



Inclusion (Disability, Aged & Carers) Advisory Committee



Minutes

Thursday 19 August 2021

Inclusion (Disability, Aged & Carers) Advisory Committee Minutes

Thursday 19 August 2021

Present: Councillors: Isabelle Shapiro (Chair)
Lucinda Regan

**Community
Representatives:** Mervyn Levine
Ruark Lewis
Gabi Simpson

Staff: Jacky Hony (Community Development Team Leader)
Vicki Munro (Acting Manager Community & Culture)

Meeting opened: 12.38pm held using teleconferencing technology

1. Opening

Cr Isabelle Shapiro welcomed Committee members and opened the meeting.

2. Acknowledgement of Country

Cr Isabelle Shapiro gave an Acknowledgement of Country.

3. Apologies

Apologies were received and accepted from Nessa Joseph, who prefers not to converse via Zoom. As an in person meeting was not possible due to Public Health Orders, Nessa Joseph's contributions were made by providing comments on the agenda prior to the meeting, with a follow up discussion by telephone scheduled to take place after the meeting date.

4. Declarations of Interest

Nil

5. Confirmation of Minutes

This being the inaugural meeting of the Inclusion (Disability, Aged and Carers) Advisory Committee, there are no Minutes from a previous meeting.

6. Items for Discussion

Item No: 6.1
Subject: Inclusion (Disability, Aged and Carers) Advisory Committee – Terms of Reference
Author: Jacky Hony, Team Leader - Community Development

Recommendation:

THAT the Inclusion (Disability, Aged and Carers) Advisory Committee members are welcomed and discuss and note the Committee's Terms of Reference.

Cr Shapiro, as Chair, invited Committee members to introduce themselves and to outline why they have volunteered to be on the Committee.

Cr Shapiro's mother is an older adult who lives independently. Cr Shapiro is therefore familiar with issues around accessibility barriers such as uneven footpaths and access to services and facilities.

Cr Regan is a Director on the Board of Holdsworth Community and has been involved with the Disability Inclusion Act through her University work.

Vicki Munro, as Acting Manager Community & Culture, has responsibilities for the inclusion portfolio.

Jacky Hony is responsible for coordinating the annual mandatory progress report on Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan, as well as coordinating the review and updating of the DIAP, and has secretariat duties for the Committee.

Mervyn Levine is retired and, as a stroke survivor, volunteers as a 'safe stroke speaker', letting people know about how to deal with a stroke. He also volunteers with Holdsworth Community.

Gabi Simpson is a vaccination and ICU nurse who is a peer support worker with [Reframing Disability](#). Gabi has an 8 year old daughter who is living with disability.

Ruark Lewis has lived with spinal injury since 1978 and was on Council's former Access Committee. Ruark is a practising artist, writer and curator.

Nessa Joseph advised prior to the meeting that she has worked in the aged and disability fields for 35 years in both the government and not-for-profit sector and currently provides cares for her husband who is recovering from surgery and lives with chronic conditions.

Cr Shapiro recapped the role of the Committee, which is to provide lived experience feedback to assist Council's progress towards inclusivity for all.

The Committee discussed the Terms of Reference, noting that the delegated authority precludes the Committee from directing Council's budget or staff. The Committee discussed, therefore, how ideas and suggestions from the Committee might be presented to Council. This will be via inclusion in Minutes of the meetings, which are then reported to the Finance, Community and Services Committee. Alternatively, Crs Shapiro and Regan are able to raise Notices of Motion regarding specific requests for consideration by Council. Should a specific request impact others or have a financial implication, a subsequent report with costings and other considerations would need to be compiled by the relevant Council staff and presented to Council for deliberation.

Resolved: the Inclusion (Disability, Aged and carers) Advisory Committee Terms of Reference were noted.

(Lewis, Levine)

Item No: 6.2
Subject: REVIEW OF COUNCIL'S DISABILITY INCLUSION ACTION PLAN 2017
Author: Jacky Hony, Team Leader - Community Development

Recommendation:

THAT community members of the Inclusion (Disability, Aged and Carers) Advisory Committee review and provide lived experience feedback regarding Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2017.

The Committee was advised that all Councils are required to have a Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) and that Council's current DIAP was adopted June 2017 and is due for a review.

The Committee raised the following points regarding the current DIAP and which may have a place in an updated version:

- Council was commended on the Watsons Bay Baths that provided Australia's first deep water wheelchair access to a tidal harbour pool. To use the baths requires transition into a hydro-wheelchair and accessing the water via a ramp. The ramp can be steep depending on the tide and therefore users may need assistance. The Committee was notified that the plastic of the hydro-wheelchairs is perishing and the wheelchairs may need replacing.

Action: *Jacky Hony to refer this to relevant Council staff for review.*

The Committee discussed other potential locations that might be modified to facilitate access to the ocean, noting that access to the Murray Rose Pool has previously been investigated but that the incline is too steep to meet standards. Access to a hydrotherapy pool within the Municipality was also raised as a current gap.

- Truly accessible bathrooms and toilets need to be more than just wheelchair accessible. Fully accessible bathrooms and toilets need to include an adult sized change table, a hoist, space to change, a shower with a fold down bench for sitting and MLAK locks to ensure access to clean and hygienic facilities in case the user needs to perform a medical procedure.

People living with disability may be better enabled to participate in community life if at least one of these fully accessible facilities was available in the Woollahra Local Government Area. The Committee discussed potential locations for such a facility. More information can be found at: <https://changingplaces.org.au/> The accessibility features of toilets throughout the Municipality are described on the [National public toilet map](#).

- The Committee raised that handrails and drop down seating located by outdoor shower facilities would be helpful in supporting people living with disability to use the showers.

- It was observed that playgrounds throughout the Municipality focus on wheelchair access as opposed to inclusion. For example, [communication boards](#) can encourage children living with disability and children living without disability to play together. A useful reference point for inclusive playgrounds is [Livvi's Place](#).

- Uneven pavements throughout the Municipality make it difficult for people to self-propel in a wheelchair and for people to push another person in a wheelchair. The issue of tree roots damaging pavements is complex as tree removal is unpopular. There have been occasions where Council has tarmacked over tree roots to smooth a pavement but this may not alleviate access barriers for people using mobility scooters.

Cr Shapiro advised the community members of the Committee that there is a new [Woollahra Council app](#) that allows people to easily make requests or report issues and that may be useful for highlighting specific uneven pavements.

- Residents who request that a disability parking space is installed in their street are required to pay installation costs of \$228 and are also required to apply each year (free of charge) to retain the parking bay. If the application for renewal is received after one month before the end of the 12 month period there is a \$106 fee for the actual costs and additional administration costs involved. Committee members were advised that neither Randwick nor Waverley Councils charge for the installation of disability parking spaces.

This matter was raised with Engineering Services prior to the meeting who advised that Council's fees and charges for the installation of traffic signs, including disabled parking space signs, is based on a user pays methodology. Although the disabled parking space can be used by any member of the public, it is primarily installed to benefit the adjoining property owner.

The Committee discussed that there are a range of fees and charges related to parking that may apply to all Woollahra residents. The Committee further discussed whether payment for potential locations for additional disability parking spaces throughout the Municipality could be sponsored by others, noting that any such locations would need to be approved by Council's Traffic Committee.

- Council's DIAP refers to the Priority of Access Guidelines for supporting children with additional needs to attend the Woollahra Preschool. However, the child of one member of the Committee was not allocated a place and had to attend an alternate preschool out of the area, thereby not allowing for their child to learn with neighbouring children.

Action: Vicki Munro to advise on how many children living with disability currently and historically have attended the Preschool, their level of disability, the criteria for admission and any barriers for accommodation.

- Prior to the meeting, it was commented that broad motherhood statements are unhelpful and that the DIAP should include specific, realistic actions with a description of how they will be implemented. For example, how will Council encourage the wider community to accept and respect people living with disability.

Resolved: the Inclusion (Disability, Aged and carers) Advisory Committee noted the above comments.

(Levine/Lewis)

- Subsequently to the meeting, the omission of reference to supporting the inclusion of neurodiverse people (for example, autistic individuals) in Council's DIAP was raised.

7. General Business

Item No: 7.1
Subject: GENERAL BUSINESS
Author: Jacky Hony, Team Leader - Community Development

Recommendation:

THAT the General Business be received and noted.

Vicki Munro notified the Committee that the revised DIAP is due for adoption June 2022 and the Plan will be on public exhibition prior to that, thereby allowing ample time for Committee members to provide feedback and comment.

Community Committee members are welcome to provide feedback outside of meetings by emailing Jacky Hony. One of the Committee members observed that, despite living with disability for 13 years, being a member of this Committee allows people to continue to learn from each other.

8. Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for a date yet to be determined in November 2021.

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 1.30pm.