the views of the broader community
- respect the ideas and beliefs of all members. Provide an atmosphere where all members feel comfortable to participate
- contribute in a positive way to finding solutions to issues or concerns
- act in good faith, with honesty and integrity and apply the skills and expertise I possess with diligence and care
- represent the views of my organisation, interest group or community, and not individual views at odds with my organisation or group
- notify the Chairperson of any potential conflict of interest that I identify with respect to my participation in the Advocacy Group
- not distribute confidential information that is discussed at the Advocacy Group meetings as advised by the Advocacy Group chair
- not make any media comment on behalf of the Advocacy Group in relation to the project unless approved by the Advocacy Group Chairperson.

Signed:

Name:

Date:

This sample resource has been provided with the support and permission of the Positive Ageing Advocacy Group.

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