**Media Release**

**4 March 2022**

**Federal Government Reforms Result in Moorabool Aged Care Exit**

Following an in-principle decision in December 2021, Moorabool Shire Council has confirmed its decision to cease delivering aged and disability services to Moorabool residents from 1 July this year.

A change in Federal Government policy arising from the Royal Commission into Aged Care made it clear that local government does not have a meaningful role to play in the future delivery of aged care services.

At the Ordinary Meeting of Council last night (3 March), Councillors endorsed a range of recommendations, which included some of the following:

* Accepts that due to inherent service cost, financial constraints, competition policy and other structural challenges, Moorabool Shire Council along with many other Victorian councils will not be able to play a meaningful future role in service delivery.
* Confirms that it will transition out of direct service delivery roles by 30 June 2022 in the following programs, subject to negotiations with Commonwealth and State Governments:

(a) All funded Commonwealth Home Support Programme services

(i) Domestic Assistance

(ii) Personal Care

(iii) Flexible Respite

(iv) Centre Based Respite

(v) Social Support – Group

(vi) Social Support – Individual

(vii) Home and Property Maintenance

(viii) Home Modifications

(ix) Delivered Meals

(x) Occupational Therapy

(xi) Sector Support & Development

(b) All funded HACC-PYP services

(i) Domestic Assistance

(ii) Personal Care

(iii) Social Support Group

(iv) Centre Based Respite

(v) Home and Property Maintenance

(vi) Delivered Meals

(vii) Occupational Therapy

(viii) Volunteer Coordination

(c) Regional Assessment Services (RAS)

* Commits to working with the Commonwealth and Victorian governments to negotiate timing and transition processes that will protect the interests of clients, their families, much valued staff, and the broader community.
* Reaffirms that in taking this decision it will continue to play an active role in ensuring its community will receive high-quality aged care services and will advocate for the needs of vulnerable members of the community.
* Notes that Council has undertaken an expression of interest process and has identified a potential values-aligned successor provider that it will recommend to the Commonwealth on a without-prejudice basis.

Mayor Cr Tom Sullivan said this was a very difficult decision for Council, but one that had to be made given the Federal aged care reforms.

“Our priorities are the residents of Moorabool who use or may require aged care and disability services and making sure they continue to receive the same level of service they are currently receiving under Council’s programs, noting that these service providers can provide a suite of services outside of Council’s capacity to ensure older community members are supported,” Cr Sullivan said.

“With our aged care and disability clients in mind, Council has undertaken a confidential expression of interest process looking at values-aligned successors. Council will make recommendations to the Commonwealth as part of the process, noting that other service providers can provide a suite of services above and beyond Council’s current service delivery.

“The transition will be managed in partnership with the Commonwealth-appointed provider, to ensure continuity of service for aged and disability clients, to ensure they can continue to access the services they need when they need them.

“Our other concern is our impacted staff. Since this was first flagged, Council has been working very closely with the 38 Council staff who are directly impacted by this decision and talking through their options with them and supporting them, and these conversations and support will continue today and in the coming months,” Cr Sullivan said.

“Once service delivery ceases, Council will continue to have a role within the organisation, who will provide support and information to the local community to ensure service referrals and links to relevant services occur and to help the community navigate the aged care and disability systems.

More information on the transition is available on our website: <https://www.moorabool.vic.gov.au/Services-and-support/Moorabool-families/Active-Ageing-and-Diversity>