7 August 2018

World Health Organisation

Avenue Appia 20
1202 Geneva

To whom it may concern,

Darebin Council is located in the northern suburbs of Melbourne, Australia. The area boasts a community rich in diversity and ethnicity. Older people play an important role as grandparents, parents, community leaders, volunteers, employees, employers, teachers and activists. Darebin’s population at the 2016 census was 158,553 with over 20,000 people over the age of 65. Of this, 3,753 were people over the age of 85.

As a local government authority, Council has many responsibilities which include the provision of community services and facilities, maintenance of local roads; town planning and development approvals and urban renewal. With a significant ageing population we are cognizant of our capacity to influence change both a local and systemic level by continuing to provide these same services with a more considered approach to the planning of services and the built environment through the lens of ageing.

Darebin City Council has a proud history of supporting services and programs for older people. The vision of the Darebin Active and Healthy Ageing Strategy 2011 – 2021 aspires towards a community that fully embraces and celebrates older citizens and values their wisdom and contribution.

The Active and Healthy Ageing Advisory Board represents the interests of older adults living in Darebin. The role of the committee is to inform and assist Council in understanding how issues, policies and drivers can impact on the health and wellbeing of older residents ageing in Darebin. Additionally the committee has a role in monitoring the Darebin Active and Healthy Ageing Strategy 2011-2021.

Darebin Council is also a signatory to the Age-friendly Victoria Declaration which reaffirms the organisation’s long standing commitment to make the city a better place for older people. Age-friendly Victoria initiative is led by the Victorian Government Department of Health and Human Services.

Council is deeply committed to finding ways to embed the principles outlined in the World Health Organisation’s Age-friendly Cities Framework. This is evidenced through recent work in which Council asked the community ***How do older people want to grow older in Darebin?*** The findings from this consultation told us older people wanted Council to (1) embed social connection in everything we do; (2) find ways to provide more help for people to live independently at home; (3) provide ‘brokers’ that can give the information needed as people’s circumstances change; (4) ensure people can be healthy and active safely; (5) support initiatives that can give people a sense of purpose; and (6) assist those who feel vulnerable.

Armed with this information we will continue working towards our mission which is to embed age-friendly principles in all we do, placing greater emphasis on ageing across the life course to allow residents to move about, confident that regardless of where they live in Darebin, their community will be accessible, responsive to their need, socially inclusive and values their contribution.

We hope you will consider Darebin Council’s application to become a member of the WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Community. Membership will provide a platform for Council to learn from and share age-friendly projects and initiatives.

I look forward to your response and am available to answer any questions you may have regarding our application.

Sincerely,



Kim Le Cerf

Mayor

Darebin Council