Confidential Item

CAMPBELLTOWN CITY COUNCIL

Confidential Item

For Council meeting to be held on

5 December 2023 at 7.00 pm

Refer Item 11.9

Confidential Item

11.9 Future of Commonwealth Home Support Program

Manager Community Services & Social Development, Tracy Johnstone's Report

Purpose of Report

To decide the future direction of Council providing Commonwealth Home Support Program Services from 1 July 2024.

Strategic Plan Link

Focus Area 1.2.1 Facilitate learning, leisure, social programs and services for all

Previous Council/Committee Resolution

Nil.

Background

Council has been providing CHSP (Commonwealth Home Support Program) services, formerly HACC (Home and Community Care Services) for over 20 years to keep older people aged 65+ or 50+ for First Nations People, living independently at home and in the Community for as long as possible.

The Campbelltown HSP (Home Support Program) is funded by the Federal Government to deliver the following service types in this time:

In-home Support:

- Domestic Assistance: house work
- Home Maintenance: basic plumbing and electrical, gutter clean, window clean and gardening
- Home Modifications: rails, key safes, ramps.

The in-home support services are delivered by contractors on behalf of Council.

Community support:

- Social Support Individual: Assisted shopping
- Social Support Group: group based activities that promote social interaction
- Transport: group shopping and individual transport to medical, shopping and social appointments.

The Community support services are delivered by Volunteers and utilise Council assets such as pool cars to deliver the program.

The following table provides a summary of the services and funding provided in 2022/2023:

Service Type	Funding	Client contribution	Clients	Output
Home Modifications	$33,295	$83,917	57	$26,183
Home maintenance	$114,591		531	2,639 hours
Domestic Assistance	$381,216	$76,428	316	7,190 hours
Social Support Group	$164,900	$48,384	310	12,809 hours
Social Support Individual	$27,378	$27,015	79	1199 hours
Transport	$90,810		254	5,522 one way trips
	$812,190	$235,744		

Council's current funding contract ends on 30 June 2024 however Staff have been advised that there is a one year extension to the current funding (until 30 June 2025) available, should Council choose to apply for this funding.

Council currently has 1,020 individual clients who are receiving at least one service.

Discussion

The Australian Government is in the process of reforming aged care and from 1 July 2025 it will be called 'Support at Home'. Support at home will incorporate 4 existing services including:

- Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP)
- Home Care Packages (HCP) Program
- Short-Term Restorative Care (STRC) Program
- Residential Respite Programs.

This is relevant to Council as the Campbelltown Home Support Program will change under the new Support at Home model and whilst providers don't have the final details about how the new model will work, the funding model is changing from block funding to fee for service with unit costs for services being set by the Federal Government.

Staff have participated in webinars held by the Federal Government, Local Government networks and the regional aged care network to ensure they stay abreast of the proposed changes. Taking into consideration all the available information, Staff believe there are 3 feasible options for Council to consider:

Option 1: Council remains in CHSP

This option would mean that Council would apply for funding to continue to deliver all current services until 30 June 2025.

Option 2: Council remains part-in CHSP and delivers Community support services

This option would mean that Council would apply for funding to continue to deliver Transport, Social Support (Group and Individua)l from 1 July 2024 – 30 June 2025 and opt out of in-home support services once the current funding contract expires on 30 June 2024.

Option 3: Council ceases to provide CHSP services in entirety

This option would mean that Council does not apply for funding to deliver in-home or Community support services from 1 July 2024 and all services are ceased on 30 June 2024. As mentioned above, this does not mean the clients will be left without a service as Campbelltown HSP Staff work with the Federal Government to transition the clients to a new provider.

Staff recommend that Option 2 as the preferred option. This includes applying for the continued block funding from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025 to enable continuity of the important Community support services.

Council delivers high quality, highly valued and important services to the Community through the Social Support and Transport programs. Council Staff (not contractors) are direct service providers and coordinating and delivering these programs utilising Volunteers and in-kind Council resources such as vehicles.

Transport is such a critical program to ensure older people remain connected in the Community. People use the transport services to attend medical appointments, social programs and undertake shopping. Whilst there are other transport providers in the East, Staff believe the Campbelltown HSP transport program is one of the most flexible, responsive and cost-effective transport programs available to support older people. The Council transport program includes one on one transport, group cemetery visits and group independent shopping trips and delivers on average over 5000 one way trips per year.

Similarly, the Social Support programs aim to connect older people to each other and to the Community and reduce social isolation. The program is fully funded by the Federal Government and with block funding available until 30 June 2025 Staff can continue to deliver the social program without any funding from Council.

Staying in social support and transport programs for another year will also provide Staff time to review the Federal Government funding model that will be provided from 1 July 2025. Once information is released about this funding model, Staff will be in a position to consider what that looks like for Council going forward and provide a further report to Council with a recommendation about how Council proceeds with these services beyond 1 July 2025.

Option 2 also means that Council ceases to deliver in-home support services from 1 July 2024 which includes domestic assistance, home maintenance and home modifications. Unlike Community support services which link older people out in the Community and more closely align with the role of Council, the in-home support services all occur on private property. Other factors informing the suggestion to transition out of these services include:

- **Contractor shortages:** Council contracts all of the work out for these service types which has identified there are workforce shortages which impact on the ability to deliver services in a timely way. There is also a reluctance from some private contractors to meet the administrative needs of being a CHSP contractor to meet the Aged Care Quality Standards for service delivery.

- **Cost:** The hourly rates for contractors has steadily increased each year and the funding from Federal Government has not kept up with these increased charges. Campbelltown HSP has had to stop using one domestic assistance contractor as they are unaffordable for the program now. In home maintenance delivery of gardening has been increasingly difficult as the pool of available contractors has diminished and the hourly rate now exceeding $60ph

As Council acts as a broker of these services it is recommended that Council does not apply for funding to continue. Importantly, existing Campbelltown HSP clients will still be provided with in-home support services as there is a process in place to work with the Federal Government who will transition the clients across to a new provider. The Federal Government requires at least four months notice for this transition to occur.

If Council supports Option 2, a further report will be brought back to Council once more information is released about the services as part of the new Support at Home Program.

Social Implications

Campbelltown Council has 14,202 older people aged 60+in the area (26% of the Campbelltown population) with 1,929 of those aged 85+, a higher percentage when compared to metropolitan Adelaide. Campbelltown Council is committed to supporting people to age well in the area as evidenced through its Ageing Well Advisory Committee, a dedicated Staff member, a draft Ageing Well Plan and participating as a pilot in the South Australian Age Friendly Environments and Communities.

Not all older people will need aged care services in their life however for those who do require additional support to live independently at home or in the Community services are available. The challenge for the Federal Government is the growing ageing population and the fact people are living longer than ever before so the demand on aged care services is high with services struggling to meet the demand.

Continuing to provide transport and social support services will ensure that clients who are use to this service being provided by Council will continue to enjoy a quality and flexible service, which will support them to maintain independence and feel connected to others within their Community.

Environmental / Climate Change Implications

There are no environmental / climate change implications in relation to this report.

Asset Management Implications

Council currently owns a van which is leased to CHSP. Should Council choose option 3 and opt out completely, a decision will need to be made whether to keep the van and divert to other uses or sell the van.

Governance / Risk Management

Staff have undertaken a risk assessment on Option 2 and 3 and have a communication plan drafted to ensure all stakeholders are informed. Council will work with the Federal Government to ensure clients and their carers / families are fully informed of any changes.

There is a reputational risk when making changes to long standing programs and services. Staff believe the reputational risk of not delivering social support and transport programs is higher than in-home support as Council designs and delivers social and transport in a unique way compared to other providers, whereas domestic assistance, home maintenance and modification is very similar regardless of the contractor.

Community Engagement

There are no Community engagement implications in relation to this report.

Regional Implications

There are no regional implications in relation to this report.

Economic Development Implications

There are no economic development implications in relation to this report.

Financial Implications

There are financial implications in relation to this report and these are set out below based on the 2023/2024 funding:

Option 1: there are no financial implications

Option 2: There will be a reduction of $574,618 in Federal funding for in-home support services which will correspond with an equivalent reduction in expenses. There is no net impact to the budget. Council will continue to receive an income of $13,400 per year in lease fees for the Hiace Van.

Option 3: There will be a reduction of $886,922 in Federal funding for all Campbelltown HSP services which will correspond with an equivalent reduction in expenses. However, Council will also have a reduction of $13,400 per year in lease fees for the Hiace van that Council owns and Campbelltown HSP leases.

Recommendation

That Council support Option 2 and:

1. **advise the Federal Government funding body that Council will commence the transition out of Commonwealth Home Support Program domestic assistance, home maintenance and home modification services with all delivery ceasing by no later than 30 June 2024, and**

2. **apply for funding to continue to deliver Commonwealth Home Support Program social support group, social support individual and transport services until 30 June 2025, and**

3. **that a further report be prepared for Council's consideration once the Support at Home funding model is released to consider service delivery from 1 July 2025.**