

Kyogle Council Ordinary Meeting 11 November 2019

Madam Mayor and council

I'm here today on behalf of the WPA, thank you for the opportunity. I requested this appearance as WPA was concerned about the lack of response by Kyogle Council to the issues of aged care in Woodenbong. Specifically, the **Woodenbong Cares** proposal as delivered to Council October 2018; and to the Cartwright Consulting Group **Options for delivery of community aged care in the village of Woodenbong**.

After approval was given for me to be here today, I have since read Council's response to the Cartwright Options Report for aged care in Woodenbong in the form of the Council agenda made available last week on Council's website. There has not been any other response provided to our community.

I would like to comment on this

The Report states "Following research and consultation, the Options Report identifies a current lack of community and organisational capacity to deliver homecare services"; WPA does not totally disagree with this suggestion. The WPA had identified this prior to consultation by the Cartwright Group commencing and was explained to the group, however this was still identified as a model. The WPA identified that the approved provider status was not the path that WPA should follow at this time; the WPA had also identified that even though Kyogle Council along with other local government authorities are taken to be approved providers in respect of all types of aged care, they would not have the capacity or understanding of providing aged care particularly home care. Even though your response does not specifically state this about Council; we believe this to be the case.

Your report goes on to state "and a critical lack of quantifiable demand for such services. This lack of expressed demand is a key issue in planning for future service delivery and for identifying sustainable models of provision." The Cartwright Report 2015 and 2019 actually demonstrates that current care providers are stretched to capacity; the Cartwright Report does state "It was difficult to determine accurate numbers relating to aged care services being provided in the Woodenbong area but it was apparent that there was not sufficient to meet demonstrated need." I would like to suggest that this statement is not respected in its intention.

I say this because the consult appointment was very much "last minute", minimal time to consult with the community regarding Ms Cartwright's appointment and the only community meeting that was held where quite a substantial amount of information was obtained and used; the numbers were low which in turn made it difficult to obtain accurate reporting numbers for those receiving or in need of care as well as confidentiality of service providers disclosing information.

Your report then offers no hope for aged care services within Woodenbong being supported by our locally elected council. Again, I say this as is stated “Following the completion of the Options Report, a total of \$50,000 remains available for deployment against housing-related initiatives”. There is no clarity where these housing-related initiative funds will be spent; and there is no further discussion about the Cartwrights recommendation of a cluster of 4-6 semi-detached single units within the village to provide an option for older people to age in place. The community has identified suitable land for this purpose, but it is likely that Council is the only entity who could undertake this task, alone or in partnership with a developer.

As identified in the councils 2016 – 2026 Community Strategic Plan it recognises the needs of its current and emerging older community members as well as those with disabilities as an integral part of the council area's ongoing social fabric. The need to recognise and facilitate the Kyogle Council area as an ‘age-friendly place’ is regarded by the plan to be an integral part of reinforcing an important part of the community’s character, its empathy and commitment towards all groups within its society as well as realising the knowledge and contribution that people from all walks of life can make towards sustaining a prosperous future.

It does sadden us that the first opportunity Kyogle Council has had to action its own vision, mission and value statements regarding to Aged Care in Woodenbong as a trial; they are unable to do so - Lindsay not sure if I said this John doesn't recall But I think I did right when the bells tolled!!

Going forward, Woodenbong and its Progress Association will not sit on their laurels or be complacent. We are currently communicating with an approved provider in our area and will work with them as being a preferred provider with the understanding, that the residents of Woodenbong do have a choice regarding providers. We are committed to a date in December for a community forum and an introduction to the service provider.

The WPA will continue to propose to Kyogle Council that there is a release of Crown Land to support the building of the semi-detached units.

My last point I wish to raise is to encourage council to read the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety Interim Report. It is titled **Neglect**, covering some of the work of the Commissioners. And the failure of the aged care system to meet the needs of our older citizens in the delivery of safe and quality care.