

Resolution of Council

19 September 2022

Item 13.1

Ageism Awareness

Moved by Councillor Ellsmore, seconded by Councillor Scully –

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council note that:
- (i) ageism, or discrimination based on age including prejudice against older people, has a profound impact on our communities. Ageism negatively affects the job prospects, confidence, physical and mental health, quality of life and control over life decisions of older members of the community;
 - (ii) in 2021, the World Health Organisation found that "Ageism has been shown to cause cardiovascular stress, lowered levels of self-efficacy and decreased productivity";
 - (iii) another major area where age discrimination impacts older Australians is employment. The employment participation rate of Australians aged 55-64 years old is 67.2 per cent, and lags behind comparable countries such as New Zealand (78.4 per cent), Germany (74.4 per cent) and Japan (77.9 per cent). Almost 223,000 Australians aged 55-64 years are on Newstart payments - actively looking for work but unable to get a job. This is the largest of any other age group;
 - (iv) Deloitte Access Economics, undertaking modelling on behalf of the Australian Human Rights Commission, has estimated that if five per cent more people aged 55 or older were employed, there would be a positive impact of \$48 billion on the national economy annually;

- (v) addressing ageism is good for both the community and our local economies. The drivers and causes of ageism can be addressed by shifting negative attitudes and addressing discrimination in employment, healthcare, aged care, housing, digital inclusion and economic security;
 - (vi) in relation to addressing ageism in housing and accommodation for older people, the Housing for the Aged Action Group has advocated for a funded specialist service to engage with older people before they experience a housing crisis, support them moving into aged care, lower the priority age for social housing eligibility and allocate 20 per cent of social and affordable housing to older people;
 - (vii) in October 2021, the Ensuring Age Appropriate Housing and Priority Housing for Older People Notice of Motion was passed unanimously requesting the Lord Mayor to write to Minister for Water, Property and Housing and the Premier of NSW to request that they meet with the Housing for the Aged Action Group;
 - (viii) in November 2021, the Lord Mayor wrote to the Premier, Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services and Minister for Water, Property and Housing requesting the NSW Government meets with the Housing for the Aged Action Group to discuss their priorities;
 - (ix) the NSW Upper House Committee on Social Issues is due to report on the findings of its inquiry into homelessness amongst older people by 30 September 2022. The inquiry examined the rate of homelessness and factors affecting the incidence of homelessness among older people, as well as impacts on health and wellbeing, challenges in navigating services and opportunities for change;
 - (x) on 16 September 2022, the Lord Mayor wrote to the NSW Treasurer requesting he meet with the Housing for the Aged Action Group to discuss their priorities before the Upper House Committee report their findings;
 - (xi) the City's community centres offer a range of programs, activities and services to support healthy and active ageing, including fitness classes, computer skills and social groups; and
 - (xii) EveryAGE Counts is an advocacy campaign aimed at tackling ageism against older Australians. The EveryAGE Counts campaign has written to the City of Sydney Councillors and the Council, asking for Council to support action against ageism;
- (B) Council agree to support the EveryAGE Counts campaign to end ageism, joining with others in our communities to create a society where every person is valued, connected and respected regardless of age; and

(C) the Chief Executive Officer be requested to:

- (i) promote awareness of upcoming Ageism Awareness Day, which will be held on 7 October 2022;
- (ii) investigate other opportunities for the Council to support the campaign and address ageism in our communities, including Council signing the campaign pledge to stand for a world without ageism, training and information for Council staff about ageism, education and awareness raising about ageism in the wider community, and advocacy to State and Federal Parliamentarians; and
- (iii) report back to Council about these, and other potential actions, that Council could take to support the campaign and address ageism.

Carried unanimously.

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