 ***Media release***

 **28 February 2018**

**Council seeking community views on Positive Ageing review**

Surf Coast Shire Council is seeking community feedback on a review of its Positive Ageing and disability care services.

Council is reviewing its services in response to the Australian Government’s national aged care reforms and the introduction of the NDIS.

The Australian Government reforms are aimed at increasing consumer choice to ensure services are efficient and cost effective.

The changes, most of which will come into effect by 2020, will mean Councils won’t automatically be the provider of aged services in their area.

Surf Coast Shire Council is investigating how the changes could impact on the services it provides.

Surf Coast Shire Council Mayor Cr David Bell said the Council was planning ahead and keen to learn community views.

“The national reforms mean that Council will have no choice but to change its services, so the prudent thing is to plan ahead of time,” he said.

“We did a first round of community engagement in 2017 and have now done further research to develop a Discussion Paper and Options Paper.

“We’re seeking people’s views before we make a decision on Council’s future role in May this year.

“Essentially we want to test whether Council should still provide a competing service if there are appropriate alternatives.

“One thing Council has already committed to is that we will not leave the community without a much needed service. Appropriate services must be available,” said Cr Bell.

“And whatever changes we decide upon won’t be implemented overnight – it will take time to get it right.”

Currently Surf Coast Shire Council subsidises its aged and disability care services by $1.35 million per year.

“That is a significant cost for ratepayers especially given the fact that rate capping limits how much revenue Council can raise through rates,” said Cr Bell.

Current clients of Council’s Positive Ageing services will receive a copy of the discussion paper and a questionnaire in the mail.

The same material is available online at [www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au/haveyoursay](http://www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au/haveyoursay).

People can request printed copies of the Discussion Paper, questionnaire and Options Paper by calling 5261 0600.

Submissions close Monday 9 April 2018.