

# NSW Public Authorities' Disability Inclusion Action Plans – Report on progress 2021-22

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Report on progress 2021-2022

August 2023

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## Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Communities and Justice acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands where we work and live. We celebrate the diversity of Aboriginal peoples and their ongoing cultures and connections to the lands and waters of NSW.

We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging, and acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people that contributed to the development of this report.

NSW Public Authorities' Disability Inclusion Action Plans – Report on progress 2021-22

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### Acknowledgements

This report includes the compiled reports of NSW Government departments, local councils and other public authorities. Some of these were provided directly to the Department of Communities and Justice, while others were obtained from the public authority's annual report.

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# 1 Executive Summary

## 1.1 Background

Under the [Disability Inclusion Act 2014 \(the DIA\)](#), all public authorities (NSW government departments, some other government agencies and all local councils) are required to develop a Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) and report annually on progress. A 'public authority' is a NSW government department, a local council, and any other entity defined as a public authority in the [Disability Inclusion Regulation 2014](#).

This document provides an analysis of their progress during 2021-22 and, in accordance with the DIA, is tabled to both Houses of Parliament by the Minister for Disability Inclusion.

Disability inclusion planning aims to reduce and remove barriers for people with disability and foster a more accessible and inclusive community.

When developing a DIAP, all public authorities are encouraged to consult with their customers, clients, residents, employees and suppliers with disability to determine actions and priorities in the four focus areas outlined in the [NSW Disability Inclusion Plan](#). These are:

1. Developing positive community attitudes and behaviours
2. Creating liveable communities
3. Supporting access to meaningful employment; and
4. Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes.

Public authorities' progress reports have been analysed against the four focus areas. Where relevant, a distinction has been made between progress reports of NSW government agencies and those of local councils. The achievements of a range of authorities have been highlighted, recognising that smaller authorities (particularly rural, regional and remote councils) have DIAP actions and achievements which are more modest than larger authorities.

- **Developing positive attitudes and behaviours:** Public authorities have successfully implemented actions to promote community inclusion and improve disability awareness. These actions are often completed in collaboration with other authorities.
- **Creating liveable communities:** There continued to be a significant focus on improvements to the built environment; this enabled the hosting of events catering to a wide range of accessibility needs.
- **Supporting access to meaningful employment:** Public authorities have acted to create employment pathways for people with disability, and to make their recruitment processes accessible. Some government departments have also implemented initiatives to support career advancement for employees with disability.
- **Improving systems and processes:** Public authorities have acted to embed inclusion in their daily work, for example creating accessibility checklists and including accessibility as a requirement for procurement of goods and services.

In this reporting period, public authorities demonstrated an increased focus on priority cohorts under the DIA (such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability and people with disability from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds), and an improvement in outcomes reporting.

All public authorities must report annually on the progress of their DIAP implementation. For most, the DIA requires that at a minimum, the public authority provides that section of its annual report which focuses on the DIAP. To increase transparency and better understand the impact of actions on people with disability, DCJ also asks public authorities to answer a series of questions about their

progress. Section 6 of this report contains the public authorities' progress reports, whether in response to DCJ's questions or as part of an annual report.

## 1.2 Highlights of progress reports

Public authorities which reported substantial progress included: Bega Valley Shire Council, Blue Mountains City Council, Byron Shire Council, City of Newcastle Council, City of Parramatta Council, City of Sydney Council, Cumberland City Council, Kyogle Council, Department of Communities and Justice, Department of Regional NSW, Northern Beaches Council and the NSW Ministry of Health.

As with last year (see [2020-21 Progress Report](#)), the greatest focus was the accessibility of the built environment, particularly for local councils. This mirrors recent research undertaken by Butcher in her study of achievements in local council DIAPs.<sup>1</sup>

Other highlights included:

- collaboration with local businesses and NGOs to build community attitudes and behaviours
- innovative approaches to consultation
- greater concentration on employment.

## 1.3 Recommendations for future disability inclusion planning

1. Public authorities may wish to consider focusing more heavily on actions promoting non-physical accessibility, ensuring the inclusion of all people with disability in the community.
2. In relation to employment:
  - a. Local government (and government agencies which have yet to implement career progression actions) could consider moving beyond entry-level positions to focus on increasing the number of employees with disability across all levels of seniority and improve career progression for their employees with disability.
  - b. Government departments and other authorities which have implemented initiatives targeted at increasing mobility and career progression for employees (such as workplace adjustment passports) could consider tracking whether this leads to the desired outcomes. Progress reports could include data on the improvements to numbers and seniority level.
3. Public authorities could further consider actions specifically related to people with disability in the priority cohorts. Specifically, actions could focus on the interplay between levels of intersectional disadvantage so that programs and services for people with disability also consider the needs of other specific cohorts and vice versa. This would also assist those public authorities which are preparing new DIAPs to incorporate the new priority cohort (LGBTIQ+) required by the July 2022 amendment to the DIA.

DCJ will liaise with public authorities to discuss these recommendations and monitor progress.

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<sup>1</sup> Butler, K. (2023) Key achievements of New South Wales local government Disability Inclusion Action Plans in the era of inclusion policy and planning: A policy content analysis. *Australian Journal of Social Issues*, 00, 1–14, at 3. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1002/ajs4.259>, at 6.

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## 2 The legislative and policy framework

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### 2.1 Disability Inclusion Act 2014 (NSW)

The DIA replaced the Disability Services Act 1993 (NSW). It represented a shift from government providing services to taking proactive action to include people with disability in our communities. The DIA 2014 takes a human rights-based approach to disability inclusion based on the principles of the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities \(UN Convention\)](#). It aims to promote the social and economic inclusion of people with disability, provide choice and control, and implement safeguards.

Amendments made to the DIA in July 2022 require that the NSW Disability Inclusion Plan is remade every four years, that DIAPs be made available in at least one accessible format, and that LGBTIQ+ people with disability be considered a priority cohort.

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### 2.2 NSW Disability Inclusion Plan

The [NSW Disability Inclusion Plan 2021-2025](#) (DIP) is the NSW Government's guiding document for building inclusion for people with disability in NSW. The NSW DIP strengthens the state's accessibility framework and outlines work to improve outcomes for people with disability. The NSW DIP is supported by the [NSW Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2021-2025](#).

The DIP builds on the work the NSW Government has undertaken to create more accessible and inclusive communities and provides the blueprint for increasing the social and economic participation of people with disability across NSW. It aligns with [Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-2031](#) and our obligations under the UN Convention.

The four focus areas of the DIP are:

**Priority 1:** Developing positive community attitudes and behaviours

**Priority 2:** Creating liveable communities

**Priority 3:** Supporting access to meaningful employment

**Priority 4:** Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes.

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### 2.3 Disability Inclusion Action Plans

The DIP is operationalised through the development of DIAPs. DIAPs provide a public statement of the commitment to accessibility and inclusion by public authorities, and puts the principles of the NSW DIA into practice. These plans build disability inclusion into day-to-day operations across state and local government.

A DIAP sets out the actions the public authority will implement to enhance inclusion of customers, employees, stakeholders and suppliers with disability. In most cases, public authorities map these actions against the four focus areas of the DIP. DIAPs should include actions which ensure that services and supports are delivered to priority cohorts in a way that recognises their unique needs and disadvantage. Section 5 of the Act specifies that these priority cohorts are people with disability who are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, women, children, or LGBTIQ+.

## 3 Focus area key achievements

### 3.1 Positive attitudes and behaviours

*AIM: To build community awareness of the rights and abilities of people with disability and to support the development of positive attitudes and behaviours toward people with disability*

#### 3.1.1 Promoting inclusion in the local community

Many local councils highlighted best practice examples of inclusion in the community, while working with stakeholders to improve attitudes. These achievements support Butcher's finding that councils demonstrate strong collaboration, using partnerships to advance their inclusion agenda.<sup>2</sup>

**Case study: Blue Mountains City Council** hosted disability access audits with council staff, people with disability and residents with temporary mobility difficulties to highlight to council staff and businesses the difficulties that can present in terms of access, and to offer some practice in design solutions.

**Case study: The NSW Ministry of Health** piloted an allyship program to support health professionals to communicate in a way that is understood and valued by patients, families, carers and each other.

##### 3.1.1.1 Working with local businesses to improve knowledge of disability and promote the benefits of making businesses more inclusive

A number of local councils, such as those below, reported joining and/or promoting the Zero Barriers project which educates businesses on accessibility, supports them to be more inclusive, and recognises and promotes accessible businesses and services.

- Canterbury Bankstown Council
- Cumberland City Council
- Fairfield City Council
- Georges River Council
- Lake Macquarie City Council
- Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council.

Other councils distributed guides on accessibility to local businesses:

- [A Tradie's Guide To Good Access](#) - collaboration between Ballina, Byron, Clarence Valley, Coffs Harbour, Kyogle, Lismore, Richmond Valley and Tweed councils
- [Missed Business Guide](#) - distributed by Gunnedah and Orange councils<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> Butcher, K., note 1, at 7.

<sup>3</sup> Submitted together with Blayney Shire Council and Cabonne Council

### 3.1.1.2 Sponsoring awards

Hunters Hill, Lane Cove and City of Ryde Councils continued to collaboratively sponsor and promote the annual Northern Districts Local Business Awards - Access and Inclusion Award.

### 3.1.1.3 Improving disability awareness

Most public authorities provided **disability awareness training** to staff, committees and in some cases, the public on a suite of topics including disability generally, mental health, DIAPs, and employment.

- The Australian Museum Trust developed a 10-minute training video, Welcoming Visitors with Disability, with its advisory panel and the Australian Network on Disability (AND). AND delivered training to front of house staff, including security staff and volunteers.
- Central Coast Council delivered Applying Universal Design training to planning staff and Disability Confidence Training to all staff.
- The Department of Planning and Environment delivered KnowlegAbility, Immersive face to face and online learning sessions about various disability types.
- The NSW Ministry of Health commenced a mini residency program in special needs dentistry at the Westmead Centre for Oral Health, providing general dentists with clinical experience in working with patients with disability.

Many public authorities **hosted cultural events** (such as talks or art exhibitions) featuring people with disability or on disability topics. This included events celebrating International Day of People with Disability.

- Newcastle City Council held an Inclusive Conversations Forum on ‘Unpacking vulnerability in the Newcastle context’, which was developed using an inclusive platform to enhance online accessibility.
- Cumberland City Council hosted an art exhibition, Out Of Order, curated by a disabled artist featuring disabled artists.

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## 3.2 Liveable communities

*AIM: To increase participation of people with disability in all aspects of community life, through targeted approaches to address barriers in housing, transport, health and wellbeing*

### 3.2.1 Pedestrian access and mobility

Increasing accessibility for wheelchair users and others with mobility disabilities continued to be a common theme of this focus area.

- Numerous accessible footpaths and pathways were constructed or repaired. Some pathways feature better connectivity to other areas and wider pathways for mobility scooters and wheelchairs.
- Councils reported making areas such as art galleries, theatres, parks, community halls, beaches and viewing platforms more accessible. Improvements included wheelchair lifts and widened and smoothed paths and kerbs for easy entry and exit for wheelchair users. Access audits were also conducted drive future improvements.
- Some local councils increased the number of mobility parking spots available.

### 3.2.2 Accessible playgrounds

Many local councils created or enhanced accessible play equipment, in accordance with the Everyone Can Play guidelines, developed by the Department of Planning and Environment.



These spaces contain intergenerational play equipment, mixed seating types, ramps, tactile indicators, shade, fencing, wide pathways and accessible BBQs and walkways.

### 3.2.3 Accessible toilets and change facilities

During this reporting period, many local councils funded and built new accessible toilets, and Forbes Shire Council and Wollongong City Council installed Changing Places facilities, with existing facilities maintained and often upgraded. Maps of accessible toilets were created/updated by councils, with some also reporting updating the National Public Toilets Map Register.

### 3.2.4 Events and programs catering to a range of accessibility needs

Public authorities reported taking steps to incorporate a range of other accessibility measures into the programs or events.

#### Case study: Quiet spaces

The Department of Customer Service piloted **'Quiet Hour' at six Service NSW centres**, providing a lower-sensory experience for customers and staff

Wollongong Shire Council created a **quiet space in the youth centre**, including dimmable lights, fidgets and sensory items. A quiet space was also provided as part of the annual **Comic Gong festival**

The Australian Museum Trust ran **'Early Birds Access Mornings'**, providing a quieter, relaxed and supportive environment for visitors on the autism spectrum.

- Audio description and captions
  - The State Library developed a mobile gallery app providing captions and audio for selected items on display
- Auslan interpretation
  - City of Sydney Council produced 18 online Auslan and English Storytime videos with captioning featuring Deaf presenters as literacy role models.

### 3.2.5 Council libraries

Many councils have continued to work to make their libraries more accessible, with actions including:

- growing collections of audio, large-print, dyslexia-friendly books, and books for people with literacy issues
- providing accessible equipment, such as reader pens, which read the printed word when sliding over text, and large print high-contrast keyboards and large screens for using databases
- screening films with open captioning
- providing library sign-up sheets in Easy Read format
- providing 'setting kits' and 'dark dens' (tents creating a quiet, dark space) for children with sensory disorders
- providing picture- and gesture-based communication books and boards for people with communication difficulties
- braille signage
- home and mobile library services.

### 3.2.6 Housing

Some public authorities reported achievements in relation to increasing housing available for people with disability.

**Case study:** Byron Bay Shire Council approved 20% of dwellings in multi dwelling or medium density housing developments as adaptable housing.

**Case study:** The Department of Communities and Justice included accessibility features in its new crisis accommodation (including larger living areas, bathrooms and doorways, and adjustable tables and benchtops.).

- Practical community supports
- Local councils are continuing to:
  - run events targeted at people with disability: Sutherland Shire Council held monthly connections café for people with dementia and their carers to create a social opportunity with others who understand limitations and behaviours. Anglicare attend to provide professional dementia support resources.
  - provide practical help to community members: Woollahra Municipal Council trialled a free ‘Bus to Books’ program, transporting people with limited mobility in the library.

## 3.3 Access to meaningful employment

*AIM: To increase the number of people with disability in meaningful employment, thereby enabling people with disability to plan for their future and exercise choice and control as a result of economic security*

In relation to this focus area, there was a clear distinction between local councils and government departments. Local councils tended to:

- report standard employment practices, such as having an equal opportunity employment policy
- focus on trainee, voluntary or entry-level positions
- increase employment in the community, including working with local businesses.

Some also made changes to their recruitment policies and practices.

Government departments were more likely to implement initiatives aimed at improving retention of employees with disability, and creating promotional and leadership opportunities.

### 3.3.1 Recruitment and retention of people with disability

#### 3.3.1.1 Collecting baseline data

Some public authorities report collecting data on the percentage of their workforce with disability, which will assist in measuring the impact of recruitment initiatives over time.

- Junee Shire Council
- Forbes Shire Council
- City of Sydney Council
- NSW Ministry of Health
- Department of Regional NSW

- Department of Planning and Environment
- Department of Customer Service.

### 3.3.1.2 Targeted recruitment

A number of public authorities reported undertaking initiatives specifically to increase the percentage of people with disability in their workforce.

A number ran **targeted intake programs** for people with disability.

- Department of Regional NSW worked with its office concierge employment company to offer employment opportunities to people with learning disabilities.
- Department of Transport ran the Tailored Talent program for neurodiverse and autistic people.

Other public authorities offered **traineeships, work experience and volunteer work opportunities** for people with disability.

- Local councils including Bega Valley and Blue Mountains offered volunteer opportunities.
- The Australian Museum Trust, the Department of Communities and Justice, the then Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC) and NSW Treasury participated in AND's Stepping Into Internship program. DPC reported that one of their interns was offered employment in the NSW Graduate Program.
- City of Sydney Council established entry-level internships, appointing two people with disability into professional roles.

### 3.3.1.3 Accessible recruitment processes

Many public authorities are enhancing their ability to provide accessible employment opportunities for staff with disability and to make reasonable adjustments for candidates and employees.

- Clarence Valley Council records the inherent requirements of all roles in its job advertisements to assist candidates with disability to apply.
- Mosman Municipal Council asks all candidates if they require a reasonable adjustment in the recruitment process.
- Department of Regional NSW designed a 'light touch' recruitment process to ensure that the selection process was appropriate for people with disability.

### 3.3.1.4 Initiatives to support career advancement of employees with disability

Public authorities reported implementing measures such as workplace adjustment passports and mentoring programs to increase the retention and advancement of their staff with disability. Some authorities created designated positions to oversee recruitment and retention measures.

**Case study:** The then Department of Premier and Cabinet created and began recruiting for a Disability Advocate. This role will manage, coordinate and champion initiatives for current employees with disability, and support hiring managers to become disability confident recruiters.

- Many public authorities reported offering reasonable adjustments to employees with disability.
- The Department of Regional NSW and the Department of Planning and Environment implemented a workplace adjustment passport, promoting the internal mobility of employees with approved adjustments.
- The Department of Communities and Justice was a top performer in Australian Network on Disability's Access and Inclusion Index for work on employment, including providing leadership training to employees with disability.

## 3.4 Access to mainstream services through better systems and processes

*AIM: To ensure that people with disability are able to make informed choices about available services and to easily and efficiently access mainstream government services and other opportunities in the community*

### 3.4.1 Accessible communication

Many public authorities report actions to enhance the accessibility of their communications, including:

- enhancing the digital accessibility of websites, and providing training on producing accessible website content
- producing documents in multiple formats including Easy Read; and retaining information in hard copy
- installing hearing loops and providing Auslan interpreters at events.

### 3.4.2 Making information about access publicly available

Local councils reported a range of actions focused on allowing people with disability to access the community with greater ease:

- **making a directory of disability and aged care services** (e.g. Bathurst, Eurobodalla and Federation councils)
- **including access features of buildings in promotional material** (e.g. Lane Cove Municipal Council)
- **making mobility maps to highlight the accessibility features** of toilets, parks and playgrounds (e.g. Bellingen, Liverpool, and Orange City<sup>4</sup> councils).

### 3.4.3 Making processes easier for people with disability

- Mosman Municipal Council is developing a process to ensure customer-facing staff identify people's preferred forms of communication and share this information across sections of Council, so people do not have to make the same request to different sections.
- City of Sydney Council produced an accessible guide to decision-making to ensure that people with disability are informed and can actively take part in Council decision-making process.
- Transport for NSW transitioned Taxi Transport Subsidy Scheme documents from paper to a credit-card sized smartcard with several inbuilt accessibility features.

### 3.4.4 Embedding accessibility in processes

Public authorities report some excellent process actions to ensure that disability inclusion becomes business as usual.

- Developing **engagement tools** to engage with people with disability (Bega Valley Shire Council)
- **Developing checklists for accessible events** (e.g. Bland, Byron, Shoalhaven, Singleton, Sutherland and Wagga Wagga councils)
- **Creating accessibility and inclusion criteria for procurement and funding guidelines:** The Department of Regional NSW has built these criteria into regional funding programs including

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<sup>4</sup> Submitted together with Blayney Shire Council and Cabonne Council

the Regional Tourist Activation Fund, Stronger Country Community Fund, and the Regional Event Activation Fund.

## 4 Other achievements

### 4.1 Actions targeting priority groups

As described above the DIA provides that services and supports are delivered to priority cohorts of people with disability in a way that recognises their unique needs and disadvantage. As the LGBTIQ+ community was only added as a priority cohort to the Act in July 2022, not all public authorities have had the opportunity to create specific actions targeting this group.

Compared to 2020-21, there has been an improvement in the number of public authorities reporting actions in relation to these cohorts. Commonly reported strategies include:

- employing community development officers specifically to focus on the needs of these subgroups, and to share learnings across the organisation
- maintaining relationships with organisations supporting the priority cohorts (such as Aboriginal medical services and Aboriginal elders) and
- translating community and disability resources into community languages.

Highlights of the 2021-22 reporting included:

**Case study:** Wollongong City Council designed and facilitated workshops in collaboration with Relationships Australia for neurodiverse LGBTIQ+ young people about healthy relationships.

- Strathfield Municipal Council established a monthly Community Connection Desk at the library which:
  - offered drop-in conversations about NDIS support and other disability questions
  - in partnership with Settlement Services International, included a caseworker fluent in Mandarin and Korean (languages most commonly spoken in the LGA)
  - provided printed resources specific to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and LGBTIQ+ people with caseworkers trained to address the needs of these groups.
- The Department of Communities and Justice developed a screening tool for young Aboriginal people with disability, mental health issues and experience of trauma who are in contact with DCJ's Youth Justice teams.

### 4.2 Outcomes-focused reporting

The [2020-21 progress report](#) recommended that public authorities consider reporting against measurable outcomes in their DIAPs and it is pleasing that some authorities did so, including:

- Central Coast Council
- City of Parramatta Council
- City of Ryde Council
- Eurobodalla Shire Council
- Fairfield City Council
- Forbes Shire Council
- Glen Innes Severn Council

- Shoalhaven City Council.

Many other authorities quantified their achievements (for example, listing the number of staff attending training, or the playgrounds made accessible).

Publishing measurable goals is encouraged. It allows identification of outcomes, improves tracking of progress and, importantly, enhances transparency so that the public better understands the impact of actions and other public authorities can replicate successful strategies.

#### 4.2.1 Consultation and collaboration

Many public authorities have internal and/or external committees (e.g. Inclusion and Access Committees, Disability Employee Networks) focused on disability and accessibility. The role of these bodies varies with each public authority, but a key task is providing feedback on the development and implementation of documents such as DIAPs.

Many public authorities also reported that they consulted with people with disability in the community more broadly. Examples of notable consultations included:

**Case study:** Dubbo Regional Council conducted consultations following an NRL game, which was made accessible via general admission passes and free transport from key location.

- Kempsey Shire Council heard from more than 400 community members at community events and local markets, on the Your Say Macleay website and across social media. This was complemented by five in-depth case studies.
- Central Darling Shire Council reported that 20% of its community (comprising 2000 people, 50% of whom are First Nations people) participated in the review of its DIAP.
- Shellharbour City Council conducted workshops and pop-up meetings; a 'Let's Chat' page; social media campaigns and discussions with community groups, including schools preschools and community events.
- City of Parramatta Council enabled consultation participants to type or record their voices or videos, which were automatically transcribed to allow other participants of varying abilities to interact with them.



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## 5 Recommendations for future disability inclusion planning

Public authorities may wish to consider the following proposals in their future disability planning.

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### 5.1 Broader view of accessibility

Some authorities are already making progress in this area; it is positive to see actions focused on removing barriers for people with disability other than physical (for example, intellectual, psychosocial, hearing, vision). Public authorities, particularly local councils, may wish to consider focusing more heavily on this.

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### 5.2 Employment

Access to quality employment opportunities is essential for promoting financial security and enhancing an individual's wellbeing. At a time when unemployment is low and employers are seeking high-quality candidates, accessing the pool of disabled talent provides significant social and economic benefits to all. This involves moving beyond compliance with discrimination legislation towards actively seeking and progressing applications from candidates with disability.

- Progress reports demonstrated an increase in 'process actions' under this focus area. It is important that these actions translate into meaningful employment for people with disability, at a range of levels of seniority and that progress reports include data on the improvements to numbers and seniority level.
  - While some public authorities are working hard to increase the number and seniority of employees with disability, many DIAPs had an emphasis on external customers only. These public authorities may wish to include actions focused on internal employment in future DIAP iterations.
  - Public authorities may wish to consider actions to improve both the number of people with disability and the grades of employees with disability, ensuring a mix of both entry-level and more senior roles. Strategies could include:
    - ensuring advertising or role descriptions clearly state inherent requirements
    - ensuring recruitment processes are accessible, and include the offer to make reasonable adjustments
    - targeted recruitment practices
    - offering training or resources for internal and external applicants with disability in job application skills.
  - Public authorities which have implemented initiatives targeted at increasing mobility and career progression for employees (such as workplace adjustment passports) could consider tracking whether this leads to the desired outcomes. Progress reports could include data on the improvements to numbers and seniority level. This would provide greater transparency to the community while also allowing public authorities to understand how well their actions were working.
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### 5.3 People with disability from priority cohorts

Public authorities could further consider actions specifically related to people with disability in the priority cohorts.



While most public authorities reported actions for each cohort separately, a small group included actions which demonstrate the interplay between levels of intersectional disadvantage.

The aim of these provisions is to ensure that supports and services for the particular populations (for example the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community) are inclusive of people with disability, and supports for people with disability are inclusive of the other subgroups.

Program and services for people with disability should consider the needs of other specific cohorts, while services and programs for these cohorts consider the needs of people with disability. A good strategy for achieving this is having people with disability represented on advisory committees for other cohorts, while ensuring disability advisory bodies comprise a diverse membership where key cohorts are represented.

## 6 NSW Public Authorities Progress Reports

### 6.1 NSW Government Departments and Entities Reports

#### Australian Museum Trust

##### Building positive attitudes

The Early Birds Access Mornings is a program that has continued through the year. The program provided a quieter, relaxed and supportive environment for visitors on the autism spectrum or for those with other access requirements, together with their family and friends. The Hidden Disability Sunflower Lanyard is offered as part of this event.

The Australian Museum (AM) developed a 10-minute training video with its AM's Advisory Panel that highlights best practice for welcoming visitors with a disability. This video has been shared publicly with Museums and Galleries NSW and can be found here:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1nNQCo3TTT9my5l2AlXRkO3ZJnyxbcFRY/view?usp=embed\\_facebook](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1nNQCo3TTT9my5l2AlXRkO3ZJnyxbcFRY/view?usp=embed_facebook)

Training on 'Welcoming Visitors with Disability' was delivered to front-of-house, including security staff and volunteers. This training session was delivered by the Australian Network on Disability (AND).

The AM has a paid Advisory Panel comprised of people with a lived experience of disability and carers of those with disability. Two new members from Autism Australia have joined the AM's Advisory Panel. It meets every three months to consult on key strategic projects at the AM.

The AM's communication plan celebrates key dates such as International Day of People with Disability. For this date, the AM's Advisory Panel Members Sabrina Houssami wrote a social media blog about the work of the AM in the Accessibility and Inclusion space, highlighted the importance of subtitles and audio-described tours for those with low hearing/deaf.

Zehra Ahmed presented at AMaGA (Australian Museums and Galleries Association) on the achievements of the AM's Accessibility and Inclusion Plan 2018-2021. Ninety percent of all actions from the AM's AIAP were implemented. Case studies of key strategic projects and the importance of paid consultancy of those with a lived disability were highlighted.

The Night Owls evening event, an Autism friendly programme aimed at increasing accessible and inclusive offerings for the public who may not be able to attend during usual business hours was planned for 2023. Outcomes

Increased numbers of visitors and staff requesting the Hidden Disability Lanyards

Increased numbers of visitors attending the Early Birds Programming

Feedback about the pilot program of Early Birds from staff, volunteers and the public was overwhelmingly positive

AM training assets such as the training video with the AM's Advisory Panel is used not only by the AM, but other cultural institutions to train staff.

AM training assets, including a training video with the AM's Advisory Panel, were used by the AM and other cultural institutions to train their staff. The AM continues to drive accessible and inclusive exhibitions, programming, educational content and web resources. It shares these case studies with other cultural institutions to drive better outcomes across NSW.

## Creating liveable communities

The AM undertook a full audit of all front-of-house and exhibition spaces with Design for Dignity. This audit resulted in a training video with Jason Barker, the Director of Design for Dignity, and covers the seven key principles of Universal Design. All new exhibitions are consulted on by the AM's Advisory Panel. All hurdles are addressed so that the AM can focus on creating exhibitions that will appeal to those with a variety of different disabilities, by playing to the strengths of those with disability. The new permanent space 'Burra' has several different sensory and tactile experiences. The staff member that worked on its curation had lived experience of Autism and used that experience to make the space as appealing and inclusive as possible.

All exhibitions staff from the design and production team have received training in the importance of dignified design and the seven principles of Universal Design. All key staff from the Exhibitions team consult with the AM's Advisory Panel, both in the design stage of new exhibitions, and when they are complete. A walkthrough and assessment of the space is undertaken by the Advisory Panel with AM staff. This results in inclusive and accessible exhibitions which champion best practice in exhibitions.

## Supporting access to meaningful employment

During 2021-2022, the AM has continued to offer paid internships for university students with disability to work at the AM in a variety of roles. This strategy created pathways for students with disability for future employment in this sector and has increased the competence of managers and staff. The AM has its own Workplace Adjustment Policy and Procedure. It continues to promote this to staff both through inductions, managers' meetings and through training.

Through the 'Stepping Into' Programme, the AM has upskilled certain teams in how to effectively use Workplace Adjustments, to support staff and increase the retention of existing and new staff with Disability.

## Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes

The AM's paid Advisory Panel continues to consult on the development of all significant projects including public programmes, exhibitions and capital works.

All public programs, exhibitions and capital works capture the views and input of those with a lived disability. This has resulted in an increase in the number of visitors with disability.

## How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?

### What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?

Feedback is provided through the AM website as well as verbal feedback to front-of-house staff. This is then circulated to the relevant departments and reported on internally every month. These reports are then used to determine where improvements can be implemented in order to improve the experience by visitors.

In addition to this the AM consults with a paid Advisory Panel bi-monthly on all strategic projects that sit across departments. Exhibitions meet with the Advisory Panel both in the design stage of new shows as well as just before or just after the opening of a new show. A walk-through with the AM's Advisory Panel takes place along with all relevant staff. An accessibility checklist is used to evaluate the exhibition pointing out what needs to be addressed or improved for future shows.

The AM has Gold Membership with Australian Network on Disability. These consultancy hours are used to progress specific projects or training to improve the overall accessibility and inclusion of the culture, system, and processes at the AM.

The AM's new AIAP 2023-2025 was done in consultation and in alignment with AND's Index to achieve best practice.

## How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?

Current Planning - Accessibility and Inclusion are included in all current planning. The AM's AIAP 2018-2021 had ambitious targets for all key departments and their implementation was reported to the Trust bi-monthly. The AM's most recent AIAP has had significant success, support, and accountability outcomes across various departments, with ninety percent of all actions being successfully implemented.

Future Planning - All strategic projects that sit across various departments are required to be developed in consultation with the AM's Advisory Panel. In regard to the AM's Master Plan and building works the AM in its past AIAP 2018-2021 and its new AIAP 2023-2025, has committed to comply with relevant disability and access standards, and aims to go beyond compliance.

## How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?

The AM has increased its focus on multicultural service delivery this year to be more inclusive of people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds by ensuring its exhibitions, maps, audio tour guides and website are in a wider range of languages including Mandarin, Arabic and Hindi. In 2021 the Museum held exhibitions in four languages, where it specifically targeted Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) visitors through direct digital and social campaigns. This resulted in an increase in CALD visitors to 27 percent. The Museum has increased targeted recruitment and training of CALD front-of-house staff and volunteers to match the leading CALD visitor and school groups who can now be welcomed in their own language. Our highest attending cultural background segments are 10 percent Chinese, three percent South-East Asian, and three percent Indian.

In early 2022 the AM implemented a Diversity and Inclusion online training program from SBS, providing a range of courses for staff and volunteers. These programs support the embedding of Diversity and Inclusion principles into everything the AM does from decision making to service delivery.

In 2021-2022 the AM increased the number of CALD leaders and the number of women in leadership positions. There is now one CALD female leader and one First Nations female leader on the Executive Leadership Team (ELT). We have continued to invest in leadership development, including leadership coaching for CALD leaders. For the coming year, the AM is focusing on increasing response rates for the Diversity data in our system (from 73% to 85%) to ensure our diversity and inclusion initiatives and programs reach all target groups.

ELT and Managers will be encouraging staff to disclose their diversity profile.

P&C will continue to promote importance of updating diversity profiles through on boarding programs. The AM will continue to expand multicultural service delivery on exhibitions, maps, audio tour guides, website, and tourism programs.

## What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?

Significant cultural change is required for staff to feeling comfortable about identifying as having a disability and then requesting work place adjustments. Whilst this work has been initiated with the AM's Workplace Adjustment Policy and Procedure, in parallel with training across various departments, the numbers of staff requesting adjustments for their disability remain low.

The AM is not yet on track to meet the Premier's Target of 5.6% employment by 2025.

## What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?

'Early Birds' has been a remarkably successful programming event. It began as a piloted project and is now a regular offering due to the value and importance.

The AM has expanded its programming to include 'Night Owls' which is a low sensory evening event programme for the Autistic community, or those who require a low sensory environment.

There has been an increase in the circulation of media articles and blog posts praising the AM's work in the space of Accessibility and Inclusion. In the past, the AM was not seen as inclusive due to access restriction related to its heritage. It has a reputation as being a champion of accessibility and inclusion.

### **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

These will be covered in the AM's new AIAP 2023-2025 which will be launched in the next month.

## **Department of Communities and Justice**

### **Building positive attitudes**

- We ran an accessible campaign called 'Make No Doubt', to raise awareness about sexual consent amongst young people, including young people with disability.
- Court Services staff were trained in how to support people with cognitive disability

### **Creating liveable communities**

- Our new premises at 6 Parramatta Square (6PSQ) includes technology to support wayfinding and accessibility.
- The NSW Government announced historic investment of \$484.3 million for housing and specialist supports for women and children experiencing domestic and family violence, including women and children with disability.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

- Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) offered 20 placements to interns with disability through the Australian Network on Disability's Stepping Into program.
- We provided some of our managers with training in Disability Confident Recruiting
- Employees with disability were offered leadership training.
- We were a top performer in the Australian Network on Disability's Access and Inclusion Index for our work in employment.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

- We added accessibility features to all DCJ websites, established DCJ accessibility community of practice and developed e-learning modules on creating accessible online content.
- The Feedback and Complaints Guidelines and Forms for Youth Justice are now available in Easy Read.

## **Department of Customer Service**

The Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2020-25 (DIAP) is mapped to the state's Disability Inclusion Plan. Our DIAP uses ten key areas of access and inclusion to ensure that Department of Customer Service (DCS) considers and includes all our customers, people and suppliers with disability. As well as publishing the DIAP, we have provided public summaries in Auslan and Easy English. Progress reports are compiled at 6 monthly intervals and the results are presented to the DCS Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Council and Ability DCS ERG.

Key achievements in 2021-22 include:

- an increased take-up in disability confident manager and disability confident workforce training, with disability confident recruiter training now being a mandatory requirement for all recruitment team members
- a 'Quiet Hour' pilot at six Service NSW centres, providing a lower-sensory experience for customers and staff
- in partnership with the Australian Network on Disability (AND), hosted 18 interns with disability, with a total of 34 interns at DCS since commencing the program
- in partnership with AND, through the Positive Action towards Career Engagement Program, hosted 10 mentees in 2021 and 7 to date in 2022
- updated our internal mentoring program to allow prospective mentors to specify that they wish to mentor a person with disability, and promoting this to our people with disability and across other ERGs
- an increase in targeted recruitment activities across a number of our divisions and agencies
- commenced a partnership with Toozly, a dedicated online jobs board platform specifically designed for job seekers with disability, with all roles advertised in accessible formats
- inclusion of hearing loops in DCS meeting rooms as standard, and all meeting rooms updated to provide automated captioning features
- achieved Bronze level for all currently leased office premises, under the NSW Government Accessible Office Design Standards
- promoted NSW guidelines of accessible content (NSW Design Standard) and digital accessibility training as part of our annual Global Accessibility Awareness Day activities.

The key DIAP strategic goals and actions align to and actively support our aim of a 0.5% annual increase in successful employment outcomes for people with disability at all levels of seniority. This includes those who have moved into management, senior leadership and other roles internally within the DCS cluster, through promotion or redeployment. Benefits seen so far include:

- as at 24 June 2021, DCS employment of people with disability was 5.0%, with 45.9% of these people at grades 5/6 or below and 54.1% at 7/8 or above, including 4 individuals at Senior Executive Band (SEB) level
- as at 23 June 2022, employment of people with disability is 4.9%, with 46.2% of these people at grades 5/6 or below and 53.8% at 7/8 or above, including 5 individuals at SEB level
- this represents a decrease of 0.1% in percentage of overall workforce, with one additional employee at senior executive level. June 2022 4.9% of people employed have a disability 46.2% at grades 5/6 or below 53.8% at 7/8 or above, including 5 individuals at SEB level

DCS recognises the importance of intersectionality and both our DIAP and AES have actions for Aboriginal people with disability. The DIAP has actions for people with disability of CALD and other diversity backgrounds.

## Department of Education

### Developing positive community attitudes and behaviours

Staff working in Communications & Engagement have begun participating in training to understand accessibility in communications. We have to date trained 70.96% of staff. The team are currently working towards creation of an Accessibility Committee that will preclude finalisation of the program of work.

The Department are in the final stages of development and release of a non-systems Workplace Adjustments Procedure. This will formalise a consistent approach to Reasonable Adjustments for staff and seeks to create a more inclusive environment for staff (existing and prospective). It is expected that a universal systems approach.



95% of school leaders have undertaken Mandatory Disability Standards training for School Leaders.

The 2022 cohort has been finalised with 112 Inclusive Practice in Education Scholarships formally awarded. The 2023 program will open for applications on 18 July 2023.

The Inclusive Practice Hub was released in November 2021. The Inclusive Education Policy for Students with Disability and practice resources was published in Term 1 2022. Next steps include supported familiarisation activities throughout Term 1, 2 and 3 2022.

A suite of nine specialist professional learning courses have been procured to build the capacity of schools to support students with disability. Development of the disability module in a micro learning series for curriculum advisors and teachers is underway. This has been designed to provide timely data to inform decisions about teacher professional learning that supports students with disability. Next steps are to analyse data to develop a coordinated and streamlined approach to continuous quality improvement of professional learning to support students with disability.

### **Creating liveable communities**

Work has begun on the development of an Inclusive Design Framework, which will underpin the future development of more inclusive education environments in the future. Additionally, Accessibility considerations are now prescribed as part of evaluation and decision-making for procurement of future school sites. Accessibility Guidelines / considerations continue to be incorporated into Business Cases to ensure new schools and school upgrades consider accessibility and inclusive design requirements from the outset.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

A non-systems workplace adjustment procedure is being drafted, and consultation with internal and external stakeholders is underway.

Barrier free recruitment training has been rolled out to 95% of the Corporate Recruitment team and 77% of Grade 7/8 and above staff in school recruitment.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Work has been completed to bring Digital Experience Platforms to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) Level AA Compliance level. Work is ongoing to achieve AAA Compliance. This uplift creates an accessible digital experience for people using these systems.

Work has begun on the development of an Inclusive Design Framework, which will underpin the future development of more inclusive education environments. Additionally, Accessibility considerations are now prescribed as part of evaluation and decision-making for procurement of future school sites. Accessibility Guidelines / considerations continue to be incorporated into Business Cases to ensure new schools and school upgrades consider accessibility and inclusive design requirements from the outset.

A small number of schools have been trained and supported to trial a revised assessment tool for determining a student's functional need and access to targeted provisions. The Department has developed a prototype for a revised Integration Funding Support (IFS) funding model. Next steps are to evaluate the validity, reliability and usability of the revised IFS functional assessment tool, currently being trialled with schools.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

The Digital Accessibility Procedure currently under development has been approved by the Teachers' Federation and PSA and will go to the Department's Diversity & Inclusion council for approval.

### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

The Department is recruiting an Accessibility Steering Committee, which will form a review point for new policy, program and project proposals to ensure accessibility is integrated into the first stages of everything we do.

We are currently undertaking a program of works to uplift all staff networks, with view to this expanding engagement staff. This will impact the Pride Network, our Disability Employment Network.

### **Our project “Hearing Australia/Toukley How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Public School Project” is currently underway, with specific focus on improving outcomes for d/Deaf and Hard of Hearing students from First Nations backgrounds.

The Department is in the process of developing a Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging strategy that seeks to embed inclusive practice across all areas of diversity.

Children and Young People with disability continue to be supported by staff with the Disability Strategy providing a strong overarching approach to ensuring equitable learning outcomes.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Team continue to develop strategies to improve representation of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Department workforce.

### **What has been your organisation’s greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Ongoing impacts of COVID-19 and other natural disasters have had significant impact on the capacity of teams to complete DIAP Projects, especially with view to projects that speak to physical spaces and accessibility

### **Is there anything else your organisation is doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Work is underway to achieve goals as outlined by the EY Report, in response to recommendations made to improve disability representation across the department.

In addition, Education is developing a plan focused on increasing safety and inclusion for disabled staff. This will include:

- Implementation of a Department-wide Workplace Adjustment Procedure
- Inclusive leadership program
- Staff network capability uplift program
- Update and refresh of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan (in collaboration with TAFE NSW).

## **Department of Planning and Environment**

We support a strong and liveable NSW by supporting delivery of new housing and jobs in a resilient and sustainable environment.

### **Our Vision**

Together we create thriving environments, communities and economies.

### **Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) staff profile**

DPE is a large organisation with nearly 10,000 staff (8,891 full time equivalent (FTE)). We have several workforce diversity dashboards capturing staff data, the primary one being Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) disclosure when joining DPE. The current rate of disclosure is 80%.

DPE has a diverse workforce:



EEO Category*	Number recorded	% of total workforce
Person with Disability (People With Disability)	248	3.38%
Women	5,186	52.5%
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders	479	5%
Multicultural	1,187	10.9%
Young People under 30	1673	15.32%

The workforce information about People with a Disability is noted below:

- In 2021-2022, there were 248 people with a disability.
- This is an improvement from the result of 192 in the 2020-2021 period.
- 94 of the 248 People with a Disability (38%) are in the Clerk Grade 9/10 to 11/12 cohort
- 13 or 2.9% of all Senior Executive staff have identified as having disability.
- 53 staff required a workplace adjustment in the last 12 months.

### Disability awareness programs (Attitudes and behaviours)

Inclusion is a key value at DPE. It is part of suite office values developed in consultation with staff – Daring, Collaborative, Inclusive, kind and Collaborative.

Staff consultation is a big part of how DPE delivers on diversity and inclusion outcomes. We have various staff networks to advance inclusion in the workplace, provide peer to peer support and feedback on organisations diversity and inclusion strategies.

These are:

- Disability Employee Network (DEN)-Supporting our people with disability and carers
- Aboriginal Staff networks - Supporting our Aboriginal staff
- Women’s networks - Multiple networks supporting women
- The Rainbow Connection - Supporting our people from LGBTIQ+ community
- Young Professionals Network (YPN) - Supporting our people new to the workforce
- Culture Connect - Supporting people from CALD backgrounds
- Harmony Council - A DPE wide ERG championing inclusion and diversity.

The Disability Employee Network (DEN) is one of our most important networks and we consult the DEN in everything we do around disability inclusion. It was established by DPE in 2018 with three members, it now has 40 members and is growing. DPE has consulted the DEN in delivering all disability inclusion strategies and in implementing the DIAP. The DEN is also a safe place for people with disability and carers to provide peer to peer support.

The four key programs we have delivered to change attitudes and behaviors on disability inclusion in the organisation are:

### ElevateAbility

- DPEs disability employment program
- This is a specialist program which provides support and inclusive recruitment guidance to:
  - The hiring manager
  - The Talent Acquisition contact

- The candidates
- 15 people recruited so far with one in the pipeline
- 100% 5-star reviews from hiring managers.

### KnowledgAbility

- KnowledgAbility – Creating awareness on People with a Disability including stories of lived experience of DPE staff
- Immersive face to face and online learning sessions about various disability types: Hearing, Invisible, Mobility/Dexterity, Speaking, Thinking, Vision
- 254 DPE employees have so far attended at least one KnowledgAbility session, with many attending more than one.
- A survey of 120 participants indicates an engagement score of 4.69 out of 5.96% agreed that their knowledge has increased as a result of the session, 99% said they would recommend this byte to others.

### Ability Aware awards

- Award initiative to celebrate International Day of People with Disability on 3 December and to encourage and reward disability inclusion.
- An extensive communications campaign was undertaken to encourage nominations. There were 33 nominations received, and 10 awards were announced at our International Day of People with Disability event, December 2021.

The award categories were:

- **Understand** - helped to enhance our understanding of the different types of disability
- **Act** - anyone who has taken action or created initiatives to help DPIE improve disability inclusion and access for employees, stakeholder and customer with disability
- **Include** - anyone who has made an impact by calling out stereotypes or championing inclusivity in their thinking and behaviour.

### Recruitment, on boarding and support (Employment for people with disability)

To meet the Premier's Disability employment target of 5.6% by 2025 DPE needs to employ 411 People With Disability (or 163 additional People With Disability) by 2025. This equates to 54.4 people with disability per year for next three years. In 2020-21, DPE recruited 56 people with a disability. Continuing at this rate we are on track to achieve the target.

- After an extensive assessment process **Disability Confident Recruiter accreditation** was gained by DPE in December 2021. The primary changes implemented as part of this program are:
- A statement on all DPE job ads which encourages people with disability to apply
- Disability Confident Recruiter training for all Talent Acquisition team members, HR business partners and hiring managers
- DPE runs a high-level induction on day one and check-ins after four weeks, three months and six months.

All employees working in the department can request a **workplace adjustment**. Candidates can request an adjustment at any stage of their employment. Our **Workplace Adjustment Guideline** outlines how a person with disability, or their manager, can apply and obtain a workplace adjustment at any time during their employment.

Our Workplace Adjustment Passport is a confidential record of what workplace adjustments have been agreed. This record means our people only have to tell us once, and their workplace adjustment will continue when they change roles, teams or managers.

**Onboarding support** for people with disability includes induction, mentor and buddy allocation and regular check-ins for the first six months.

We provide several **support programs for all DPE staff** including EAP, Dr Care program, Wellbeing Ambassador program, Parents program.

**There are targeted roles** and a statement on all DPE job ads encouraging people with disability to apply. The Diversity and Inclusion team and recruitment advisors provide support to applicants prior to and during the recruitment process. This includes providing information about the workplace adjustment program during and post recruitment process.

### **Improving systems and processes**

We have made some improvements in systems and processes and there is scope for further improvement.

We have been able to deliver on the following:

- Implementation of Personal Employee Evacuation Plans (PEEP's)
- Making meeting communications more accessible (e.g. Captions, Recordings & Transcripts, engaging Auslan interpreters for events, Accessible templates, and documents)
- The development of the Workplace Adjustment Passport Portal.
- DPE Social procurement disability enterprises.

DPE is continuing to increase our social procurement spend each year. In FY21/22 we purchased services from 21 different disability enterprises. We will continue to buy goods and services from disability enterprises, because it provides employment opportunities for people with disability outside of the department. We have room to grow social procurement at DPE, noting the size of our budget and the variety of goods and services that are required.

### **Wangarang Social procurement case study**

Orange is located in central western NSW, and has been the headquarters for corporate services at DPE and its predecessor departments. Until 2016 a major manufacturer of electrical goods was based in Orange. The company made the decision to relocate its operations offshore, and in 2016 the last fridge rolled off the production line. The company made a concerted effort to reskill its employees, but it was clear a number of contracts would end, including the one with Wangarang Industries. At the same time, the cleaning contract for the DPE office at Kite Street was up for renewal.

Wangarang Industries is a disability enterprise based in town, and their supported employees worked at the manufacturing company on the assembly line. DPE approached Wangarang and discussed the possibility of them providing these services. This required some new thinking from both parties, and we engaged National Disability Services to help broker the arrangement. In the end Wangarang were engaged for the DPE cleaning, garden maintenance and car cleaning services. The Orange model is to be rolled out across other contracts in NSW.

### **Wangarang advantages**

DPE generated employment for people with disability and the cleaning staff doing their work during office hours generated a social interaction between the staff that has been highly beneficial. Department staff were pleased to see we were supporting Wangarang and as it was a visible demonstration of our values and our commitment to disability inclusion.

The cleaning contract was a great success, so we wanted to broaden social procurement beyond corporate services and formalise the approach to procurement from disability enterprises to encourage the cluster to engage their services.

## Supporting liveability outcomes (Liveable Communities)

DPE has delivered several initiatives to improve liveability outcomes in the community. These include:

**Environment** - National Parks and Wildlife Service developing an accessible walking tracks and facilities policy

**Property** - Our planning team continuing to review accessibility as part of development approvals helping ensure that the built environment is accessible. They delivered several 'connected' workplaces with embedded accessibility features from a technology perspective enabling all staff to move easily between offices, meaning you can just 'plug and play'. They have also delivered an accessible office design framework.

**Open Spaces** - The DPE Everyone Can Play program has provided grants to various local governments to make play spaces in NSW more inclusive. The program has funded 141 inclusive play projects since it commenced in 2018, delivering on its \$20 million commitment to creating inclusive play spaces across NSW. Through the supporting Everyone Can Play (ECP) Guideline we are helping designers and councils develop designs that are more inclusive. The Guideline asks designers and planners of play spaces three simple questions: Can I get there? Can I Play? Can I stay?

**Housing** - DPE has delivered an affordable accessible social housing.

## Key priorities over next 12 months

DPE has a number of initiatives planned over the next 12 months to further disability inclusion in the organisation.

Our first priority is to increase the current disclosure rate so that we can accurately capture the people with disability in the organisation. Currently we have 80% EEO disclosure rate.

This means that we could have more People with Disability in the organisation if more people declared their EEO information. To address this, we are working on a sharing your Diversity Data campaign to increase reporting of People With Disability in DPE.

We want to continue to engage staff in development of our disability inclusion strategies. Therefore, one of our key priorities would be to increase membership of the Disability Employee Network (DEN) and establishment of DPE Harmony Council 2.0 which includes representation from people with a Disability.

Having a good understanding of the disability inclusion gaps in the systems and process across our organisation is also a key priority. We will be working with the Australian Network for Disability (AND) to do benchmarking as part of doing the access and inclusion index and gap analysis.

Lastly, and most importantly, one of our key focuses over 2023 would be to start the process to develop our new Disability Inclusion Action Plan with staff and community consultation.

## Department of Premier and Cabinet

Since the inception of the Inclusion and Diversity Strategy, the department has made significant progress. Inclusion and diversity is embedded in our organisational culture to ensure employees feel valued and able to bring their whole selves to work.

The department has persistently pursued diversity and inclusion, with a focus on disability. Our Disability Inclusion Action Plan is incorporated into our broader Inclusion and Diversity Strategy, informed by advice from the Australian Network on Disability's Access and Inclusion Index.

The strategy includes seven focus areas, from leader-led inclusion to integrated inclusion across the employee lifecycle.

We are committed to delivering employment opportunities and outcomes for people with disability. This year we engaged Jigsaw Australia to support our disability employment strategy. We identified several priority areas including identifying roles and tailoring them to suit people with disability; growing talent pools; supporting disability-confident practices; and supporting managers, teams

and employees with disability. A 12-month trial placement for people with disability began in the People, Culture and Talent branch.

In June 2022, the department created and began recruiting for a Disability Advocate role. The Disability Advocate will manage, coordinate and champion retention, inclusion and support initiatives for people with disability within the department. They will also support managers to become disability-confident recruiters, capable of overcoming perceived barriers and creating inclusive teams.

The department's Diversity and Inclusion Network (DAIN) is an employee-led all-inclusive network that seeks to recognise and celebrate the diversity of our workplace.

Its motto – everyone is welcome – reflects its goal that all employees bring their authentic selves to work.

In 2021–2022, DAIN focused its support across four work streams which include wellbeing and mental health and disability and accessibility.

The department has continued to support the Australian Network on Disability's Stepping Into program and the Career Trackers Indigenous Internship Program. Both national initiatives offer students paid internship placements and a chance to gain vital work experience during study.

Interns are given opportunities to shadow senior executive leaders, build confidence and explore unique career options. During this financial year, interns from both programs were offered post-internship employment, and one Stepping Into intern is now a NSW Public Service Graduate.

## Department of Regional NSW

### Building positive attitudes

Accessibility Guidelines have been developed for internal events to ensure they are accessible, publishing accessible content and documents, holding accessible meetings, sourcing, and tagging images and accessibility tools in MS Office and Outlook. Guidelines have been publicised internally and are available to all staff on the Department of Regional NSW (DRNSW) intranet.

### Creating liveable communities

Accessibility and inclusion criteria have been built into regional funding programs including the Regional Tourist Activation Fund, Stronger Country Community Fund, and the Regional Event Activation Fund. Accessibility and inclusion provisions were incorporated into seven regional events in 2022 including the Tamworth Country Music Festival, the Regional Outreach Program, Sculptures by the Sea, the Mundi Mundi Bash, Play on the Plains, Broken Hill Festival, and the Parkes Elvis Festival.

### Supporting access to meaningful employment

Providing access to meaningful employment for people with a disability was a key outcomes in 2022.

Two new roles were funded within the diversity and recruitment teams to deliver disability employment outcomes.

The DRNSW Disability Recruitment Strategy for 2022-2023 was implemented in July 2022. In the six months July to December 2022 our disability employee base has risen from 1.6% to 2.4%. We've expanded our advertising channels, improved our external careers page, increased partner organisations and networks, and improved recruitment processes and advertisements to meet the needs of candidates with a disability.

Disability Talent Pools were established in August 2022 and 14 positions have been filled. A 'high touch' recruitment process was designed to ensure that the selection process was appropriate for people with disability and workplace adjustments available. Roles have been filled at the Clerk Grade 3/4, 5/6 and 7/8 level within Strategy & Engagement, Biosecurity and Food Safety, Regional Development & Programs, Soil Conservation Service and Regional Precincts.



On commencement with DRNSW all employees activated from the talent pool are contacted within their first week and monthly as part of the orientation process. This also includes a survey about the recruitment and on boarding process so we can continue to improve processes. Hiring managers are contacted post employee commencement to ensure they have the support needed for their employee and team.

Our new Workplace Adjustments Policy was developed to ensure all employees have what they need to work at their best. Workplace adjustments are available to all employees as part of the revised recruitment process. The new Adjustment Passport will make it easier for people requiring adjustments to move roles within DRNSW and the public sector.

We are working with our office concierge employment company to offer employment opportunities to people with learning disabilities. We have provided concierge employment at our Sydney office and plan to expand this initiative to other offices during 2023.

An Aboriginal Recruitment Strategy has been developed with Aboriginal talent pools a focus for 2023.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

DRNSW has created an Access & Inclusion Event Planning Toolkit which provides guidelines for inclusive regional events. We are working with regional councils to ensure future regional events are accessible.

Regional NSW websites and systems are all compliant with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. This international standard ensures that digital information is more accessible to people with disabilities.

All DRNSW office fit-outs and upgrades are assessed against the Public Service Commission Accessible Office Design Framework to ensure that accessibility is a core component of office design.

Our recruitment policies processes have been redesigned to provide an improved experience for candidates with a disability.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

#### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

The first DRNSW Disability Employee Network (DEN) was established in November 2022 following an awareness campaign to recruit members. Comprised of more than 25 people from across the department, the group meet regularly to ensure DRNSW employees with disability are supported, valued and part of our success by eliminating discrimination, stigma, and unconscious bias in DRNSW workplaces. The DEN works to create a workplace of opportunity, where everyone is valued and respected. In February 2023 the DEN annual plan of work will be finalised based on the input and feedback from DEN members.

A key component of our Disability Talent Pool process is obtaining feedback from new employees. Talent pool candidates complete a survey to provide feedback about the process and suggest improvements. Candidates rated the overall process 4.88 out of 5 at November 2022 and suggestions for improvements related to the DRNSW on boarding process and these ideas will be incorporated into our standard on boarding process.

#### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

DEN member feedback will inform priorities for the DEN plan of work for 2023.

Candidate feedback is reviewed and where appropriate, changes are made to our processes.

Our DIAP Communications Plan ensures DIAP objectives, actions, information, resources, and events are communicated throughout the department.

Our social media posts solicit feedback which is provided to the DEN and Diversity and Inclusion Council.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

DRNSW has developed a range of Action Plans to ensure outcomes are achieved across a range of Diversity & Inclusion (D & I) groups. Based on priorities identified in the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, Action Plans detail actions, timeframes, and accountabilities.

Action Plans include:

- Aboriginal Outcomes Plan
- Aboriginal recruitment Plan
- DIAP
- Disability Recruitment Plan
- LGBTQAI+ Plan, currently in development
- Gender Equity Action Plan
- Family Inclusive Workplace Plan.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

To achieve defined outcomes within agreed timeframes additional resourcing was required. Two positions were established within the recruitment team to focus on managing disability and Aboriginal recruitment pools. Two D & I Partner roles were created to lead diversity & inclusion initiatives and to oversee the DIAP and other Plan outcomes.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Due to the dedication of our DIAP Working Group and Diversity and Inclusion Team, we have successfully achieved significant outcomes during 2023. Communities are benefiting through the incorporation of accessibility into regional funding programs and regional events. Within the department we are very proud of our newly established disability talent pools, which provide a positive experience for candidates and increase the number of people with a disability employed by the department. Our new DEN provides our people with a forum to influence disability employment and issues within DRNSW.

### **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

DRNSW will continue to drive DIAP outcomes over the next 12 months. As new priorities are identified they will be added to the DIAP and other relevant Plans.

In 2023 we will continue to focus on inclusive employment and utilise our disability talent pools to appoint people with disability to vacant positions. New sourcing strategies and partnerships will be implemented to identify and attract disability talent. Alternative assessment methods will be documented and made available to hiring managers. We will seek accreditation through the Disability Confident Recruiter Program.

In parallel, we will expand our learning and leadership programs to increase awareness and knowledge across the business and support capability uplift for people with disability. Places on leadership programs will be reserved for people with disability and disability confident recruitment training will be mandatory for recruiters and hiring managers. People with disability will be offered mentoring partnerships with DEN members and senior leaders. To improve data management, a data

collection and reporting framework will be developed to improve measurement and the accuracy of diversity data.

## Destination NSW

### Building positive attitudes

Communication plan developed to promote the DIAP and actions are being taken to create disability awareness at all levels to build an inclusive workplace culture within Destination NSW (where everyone feel safe to bring their whole selves to work and there is a strong sense of belonging), including refresh of the DIAP.

### Creating liveable communities

Actions have been taken to ensure building and facilities comply with the Building Code of Australia & Australian standards for access and mobility and budget allocated to ensure minor and major workplace adjustments.

### Supporting access to meaningful employment

Recruitment staff were trained to give advice on access and inclusion to hiring.

### Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes

Processes have been put in place to ensure DNSW staff can create accessible documents & services.

### How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?

#### What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?

Consultation plans have been developed to assess how well the organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability. DNSW has identified that there is scope for continuous improvement to ensure DNSW meets needs of people with disability and different abilities including feedback from employees, stakeholders and communities. Procedures are being developed to ensure proper record keeping of feedback received from People with disability and continuous improvement in this area.

#### How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?

Consultation with people with disability and various diversity groups including staff survey and feedback with key bodies have been planned as a part of development of the new DIAP for DNSW which will be finalised in 2023.

### How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?

During the recruitment application process and on boarding process, DNSW seeks inputs via forms in MyCareer portal to understand representation of people from diverse groups, needs and requirements. Prior to implementing the new DIAP, DNSW is working on a thorough consultation plan with to identify any needs of diverse groups (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, women, children, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and LGBTIQ+ people) and to incorporate new actions based to feedback to ensure the DIAP is fit for purpose and actions are taken to ensure intersectionality.

### What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?

The greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions has been the lack of dedicated resource who can prioritise and focus. Earlier this year, DNSW went through re-organisation to ensure right people



with required skill set and experience are in right position. Resource has been recruited who will look after diversity & inclusion strategy, implementation of DAIP actions as part of their role's responsibility.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

DNSW planned and delivered various programs and events in collaboration with various network partners within the state of NSW that is accessible and inclusive to everyone. There were several accessible options provided to ensure experience of people with disability was as memorable and enjoyable.

### **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Please include new actions that your area will be undertaking and whether these have been added to your organisation's DIAP DNSW is in process of developing the new DIAP and consult various stakeholders.

- Include disability awareness training in all Induction programs
- Raise awareness and early response to assist people experiencing mental illness in the workplace
- Provide resources to employees on 'mental health in the workplace' and managing and supporting employees with mental illness
- Alignment of Health and well-being initiatives with DIAP including Mental Health First Aid training for people leaders. Liveable communities
- Develop opportunities for staff to engage with the disability sector
- Create and promote process for all staff with disability to develop Personal Emergency Evacuation plans Employment
- An audit of the recruitment and onboarding processes to identify and remove any barriers to people with disability
- Collaboration with JobAccess
- Provide a supportive working environment to people with disability
- Managers and supervisors are aware of how to effectively manage and support employees with visible and invisible disability
- L&D registrations include the opportunity to request an adjustment Technology
- Create support process and resources for staff with disability to be able to resolve access and inclusion issues in a timely manner.

## **NSW Ministry of Health**

### **Building positive attitudes**

In 2021-2022 NSW Health continued work to build positive engagement, attitudes and behaviours through:

System wide development and use of accessible communications, for example:

- Drafting a NSW Health accessible communications policy directive. A suite of resources including guidelines, templates, training modules and other support tools are being prepared to complement release of the policy in early 2023 (DIP Action 4.1).
- co-production of Easy Read and plain English resources on NSW Health sexual assault services and New Street services led by the NSW Health Education Centre Against Violence as part of

NSW Health's implementation of its Sexual Assault Services and New Street Services Strategy for People with Disability 2021 - 2025.

Improving experiences, for example, NSW Ministry of Health facilitated the Allyship Program Pilot to support health professionals to communicate in a way that is understood and valued by patients, families, carers and each other. In four sessions, held over four weeks, key ideas around language, effective communication, behaviour, compassion, and values were shared. Over 300 NSW Health staff participated in the Allyship Program Pilot. The program was developed by a mother of a child with profound disabilities and her journey through the health care system.

Improving skills and knowledge, for example, a Pilot Mini-Residency in Special Needs Dentistry program commenced in February 2022 at the Westmead Centre for Oral Health. The mini residency included a 12-week clinical placement, which provided general dentists with clinical experience working with patients with disability. The mini residency is intended to reduce the number of patients being referred to tertiary services for specialist care. In particular, this model of care will benefit patients living in regional and remote areas because they will no longer need to travel to metropolitan areas or regional hubs to be seen by a Special Needs Dentist. Due to the success of the Pilot, applications for the next Mini-Residency in Special Needs Dentistry program opened in late 2022. It is expected that the program will commence again in early 2023.

### **Creating liveable communities**

In 2021-2022 NSW Health continued work to create more liveable communities, including to fund and oversight delivery of the Housing and Accommodation Support Initiative (HASI) and Community Living Supports (CLS) programs (DIP Actions 2.5.2 and 2.9).

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

In 2021-2022 NSW Health continued work to support access to meaningful employment for people with disability including by:

- Working with local health districts and other NSW Health organisations to develop best practice in recruiting, supporting and retaining people with disability. Some organisations already exceed the Premier's Priority to ensure that 5.6% of all Government sector roles are held by people with disability by 2025. 7.8% of people employed by HealthShare NSW, for example, are people with disability. Best practice case studies, strategy resources and the Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging (DIB) guide are published and promoted via the NSW Health DIB Hub website.
- Ensuring that NSW Health recruitment policies continue to promote disability inclusion principles. In 2021-2022, the NSW Ministry of Health commenced a review of the NSW Health Recruitment and Selection of Staff to the NSW Health Service Policy Directive, including references to inclusive recruitment strategies. The revised Policy Directive is due for publication during 2022-2023.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

In 2021-2022 NSW Health continued work to improve access to mainstream services, including by:

Implementation of the NDIS Mental Health Officer Program (NMHO) which aims to improve access to, and the experience of, the NDIS for people with psychosocial disability in NSW. Under the program an NMHO is embedded in the NSW Health mental health service. The program is showing significant benefits for clients of NSW Health mental health services since delivery of the statewide program began by the 18 FTE officers. NMHOs are building effective and supportive relationships with clinical staff, resulting in effective capacity building of clinicians and mental health teams to support consumers to access and use the NDIS. This is reflected in the number of NDIS access requests being approved, the quality of plans, and the number of consumers with complex needs who have been supported to access NDIS services.

Implementation of two statewide Intellectual Disability Mental Health (IDMH) Hubs who provide leadership and capacity-building to support mainstream mental health services. The Sydney Children's Hospital Network hosts the child and adolescent statewide IDMH Hub whilst the Sydney

Local Health district hosts the adult IDMH Hub. Both Hubs provide capacity building via an education and training program to build the confidence, clinical knowledge and expertise in mental health care to people with an intellectual disability. They also provide joint assessments and case discussions for NSW Health mental health teams.

As part of NSW Health's response to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, NSW Health is implementing the NSW Health Sexual Assault Services and New Street Services Access Strategy for People with Disability 2021-2025. The Strategy is focused on building workforce capacity to support increased service accessibility and appropriate clinical practice in NSW Health sexual assault services and New Street services. In 2022, NSW Health Education Centre Against Violence (ECAV) established a state-wide, multiagency disability and sexual violence standards training committee to guide implementation of the strategy and development of evidence-based, best practice training and professional development. This includes specialist training for sexual assault services to identify and respond to sexual assault presentations for people with disability, delivered in partnership with People with Disability Australia and the Council for Intellectual Disability.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

#### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

In 2021-2022 NSW Health continued to build structures, processes and knowledge to ensure that NSW Health services and organisations seek and act on feedback from people with disability where appropriate. The following initiatives have been informed by engagement with people with disability:

The Improving the oral health of people with disabilities project, developed in consultation with key stakeholders, carers of children and adults with disabilities. The aim of this project is to improve health literacy and oral health information to enable carers to support those in their care. This project has also engaged consumers and key stakeholders to develop appropriate resources which include videos, Tip Sheets and corresponding information in an 'Easy to Read' format.

People with intellectual disability may have difficulty completing experience surveys and are an under-represented population in feedback provided to NSW Health. The NSW Ministry of Health has commissioned a literature review to explore how to better capture the experiences of patients with intellectual disability. This review will inform the development of more effective collection methodologies.

#### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

See above

### **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

The NSW Ministry of Health supports a number of programs which support disability inclusion across NSW Health, including providing \$4.6 million annually in operational funding for local health districts and specialty networks to pursue culture and diversity projects developed for local needs. Local programs enabled by this culture funding include: implementation of local diversity and inclusion plans; improving on boarding, orientation and workplace adjustment processes for new staff with disability; and partnerships with key disability organisations such as the Australian Network for Disability to conduct organisation-wide assessments and guide improvement of local practices. In 2021-2022 NSW Health undertook multiple initiatives to better address the needs of women, children, and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds with a disability, including:

The NSW Health Sexual Assault Services and New Street Services Access Strategy for People with Disability 2021-2025 has included the development of a trauma-informed co-design model. The model supports people with disability who are survivors of violence, abuse and neglect to be involved in the review of the design and delivery of Violence, Abuse and Neglect (VAN) services to

improve the responses of these services to people with disability (DIP Action 4.3). To support its implementation, NSW Health Education Centre Against Violence (ECAV) established a co-design advisory committee to provide strategic advice from people with lived experience expertise of sexual violence and disability. There is diverse representation including members who are women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, LGBTQIA+ people, and from regional and remote localities.

The NSW LGBTIQ+ Health Strategy 2022-2027 was published in March 2022 to provide direction to all NSW Health organisations and staff, so that collectively we can deliver the best care to LGBTIQ+ people and work with them to achieve optimal health and wellbeing. The Strategy recognises that an individual's health is shaped by multi-dimensional and overlapping factors including disability. People with a disability are identified in the Strategy as a priority group with greater likelihood of experiencing violence, discrimination and abuse, including from carers, support workers and institutions, than people without disability. The 13 actions in the Strategy will guide the NSW Health system over the next five years to strengthen its delivery of inclusive and affirmative healthcare to all LGBTIQ+ people and diverse communities.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

NSW Health's pivotal role in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic impacted on delivery of DIAP activities. The COVID-19 pandemic required a flexible and agile response, which included embedding disability inclusion approaches and elevating the voices of people with disability and their carers, in the context of providing an emergency response. NSW Health successfully used the opportunities that evolved from this challenge to build stakeholder engagement and strengthen communication with people living with disability, their families and carers through new processes including the Disability Community of Practice (COP). The Disability COP has more than 150 members including people with disability, carers, peak non-government organisations, clinicians and program managers, to ensure that NSW Health's COVID-19 response was informed by people with disability, their advocates and services. Communication products and resources relating to COVID-19 were developed, specifically targeted at people with a disability and, applicable to people with a disability. These include online videos, Easy Read resources and Auslan interpretations.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

As above

## **NSW Treasury**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Regular Executive communication to provide awareness and knowledge of how to support people with a disability and the benefits of doing so.

### **Creating liveable communities**

Consideration was undertaken about how Treasury can impact sector projects to use more Disability suppliers and resources. This proved to be difficult due to the devolved nature of the NSW Government. These may be later addressed by a sector-wide project.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Actions were completed that progressed Treasury's application for Disability Confident Recruiter status (later achieved in December 2023) SBS video training modules were completed by the majority of staff. An image bank library was created to provide accessible images of people with a disability. A process to request workplace adjustments was embedded.

## **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

A process to request workplace adjustments was embedded The Workplace Reimagined Project was completed which included the creation of improved facilities and accessibility.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

#### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

Treasury's DEN has been non-operational for a number of years due to the resourcing issue mentioned below. However as a result the new strategy, which has an Advocate stream (where people with lived experience are given a voice) they will have the ability to influence decision making in the future.

#### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

It was identified that people with a disability were not being given the opportunity to provide feedback. This new strategy corrects this by the establishment of the new Advocate stream. Hence we anticipate many future opportunities for people with a disability.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Our new Diversity and Inclusion manger monitors activity and has seen improvements in some areas and opportunities in other areas. Accordingly the new DIB strategy was designed as an intersectional model. Treasury has five D&I streams- CALD, First Nations, Pride, Gender, and Disability. The new model creates a governance structure where the streams integrate intersectionally.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Treasury has experienced significant staff turnover due to Machinery of Government changes and current employment conditions. This resulted in the initial DIAP team disintegration leading to delays in DIAP execution. A review process was commenced towards the end of the financial year to address the resourcing issues.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Our Facilities team completed office adjustments to improve accessibility and better support people with Disabilities. There was significant progress working towards gaining Disability Confident Recruiter status. The appointment of dedicated Diversity and Inclusion Manager. Recognition from the Treasury Executive that Diversity Inclusion and Belonging needed to be better managed by the agency. Increase in F2F and online Diversity and Inclusion training Slight increase in the number of employees with a Disability.

### **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

In the current Financial Year we have rebuilt the DIAP team and have commenced a review of the existing DIAP. DIAP is now supported by a wider Diversity, Inclusion and belonging strategy. The establishment of an events calendar for Disability events at Treasury. DCR status has been completed and achieved. We have launched leadership KPI's to embed Diversity and Inclusion goals. A Treasury-wide Executive endorsed, leader-led Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging strategy is being embedded across all of Treasury. Treasury are leading a sector-wide recommendation to improve outcomes for people with a disability in NSW through the creation of improved information sharing and reporting. Treasury is actively prompting and participating in the Stepping Into intern program



for people with a disability with plans to increase numbers in 2023 (increasing from one in 2022 to eight or more (hopefully 10 or more).

## State Library of NSW

### Building positive attitudes

Continuing to provide Disability Awareness training to all staff.

### Creating liveable communities

Major building works underway to support access to the Macquarie Street and Mitchell buildings (construction of a permanent accessible lift and accessible pathways)

Hearing loop installed in the Dixon Room

First accessible Family History webinar held with Auslan interpreters

Building in-house capacity to provide online transcriptions, with staff trained in audio transcription to meet accessibility standards

Large format print guides now available for exhibitions

Mobile gallery app developed, providing captions and audio for selected items on display.

### Supporting access to meaningful employment

Monthly staff wellbeing email introduced, addressing mental health awareness and healthy living initiatives.

'Reasonable Adjustment' policy developed and changes made to work environments to allow people with disability to work safely and productively.

### Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes

Continuing to purchase large print and talking books, made available through the Public Library Network.

Continuing to build the Library's collection with material relating to people with disability. See highlights below.

Piloting a new transcription platform (FromThePage) for manuscript collections.

Supporting improved access to optical character recognition scanning for books and manuscripts within our new catalogue. Collecting for Everyone Contemporary collecting in 2021-2022 encompassed material relating to life and experience in NSW today: the state's people, their voices, communities, cultures and environment, including records of the St George Association for People with Physical Disabilities, 1952-2019. Our oral history collecting program conducted wide-ranging interviews during the year, including with people in the deaf and hard of hearing communities: two interviews filmed in Auslan with interpreters; and three interviews conducted with leading members of People with Disability Australia to mark their recent 40-year anniversary.

## How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability

### What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?

The Library monitors progress against the Accessibility Action Plan 2020-23 annually, working to achieve further improvements in supporting access for people with disability. We continue to work with our Accessibility Advisory Committee to remove all the barriers we can, so that when people visit the Library, disability doesn't mean any less an experience.

Accessibility Advisory Committee

The Committee's responsibilities are to:

- monitor the implementation of the Accessibility Action Plan and update as required
- recommend ways to make it easier to navigate the Library both physically and online
- advise the Library about ways its services and offerings can be made more inclusive and accessible and make recommendations to the Library's Executive when necessary
- review the Library's public programs and exhibitions and make recommendations where appropriate to ensure that they cater for people with disability
- review feedback and data relating to readers' and visitors' experiences of the Library relating to accessibility
- Advise the Library about communications relating to accessibility in publications, the Library's website, intranet and social media platforms and make recommendations when necessary.

After a hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Committee reconvened in May 2022. Committee members: Dr Breda Carty Timothy Hart Mark Kunach Dr Naomi Malone Dr Gaele Sobott Mark Tonga (until March 2022) and State Library staff from across the organisation. Feedback and surveys:

- surveying users of the State Library facilities, services, and programs
- we often seek feedback on accessibility issues
- User feedback and testing sessions for the new catalogue included participants with disability.

#### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

The Accessibility Advisory Committee remains active and continues to meet its' terms of reference. Wider community engagement is planned to inform the development of the new DIAP in 2023.

#### **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Identifying and working to address the more specific needs of identified groups will be included in the new State Library DIAP.

#### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

The continued impacts of COVID-19 delayed some actions, however significant progress has been made towards meeting our commitments this year.

#### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

The NSW Government has allocated more than \$24 million in funding to enhance visitor access and experience at the State Library. The Library is on track to make the much-loved cultural institution fully accessible to the public for the first time, including parts of the historic Mitchell building rooftop. The transformation of the Library will give readers and visitors:

- an accessible entry into the Mitchell building (underway)
- an accessible link between the Mitchell and Macquarie Street buildings (underway)
- a ramped access route to the Macquarie Street building (now open)
- a new underground auditorium (underway)
- a refurbished Mitchell Library Reading Room (now open)
- a new rooftop bar (now open).

## Is there anything else your organisation is doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?

The State Library's new DIAP will be developed during 2023 and will explicate actions designed to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability.

## Additional information and comments about the information provided (include any contentious issues)

This reporting represents highlights of DIAP progress made during the 2021-2022 period.

### Transport for NSW

Transport is a critical enabler of social and economic participation for everyone in NSW. However, people with disability often face multiple barriers when accessing transport infrastructure and services. Equivalent access is crucial in ensuring that everyone can participate in education, employment, recreation, and all other aspects of community life.

In December 2017, Transport released its Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2018-2022 containing 160 actions under five key outcome areas. Transport has commenced developing the next Disability Inclusion Action Plan, aligned to current state and national strategies, with an expected release in 2023.

Key achievements during 2021-2022 to improve accessibility for customers and employees are outlined below.

#### Liveable communities •

- The Transport Access Program is an initiative to deliver accessible, modern, secure and integrated transport infrastructure. Upgrades to an additional 16 railway stations and one ferry wharf were completed. Construction either started or continued at a further 21 railway stations, and planning commenced or continued for upgrades to an additional nine railway stations and five ferry wharves.
- A new, state-of-the-art fleet of intercity trains, called the Mariyung, will provide a new level of comfort and convenience for customers travelling between Sydney and the Central Coast and Newcastle, the Blue Mountains, and the South Coast. Community consultation, including with disability advocacy groups, has helped inform the train design and proposed operating model. Key benefits of the Mariyung are improved accessibility, enhanced safety, improved comfort and improved customer information.
- Transport is replacing the ageing NSW regional rail fleet of XPT, XPLOER and Endeavour trains. The new trains will provide improved safety, accessibility, information, facilities and reliability for customers who travel from many NSW regional centres to Sydney as well as Canberra, Melbourne and Brisbane. Stakeholders and customers from diverse groups have been engaged to support the new fleet design. This includes NSW TrainLink staff, human factors specialists, people with disabilities or specific needs, and Transport's Accessible Transport Advisory Committee.
- Transport has approximately 3,970 buses operating in the Greater Sydney area, with 95 per cent of this fleet being low-floor wheelchair accessible buses. In 2021-2022, a further 100 new low-floor replacement buses were approved by Transport for procurement.
- The Bus Signage Rollout Program installed a further 3,400 bus stop signs across NSW. The new signs for regular route services feature raised braille and tactile elements to assist people who are blind or have low vision in identifying the bus stop.
- The Country Passenger Transport Infrastructure Grant Scheme (CPTIGS) provides subsidies to support the construction or upgrade of bus stop infrastructure, generally owned and maintained by local councils, across regional NSW. The first round of the CPTIGS 2021-2023 program saw 44 applications approved across 41 Local Government Areas, totalling \$2.179 million:



- West Region approved 10 applications, which included 36 upgrades and 23 new shelters totalling \$331,500 across 10 Local Government Areas
- North Region approved 18 applications, which included 206 upgrades and 74 new shelters totalling \$1.22 million across 17 Local Government Areas
- South Region approved 16 applications, which included 23 upgrades and 51 new shelters totalling \$625,300 across 14 Local Government Areas.

### Accessible systems and processes

- Transport has continued to participate in the reforms of the Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002. The reforms are led by the Australian Government Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications. Transport continues to represent the NSW Government advocating for positive changes for customers with disability and ensuring standards are fit for purpose. During the year, the NSW Government, supported by Transport, responded to the Stage 2 Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport: Consultation Regulation Impact Statement.
- With more than 40,000 people across NSW registered for the Taxi Transport Subsidy Scheme (TTSS), Transport has now transitioned away from the use of paper docketts in favour of a TTSS Smartcard state-wide. The TTSS Smartcard improves the overall experience of participants and taxi drivers as the credit card-sized smart card is easier to carry, includes a photo for added security and has several built-in accessibility features to support easy recognition and identification. These features include embossed lettering, a dark blue design with white lettering for strong colour contrast, and a notch along the top side of the card.

### Accessible customer information technology and research

- Travel Training is a process that promotes independent use of public transport for vulnerable cohorts of customers. The 2021 Travel Training Innovation Challenge set out to build a broad set of digital tools that improves confidence in the use of public transport and reduces reliance on alternative forms of transport for four key cohorts - people with disability, young people, older people and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities. Two vendors were engaged by Transport to:
  - Test and learn what actions may increase customer confidence in using public transport, leading to independent use of public transport among the specific cohorts
  - Develop a digital proof of concept to increase customer confidence in using public transport, targeted at people with disability and older people.
- Through the NSW Small Business Innovation and Research program and in partnership with the Office of the Chief Scientist and Engineer, Transport is seeking innovative solutions from external parties for hyperlocal navigational technology that will aid customers in navigating our transport interchanges. The technology will also provide additional assistance to customers with vision or other impairments who may find difficulty in navigating the public transport network. Assessment of the Phase 1 feasibility studies is in progress.
- Sydney Trains has developed SpeechMagic, an application that enables customers with hearing impairment to receive equivalent visual information when manual announcements are made by station staff. The visual announcements appear as text on platform screen indicators at stations. The application will be trialled with customers in the coming year.

### Inclusive customer service and feedback

- Transport has continued to maintain its relationship with the disability and ageing sector through our Accessible Transport Advisory Committee (ATAC). The ATAC held regular forums throughout the year, involving 20 peak disability and ageing organisations throughout NSW. ATAC provides an opportunity to regularly engage the disability sector in consultation regarding Transport for NSW projects and policy initiatives.

- Transport has engaged with customers with disability to provide feedback during project-specific consultations, including for the Transport Access Program, Parramatta Light Rail, Regional Rail Project and the Regional Cycling Plan.

### **Disability employment**

- Transport acknowledges the International Day of People with Disability in December each year as a visible sign of our commitment to people with disability. Each year, we hold a cluster-wide event, attended by between 300 and 500 employees in person with keynote speakers and employee-lived experiences. In 2021, our Master of Ceremonies for the event was a participant in the first cohort of our neurodiverse employment program 'Tailored Talent' for autistic people. In hosting the event, this person played an important role in challenging stereotypes around neurodiversity.
- In 2021-22, 1,642 Transport staff completed the NSW Public Service Commission's Disability Awareness Training.
- Transport's partnership with Specialisterne Australia is ongoing, providing nine employment opportunities for neurodiverse people. Transport presented at a Disability Employment Services (DES) engagement session on 22 March 2022 with the NSW Public Service Commission, and is now forming partnerships and connections with DES providers through the Talent Acquisition and Career Transition team.

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## 6.2 NSW Local Councils Reports

### Albury City Council

#### Building positive attitudes

2021 International Day of People with Disability event was held in conjunction with the City of Wodonga. The event featured guest speaker Dylan Alcott, musician Josh Campbell and comedian Oliver Hunter. The event was held in person and online. The hybrid format was to overcome limited capacity due to COVID-19 restrictions, however the added benefit was the improved access, and the event reached a larger audience.

Albury City completed its first photoshoot focused on capturing people with disability in the community. Over two days members of the Access Committee and their families participated in the photo sessions through the community. Locations included QEII Square, Murray River bike path and the Yindamarra Sculpture walk. These photos are to be available organisational wide and to be used in a variety of publications and on social media and not exclusively for disability related information. These actions result in increased visibility of people with disability in our community and increased community awareness of the rights and capabilities of people with disability.

#### Creating liveable communities

Albury City has a disability Access Committee which meets bi-monthly. Committee members comprise of people with disability, their families and carers, disability sector employees, community members with a vested interest and AlburyCity employees. The committee has been instrumental in access improvements around the City including additional accessible parking spaces, safety improvements at roundabouts and improved access to public bus shelters. Members were also involved in a tour of public toilets to assess the accessibility and consult on future builds. The actions resulting from the Access Committee meetings increase the participation of people with disability in the community by addressing identified barriers.

#### Supporting access to meaningful employment

AlburyCity has committed to creating and adopting an internal Diversity and Inclusion Strategy. This strategy will explore the feasibility of AlburyCity becoming an accredited Disability Confident Recruiter and the establishment of an internal peer support network. The development of this Strategy will establish AlburyCity as a safe and accessible workplace and increase the number of people with disability in meaningful employment at AlburyCity.

#### Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes

AlburyCity implemented a new Have Your Say webpage for the collection of community feedback. This new platform is WCAG 2.0 compliant, helping to improve access to Council updates and planning. To further help identify current and future needs of those in the community living with/or caring for someone with a disability the DIAP survey was translated into Easy English. AlburyCity engaged Scope Australia to complete the translation and was available as a hardcopy or on the Council homepage. The Community Development team were also available to complete surveys face to face or over the phone. These actions have ensured that Council planning is accessible and informed by people with disability.

## How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?

### What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?

Extensive community engagement was undertaken in November 2021 through to January 2022. This included:

- The development of a Have Your Say page on the AlburyCity website.
- The development of a survey in hard copy, electronic and Easy English.
- Public Notice in the Border Mail.
- Promotion through social media, AlburyCity News and emails to the Community Engagement Group.
- Emails to schools, disability service providers, aged care providers and other identified stakeholders.
- Consultation with the Albury Access Committee. Meetings with CALD and ATSI community leaders.
- Presentation to AlburyCity Youth Committee - strong representation of the LBTQIA+ community.
- Public Exhibition at Council Office, Community Centres and local libraries.
- Albury Access Committee.

### How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?

The thoughts, feelings and aspirations of the community have been included in the new Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026, assisting with the development of associated actions, which will help Council continue to make Albury more inclusive and accessible to people with disability.

### How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA

The Community Development team met with the local Wiradjuri Elders group, The Youth Council and CALD community leaders as part of DIAP 2022-2026 community engagement activities and considered their feedback in the development of the DIAP 2022-2026. The Team also consulted with a variety of stakeholders to ensure the wording of survey questions was inclusive and reflected contemporary language. Through the development of the AlburyCity Diversity and Inclusion Strategy we will have a more consistent approach to ensuring that we are addressing the needs of all of these groups in future.

### What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?

Resourcing restraints across the organisation and the continued impact of the COVID-19 pandemic restricted the implementation of DIAP actions in the 2021-2022 financial year. Actions that were not started or incomplete formed the basis of planning for the new DIAP 2022-2026.

### What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?

AlburyCity's greatest successes for this financial year were:

The commencement of construction of the Changing Places adult change facilities at National Forrest Grove and the approval for an additional Changing Places at Hovell Tree Park (construction due to commence in the next financial year).

Piloting disability awareness training. The Community Development and Organisational Development teams collaborated to pilot a tiered training approach to develop awareness. This is to strengthen Our People's skills and confidence when interacting with and enhancing accessibility for

people living with a disability. This pilot will form the basis of continued training for all AlburyCity people.

### **Is there anything else your organisation is doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Commenced investigations of partnering with Bayley House to implement the Hidden Disability Sunflower Scheme across AlburyCity. Given the high percentage of people in the community living with hidden disabilities this scheme could be a way to offer additional assistance to those that choose to wear the sunflower. The training on hidden disabilities will complement the Disability Awareness training to be implemented over the next five years.

## **Armidale Regional Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Action achieved - Promote a set of corporate values which reflect social justice principles of equity, diversity and supportive environments.

### **Creating liveable communities**

Scope out the work required to upgrade the Guyra HACC Centre to make it accessible. \*To continue to update the existing database and send out notifications of current and future planned road works and footpath maintenance when requested. \*Continue to support the operations of the Kent House Community Centre and the Guyra HACC Centre. \*Liaise with government departments to increase quota for designated disability parking bays especially in the Guyra Main Street.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Action achieved: - \*Council to provide staff resources to develop the DIAP.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Action achieved: - \*Review Council's customer service processes to identify barriers to access and communication for people living with disability.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

#### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

Consultation began with the community for the development of our new DIAP - 2022 to 2026. This included workshops with people living with disability and services associated with the delivery of disability services.

#### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

This informed the creation of our new DIAP, which was adopted by Council in 2022.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

We undertook extensive community engagement for the development of our new Community Strategic Plan - and the needs of our community informed and guided the preparation of the final document. We also constantly maintain strong relationships with many community groups representing people within these groups, via meetings such as Youth, Child & Family Interagency, Aboriginal Advisory Committee, Humanitarian, Settlement Program Network, etc.

## What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?

Staff turnover, recruitment delays due to an organisational restructure and COVID-19.

## What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?

Community engagement and creation of new DIAP with limited resources and skeleton staff.

## Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?

Council has recently reinstated our Access Advisory Committee, which had not been in place for approximately three years. This will support Council in the delivery of the DIAP actions from 2022-2026.

## Ballina Shire Council

### Building positive attitudes

- Access Reference Group continues to provide advice to Council on disability access and inclusion issues
- Membership of Dementia Inclusive Ballina.
- Images of people with disabilities included in Council publications.

### Creating liveable communities

- Upgrade to Ross Park in Lennox Head incorporates accessible design elements
- New toilet block Moon Street Ballina includes two ambulant toilets and one accessible toilet
- Wollongbar district park opened including accessible design elements
- Accessible toilets remain unlocked throughout the day, and residents gain access after hours via use of MLAK keys.
- Provision of accessible design elements in upgraded parks and reserves including BBQ's, seating area, picnic areas waste bins and pathway network.
- Beach wheelchairs available for hire free of charge.
- Playground upgrades include accessible play options.
- Accessible design elements included in approved plans for Wollongbar District Park.

### Supporting access to meaningful employment

- Continue to support the employment of individuals with low to medium physical and intellectual disabilities within Council's Open Spaces section.
- Accredited employer under the NDIS.
- Recruitment methods provide people with a disability the opportunity to apply for positions with Council.

### Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes

- Website has been updated and is compliant with Website Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA.
- Auslan interpreter at Council meetings and community consultations as requested.
- Council information and communication material accessible to people with disability.



- Council design engineers are incorporating accessible design features into public space designs.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

#### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

Ballina Shire Council supports the local Access Reference Group. This group is made up of individuals who have a disability and reside in the Ballina LGA. The group provides regular feedback to Council on a range of Access and Inclusion issues. The group has been and continues to be supportive of Council's work in promoting inclusion. Council reports against the actions in the DIAP as part of its quarterly reporting process. Most of the actions are ongoing and are incorporated into Council's work program. The actions that are one off have been implemented.

#### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

The actions of the DIAP are incorporated into the council's operational plan. Council also responds to issues raised by the Access Reference Group and any other issues raised by the broader community. Identified issues are entered into the works program and implemented accordingly.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Council undertook a review of its existing DIAP the feedback received was supportive of the measures that Council has undertaken.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

The flooding experienced in our region has had an impact on Council's ability to deliver projects within proposed timeframes. Projects that had to be placed on hold as council staff were directed elsewhere. Ongoing supply issues have also delayed some public infrastructure projects.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Council has over recent year completed a range of infrastructure projects that have included accessible features. This past year Council has completed the Wollongbar district park and includes numerous accessible design features which enable a person with a disability to participate in a range of activities.

### **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Council will begin to prepare a new DIAP in 2023 and expects this to be completed by November 2023.

## **Balranald Shire Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Strengthening Community Access, Inclusion & Wellbeing Advisory Committee.

### **Creating liveable communities**

Widened Swing Bridge for Wheelchairs & Gophers. Upgraded Footpaths in townships. Construction of Creative Learning Centre. EXPO held at Theatre Royal, Balranald.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

EEO Policy to Employ all people.



## **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Footpath Upgrades Accessible Walkways and bridges.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

#### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

Monthly Advisory Committee Meetings.

#### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

Our committee has guest speakers attend the meetings to discuss the needs. Two of the committee members work with a disabled group of people, other members of the committee have disabled children, and they put recommendations to Council for implementing.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Our committee has guest speakers attend the meetings to discuss the needs. Two of the committee members work with a disabled group of people, other members of the committee have disabled children, and they put recommendations to Council for implementing.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Flooding - upgrade accessible.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Swing Bridge widening to allow all access to residents and visitors.

### **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Village Plans.

## **Bathurst Regional Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

- Profiles created and shared featuring local people living with disability as part of an International Day of People with Disability campaign.
- Acknowledgement of local businesses who have improved access and employment opportunities for people living with disability
- Information provided at Council's new staff induction days around accessibility and the Disability Inclusion Action Plan
- Provided information through Council's newsletter to local businesses regarding accessibility and employment opportunities for people living with disability.

### **Creating liveable communities**

- Continuing to implement strategies in the Bathurst Regional Council Access and Cycling Plan 2011 with a focus on the width of footpaths.
- Council has also completed some major footpath renewals in the CBD including further sections in William, George, and Havannah Streets. With further sections to be completed as more funding becomes available.

- Footpath maintenance ongoing with priorities identified through Bathurst Regional Access Committee (BRAC) and Council's Cultural and Community Services department;
- Bathurst Access Improvement Grants continues to be provided with the assistance of the Bathurst Regional Access Committee (BRAC);
- Council continues to advocate for improved access to shops and businesses through the BCA and DACC assessment processes;
- Purchase of portable ramps for use at Council events;
- A hearing loop is installed in Council's Chamber;
- Continued inspection and maintenance of accessible toilets;
- Roll out of street lighting upgrades;
- Charge stations for motorised wheelchairs at the Library/Art Gallery and BVIC;
- Accessible Parking included in CBD Master Plan
- Continued provision of accessible toilets, parking and site access for major events
- Continued provision of accessible programs through the Library.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

- Training provided to Council staff regarding the Disability Inclusion Action Plan at induction;
- Recruitment software asks People with Disability to specify what additional requirements they need to assist them during the employment process.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

- Promotion of accessible programs and events
- Consultation with people living with disability during the development of a new Council website
- All Council websites provide Read speaker function including an enlarge font button;
- Disability Service Directory available on Council's website.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

#### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

Council works closely with the Bathurst Regional Access Committee (BRAC) to ensure the needs of the community are being met. To develop the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022 – 2027 Council conducted consultation with the community including a survey and stakeholder focus group. The Disability Inclusion Action Plan Survey was developed to inform the priorities of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022 – 2027. The survey included questions to determine the challenges faced by local people living with disability in accessing information, employment and local facilities. An easy read version of the survey was also available. A Stakeholder Focus Group was also held with key local stakeholders and an internal Council Working Group formed to identify the priorities of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022 – 2027.

#### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

Council has developed the objectives and actions of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022 – 2027 to directly address the feedback and concerns raised during consultation.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Through the Disability Inclusion Plan Survey and Stakeholder Group, Council was able to consult with a range of groups including those identifying as and providing services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, women, children, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and LGBTIQ+ people.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

The 2021 – 2022 financial year saw a continuation of COVID-19 restrictions and lockdowns which impacted the delivery of actions within Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan. Resources also impacted the delivery of actions, with staffing and financial resources both stretched during the financial year.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Extensive consultation carried out as part of the development of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022 – 2027 allowed Council to develop new relationships and strengthen existing relationships with stakeholders and the community.

## **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Bathurst Regional Council is also implementing the actions contained in the Positive Ageing Strategy 2021 – 2026. Many of these actions will improve the region's liveability for people with disability.

## **Bayside Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

The expression of interest (EOI) and the Terms of Reference for the Bayside Disability Inclusion Reference Group has been endorsed, Council will be going out to the community to seek expression of interest early April.

Councils Grants opened 1 February 2023 council is supporting & encouraging Community Disability Organisations and services to apply for grants.

Encouraging and supporting inclusive activities and events for 2023/24.

Working in collaboration with Disability Interagency members to plan and deliver inclusive events and activities.

Planning to hold CALD NDIS information workshops in Councils Libraries in collaboration with Latrobe University, to provide opportunities for People With Disability to access the Libraries and disability service information that meets their specific need.

### **Creating liveable communities**

Access and Inclusion has been placed on the agenda for new staff induction orientation days - the DIAP is introduced and the importance of inclusion is presented to every new staff.

The Community Development Disability Specialist has started work with the People & Culture unit to establish a whole of council approach to staff development and training, working towards including an Access Inclusion component into the existing on line yearly training portal.

Additional disability and inclusion training to be provided to council staff as identified.

The Community Development Disability Specialist in meetings with Strategic Planning unit to review the LEP & the Affordable Housing DCP.

## Supporting access to meaningful employment

Community Development Disability Specialist started working with Councils Business Transformation team and Nova Employment.

Council has established a working group focusing on Employment and Education for people with disability.

Council job vacancies are advertised in the community newsletter.

## Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes

Bayside Councils Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026 endorsed by council, lodged on the Department of Communities and Justices portal. The DIAP Action Plan 2022 - 2026 is available in an Easy to Read Format, on line and in hard copy.

Council has installed an accessibility widget on the Community Engagement website to ensure People With Disability have access to council's documents, event information and community consultation process.

## How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?

### What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?

Trained Customer Service Officers are receiving, responding and redirecting service enquires to the Community Development Disability Specialist as required.

People with a disability can also gain access and provide feedback through the accessibility widget on the engagement website, this ensures people with disability can read, listen and access information in a variety of ways.

Additional consultation with service providers and people with disability is occurring through the Disability Interagency.

We have established collaborative partnership with Latrobe NDIS to identify gaps in service access for people with disability in Bayside LGA. As a result we are planning to hold a number of CALD NDIS Information Workshops throughout the year in our Libraries.

Bayside Council has restructured the Community Life Team to ensure there is professional engagement and response to people with disability from CALD, Aboriginal, Ageing and all other community members.

### How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?

Bayside Council does evaluation of all activities, events and consultations to ensure people with a disability are included.

Bayside Council Community Engagement Website is accessible and provides a report to the Disability Specialist on the number of people with disability who engage.

The Disability Interagency further supports the implementation of DIAP Focus Areas. Including and not limited to the establishment of the Disability Employment Working Group.

## How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?

Bayside Council restructured in November 2022. The Community Life Team restructured to ensure there is professional engagement and response to people with disability from CALD, Aboriginal, Ageing and all other community population groups. As a result, four community development specialist positions now provide direct professional support to people who include: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, women, children, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and LGBTIQ people.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Over the past six months due to the organisation restructure and recruitment of new staff we are now strongly positioned to engage across the organisation and community to achieve current and future DIAP Goals.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Establishing a Bayside Council DIAP Working Group.

Employing a Community Development Disability Specialist to engage and ensure the DIAP Goals are implemented.

The restructure provided Council's Community Engagement Team and Community Support Team to work more collaboratively to ensure people with a disability have an equal opportunity to engage, provide feedback and participate in community life.

### **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

The Community Development Disability Specialist is currently working in collaboration with the Community Grants Officer to notify Community Based Disability Organisations of Grants being open and available to apply for. The Disability Specialist is also partnering with Council's Business Development Specialist to engage and build capacity to achieve Access to Meaningful Employment for people with disability. As identified in the DIAP.

### **Additional information and comments**

We believe we are now well positioned to better engage, listen and respond to the needs of people with disability living in the Bayside Community.

## **Bega Valley Shire Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

#### **Improve staff awareness of disability issues**

Council's corporate induction program included a session on Council's Code of Conduct and PLaCE values. This session provides an overview of Equal Employment Opportunity legislation and staff responsibilities concerning inclusive service provision.

Council engages with its employees through a Consultative Committee which meets approximately every six weeks. The committee has a designated position for a staff member with disability which focuses on disability inclusion and awareness in the workplace.

Inclusive tourism and Dementia awareness training was attended by Bega Valley Regional Gallery staff.

#### **Acknowledge and include disability when developing communication and engagement strategies and plans.**

An Easy Read version of the DIAP has been made available on Council's website. Communication materials are developed using plain English principles.

#### **Improve staff communication when working with diverse groups including people with a disability.**

Council's style guide for staff has been reviewed and updated to improve resources and culture for inclusive communication.

## **Celebrate inclusive practice and access outcomes.**

Access and inclusion continues to be a focus across Council. The Communications and Events team promotes inclusive projects and programs that improve access and inclusion via social media, media releases, Council's website and regular Council newsletters.

## **Creating liveable communities**

### **Contribute towards liveable and accessible public places.**

Council seeks continuous improvement in the implementation of a strategic approach to community input at concept design stage on identified projects in public places. This action is supported by Council's Community Engagement Strategy.

The Affordable Housing Strategy has been finalised and adopted by Council. The plan has identified short-, medium- and long-term actions to address the need for affordable rental properties and to stimulate the development of new fit for purpose housing which meets the needs of people with disability.

Information about progress under the Affordable Housing Strategy is promoted through Council's communication channels including media releases, Facebook and the website.

A campaign has been developed to support the promotion of Council's actions under the Affordable Housing Strategy.

The Affordable Housing Implementation Group has been developed to facilitate the delivery of the Affordable Housing Strategy actions.

Construction commenced on the new gallery and executive area. This includes greater accessibility features such as improved entrance way, wider doorways, indoor/outdoor bench seating, accessible toilets, accessible project/workshop space and improved lighting.

### **Increase access to community assets.**

Access outcomes are prioritised in renewals and upgrades of community assets. Access criteria are included in the management of community facilities and assets.

Projects with improved accessibility elements delivered in 2021–22 include:

- Bemboka Colombo Park amenities and parkland improvements
- Cobargo Apex park amenities
- Cobargo Princess Highway amenities
- Barclay Street Sports Pavilion
- Blackfellows Lake boat ramp pontoon and shoreline access path.

Additionally, projects that are underway or in the development stage and where consultation with the AIAC has occurred include:

- Short Point Coastal Accessibility Project (under construction)
- Quaama Playground (under construction)
- Bermagui Sports Stadium Renovation (detail design)
- Bega Sports Building (detail design)
- Bermagui Harbour Boat Ramp (detail design / approvals)
- Pambula Lake Boat Ramp (detail design/approvals)
- Barclay Street Inclusive PlaySpace (design / approvals / procurement)
- Barclay Street Skatepark (design / approvals / procurement)
- Tathra High Needs Amenities (funding applications)



- Merimbula Boardwalk and Foreshore Walk (funding application)
- Pambula Sports Building (funding application)
- Bega War Memorial Swimming Pool Redevelopment (funding application)
- Tathra Headland Precinct Masterplan (concept development).

Meetings of the Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee were held in August 2021, November 2021 and May 2022. Council endorsed new Committee membership in March 2022.

Council continues to facilitate the multi-agency Health and Wellbeing Committee that was established with representatives from disability services to coordinate disaster recovery efforts.

Council continues to work with key community stakeholders on accessible business and tourism initiatives. Representatives from these sectors are represented on the AIAC.

An engagement Plan for Active Transport Strategy commenced development and will include people with a disabilities.

Increased number of accessible parking options are considered as part of the identified Asset Management Plan renewal and design projects.

Council's Signage Strategy was adopted which addresses improved signage and wayfinding in public venues and spaces.

Tathra high needs amenities project concept plan has been endorsed by Council.

5 public toilet upgrade projects completed (including compliant accessible amenities).

The National Public Toilet Map is available on Council's website.

### **Contribute towards programs which aim to increase social inclusion and community connections.**

The benefits of accessible business practice are promoted through the Business Forum and Chambers of Commerce.

Four Accessible Tourism Masterclasses were held during March and May, facilitated by Council's contracted tourism provider.

Council continues to apply for relevant grants to improve access improvement including for funding to upgrade Merimbula Boardwalk.

### **Advocate for improved access and inclusion outcomes across all levels of government.**

Council facilitates the Bega Valley Local Traffic Committee to improve access outcomes and transport equity in the shire.

An AIAC committee member is allocated to each new community facility or asset project to enhance consultation/engagement outcomes.

An application has been made under Building (ILC): Economic and Community Participation Program Building Employer Confidence and Inclusion in Disability Grant Opportunity to increase the capacity of BVSC and local businesses to employ people with disabilities.

Council has written to Minister for Senior Australians and aged care services advocating for equal access to National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) services for people with a disability over the age of 65 years.

### **Respond to demonstrated needs for NDIS services.**

BVSC NDIS program continues to be provided with 132 clients being provided services under this program.

A brief has been prepared for an external review of Council's Aging and Disability services.

Disaster preparation and response support for people with a disability/mobility issue.

A partnership with Centre for Disability Research and Policy, the University of Sydney has been established with an inclusive emergency management forum and training to be delivered in Bega in November 2022. The workshop will cover:

- People-centred approaches to emergency management
- Factors that increase risk for people with disability in emergencies
- Strategies to reduce risk and increase the resilience of people with a disability to disasters
- Local community assets that can be shared before, during and after an emergency to keep people safe.

## **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

### **Develop and enhance employment opportunities for people with disability.**

Council has a work experience program which supports young people with disability to apply for and participate in work experience in areas of interest within the organisation. Details of this work experience program can be found on the 'Careers at Council' web page.

Council's library services actively encourage and support high school work experience placements for students with disability and current volunteers with disability are engaged in digitisation, local history, collections and support projects.

A disability social enterprise has been engaged to provide resource maintenance and other services in the library and Community Connections service areas.

### **Provide volunteering opportunities for people with all abilities.**

Council engages with staff and volunteers who identify as having a disability, primary caring responsibility or as coming from a diverse background, to better understand and meet their unique needs.

Volunteering and job vacancies are promoted via community networks, schools, TAFE and Universities.

Bega Valley Regional Gallery (BVRG) has a proud history of providing volunteering positions for people of all abilities, including young people with mental health challenges. BVRG is a safe space for all and strives to provide inclusive and meaningful engagement through contemporary art, accessible systems, information and processes.

Council continues to work with local community groups and tourism businesses to promote the concept and importance of inclusion to improve volunteering and visitation rates.

## **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

### **Ensure accessible and inclusive community engagement.**

Council uses an Engagement Toolkit which requires employees to consult, engage and collaborate with relevant stakeholders on associated work projects and development across the organisation. The document includes tools for engaging with people with disability and people from diverse backgrounds.

The draft Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) 2022–2025 has been made available on Council's website in both original and Easy Read formats.

Consider inclusion for people with less visible disabilities in addition to those with physical disabilities.

Large print keyboards for the public introduced at Council library services for vision impaired persons.

Sensory tents, schedule boards and Picture Exchange Communication (PEC) System cards introduced into Storytimes at all library branches. Special Sensitive Storytimes commenced at Bega Library for children with sensory issues.

PEC cards available on all library service desks for non-verbal persons.

Dyslexic font collections for children and youth grows annually.

Library web page highlights accessibility services and collections in development.

Temporary accessible drop off, parking and inclusion features trialled as part of MOTEL Art fair event 2022.

Accessible information pages added to Gallery and Art Month sapphire coast websites.

Visual communication signage available at temporary off site events including Myer House artist talk and MOTEL Art Fair 2022.

BVRG staff participated in inclusive programming training with the Black Dog Institute which will inform the delivery of programs in 2023.

### **Continuously improve processes to achieve access and inclusion outcomes.**

National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) documents are available to scheme participants in Easy Read format options.

Council events and community programs are inclusive.

Council's community funding programs are promoted within the disability sector.

Library services are delivered through a range of accessible options such as live webchat, phone and email plus a Home Library Service that delivers library materials to those who cannot access the library due to disability, health vulnerability or lack of connectivity.

The library offers materials in a range of accessible formats for adults and children including books in large print and dyslexic fonts, physical audiobooks and audio-readers, electronic audiobooks via several free platforms, and eBooks and e-magazine platforms with large print, dyslexic and comfortable font options.

On request the library can source materials in accessible formats through the State Library of NSW and inter library loan.

Council's main website, library and gallery websites are W3C compliant for multi device accessibility.

Council's Children's Services provide improved staffing ratios and additional support for children with disability under the Disability Inclusion Program grant. This increases the ability of identified children to participate in our early childhood education and care programs.

Council delivers Support Coordination and Plan Management for NDIS participants.

### **Access and inclusion to be considered in project management, design, and strategy development.**

Council has a Community Engagement Strategy which seeks to obtain community input at concept design stage on identified projects in public places.

Access outcomes are prioritised in renewals and upgrades of community assets.

The AIAC consulted on all major projects and a committee member is assigned to each major project.

Council applies inclusive design principles such as those in the Everyone Can Play Guidelines to identify and include improvements in recreation project development.

A project management module has been developed for Council staff with specific consideration of access and inclusion embedded in its process.

## Bellingen Shire Council

### Building positive attitudes

Promoted the Ian J. Cooper Awards for Access and Inclusion. Nominations were promoted on social media and in print advertising. Co-ordinated an event to showcase nominees and winners of the awards at an inclusive art exhibition in partnership with the neighbourhood centre held on International day of People with disability on 3 December.

Deliver event/s that decrease stigma and increase knowledge about a range of issues including mental health. Council hosted an all staff and all community event for RUOK Day on Thursday 8 September 2022 in the park outside of the Council Admin Building.

Increase awareness of the importance of inclusion and diversity in our community. Promoted awareness raising campaigns that focus on inclusion on our social media channels including RUOK Day, October Mental Health Month, International Day of People with Disability and the biannual Ian J. Cooper Awards for access and inclusion.

Incorporate inclusion into council's communication and engagement strategies. Communicated what has been done to improve accessibility on social media and in Council's winter newsletter. These included amenities upgrades and footpath improvements at Alma Doepel Park, Mylestom, Roses Reserve in Thora and Dangar Falls, Dorrigo.

### Creating liveable communities

Continue to improve accessible toilets, investigate the installation of bins in men's toilets. Bins were installed in nine key public amenities mainly women's toilets and MLAK toilets. Due to an increase in vandalism it was decided not to include in the all access toilets at this stage. Continue to identify opportunities to undertake accessibility upgrades in various townships: Council completed new amenities upgrades at Alma Doepel Park in Mylestom and at Roses Reserve in Thora. These included footpath access and accessible parking spaces.

Improve footpaths that link key locations. New footpaths along Crown St, Bellingin, and works have begun on footpath to Dangar falls.

Increase awareness of accessible features and services. Mobility map was updated and distributed to Libraries, visitor info centres and at council's admin building. Accessible features and tourist destinations were promoted steadily on social media channels including: assistance animals, MLAK toilets, toilet map app, sensory friendly kits at libraries, accessible features of library including hearing loop, and materials such as large print and audio books, beach wheelchair at Urunga, tactile surface indicators at crossings, pinkbox sanitary disposal unit, disability parking spaces and Easy read version of the DIAP.

Investigate challenges for people with disability during disaster events: Two council staff completed training in person centred emergency preparedness Course through university of Sydney co-designed and tested with people with disability.

Improve access to council facilities as well as the natural environment. Universal design is incorporated into all new builds and accessible furniture has been installed at playgrounds at Dangar Falls and Connell Park playground upgrade including picnic table and everyone can play design criteria has been considered in the design.

### Supporting access to meaningful employment

Create an environment where everyone belongs. Face two face and online learning modules have been sourced and will be delivered in early 2023. Merit based selection training has been scheduled to be delivered in December 2022 and early 2023.

Attract and recruit people with disability. An Inclusive statement was developed and appears on all recruitment advertising. Have been working with BlueSky Community Services to identify barriers to employment and are engaged in a program that will assist council in identifying areas for improvement.

Strengthening relationship with disability employment agencies. People and Culture to meet with local disability employment agencies by the end of 2022 including APM, CHESS and Tursa. Council is an EEO employer and continues to employ people from diverse backgrounds. Community Wellbeing staff regularly attend interagency meetings including Aged care and disability networks and continues to build relationships with these groups.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Improve accessibility of Council information and services. An Easy Read version of the DIAP was developed and made available on Councils website and in hardcopy at the Libraries and Admin Building and promoted on social media channels.

Report key DIAP outcomes in Council newsletters. Amenity and footpath upgrades with accessible parking spaces, and upgrades to playgrounds at Connell Park, Dangar falls and Roses Reserve were included in the winter 2022 newsletter. Council continues to engage with BlueSky Community Services to identify how we can better provide service to our community and ensure we support people living with disability.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

#### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

We have open feedback channels and check in with our disability reference group on a regular basis. We plan on having a more formal check in session in the new year to ensure that we are still on track and continue to prioritise our actions. The main feedback we receive is around disability parking spaces and footpaths. We continue to have open communication and engage with people where we can. Council have also engaged with BlueSky Community Services to undertake a Disability "Health Check" to help in identifying where we could be doing things better. This is an ongoing project which will really help us in determining whether we are meeting the needs of people with disability and will involve developing a staff survey which will provide much needed feedback.

#### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

We continue to consult with the community and have increasingly been going out into the community when undertaking consultation i.e. at markets and at the local agricultural shows. We also plan on having a feedback channel on Councils website and to promote this so that people can share more stories and experiences as well as provide feedback while also having the opportunity to go on our distribution list to find out updates. A staff survey is being developed to see whether we are meeting the needs of people with disability within the organisation. This could be rolled out more broadly over time. An Ageing Well Strategy is also in the development stages and the consultation phase has provided important feedback on how we are supporting our ageing community which includes those living with a disability.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Council undertakes regular consultation with the community. We aim to be inclusive of all people within our community which includes these identified groups. We engage with schools, youth, disability service groups and beyond and also gained feedback when consulting for the DIAP 2022-2026. Our Youth Service in Bellingen and Disability Support Service in Dorrigo assist with meeting the needs of these groups more broadly.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

The greatest challenge is prioritising actions amongst all of the other work that needs doing within a small Council. It is also a challenge to monitor what work is being done within the organisation across different working groups and finding the best way to collate this information in a meaningful



way. Budget restraints are an ongoing challenge when implementing the DIAP as we do not always have the funds to undertake projects with competing demands.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

We have increased our communication through social media channels and have been able to provide information and updates on accessible features and places to visit as well as use this as a platform to educate and raise awareness about disability to the wider community. Developing the DIAP in Easy Read format was also a success.

### **Is there anything else your organisation is doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

We are planning to develop a suite of photos of people in our community including people living with disability and seniors so that they can be used in our communications. We also plan on developing a better feedback channel so that the community can share stories and provide feedback on our website so that these stories can be shared more broadly as a way of breaking down misconceptions about disability. Council is in the process of developing a DRAFT Ageing Well Strategy which will assist us in meeting the needs of our ageing community members and their carers including those living with disability. We have completed the initial consultation and will develop a strategy that will inform our actions into the future.

### **Additional information and comments about the information provided (include any contentious issues)**

Bellingen Shire Council is an extremely small Council that has to implement the DIAP with a small budget and very limited staff resourcing.

## **Berrigan Shire Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

In the past 12-months the Council has acted on two key actions in its DIAP aimed at Building positive attitudes and supporting inclusion. Commissioned by the Council has been a rebrand of its corporate communications. Included in the project brief is the requirement to ensure that images used reflect the diversity of our community members (including the disabled) and further that these images promote the strengths of disabled community members and their contribution. The Council continues to use its social media presence to advocate for and show case opportunities in our communities and the achievements of disabled residents including our Council's Mayor.

### **Creating liveable communities**

Two projects which added to the liveability of our communities are the redevelopment of our parks, recreation reserves and the Tocumwal Foreshore Reserve. Families can now enjoy the LGAs first fully accessible playground" built beside the Tocumwal Library funded from a NSW Everyone Can play grant this playground in the main street of Tocumwal is highly visible, inclusive and accessible for all ages and abilities. The second project is improving the accessibility and inclusiveness of the Tocumwala's Town Beach and Foreshore Reserve" the Council secured a grant to build fully accessible fishing platforms while a survey of Tocumwal residents identified strong support for any future development of Town Beach needing to ensure all abilities access.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Staff survey comments contributed to ensuring that all staff have the opportunity to ensure that workplace modifications and equipment are fit for purpose and allow injured or older employers to work comfortably. Two new employees with disabilities have commenced in the past 12-months and continue to receive support as required from disability employment agencies.



## **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

The Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan was reviewed in the final six months of this year. Community feedback identified that local access to information and the changes in NDIS and funding of support services were priority issues. Council's role in this regard is limited to that of an advocate for place-based and localised service delivery by State and Federal funded NGOs. Also identified for further action is the accessibility of Council's website, and library services, new hardware and software is needed to promote digital inclusion and access.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

This financial year feedback was sought from people with a disability and their carers about Council's services via focus groups and an online survey. Pulse surveys have also been conducted with Council staff on requesting feedback on how we can better support all employees in the workplace.

### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

Feedback informed the Council's new 4-year DIAP - actions identified in the DIAP will be included in subsequent Operational Plans.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Preparation of DIAP and specific Council strategies for Children, Young People and their Families, also we have just commenced the development of a Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Improving access to services - hence promotion of positive community attitudes. NDIS model is failing in rural communities - with service providers who presented at our focus groups telling us they came because they wanted to know how to access services or where they could go to meet the needs of their clients NDIS plan. People who are also not eligible for NDIS also report no access to services - psycho-social and employment. These systemic challenges place strain on rural Council service delivery and efforts to shift community attitudes and promote access to services as Council's are the only visible service in a town - yet Councils have no capacity to influence decisions made by NGOs or their funding bodies so very hard to shift community attitudes when the funded agencies are 'blind' and 'prefer online service delivery' and do not want to travel, have a shopfront or be 'part' of the community.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

The beginning of internal conversations about access and inclusion - being regarded as 'business as usual' cost for capital projects and that just because it meets code - the code is a minimum standard - not an optimum standard. We often have the space, in new projects, therefore we are taking the opportunity to ensure that we exceed code - because it does not cost that much more and we have one thing that metropolitan Council's do not - space to ensure that we can build wider paths, trails, parking bays etc - to meet all needs. For example, those of young mums with two toddlers walking side by side as well as someone in a wheelchair who wants to use a path and have their family friends walk beside them rather than behind or in front because the minimum standard is that the path is built to accommodate only the person in a wheel chair or mobility scooter.

## Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?

Digital access and inclusion - in our Library Services - highlighted as actions in our DIAP and Library Services Strategy. Our libraries were inundated with requests to assist patrons with online services and access during Pandemic and Border Closures. Our focus therefore, is to ensure that we have systems that are secure and support patrons who find it difficult to navigate online and digital environment do so.

### Blacktown City Council

#### Building positive attitudes

A DIAP 2021 - 2025 has been developed and adopted by Council.

2021/2022 was the fifth year of the International Day of People with Disability Talent Showcase and the fourth year of Disability Awards. This is an award event for disability leadership and achievement, recognising and celebrating the extraordinary contributions and leadership shown by people with disability, their carers, advocates and local disability service providers in Blacktown City. This award event reflects what is important to people with disability and services, and the ways they are affecting change and pursuing access, inclusion and equity for our community. The award event also recognises outstanding achievements by individuals, or disability services, who have significantly contributed to advancing the status of people with disability in the Blacktown community.

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic the Event had limited numbers. Award winners and supporters attended the event at International Day of People with Disability 2021/2022.

An Auslan interpreter was present at the event in 2021/2022. In 2021, there were five winners and 14 finalists in the following categories:

- Inspirational person of the year award
- Community advocate of the year award of Inspirational young person of the year (aged under 21) award
- Volunteer of the year award
- Organisation or business of the year award.

A media release was written and circulated from the Blacktown City Council media unit for the 2021 Disability Awards and Talent Showcase Event.

The Blacktown Council has a Disability webpage and this webpage was updated during the 2021/2022 financial year with relevant information and links to services that people with disability will use. Please refer to <https://www.blacktown.nsw.gov.au/Community/Our-people/People-with-disability>.

With the relaxation of COVID-19 restrictions, our Community Development team commenced working to create an International Day of People with Disability event for December 2022 that is open to the general public and will provide fun and entertaining activities. This will showcase the achievements of people living with disabilities and we plan to promote the award winners widely.

#### Creating liveable communities

Livi's place playground in Nurragingy Reserve is almost complete, and accessible play equipment has been included in other new playgrounds.

Blacktown City has a disability purpose built centre - The Sargent Centre. This Centre has Sensory rooms, gardens and other facilities for People with Disability and their support services. This Centre has been promoted to people with disability and their support networks.

Following advocacy by Council, the upgrade to Doonside station is underway. This will include lifts, improved ramps and footpaths and additional accessible parking spaces.

Blacktown Leisure Centre hosted Activate Inclusion Sports Day.

Blacktown Libraries have increased the number of large print and audio books available for borrowing.

The new Warrick Lane car park in Blacktown CBD includes 10 accessible parking spaces, with the new adjacent buildings offering public accessible toilets.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Council's recruitment and selection procedures, including advertising of vacant positions, are inclusive for those applicants who identify a disability. There has been no evidence of incidences of discriminatory conduct in relation to the recruitment and selection process.

The corporate induction checklist provides for information to be included that will allow for reasonable adjustment in the workplace for existing and new staff with disability.

An access awareness instruction is included in training attendance notices to ensure that all reasonable access is provided to learners.

During COVID-19 restrictions, with the majority of Council staff working from home there was limited new recruitment across the organisation.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Continued monthly meetings of the Blacktown LGA Disability Interagency which brought together over 45 local services for collaborative planning. The Blacktown LGA Disability Interagency provides opportunities for information share for all members.

Enhanced our Library Services large print collection, introduced large print high-contrast keyboards for sight impaired patrons and assistive listening devices for use in children's story times.

Blacktown City Libraries have the following equipment at Max Webber Library - large print hi-contrast keyboard, large screens, toilets have external braille signage and disability toilet has a MLAK key.

Staff have been supportive during events (particularly story time) to wear the special Assistive Listening Device (ALD) when provided by the client. The library purchases a range of resources to assist people with reading disabilities for a range of ages including large print items in adults and children's collections, spoken word in adult and children collections and read along for children where the audible and book are combined.

The Blacktown City Library also have a large number of e-Audio books where the client can download the item at any time at their convenience. Blacktown City Library also purchase many eBooks where the client can alter the print on their device to suit their needs.

The Blacktown City Council Kids' Early Learning has continued to facilitate relationships with agencies such as the department of education and NDIS providers for individual support for specific children.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

#### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

Early 2022 EOIs were sent to community members and a new Access Advisory Committee was established. This committee includes people with disability, carers and agency representatives working with them. Meetings commenced in June 2022.

Disability interagency – brings together organisations that support people with a disability to share wins, challenges and ideas. The interagency members also provide advice around what the priorities are and how they can work together. The Blacktown LGA Disability Interagency meeting objectives are: Raising Awareness, Capacity Building, Inclusion, Networking, and Collaboration.

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic 2021/2022, the majority of these meetings we held via Zoom. Highlights include:

- Monthly Zoom meetings were held with 30 - 40 service providers, people with disability, advocates and general Community members attend this meeting
- Different guest speakers from the disability sector presented at each of these meeting
- Information share and networking.

Social issues and strengths are identified in our People with Disabilities Social Profile Snapshot.

We receive feedback from the International Day of People with Disability events held each year.

### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

Council will meet bi-monthly with the new Access Advisory Committee and take on board suggestions and recommendations.

Council will consult and collaborate with member of the Blacktown LGA Disability Interagency on new projects, including the creation of the new International Day of People with Disability event.

Access snapshot around local priorities for people with disabilities, taken from Census data and the Blacktown Social Profile, will be presented to the new Access Advisory Committee and interagency.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Blacktown Tennis Centre Stanhope won the 2021 ARI ACCESS INCLUSION AWARD. This award recognises commitment to access and inclusion. Blacktown Tennis Centre Stanhope, which is a Blacktown City Council venue, pride themselves on the delivery of inclusion programs and the support they provide to inclusive activities and tournaments. The first-class facilities cater to all groups of the community with well-established programming. The range of inclusion programs and activities include Wheelchair tennis, Blind/low vision tennis, seniors' activities and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, transgender, and Intersex (LGBTI) events.

Council also runs advisory committees and interagencies in areas of multicultural, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, youth, seniors and women. Advice will be sought from these groups as required.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

COVID-19 and the resultant restrictions was the greatest challenge in implementing DIAP action this financial year.

The majority of Council staff worked from home for a significant period during this time limiting opportunities for collaboration, meetings and events.

Local government elections were postponed after the dissolution of the previous Access Advisory Committee. The establishment of the new committee was therefore later than expected.

Increased staff sickness internally and externally.

Blacktown is a City of diverse cultures – a home to around 403,000 people representing around 188 birthplaces and 182 different languages. Blacktown City is the largest Council in NSW. With this large, diverse population, there is need to increase financial and human resources to do comprehensive inclusion work in the City.

Blacktown City Council does not have dedicated 'Disability Inclusion Officer'.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

New Access Advisory Committee has been established Successful Interagency.

## **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

New Access Advisory Committee has been established.

Blacktown City Council, in partnership with Disability Sports Australia, announced funding from the NSW Government to develop a new Disability Sport Centre of Excellence. The \$15 million project, funded by the NSW Government, to be built within Blacktown International Sportspark, will deliver a new multipurpose indoor training facility for athletes with disability, along with bespoke amenities designed to allow athletes to train more often around work, family and educational commitments.

Delivery of inclusion training to all volunteer supervisors across Council.

Revamp annual funfair & disability awards.

Council's new style guide will include a section on accessibility, ensuring layout, fonts and plain English offer a better experience for people with a disability.

An application has been made for a WestInvest grant to expand and modernise the existing community centre with a fully accessible library. Other applications cover improving road and footpath user safety, the development of a new fully accessible Arts Centre, a First Nations Community Centre at Mount Druitt and accessibility upgrades to our leisure centres.

Council staff to complete P-CEP online course - Preparedness and Recovery in an emergency.

Continuing to work on completing actions listed in the DIAP.

## **Bland Shire Council**

The plan forms part of other major reforms within the disability sector, to encourage positive change to the lives of people with disability and supports the full participation of all community members in all aspects of the community. Engaging the community is vital to the Plan's success and community members and other local stakeholders are urged to support its implementation. An inclusive Bland Shire will benefit everyone and strengthen our community.

The Disability Inclusion Action Plan has been discussed at MANEX, reviewed at a Council meeting and made available to all staff throughout the organisation with staff encouraged to familiarise themselves with the document.

## **Building positive attitudes**

Disability awareness training to be offered to senior staff as required. Equal Employment Opportunity Training held for all staff in the 2021-2022 period.

People with disabilities and their carers encouraged to provide feedback to Council in the development of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan.

National Day of People with Disability Celebrations held December 2021. Promotional material circulated for these events and Councils Access Incentive Scheme Grant.

Councils Mayor and General Manager worked with students from West Wyalong High School to develop a mental health awareness video to break down mental health stigmas.

Information regarding Councils Access Incentive Grant stream published in Council Notices and on social media.

Social media promotion used to mark the (International Day of People with Disability) event, encourage the community to have their say on access and inclusion, to promote the access map and grant scheme and to increase community knowledge and awareness of access issues.

## **Creating liveable communities**

The customer satisfaction survey was held in 2020 with a majority of the community satisfied with council's public spaces.



Processes are regularly reviewed to ensure Council builds align with appropriate building codes and best practice in disability standards.

The Mobility Access Map is available on Council's website and will be promoted on social media throughout the year.

Information on Australian access design requirements and compliance standards is readily available on Councils website.

Councils Access Incentive Scheme Grant fund was promoted across social and print media during the 2021 – 2022 financial year.

Access grants were provided to the Waratah Retirement Village and Panache Life Style and Living.

Council has received grant funding to develop a new Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan (PAMP).

Funds allocated to Councils Access Incentive Scheme Grant for the 2022 – 2023 financial year.

Installation of new accessible toilets within the shire.

Support and assistance provided to various organisations who work with and advocate for people with disabilities particularly around the NDIS and access to local service provision.

Community Reference Group (CRG) meeting held in May 2022.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Council conducted an access audit as part of its most recent Access Map update to ensure the provision of a safe and accessible workplace.

Fire Warden training held in July 2020 which includes assisting people with disability during emergency evacuation procedures ensuring a range of disabilities are included. Fire warden training scheduled for November 2022.

Training made available to people with disabilities as required to assist them in the workplace.

Provisions made for people with disabilities when undergoing the recruitment process including reviewing and updating the recruitment and selection process.

Position descriptions are updated regularly to accommodate changes to optimise the opportunities given to all applicants to demonstrate their merits against job requirements.

The Disability Inclusion Action Plan has been discussed at MANEX, reviewed at a Council meeting and made available to all staff throughout the organisation with staff encouraged to familiarise themselves with the document.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Available technology promoted on Councils website and across social media.

Discussions held with service providers to improve understanding of the needs of people with disability and their carers.

Council website continues to be updated regularly to ensure it is accessible for all residents and users.

Council employs user friendly fonts, text size and colours in all outgoing documentation. Council works to ensure all documents are compatible with adobe reader. Investigations undertaken and changes adopted to increase accessibility of Council Information is ongoing.

Community Reference Group meetings are held bi-monthly with community members encouraged to voice any access issues or concerns.

Council has created portable disabled parking signs for use at events to ensure events are access friendly.

Event accessibility checklist used and site audits conducted during event planning to ensure all events are access friendly where possible.



Internal processes adapted on an individual basis to meet the individual needs of service users or staff as required.

All Council staff provided with a copy of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan and instructed to familiarise themselves with the document and the requirements noted.

The DIAP is acknowledged in Councils IPR documentation.

## **Blayney Shire Council**

### **Developing positive community attitudes and behaviours**

Highlights include training for staff and councillors during the reporting period.

As content is published a review for inclusiveness is undertaken. Agencies have been identified and publications reviewed to ensure council website, documents and communications use language, formats and colours that promote inclusion. People with disabilities are not excluded from photo opportunities.

Free Access Consulting funding is available however no funds expended.

### **Creating liveable communities**

Highlights include commencement of women's change room and amenities upgrade at Council's premier sporting ground, King George Oval. Also, completion of accessible car parking audit and Neville Multipurpose Court project that encompassed accessible parking and wide paths to facility. Funding sought for Heritage Park and Carrington Park amenities facilities encompassing improved accessible parking. Continuation of NSW Companion Card holder fee (free entry) to access CentrePoint Sport & Leisure Centre.

Active Movement Strategy is being reviewed with a focus on kerb ramps upgrades.

Access Consulting Support program promoted to businesses and assists by providing preliminary accessibility compliance advice triggered when a construction Certificate is lodged. No applications received to June. Access and inclusion is a guiding principle in Plans of Management for community land and provisions with the Development Control Plan and is applied to all applicable development.

Event Management Plan and associated approval process promotes accessible events. Event organisers are asked to consider accessible facilities and parking with event planning. Associated information is also provided.

Accessibility assessed as part of proposed renewals and upgrades (of Council assets) as project and funding becomes available. Accessible car parking projects completed in period (see highlights). Audit of accessible parking within Shire completed. Identified works being incorporate in project renewals and upgrades.

Continuous engagement with Orange and Cabonne Shire Councils to improve access to tourism destinations.

Existing accessible parking spaces reviewed and works incorporated in project renewals and upgrades. Funding sought for Heritage Park and Carrington Park amenities facilities encompassing improved accessible parking.

Council continues to support of Interagency and delivery of services to people with disability.

NSW Companion Card holder fee (free entry) to access CentrePoint Sport & Leisure Centre included in 2021-2022 Operational Plan fees & charges. Facility also promoted on Companion Card website.

Council engaged with a number of agencies and service providers involved in service provision to the aged and people with disability whilst planning Blayney Wellbeing Health Fair.

## Supporting access to meaningful employment

Highlights include continuation of Council's promotion as an EEO employer and support of Interagency meeting enabling engagement and networking of service providers that service the Blayney LGA.

## Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes

Highlights include design staff have undertaken accessibility training and reference appropriate design standards with works design and planning, regular meetings of Access Committee meetings, and endorsement by Council of establishment of Disability Inclusion Working Group for new Council term.

Principles of access inclusion in Media and Publications.

Operational Plan included program with \$5K funding for use as a contribution to assist businesses if engagement of an access consultant report was required when lodging a DA and/or CC.

Nominations called for community representatives on the Disability Inclusion Working Group.

Design staff have undertaken accessibility training and reference appropriate design standards with works design and planning.

## How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?

### What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?

Council has engaged with its Disability Inclusion Working Group comprising of interested members within the Blayney Shire LGA. It was also tabled the report through its Ordinary Council meeting held 21 November 2022 that also invites public submissions. Council has not received any complaints or submissions outlining Council's failures.

### How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?

Council has a Disability Inclusion Working Group that it regularly engages with. It is a committee of Council that has the following responsibilities:

- Advising and making recommendations to Council on matters relating to access issues, with particular emphasis on issues for people with disabilities as defined by the Disability Discrimination Act.
- Monitoring and developing strategies to maintain Council's commitment to improving access for all community members to a range of services implementing the Disability Inclusion Action Plan.
- Providing advice and monitoring the implementation of relevant Council programs and policies. Such programs and policies include but are not limited to Disability Inclusion Action Plan.

## How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?

Council engages with the whole of its community equally through a number of avenues and openly invites the whole community to participate in Council decision making through many means. Council has its committees and relationships with the Local Aboriginal Land Council. As a small council with limited resources it does not undertake targeted engagement.

## What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?

Being a small Council with limited resources we are only able to deliver improvements identified in the DIAP within allocated budgets. While we have been fortunate to deliver re infrastructure with the help of funding, we do not have dedicated community services staff nor services providers located within our LGA. Accordingly, community engagement and delivery of outcomes is most

difficult. Add to this unfunded mandates such as compliance reporting in freehand text such as this return adds to the cost and administrative burden.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Council has been successful with sourcing government grants and has undertaken significant improvements to its public buildings i.e. leisure centre, library and amenities facilities, that has presented the opportunity to upgrade them to the current accessibility standards.

### **Is there anything else your organisation is doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Through grants sourced Council is continuing its program of improvements to public amenities including car parking to improve Council's compliance.

## **Blue Mountains City Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Blue Mountains City Council has continued the promotion of inclusion of people with a disability, through Committees and Working Groups such as Councils Access Advisory Committee which meets bi monthly.

Active involvement of people with disability in Master Planning processes, development of an Accessible Safe Wayfinding Principles.

Council has also hosted 'Disability access audits with Council staff, people with a disability and residents with temporary mobility difficulties'. To highlight to Council staff and businesses alike the difficulties that can present in terms of access, and to offer some practice in design solutions that provide universal access for everyone.

There was a continued facilitation of Mental Health First Aid workshops for front line Council staff via Lifeline to assist staff with dealing with vulnerabilities of customers and staff.

Council staff have adopted the correct use of language terminology for people with disability in everyday practises to further develop positive community attitudes and behaviours of council staff with members of the public.

### **Creating liveable communities**

Works under construction include:

- Blackheath Soldiers Memorial Park - accessible toilets, improvements to path system, loop walk around duck pond, sensory plantings.
- Buttenshaw Park Springwood – new play space with inclusive elements
- South Lawson Park – 2km accessible loop walk, fenced and accessible dog off leash area
- Lomatia Park Winmalee – replacement of accessible clubhouse, retrofit of connections to the existing courts and accessible parking
- Corridor of Oaks Falconbridge – accessible board walk through the grove of heritage trees, with accessible parking and connections
- Accessible platform adjacent water's edge at Wentworth Falls Lake Works completed In both natural and urban areas to increase the accessibility for tourists and residents with a disability
- St Johns Park Blaxland - Replacement play space with accessible toilet and a range of inclusive features
- Neate Park Blackheath – retrofitted accessible path and picnic setting, wheelchair friendly surfacing, and tactile elements into an existing play space

- Hargraves Lookout Blackheath key tourist area
- Provision of Accessible parking for children/parents with disability accessing Blackheath Public school
- Mt Blackheath Lookout new parking and paths to lookout
- Accessible toilet at Pitt Park Wentworth falls for people with a disability playing sports
- New accessible parking space/s at Leichardt Street and Great Western Highway, Blackheath and Woodlands Road, Katoomba.
- Improved kerb ramp to compliant spec at accessible parking space – Parke Street, Katoomba.
- Construction of pathways at Sinclair Crescent, Wentworth Falls, Wilson Street, Lawson, Falcon Street, Hazelbrook, Hawkesbury Road, Springwood and Great Western Highway, Blaxland Mitchells Pass, Glenbrook
- 10 x bus stop upgrades to DDA compliance – Katoomba, Leura, Mount Riverview, Glenbrook.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Research conducted on how other Councils support access to meaningful employment, resulting in a DRAFT statement being developed on inclusion for our website.

Disability Inclusion and Awareness online training piloted with key staff. Training to target people leaders and hiring managers in the next six months.

Council continued the traineeship program for people with disability this year, which has slowly created a cultural shift in acknowledging that people with disability can carry out a number of tasks thus improving the productivity of the Council.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Continue to provide Auslan interpreters at Civic events, this has also been incorporated into Councils new DIAP.

Provide 15 large font keyboards for Library patrons who have vision impairments via Vision Australia.

Provide audio CD's of Councils Updated Community Care Guide (that lists services under My Aged Care, NDIS and allied health services to assist people with disability the frail aged and their carers live more independently) to all of Councils six library branches for patron use Councils Customer contact centres and disability services.

Council is currently developing a draft DIAP for 2022-2026 committed to developing an Easy Read Community Strategic Plan.

Review of Community Engagement Strategy to cater to people with disability both people with a physical disability and cognitive disability. Council has now adopted a new Community Engagement Strategy whereby Council directorates now will consult with people with a disability one on one via online and face to face methods to accommodate to their needs.

Provide Pop-up Library @ Home, to deliver non-library books, DVDs and magazines for the frail aged and people with a disability who are housebound up until the Home Library Service pilot commenced.

Pilot Home Library Service to deliver library materials to library members who may be housebound, frail, aged, living with a disability or illness, or their carers (replacing the Pop-up Library @ Home service). The pilot Home Library Service commenced delivery to customers from 10 October 2021.

Provide public access computers with access to the Internet for accessibility at all the library branches for those who are disadvantaged.

Provide library collections in multiple formats to suit a diverse range of needs, including large print books, books in Dyslexia font, DVDs, eBooks and eAudiobooks.

## How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?

### What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?

Community Engagement has been complicated by COVID-19 restrictions, however despite this, Council has continued to seek feedback from people with a disability through the following channels:

- Councils Bi Monthly Access Advisory Committee which has people with a disability on its membership and disability service providers. Through this committee designs for park upgrades and town centres have been presented to people with a disability for comment.
- Monthly Community Care Forum which comprises of disability services and their clients. Of particular significance the service Self Advocacy continued its active participation to the forum this year. This has been instrumental in assisting Council to have a better understanding of the needs of people with a disability in the Blue Mountains Community and how best to engage with them and have an understanding of their needs.
- Fortnightly Master Planning Processes - Council through its master plan process for Katoomba Master Plan and natural areas have hosted several stake holder meetings with people with a disability directly via services clientele and people with a disability on Councils Access Advisory Committee. Where people had difficulty undertaking the survey engagement via these above forums has consisted of telephone interviews, online meetings, completion of surveys and onsite meetings where possible at venues chosen by community members with a disability to ensure full inclusiveness.

### How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?

Through these engagement processes Council has made a commitment to its current and future planning to ask people with a disability how they would prefer to be engaged. Instead of expecting and assuming that the person with a disability should be consulted by traditional methods of engagement, and or come to a select venue chosen by Council to be consulted.

### How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?

BMCC adopted the Statement of Recognition and Commitment in May 2021, which commits BMCC to addressing the ongoing disadvantage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders continue to suffer because of colonisation. To support the implementation of the Statement BMCC has established a dedicated First Nations Program Area consisting of three staff members, two of which are ATSI identified positions as well as a First Nations Land management trainee position.

Initiatives include:

1. Engagement and consultation via a range of consultative mechanisms such as the Aboriginal Advisory Council (AAC), Gundungurra Indigenous Land Use Agreement committee, Dharug Ngurra Birang, the Gully Cooperative management Committee and First Nations Staff Consultative Committee to identify and address First Nations needs.
2. The AAC develops the four year Pathways' Strategic Plan in collaboration with BMCC which guide the direction of the AAC and the Council to undertake meaningful changes in the following themes:
  - Formal Recognition – developing agreements for Traditional Owners to co-manage Ngurra (Country) and all that this includes within the Blue Mountains Local Government Area;
  - Dual Naming – Building the cultural awareness in the city through place naming practices that include dual naming in Traditional Languages;
  - Living on Ngurra (Country) - Realisation of the social, cultural and economic opportunities on Ngurra (Country) for Traditional Owners and other Aboriginal people, with a strong focus on younger people.



- Honouring the Past & Responding to the Future – Locally recognising and redressing the ongoing process of Colonisation while working with Traditional Owners to develop a shared direction for the future, which embraces the interests of all Aboriginal community members.
  - Addressing ongoing disadvantage in the Aboriginal community in Civic Leadership, employment, education and economic outcomes, affordability and importantly the health and wellbeing of the community;
  - Achieving culturally responsive community outcomes, within a Local, State and Federal legislative structure which responds to opportunities for Traditional Owner recognition, inclusion and interests in Ngurra (Country).
  - Advocating for and assisting younger Traditional Owners and other Aboriginal young people to gain educational experience culturally, academically and economically to undertake leadership roles particularly in relation to opportunities that derive from Ngurra (Country). Through these central ‘Pathways’, the AAC developed actions that work towards achieving meaningful change to benefit Ngurra and the Aboriginal community. The outcomes achieving on the Pathways Strategic Plan is reported to Council at the end of each AAC four-year term.
3. Ongoing development of co-management agreements on the management of sites of First Nations significance to traditional owners on council managed lands
  4. Ongoing Implementation of the First Nations Economic Opportunities Plan to identify and pursue economic opportunities such as employment or procurement of First Nations Services This includes ATSI identified positions, cadetships and traineeships within BMCC
  5. Supporting First Nations NGOs addressing First Nations needs including the Aboriginal Cultural Resource Centre (ACRC), Gully Traditional Owners Inc., the Deadlee Café and the Gunyah Shed project.

In terms of addressing the needs of other minority groups, Council has developed a Gender Equity Strategy this past financial year which has a range of commitments for addressing discrimination. A key objective of this strategy has centred around Community engagement on Gender Equity in the Blue Mountains (GEBM), Council is supporting community engagement to raise awareness and encourage people to actively get involved through the Gender Equity Blue Mountains Project go to link. This Project was developed through wide community consultation in 2019 and 2020, culminating in a partnership with key Community organisations and an Action Plan. The partner organisations with Council are Blue Mountains Women’s Health and Resource Centre and ZONTA Blue Mountains.

Belong Blue Mountains Development of a Community Safety Strategy to in part address the issue of safety for women, the indigenous community and LGBTIQ+ communities in the Blue Mountains. Additionally, Council is committed to addressing the needs of women and children through development of a Child Youth and Family framework. This four year framework provides a list of initiatives to address the various needs of children from early development, the teenage years and family relationships. This plan was developed through consultation with children and families and the care sector. Council identified the needs of the above groups through hosting annually the following activities Tibetan Day, IDAHOBITQI Day and NAIDOC Week.

### **What has been your organisation’s greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

COVID-19 has continued to be a major issue again this past year with many staff absent from work, thus implementing projects to improve inclusion has meant the timeframes have not always been met. There has been a general cultural shift in acknowledging local government has a core role in improving access, there is however some directorates that are a little slower in their uptake of implementing the plan, this is a work in progress.



## **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Some of the Council's greatest successes in developing and implementing the DIAP actions this past financial year have included the creation and endorsement of a policy to provide adult change tables in the district parks that have high usage and endorsement of universal design principles in public domain master planning.

## **Is there anything else your organisation is doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Council is looking to trial the introduction of the Reader Pen Reader2 to provide access to those customers with reading difficulties in Council libraries. The Reader2 converts text to speech and reads the words out loud to the user. Earphones that come with the pen means that other patrons are not disturbed.

Council is also exploring online fillable forms for rebates and direct debits to enable people who are housebound and/or who have other disabilities to pay their rates online.

Council will also be progressing the development of online mobility maps for key town centres to enable people with disability, tourists and residents to make access to the town areas of the Blue Mountains more inclusive.

## **Additional information and comments about the information provided (include any contentious issues)**

Ongoing planning to address the needs of people with disability is a complex one, whilst different directorates of Council have good intentions to ensure the needs of people with disability are addressed, changes in everyday practise needs to occur. Access needs to be broader than compliance to one of best practise whereby the needs of people with a disability are at the forefront of our thinking. I am confident this will occur in due course through further development of DIAPS and community awareness at all levels of Government.

## **Bogan Shire Council**

The DIAP's focus is on removing barriers and enabling people with a disability to participate fully in their communities. Bogan Shire Council takes pride in its ability to provide a Comfortable Country Lifestyle. In order to achieve this we must recognise a socially just community is one where everyone has fair and equal access to services. It is important to acknowledge some people need more support than others. Council recognises older people and people with a disability as being in need of this additional level of support.

Council has progressed the following initiatives from the DIAP.

### **Building positive attitudes**

Council recognises International Day for People with Disabilities, liaises with the Interagency Group for ways to provide opportunities for people with disabilities and attends Interagency Meetings and ensure disability opportunity remains on agenda.

### **Creating liveable communities**

Successful in obtaining grant funding for construction of accessible toilet and change facilities at Larkin Oval.

Maintained appropriate Shade over the Liberty Swing.

An accessible front counter.

An accessible showground and racecourse.

Maintained and repaired existing footpaths pathways and obtained funding and extended accessible and safe footpath network.

Provided and maintained sufficient disabled car parking in Nyngan CBD.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Council's recruitment forms and processes are easy to understand by all.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

#### **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

##### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

- Feedback received from residents about difficulty in traversing gutter crossings at their residences.
- No significant other feedback received for the financial year.
- Council's community strategic planning process was broadly communicated and incorporated feedback from all sectors.
- Engagement with service providers at regular Interagency meeting.

##### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

Gutter crossings have been adapted on an as-needs basis. Construction of new footpaths and access ramps has incorporated feedback and is compliant.

#### **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

In the context of a small rural community of 2,400, senior staff and Councillors have multiple linkages in our community who provide direct feedback on their needs.

#### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Allocating sufficient staff resources against competing demands, including impacts of COVID-19 and multiple grant funded infrastructure projects.

#### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

The need for availability of disabled access to public toilets has been addressed through acquisition and installation of multiple modular compliant public toilet units.

#### **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Construction of new footpaths throughout the CBD to remove uneven pavers which have been identified as a significant risk for people with a disability.

## **Bourke Shire Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Council has improved disabled access to its most popular tourist attraction and to a prominent toilet block during 2021/2022. COVID-19 and extended periods of wet weather and flooding in the Bourke Shire have restricted Councils overall ability to progress actions in its DIAP. Various training sessions for staff have had to be postponed until 2023.

## **Creating liveable communities**

Major events held in Bourke during 2021/2022, which have been limited due to COVID-19 and extended periods of wet weather, included Australia Day Festivities, Christmas in the Park, Welcome to Bourke Function, and the Bourke Easter Festival. All activities were accessible. Council was happy, and the community embraced, its 2022 Australia Day Ambassador, Mr James Pittar. James is a blind open water swimmer.

Throughout the year, Council progressed its Pedestrian Access Mobility Plan by undertaking its kerb and guttering replacement program, which included the installation of improved kerb ramps.

Council in the undertaking of planning for the construction and/or upgrade for facilities gave consideration to ensuring that facilities are able to be utilised by all members of the community.

## **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Council has continued to ensure that recruitment processes provide access to those with a disability by adhering to the principles of equal employment opportunity.

## **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Council continued its liaison with the Interagency, Health professionals and Maranguka during 2021/2022, especially during the COVID-19 "Stay at home" requirements of August September 2022 where Council headed up the distribution of food packages to disabled and vulnerable members of the community.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

Community consultation was undertaken during the review of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan. Feedback from community members was incorporated into the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2021-2025 and community consultation on the draft plan incorporates direct contact with individuals and disability groups to seek their feedback on the plan.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Community consultation was undertaken during the review of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan. Feedback from community members was incorporated into the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2021-2025 and community consultation on the draft plan incorporates direct contact with individuals and disability groups to seek their feedback on the plan. Council is currently upgrading the DIAP following receipt of grant funding.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

The most impacting challenge in impacting DIAP actions this year have related to COVID-19 and then protracted flooding across the Shire which has extended for in excess of six months.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Council's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this year has been the provision of disabled access to the Back of Bourke Centre and the provision of disabled access to the toilet facilities at Rotary Park, Bourke.

## Is there anything else your organisation is doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?

Council is planning for the installation of disabled access in conjunction with relocation of the Men's Shed toilet facilities. Council is currently upgrading the DIAP following receipt of grant funding.

### Brewarrina Shire Council

Audits of both Council and Tourism websites are carried out to ensure effectiveness; the new tourism website continues to meet Disability Inclusion Act by being AA compliant with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 (WCAG) however, Council's main website still requires additional work to meet necessary standard.

The website is under construction aimed at simplifying a more user-friendly model.

Council indoor staff have undertaken online training in disability awareness to promote positive views and confidence in providing customer service to a diverse range of people.

Council continues to utilise event management planning resources in order to ensure inclusiveness to increase social participation for all.

Whilst Council have now installed a hoist at swimming pool, and lit shared footpaths from Dodge and Newtown continuous improvement remains a focus for Council. Targeted works include; more kerb and guttering, additional shared pathways with lighting to support connectivity of villages to township, inclusive equipment for recreation i.e. parks and splash park.

Council has specific referrals and pathways to NDIS providers and continues to chair the interagency monthly to identify community needs for recommendations to council.

DIAP outcomes are incorporated in Council employment Policies, Induction and recruitment processes, which are reviewed regularly. Staff continue to undertake online disability awareness training.

Council continues to demonstrate leadership by championing the interagency meetings throughout 2021/2022 which engaged approximately 15-20 people per session. The Interagency provides existing, new, local and out-reached government and nongovernment services i.e. Mission Australia Brewarrina AMS, Service NSW, Brewarrina LALC, Brewarrina Hospital, Catholic Care, Birrang, the Aboriginal Child & Family Centre, Brewarrina Central School, St Patrick's Catholic School, RaRMS, NDIS, Disability Advocacy NSW, FACS (now DCJ) Youth Centre, opportunity to discuss community needs, trends, gaps and collaborate on shared events.

### Broken Hill Council

#### Building positive attitudes

Training to develop alternative formats in Word, PDF, PowerPoint provided to Corporate Services staff, with Corporate Services further providing guidance and assistance to relevant areas as required.

#### Creating liveable communities

Broken Hill Event Guide, events and event planning templates reviewed and updated to ensure accessibility and inclusion are incorporated and made available to event organisers.

Accessibility features of the Library, Art Gallery, Visitor Information Centre and GeoCentre buildings documented and made available on websites and displayed at facilities. - Regular service, program and activity reviews undertaken by the Library, Art Gallery and GeoCentre to ensure accessibility, inclusion and participation for all.

Training provided and partnerships developed by Library staff to develop Social Stories to assist children to participate in program activities/groups.

Public Toilet accessibility information updated and added to the National Public Toilet Map and the link to the National Public Toilet Register included on Council's website under 'Facilities'.

Investigation of accessibility features of Council buildings and development of PDFs showing Council building access features and activities hosted within buildings.

Investigation and development of documentation detailing accessibility features of sports grounds, parks and playgrounds (including fencing).

Regular review and update of Library programs to ensure inclusive activities, events and programs.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Australian Network on Disability resources accessed and all policies and procedures reviewed for inclusion of best practise principles.

Recruitment Framework reviewed, updated and implemented operationally, ensuring Council's ability to implement reasonable adjustment for all applicants during the employment process.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Included and considered within the procedures in this Framework.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

#### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) Progress Reports provided to community and DIAP Monitoring Group members, with feedback provided from service providers working with people with disability on Council's implementation of Disability Inclusion Action Plan. Feedback provided reviewed by Council staff and updates/amendments made to DIAP actions as required. - Active participation in monthly Disability Interagency meetings.

#### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) Progress Reports provided to DIAP Monitoring Group members, with face-to-face PowerPoint presentations on progress and achievements made by Council staff to Monitoring Group and discussion and feedback provided by Monitoring Group members. Monitoring Group feedback reviewed by Council staff and where required amendments/updates made to DIAP actions. - Increased accessibility action/works in Council's Active Transport Plan. - Sector representation on project planning groups for Infrastructure and Events.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Engagement sessions with people with disability from groups specified in the Disability Inclusion Act 2014 were undertaken by Consultant on behalf of Council to develop the new 2022-2026 Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP). This plan was developed in 2021-2022 prior to the inclusion of LGBTIQ+ groups. Council will undertake engagement sessions from 2023 to include LGBTIQ+ community and seek feedback on the 2022-2026 DIAP.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Improving accessibility within the community through Active Transport Plan projects particularly associated with footpaths, refuge islands, and ramps.

## **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Engagement with LGBTIQ+ community.

Consult with inclusive communication experts to develop guidelines/strategies for supporting inclusion and managing differing needs.

Provision of social media stories on progress of actions.

Provision of quiet sensory areas in Council buildings and events.

## **Burwood Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

The Burwood Disability Inclusion Advisory Panel was established to work with Council to raise awareness in the community about diverse types of disability and emerging issues relating to people with disability, including barriers to access and inclusion.

Council publications and social media posts have begun to reflect and celebrate the diversity of our community, including featuring positive images and stories of people with disability.

We have celebrated International Day of People with Disability with a range of inclusive events.

Disability Awareness Training has been scheduled for the leadership team.

### **Creating liveable communities**

The Grant Park Inclusive Play space has been launched, the design of which was based on the NSW Government Everyone Can Play guidelines.

Council's website summarises the accessibility of Council venues (aquatic and community facilities) in an easy to read table.

We continue to work with local service providers to deliver targeted programs for people with disability and their carers.

We continue to convene and coordinate the Inner West Disability Forum to ensure ongoing engagement with disability service providers and their clients.

Enfield Aquatic Centre offers reduced entry and learn-to-swim class fees for people with disability who live in the Burwood LGA.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

We have entered a partnership with a local service provider to give people with disability work experience at Council venues and events.

NSW Accessible Arts has been liaised with to ensure local interactive artworks cater to residents with disabilities. Ongoing opportunities with artists with disability to work on Council arts and cultural projects continue.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Council communications are becoming increasingly available in accessible formats for our diverse community.

The DIAP actions and achievements are being reported on through the IP&R framework.

DIAP achievements have been shared and celebrated through internal Council communications.



## **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

Consultation has been undertaken with the community including people with disability, carers and advocates and local service providers. From this, key priorities have been identified in the following areas: accessible transport and parking; inclusive programs, activities and events; increasing community education and awareness; local employment opportunities; accessible public spaces; pathways, roads and signage; engagement and access to information; accessible toilets, change rooms and amenities; and consulting people with disability.

Feedback has been mostly positive and any items that have been raised have been/will be actioned by the relevant department if applicable.

### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

The Burwood DIAP was developed based on the findings from the above engagement and feedback, and the Burwood Disability Inclusion Advisory Panel established to maintain a mode of two-way communication between the disability community and people with disability who live, work, and visit the area.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Burwood Council is the fifth most diverse LGA in Australia, and as such people from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and other culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds are at the core of what we do. We have a well-established Multicultural Advisory Committee who meet bi-monthly to provide Council with enhanced insight into the needs of our multicultural community and make recommendations based on their knowledge of the local culturally diverse community. Our Disability Inclusion Advisory Panel also encompasses a range of genders, cultural backgrounds and distribution of individuals with lived experience of disability, or experience caring for people with disability, to accurately represent our local community. Recent Engagement Strategy consultations have helped us to make connections with other minority groups such as LGBTQI+ which will support our continued efforts to support their specific needs.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Due to budget and resourcing constraints, such as limited staff and financial capacity, we feel we have not been able to action as many DIAP items in as timely a fashion as we would like to deliver for the community. We hope to rectify this in the upcoming financial year.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

The combination of an International Day of People with Disability event and launch of a brand new all-abilities play space thrown by Council this year has reinvigorated the buzz internally around our DIAP. This successful event has been widely promoted throughout the community, which also brings up the profile of our DIAP and disability community and their successes. The event was well attended and managed to complete a number of DIAP actions, beyond just those pertaining to International Day of People with Disability.

### **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Burwood Council invested great time and energy in the consultation period of developing our 2022-2026 DIAP, including an exhibition period where the public were able to view and comment on the DIAP. The perception internally and from the community has been that the DIAP encompasses a

broad range of identified needs for the disability community, and at this stage no further additions have been or will be made.

## Byron Shire Council

### Building positive attitudes

Council has worked towards promoting positive attitudes and respectful behaviour towards people with disability, including "invisible" disability.

Delivered disability awareness training to 175 Council staff. Delivered Vision Australia accessible documents training to five Council staff.

Facilitated a staff working group to support the delivery of DIAP actions.

Shared access and inclusion resources with the business community.

Worked with National Parks to increase understanding of accessibility and inclusion.

Consulted extensively with people with disability over eight weeks to develop the new DIAP 2022-2026, receiving 148 responses to the community survey, 89 responses to the staff survey, three email submissions, five one-on-one telephone conversations, and participation in three online workshops.

Welcomed a new Access Consultative Working Group made up of people with lived experience of disability.

### Creating liveable communities

This year many of Council's planned accessibility upgrades were not completed due to the floods and required remediation of community assets. While this delayed the proposed works, there were still several projects that were completed to improve access and inclusion including:

- Constructed and repaired 1207m of footpath throughout the Shire
- Designed a program of works to upgrade three access ramps and deliver 140m of footpath to connect Assisted Living Accommodation to Waterlily Park.
- Designed accessibility upgrades to Kolora Way footpath and bridge
- Commenced a Pedestrian, Traffic and Heavy Vehicle Study on Tincogan Street
- Installed accessible park furniture at Brunswick Heads and Byron Bay
- Upgraded accessible amenities at Gaggin Park, Clarkes Beach and Tennyson Street
- Constructed new accessible pathways at Byron Bay Rail Corridor, Bangalow Parklands and Ewingsdale Road
- Constructed a new accessible pathway and kerb ramps at Lighthouse Road
- Created a new accessible shared path with three pedestrian refuge road crossings and kerb ramps at Tennyson Street
- Designed accessible raised children's crossing at St Johns Primary School, Murwillumbah Road
- Designed footpath and road crossing upgrades at Lawson Street
- Constructed new accessible amenities at Sandhills Estate (Middleton Street)
- Installed a wheelchair-accessible carousel and accessible bird nest swing at Gaggin Park Playground in Suffolk Park
- 20% of dwellings in multi dwelling or medium density housing developments approved in 2021-2022 are adaptable, which surpasses the minimum 10% target.
- Drafted an inclusion policy for Council Holiday Parks
- Worked on increasing all abilities cabins at Council Holiday Parks

- Continued accessibility upgrades to existing bus shelters across the Shire.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Offered workplace adjustments to all staff.

Became a member of Australian Network on Disability to support us to deliver better outcomes for people with disability through specialised support.

Seven people participated in inclusive recruitment processes.

Reviewed the online recruitment platform for compliance and accessibility.

Reviewed and updated our Flexible Work Guidelines.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Access Consultative Working Group (ACWG) members provided strategic advice to improve policies, strategies and plans and advance the inclusion of people with disability. Some key projects included the Brunswick Heads Library redevelopment project, the Brunswick Boat Harbour Upgrade and the Petria Thomas Pool at Mullumbimby. ACWG members co-developed the DIAP 2022-2026 community consultation process including the community and staff surveys.

Developed an Easy Read survey as part of the DIAP 2022-2026 consultation to ensure people with intellectual disability could participate. Developed the Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) 2022-2026 and produced an Easy Read version and Large Print Version.

753 updates published to the website all reviewed for Quality Assurance and compliance with WCAG 2.0 Level AA standard. ReadSpeaker was used 9,038 times. Accessibility statement providing information about accessibility features and requests for alternative formats added to website.

New Corporate Brand Style Guide developed and produced with a key objective of creating accessible and inclusive templates. Over 50 templates have been produced and reviewed for accessibility compliance. This includes five accessible Word templates for core document types.

Consultants' Accessibility Checklist updated with reference to new style guide.

Supported and guided staff in the preparation and implementation of inclusive communication and engagement plans for projects and initiatives. Approximately 21 active engagement projects via Your Say Byron Shire.

Prioritised the writing and publication of information in plain, easy-to-understand English.

Provided early childhood education and care in-line with the National Quality Framework Access Standards.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

#### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

This year we created a new Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026 in collaboration with the Access Consultative Working Group (ACWG) and in consultation with people with disability, people with mental health conditions, carers, friends and families, disability services providers, community organisations and staff. As a result of this process, we undertook a community survey, community conversations, and a staff survey. 248 community members and staff participated in the consultation to help create a new plan. The feedback and ideas shared by people with disability has directly informed and shaped our new DIAP.

#### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

Our Plan talks about what we want to do to make Byron Shire more accessible and inclusive. When something is accessible, everyone can use it. When something is inclusive, everyone can take part.

We hope to build on the success of our previous plan and create new opportunities to make sure people with disability can participate equally in our community. We created actions based on the feedback we received throughout the engagement process.

Some of what we heard in the consultation included:

- Promoting positive community attitudes and behaviours

There were mixed results from the consultation. Whilst 20% of respondents reported positive or very positive perceptions of people with disability in the Byron Shire, the majority of respondents felt perceptions were neutral (sometimes positive and sometimes negative) and 16% felt that perceptions were negative or very negative. The reported perception of people with mental health conditions was more negative, with 40% indicating negative or very negative perceptions, and half of respondents reporting neutral perceptions. When asked what is most important to change attitudes towards people with disability, respondents were limited to three responses to help elicit priority actions. Including people with disability in the development of communication campaigns was the top response, closely followed by the need for more community education and awareness, and the need for Council to lead by example. The need for public events to be accessible was also a popular response.

- Creating liveable communities

The majority of responses, suggestions and feedback from the consultation related to access issues in the Shire. From the survey responses, beaches and footpaths were reported as being difficult to access by the most people, with a number of other issues such as vehicle parking, public toilets and adult change facilities, and public transport also presenting access difficulties for many respondents. Additional access difficulties, beyond those listed, included access to specialist doctors and affordable allied health and mental health services, affordable housing, and Auslan interpreting services.

- Supporting access to meaningful employment

People with disability experience multiple barriers at all stages of the employment process, ranging from inaccessible interview venues, lack of reasonable adjustments to the work environment, poor career planning opportunities, rigid role descriptions and online testing that may place applicants at a disadvantage. Whilst there were some encouraging examples of employment opportunities and flexible workplaces, feedback from the survey indicated that young people have a particularly difficult time accessing meaningful employment in the Byron Shire.

- Improving access to services through better Systems and Processes

A common issue for people with disability is the difficulty in navigating systems and processes to access the services and supports they need in the community.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Of the 148 responses to our community survey, the majority of respondents were female (69%) and there was a good spread across ages, including children (16%). 6.2% of respondents identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. Given that the percentage of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population in the Byron Shire is 1.8% this is an excellent response. We fell short on asking respondents their sexuality however, we did have a question on gender. 4% of respondents were non-binary and 3% of respondents preferred not to disclose their gender. 15% of respondents speak a language other than English at home, with Bahasa Indonesian, Sudanese, German, Pashto (from Afghanistan), Spanish, and Portuguese listed as the languages spoken.

The survey was hosted online via the YourSay platform, and was available in both standard, Easy Read and text-only Easy Read versions. The Easy Read version used clear, simple messages and images to support the text. This made it accessible to a wider audience, such as people with disability, culturally and linguistically diverse communities and people of all ages with low levels of literacy. We hope that through our targeted engagement, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

people, women, children, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and LGBTIQ+ people have been able to directly inform the 2022-2026 DIAP actions through their feedback.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

This year has been one of the most challenging ever faced by the Byron Shire community (and our neighbouring communities), certainly in recent history. The end of February 2022 saw severe rainstorms bring huge volumes of water into Byron Shire catchments. The Byron Shire community did what it's renowned for and rose up to support neighbours, friends, family and strangers. People who themselves had lost everything were out there volunteering, and helping neighbours move furniture or clean the mud. As a result of the floods, Council's priorities shifted and there was a focus on recovery. It's impossible to put into words the impact this has had, and continues to have, on our community – residents, businesses, Councillors and staff.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Our greatest achievement this year was, developing our DIAP 2022-2026 through an extensive engagement process, co-designed with the Access Consultative Working Group. The Group is made up of members of the Byron Shire community with a lived experience of disability and involved consultation with people with disability, people with mental health conditions, carers, friends and families, disability services providers and community organisations. The feedback has been used to inform the strategies and actions Council will deliver over the next four years. The DIAP actions are then embedded into Council's integrated planning and reporting framework through the Operational Plan. The actions are deliverable within existing staffing and operational budgets or will be delivered through future planned capital works projects, procurement contracts and agreements. Overall, feedback has been positive, and Council looks forward to working with the community to create change for people with disability, their families, carers and friends through the operationalisation of the DIAP 2022-2026.

## **Cabonne Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Positive images are used in some of Council's publications including the current DIAP. Work across Councils Departments is ongoing to increase awareness of inclusion through publications and social media. Council communication uses language and formats that promote inclusion for example the font size on the website. Council conducted a collaborative community online survey with Orange City & Blayney Councils. Cabonne also conducted a staff and Councillors survey to better understand the needs of people with disability, this will inform the next DIAP. Council Community Services Department is building relationships with relevant partner agencies to better support inclusion in the workplace e.g. OMNIA. Council-owned building re-developments and new builds meet requires legislative building codes. Masterplans are developed for all Cabonne and encompass inclusiveness, this includes updated streetscapes for Molong and Canowindra. Initial discussion with Councils Governance Department have occurred to better capture data on requests, feedback and complaints that relate to inclusion and access.

### **Creating liveable communities**

Masterplans are developed for all Cabonne and encompass inclusiveness, this includes updated streetscapes for Molong and Canowindra. Community Transport services have an accessible vehicle available to clients. Cabonne Home Support provides services to eligible clients/carers across Cabonne. Development applications must meet the Legislative requirements. Upgrades to amenities across Cabonne have accessible bathrooms and change facilities at Molong Showground and Canowindra Morris Park and the sports ground change rooms. Council has available a document "Planning a Public event" available on its website that outlines considerations for ensuring events



are accessible, including venues and bathrooms. Liaison with Blayney and Orange City Councils has been undertaken in the planning for the new DIAP.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Council recruitment supports Equal Employment Opportunities for prospective new staff. Council Community Services Department is building relationships with relevant partner agencies to better support inclusion in the workplace e.g. OMNIA. Council conducted a staff survey to better understand the needs of people with disability, this will inform the next DIAP. Discussions have occurred between relevant Council Departments regarding identified positions within the organisation to improve employment opportunities for people with disability in local government.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Councils' children services work to ensure inclusiveness for all children and partner with local Inclusion Support Services as required. Principles of access and inclusion are included in Councils Strategic Plans e.g. Social Justice Statement. Initial discussion with Councils Governance Department have occurred to better capture data on requests, feedback and complaints that relate to inclusion and access. Meeting held with between Council Departments to discuss the need for all parties to build access and inclusion into Department plans.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

#### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

Council conducted a collaborative community online survey with Orange City & Blayney Councils. Cabonne also conducted a staff and Councillors survey to better understand the needs of people with disability, this will inform the next DIAP. Face to face consultations occurred in three Cabonne communities, Molong Canowindra & Yeoval, meetings with Molong Preschool, staff from Central West Libraries and 10 carers of people with disability or additional needs.

#### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

The above work will inform the development of the next DIAP and include tangible measures that will demonstrate outcomes.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

The next DIAP will have specific actions that will address the needs of these target groups that are culturally and gender appropriate. Work with Councils Safety, People and Culture Department will also occur to better capture baseline workforce data.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

The geographic area of our rural LGA and the number of small towns and villages where services are provided and the ongoing impacts of COVID-19 and having the ability to ensure meaningful consultation and outcomes.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Commencing internal conversations with buy-in with other Departments around the need for a whole of Council approach.



## **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Community Services Department focus on advocating for recruitment of people with disability across Council.

### **Camden Council**

#### **Building positive attitudes**

Provided Disability Inclusion Resource Kits (book packs) at libraries that encourages preschools, school groups and the public to borrow. Provided Storytime sessions that focus on Social Inclusion and encourage discussion about all abilities and differences and talk with children about recognising all abilities. Annual Council Disability Awareness and Communication Accessible training programs and assessments to continue registration as an approved Communication Access Symbol Organisation. Bi-monthly Community Access Reference Group meetings. Members work proactively and in partnership with Council and other community organisations/services to raise awareness and address access and inclusion issues of concern across the Camden area through a consultative, collaborative and action-orientated approach.

#### **Creating liveable communities**

Accessibility improvements made to existing buildings, signage, seating and equipment as a direct result of access audit recommendations. Over 100 free Master Locksmith Access Keys (MLAK) provided to eligible Camden residents. New amenities in parks and open spaces that take the needs of people with disability into account providing accessible BBQ's, picnic tables, pathways and play equipment. Accessible exercise and play equipment available at 17 locations across the Camden LGA. 5.4km of new accessible footpaths in areas heavily used by older people and located near aged care facilities. Taxi vouchers provided for People with disability to travel to and from Council meetings, events and programs. Continuous delivery of the Bins 4 Blokes Campaign, each male public toilet facility in the Camden LGA has a disposal bin available for incontinence products for boys and men who need them. Provided and continue to provide additional sessions at events to cater for people with disability including quiet zones with sensory play at community events. Provided and continue to provide quiet zones at larger community events.

#### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Partnerships established and strengthened with local service providers that supports access to employment. Partnerships built with local disability employment services to provide information and promote their services. Provided and continue to provide ongoing service delivery space at Council's Julia Reserve Youth facility to accommodate Disability Employment Organisations on a regular weekly basis to support access to local employment services for People with disability.

#### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Promoted disability awareness, training and services throughout networks and Council's websites. Delivery of Disability Awareness training to Council staff, services and community grant projects. Upgraded website to access and centralise information. Provided large font books to Disability Services and to support Camden's book bus project.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

#### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

Continuous consultation and feedback through partnerships, sector development and delivery currently and into the future with community, services and advisory groups including Camden Council's Reference group, Camden Council's Cohesive Communities Reference group, Community and Sector surveys and focus groups and Macarthur Region of Council DIAP development group.

Development of DIAP – Your Voice – interactive engagement web page Council provides various formats of consultation including focus groups, community and reference group consultations, conversations and target based surveys. This provides an opportunity for people from diverse backgrounds and abilities to be heard and have open discussions about existing resources, needs and improvements, in which Council can utilise, to make Camden a more inclusive and accessible community. The consultations and community conversations allowed for feedback on emerging needs, thoughts, ideas and aspirations to be obtained.

### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

Emerging themes and feedback from the survey results provided the information to form a series of consultations and focus groups. People with disability, their families, carers, service providers, council staff and local businesses participated in community conversations. They all shared their needs, knowledge, ideas and experiences to improve access and inclusion across the Camden LGA.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

A focus across all consultations of people with disability, included participants identifying the intersectionality of characteristics such as being LGBTIQ+, culturally diverse, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people, young people, seniors and the need for support and education. By identifying this need, quality services can be provided in a world where individuals identify and express multiple characteristics within different groups. This is embedded throughout the strategic actions of the DIAP focusing on supporting the diverse needs of community, specific groups and individuals. Council will continue to provide safe accessible environments that are supportive and inclusive to consult with community and organisations, specific groups and individuals across this four year plan for continuous inclusion and access improvements.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Changes in funding and focus within peak Disability services have resulted in the close of regular network meetings, information sharing, connections and partnerships. There is added responsibility for Councils to provide this platform for services on a regular basis. Numerous interactive face to face programs, activities, focus groups and consultations were cancelled due to COVID-19. Opportunities for work experience for students with hidden and physical disability and challenging behaviours from local special needs schools was also cancelled.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Collaboration with Macarthur Councils to support the disability sector in the broader Macarthur region. Development of strategic partnerships to address gaps in service provision. Disability access is considered in the assessment of Development Applications across Camden LGA. People with disability have an opportunity to inform design and development of key public spaces and events. Current and future facilities and play spaces access and inclusion is improved for children and adults of all abilities. Development of an online Askaway video which provided opportunities for people to ask anonymous questions about the intersectionality of characteristics of People with disability such as being LGBTIQ+, culturally diverse, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, a women or young person. People with lived experience answered these questions via the video. Development of Your Voice webpage a continuous interactive platform that seek information on how best to improve our services, facilities and communications.

### **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Sporting teams for all abilities. Mainstream sporting clubs create pathways for an all abilities teams. Enhance accessible and inclusive processes when applying for Council community grants programs. Encourage People with disability to apply for grant funding and reducing gaps in service delivery.

Develop Access and Inclusion Event Guidelines that provide best practice processes for the delivery of inclusive and accessible events. Geographical place based information for specific accessible and inclusive equipment and facilities including toilets, parking and hearing loops.

Develop publicly accessible and inclusive asset maps with information relating to facilities relevant for People with disability. Development of an interactive Askaway webpage for people to post questions including the intersectionality of characteristics of People with disability such as being LGBTIQ+, culturally diverse, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, a women or young person. People with lived experience post the answers to these questions via the webpage.

Provide education and training to businesses to meet practical and physical requirements to improve access and inclusion for People with disability. Deliver Cyber Safety education workshops for parents and children with disability. Promotion of training and workshop opportunities relating to children with disability or behavioural issues Facilitate a range of community education programs addressing the need for safe transport options for People with disability. Increase opportunities for People with disability to participate in volunteering opportunities with Council. Financial support for groups and service providers who advocate for and work with People with disability.

## **Campbelltown City Council**

No DIAP report provided, no annual report on website.

## **Canterbury Bankstown Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

The attitudes and behaviours of the general community towards people with disability have been described as the single greatest barrier to full access and inclusion. Attitudes and behaviour permeate all aspects of life. Attitudes towards people with disability are often determined by ignorance, fear, or lack of opportunity to interact. Developing positive attitudes involves increasing awareness and changing negative perceptions over time. In 2021-2022 Council:

- Produced a video in partnership with the Canterbury-Bankstown Disability Abuse Prevention Collaborative to help raise awareness about the rights of people with disability. Translated into Arabic, Chinese and Vietnamese, it shows different signs of abuse to better detect, identify and call out abuse, and where to find help and support;
- Launched a resource card of local contacts for the prevention of abuse of people with disability;
- Planned and delivered events for Mental Health Month, Carers Week and International Day of People with Disability;
- Arranged video of local person with disability to bring awareness to International Day of People with Disability; and
- Ensured Council's image gallery was indicative of people with disability.

### **Creating liveable communities**

Creating liveable communities focuses attention and resources on the elements of community life that most people desire. Creating liveable communities for people with disability is more than modifying the physical environment, it covers areas such as accessible housing, access to transport, community recreation, social engagement and universal design. In 2021-2022 Council:

- Supported the South West Sydney Activate Inclusion Sports Day for primary school aged children with disabilities - 100 students attended
- Co-hosted and led the Seniors Safety and Wellbeing Expo with 250 local Seniors in attendance at Canterbury Leagues Club
- Coordinated weekly Walking Football and Walking Basketball events with 28 participants per week across programs

- Ensured all Council capital projects utilised universal design principles for access and inclusion and where required were reviewed by the Universal Access Advisory Committee
- Ensured all Council pathway designs met accessibility standards
- Progressively upgraded signage and tactile ground surface indicators at bus stops and town centres
- Completed the annual Bus Stop Accessibility Program and Pedestrian Access and Mobility Program (PAMP)
- Ensured all Level 1 PlaySpace designs incorporated appropriate standards for inclusivity. Council goes beyond minimum requirements by designing for people living with autism spectrum disorders, mobility, cognitive and psychological disorders, by providing adult change amenities, sensory play spaces, removing spatial and physical barriers.

The new Parry Park PlaySpace, completed in 2021-2022, included accessible pathways throughout, and a range of play items suitable for differing levels of ability. Ensured that equitable access was a priority design consideration for the new Greenacre Splash Waterplay and Play Space. Current designs include family change rooms, accredited 'changing places' infant and adult facility, accessible pathways, and a range of play equipment with differing play values.

The proposed play equipment meets with NSW Government 'Can I Get There, Can I Play, Can I Stay?' principles; and Ensured the detailed design of the new Canterbury Leisure and Aquatic Centre and Max Parker Leisure and Aquatic Centre included a focus on accessibility. Initial concepts include ramp and hoist access to all pools as well as the inclusion of an accredited "changing spaces" setup. The inclusion of warm water pools will address a number of accessibility issues by having facilities that are conducive to rehabilitation, disability group programs.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

People with disability experience multiple barriers at all stages of the employment process, ranging from inaccessible interview venues, lack of reasonable adjustments to the work environment, poor career planning opportunities, rigid role descriptions and online testing that may place applicants at a disadvantage. These factors reduce their opportunities to gain and retain employment. In 2021-2022 Council:

- Supported the Zero Barriers program and attended their Advisory Committee meetings.
- Zero Barriers provides support and guidance to businesses, services and groups, helping them address barriers that prevent people with a disability from shopping, participating or using a service like everyone else; and
- Supported the Zero Barriers Excellence Awards for accessible businesses. There were 100 people in attendance.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

A common issue for people with disability is the difficulty in navigating systems and processes to access the services and supports they need in the community. Some of these difficulties stem from the quality of service and training of frontline personnel, the systems and processes required to access services, and the lack of accessible options for communicating, accessing information or providing input or feedback. There is often confusion about what services are provided across the three levels of government. In 2021-2022 Council:

- Reconstituted its Universal Access Reference Group to better represent the needs of people with disability in the local area and to provide advice and recommendations to Council in relation to local community issues and needs. They also help organise events for people with disability including International Day of People with Disability Gala;
- Facilitated the Canterbury-Bankstown Disability Abuse Prevention Collaborative. The Collaborative of local health, government, police, housing and legal service providers protects adults with disability from abuse, neglect and exploitation in their family, home and community;

- Arranged an abuse for women with intellectual disability session for the Disability Abuse Prevention Collaborative;
- Ensured that relevant Council staff were aware of their responsibilities under the new Disability and Inclusion Action Plan;
- Hosted Inclusive Communities Network meetings; and
- Conducted Disability Session for the annual Social Planning Workshops.

### **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

In 2021-2022, Council adopted a new Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP). The Plan was prepared in consultation with the community and reflects the needs of people with disability living in, working in and visiting Canterbury-Bankstown. Expanding on the achievements of the first plan, the new DIAP overcomes barriers so that everyone in our community, regardless of disability, can live more freely and equally. It sets direction under four pillars.

## **Carrathool Shire Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Support and advice have been given to businesses wishing to improve accessibility to their businesses. Only small changes have been made but it is hoped that further changes will occur.

Council has encouraged the adoption of inclusion guidelines for sporting clubs, community groups and organisations. While some interest has been shown no formal adoption by the organisations have been made. Though a number of charitable events have been held supporting various community charities.

Council has supported the HACC services to the community and the transition to home care packages. HACC services are stretched in the community and an extensive review of services has been completed. Services have been improved as much as possible with further providers encouraged to provide services with one new provider setting up in Hillston.

### **Creating liveable communities**

Draft Footpath master plan has been prepared and implemented.

Problem areas for wheel chair access has been identified in Council's kerb and guttering and footpath network. Some work has started in improving access and placing footpaths for easier access. Signs have been erected to promote parking safety in areas with the improved access.

Council has reviewed its offices, halls, toilets and other community buildings to determine accessibility and problem areas that need remediation. Due to the influx of grant funding Council has been able to renovate some of its community buildings especially the halls and improve accessibility including toilet access.

Improvement works have been completed in the Hillston Hall especially the toilet access, Goolgowi Hall, Carrathool Hall toilet access and Rankins Springs Hall. Several amenities access and other works have also been completed at the Hillston Caravan Park.

New and improved facilities have been provided at the Goolgowi Recreation Ground with accessibility provisions. A new wide walking track has been provided at the Goolgowi Settlers Park.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Council encourages flexible work practices to encourage an inclusive work environment. Council's EEO policy was reviewed, and training provided to staff.



## **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Council has completed its new website incorporating the web content accessibility guidelines 2.0 where practical.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

#### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

Council has received no adverse feedback.

Council has completed an extensive review of its HACC services and have had meetings with clients, and other service providers.

Council has also undertaken as part of the review of the Community Strategic Plan and DIAP community consultation through pop up street discussions, QR Code questionnaires, surveys, Facebook interactions and workshops.

#### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

This has been incorporated into the new Community Strategic Plan and will also be part of the review for the new DIAP during this year.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Council has also undertaken as part of the review of the Community Strategic Plan and DIAP community consultation through pop up street discussions, QR Code questionnaires, surveys, Facebook interactions and workshops. Council works with the Griffith Aboriginal Medical services in provision of services to the Aboriginal community in the Shire.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

The updating of a lot of Council facilities to improve access.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

### **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Council is reviewing the current DIAP and will implement further community projects or programs, once this review is complete.

## **Central Coast Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Delivered an annual campaign to educate the community, including children and Council staff, about disability, including, the lived experience, invisible disabilities, respectful behaviours and inclusive practices, the importance of accessible parking spaces and toilets for people with disability. Campaigns this year focussed on parking, including on number of fines for parking in accessible parking without a permit, and accessible toilets with a Master Locksmiths Access Key (MLAK). This includes:

- posters and icon used for promotion of Invisible Disabilities, established relationships with external stakeholders to champion the awareness raising campaign
- Updates to website to include apps and pictorial examples of Action Description Indicators Progress Comment



- positive stories showing the diversity of people with disability
- respectful use of shared pathways
- how to get and use an MLAK key
- promote the role and value of carers Master Locksmiths Access Key (MLAK) to increase accessibility of information
- Disability Inclusion Officer developed the Virtual Reality Live My Experience Project
- Immersive education experience using Oculus Quest2 Virtual Reality headsets and custom-built experience software to raise awareness of the barriers to access for people with disabilities and shift biases and assumptions through a first-person perspective.

Continued to promote inclusive sporting opportunities, including with local clubs, active recreation providers, associations and local sports peak bodies and at Council facilities, such as “Come and Try” Days with the expected outcome being increased participation by people with disability in mainstream sport. Activities include:

- Niagara Park Stadium hosted 124 accessible bookings / events over the year. There are three regular activities held that make up the majority of this number including:
- Wheelchair Basketball (40 bookings per year), Special Olympics Basketball (40 bookings per year) and Disability Soccer (40 bookings per year).
- Promoted and distributed links to Accessible and Inclusive Sport and Active Recreation Resource Booklet to local sport and active recreation providers
- Promoted the Accessible and Inclusive Sporting Programs and Come and Try events of other local sport and active recreation providers via The Sports Hub and Sports Activation and Development E-News, including One Culture Support Services Inclusive Championships, NSW Wheelchair Rugby League Come and Try Day and Wyoming Tigers and Southern Ettalong United Football Club Inclusive Football Programs
- Presented the Virtual Reality Live My Experience project at Sports House NSW to eight State Sporting Organisations.
- Facilitated working relationships between local providers and One Culture Support Services to create inclusive sporting programs, for example, Peninsula Floorball and Central Coast Pickleball
- Secured a Council owned space for One Culture Support Services to utilise as an office to continue their work with local providers to set up Inclusive and Accessible Sporting programs.
- Developed and distributed an EOI for local sport and active recreation providers to receive Council support to make their program or activities more accessible and inclusive
- Presented and discussed Council’s work on access and inclusion at the Sport NSW Industry Conference
- Collaborated with WeFlex and improve gym offerings at Council’s leisure and recreation for community members with disabilities.

Delivered training to Council staff including, Disability confidence training for all customer facing staff, Applying Universal Design for Planning and Design staff, and Induction training for all new staff and at least 100 customer facing staff complete disability confidence e-learning or face to face training each year. Expected outcome is relevant staff are familiar with Universal Design Guidelines:

- By end Year 4, all planning staff have attended Universal Design training
- All new Council staff receive disability awareness training at induction via online eLearning in first 90 days or combined with other face to face training
- Corporate Induction program is being reviewed and will be recommenced 2023.

Used best practice contemporary images of people with disability in Council publications and digital content. Expected out Council publications and digital content include positive and diverse images of people with disability.

- Positive and diverse images of people with a disability included in Council publications.

Support International Day of People with Disability with expected outcome to be International Day of People With Disability is celebrated and promoted by Council each year.

- Celebrated International Day of People With Disability with launch of Councils new Disability Inclusion Action Plan (2021-2025) and a promotional video campaign showcasing the Beach Access Program in readiness for summer.

## Creating liveable communities

Continued to make beaches more accessible with installation of beach matting and other accessible features with the expected outcome being mats installed at all beaches where they are feasible.

- Beach matting installed at a number of beaches including Ocean Beach, Umina, Terrigal and Toowoona Bay.

Continued to make Council bushland destinations more accessible with features like clear, wide compressed pathways, accessible signage, accessible toilets, accessible parking, views unobstructed by railings etc and shaded seating. The expected outcome being number of new or upgrade access ways to high profile bushland destinations, such as lookouts, that have addressed disability access and inclusion.

- Works have been undertaken to include accessible features.

Continue to improve accessibility of places and spaces in Budgewoi, Umina Beach, Wyong, Gosford and The Entrance with expected outcomes being access improvements made in these areas.

- Implemented multiple projects to improve access in four town centres, including:
  - Sidewalk upgrades and widening within Wyong and Budgewoi
  - Bollard upgrades to improve access in The Entrance, Wyong and Gosford
  - Clearing of shrubbery and other items on pathways throughout The Entrance, Gosford, Wyong and Budgewoi
  - Surface upgrades throughout The Entrance.

Continued to make parks and play spaces more accessible and inclusive, with design and informed by the Everyone Can Play Guidelines with expected outcome being all new and upgraded play spaces have continuous paths of travel and inclusive play elements.

- All play space designs have considered accessibility into the design in line with the Everyone Can Play Guidelines. While every aspect of accessibility cannot be included in every play space, accessibility elements have been included within available budgets.

Implement actions from the Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan (PAMP) with expected outcome being the delivery of the approved pathway works. This was substantially impacted by the prolonged wet weather and natural disasters events, with 4.38km constructed. This is still considered a great result despite the challenges.

Worked with state government on Gosford City planning to facilitate accessible linkages across Gosford, including links to key hubs and for example Gosford Train Station and Gosford Hospital. The expected outcome was to advocate to NSW Government to provide priority accessible linkages to key hubs and facilities within Gosford underway.

- Discussions with NSW Government have been continued. This will be an ongoing deliverable with various development opportunities underway.

Continued to implement program to make bus shelters accessible, including supporting infrastructure like pathways and kerb ramps with the expected outcome to be bus shelters made more accessible.

- The delivery of the approved pathway works has been substantially impacted by the prolonged wet weather and natural disaster events, with 28 bus shelters installed. This is still considered a great result despite the challenges.

Published and promote Accessibility Maps with the expected outcome to be number of maps published showing access in town centres

- Details on accessible facilities and locations is available on Council's website. A new addition this year was the Accessible Nature Central Coast brochure. The brochure was developed in collaboration with NSW National Parks and Wildlife, with 300 copies printed and distributed across the Central Coast as well as being available online.

Investigated options to deliver new Accessible Adult Changing Facilities in a key location. The expected outcome being an Accessible Adult Changing Facility or certified Changing Place is installed in at least one town centre.

- One Adult Accessible Change Facility installed as part of the upgrade to The Entrance Visitor Information Centre.

Implemented access upgrades at pools and leisure centres (e.g., hoists, accessible adult changing facility), seeking external funding if needed with the expected outcome being number of actions taken to improve access to pools and leisure centres.

- Implemented accessibility improvements to the car park and entrance of Niagara Park Stadium thanks to securing \$835,000 funding from NSW Government.

Continued to upgrade Council owned community facilities informed by access audits as part of a 10-year program with the expected outcome being number of facilities upgraded for better accessibility.

- No actions were planned or have been undertaken on facilities during this financial year.

Researched and investigate accessible parking sites to fit minibuses / minivans with rear hoists (e.g., The Entrance). The expected outcome being recommendations made on opportunities to provide suitable parking for minibuses / vans with rear hoist.

- Investigation undertaken with two sites identified. Works progressing on design and implementation.

Researched opportunity to increase accessible parking spots at beaches, shops and schools close to entrances and facilities (with compliant widths and clearance zones). The expected outcome recommendations made on opportunities to increase accessible parking Improvements on accessible parking opportunities carried out with improvements implemented at specific locations across the region.

- Investigations are continuing for accessible parking at beach locations where beach wheelchairs are available.

Building capacity of Council event staff to deliver accessible and inclusive events, activities and programs with expected outcome number of Council events staff who receive training / upskilling on delivery of accessible events.

- Capacity building activities include events staff participating in Virtual Reality program co-design sessions as a professional development opportunity to hear from people with lived experience. Events staff also met with the Access and Inclusion Action Reference Group to seek input on upcoming events e.g., Flavours by The Sea, with suggested changes implemented at event.

Plan and deliver community, cultural, sporting, recreation, leisure and learning events, activities and programs that are welcoming and accessible for people with a Disability with expected outcome being number of accessible events and activities delivered annually Events delivered this year:

- National Simultaneous Storytime was held in May with all branches participating. This was an accessible event with online streaming of Auslan, accessible facility and also live reading of the story Family Tree by Josh Pyke.

- Niagara Park Stadium hosted four accessible school sporting events including the Department of Education Boccia Tournament and the Central Coast Multi Sport Days
- Female Multi-Sport Program at Peninsula Leisure Centre which was open to participants of all abilities.

Provided Council theatre and performance art spaces that are welcoming and inclusive, such as Auslan interpretation, audio description and reserve accessible seating only available to people with disability with expected outcome being teams deliver at least two accessible activities per year.

- The programming of accessible performances, workshops and Auslan Interpreters was greatly impacted by COVID-19. However, accessibility additions at Laycock St Theatre include Hearing Loop and National Relay Service, accessible parking, accessible toilets, reserved wheelchair seating, accessible performer access lift and Companion Card.

Ensured Council's Comprehensive Development Control Plan (DCP) incorporates inclusion of universal design principles with the expected outcome being The Development Control Plan talks about the importance of designing for universal access.

- This matter will be considered as part of the Central Coast Local Housing Strategy and considered as part of a future review of the residential planning controls within the Central Coast DCP.
- Promote Universal design through Council's Housing Strategy Council 's Housing Strategy includes universal design principles
- Finalised Central Coast Public Domain Guidelines to reference AS 1428.1 Design for access and mobility,
- Part 1: General requirements for access - new building work Public Domain Guidelines finalised and highlighting importance of access and mobility
- Work is continuing on the Street Design Manual, with the finalisation of Stage 1. Stage two will continue into 2022-2023.

Ensured universal design and accessibility requirements are considered for all renewal and Upgrade programs, new capital works, infrastructure and place planning where practicable with the expected outcome being demonstrated application of universal design principles

- Council's Disability Inclusion Officer (DIO) developed an Internal Universal Design Guidelines document promoted its use across Council. The DIO also provided support to staff to move beyond basic compliance towards best practice and innovation in universal design.
- New and upgraded play spaces delivered this year in accordance with the Everyone Can Play Guidelines, include:
  - Ross Park, Avoca Beach
  - Hylton Moore Oval, East Gosford
  - Woolmers Crescent Reserve, Mardi
  - Palm Gully Park, North Avoca
  - Turo Reserve, Pretty Beach
  - Jirramba Reserve, Saratoga
  - Tunkuwallin Oval, Gwandalan
  - Sun Valley Park, Green Point.

Other projects delivered include:

- Narara Skatepark formalisation of new disabled parking spaces, DDA compliant ramps and
- connecting shared pathways

- Sun Valley Park construction of new DDA compliant toilet facilities with MLAK adult changing places facilities, ambulant and accessible toilets, ramps and connecting pathways,
- Adelaide St Oval, Rogers Park and Lemongrove - new amenities buildings that are DDA compliant
- Sensory Park, Narara rectification and upgrade of pathways to improve accessibility within the reserve.
- Woy Woy Waterfront Masterplan accessibility requirements have been considered within the concept design
- Myrtle Brush Community Hall -construction of ramp.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Continue ongoing collection of data on staff disability status (non mandatory) through anonymous options Data collected on annual basis. As data collection is non- mandatory it is making data analysis difficult.

Assist Managers and Supervisors to support staff with disability, including mental health, by providing reasonable adjustments with the expected outcome being assistance provided as required.

- Reasonable adjustments are made as required to enable all people the ability to participate in the workplace.
- Mental health and resilience training pilot rolled out May 2022.

Ensured that job advertisements are provided in formats that are compatible with assistive technology, and applications are accepted in alternative formats where feasible with the expected outcome being number of people identifying as having a disability who have applied for a role with Council.

Reviewed job descriptions to remove non-essential criteria that impacts people with disability, e.g., requirement for driver's licence if not essential for the role. Expected outcome being number of job descriptions where amendments made for new hires.

-This action item will continue to be addressed as part of the new performance appraisal process.

Ensure that all professional development opportunities within Council, including leadership programs, are explicitly accessible and inclusive of people with disability, with reasonable adjustments made to facilitate access and delivery. Expected outcome being training information, delivery and premises are accessible and adjustments have been made to enable full participation.

- Council 's Equity Diversity and Respect Policy ensures that a work environment is provided that fosters equity, diversity and respect and is free from unlawful discrimination, harassment and vilification.

Actively attract people with disabilities who have a start-up business idea to participate in Council's LaunchPad program. Expected outcome being 23% of people with disability involved in skills development and networking activities.

- The LaunchPad program was reduced this year due to COVID-19.

Reviewed workplace leave and flexibility policy and associated FAQs, so Managers know how to support staff who are carers for people with a disability. Expected outcome being the revised policy recognises the role of carers and outlines how they can be supported.

- Project delayed due to resourcing constraints.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

As a government agency Council are required to meet the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0). This item was delayed due to the introduction of new software.



Ensured that at least one representative from each unit across Council completes online accessible document training

- Online training for Council's intranet commenced June 2021 with a primary group completing training on creating accessible web documents. This training continues to be available and will be ongoing.

Make information available on accessible events, activities, services, support and places, including links to accessibility apps, info on where to get help, inclusive community and council activities. Expected outcome number of events, activities and services for which access information is available.

Information provided on Council's website, included:

- Events, programs and activities available
- COVID-19 support services information
- The Accessible Events Guide
- The Accessible and Inclusive Sport and Recreation resource
- The Accessible Nature Central Coast Guide
- The Making Access and Inclusion Your Business resource kit.

Implement use of speech to text technology for frontline staff to communicate with people who are deaf and promote that it's available with expected outcome being front desk staff know how to use speech to text technology to support people who are deaf.

- Technology implemented.

All Council websites comply with the most current web content accessibility guideline (WCAG) version. Expected outcome being web compliance audited bi-annually and compliance actions addressed.

- All Council websites are compliant.

Implemented targeted communication to disability network and contacts to share information about access and inclusion developments / opportunities at Council and across the Central Coast community, including reach to Aboriginal, Deaf and CALD communities. Expected outcome being biannual communication to key groups.

- Council's Disability Inclusion Officer (DIO) attended relevant disability network meetings throughout the year, including the Access and Inclusion Reference Group meetings. The DIO shared information at these meetings about access and inclusion developments / opportunities at Council and across the Central Coast community.

Consulted with Council's Access and Inclusion Reference Group to improve awareness amongst people with disability about local emergency information resources, such as the Central Coast Disaster Dashboard, and advocate to primary agencies about any issues raised about access to emergency information. Expected outcome being Access and Inclusion Reference Group have been consulted and feel informed.

- Due to the impact and follow up work associated with the multiple disaster events in the year, this action has been delayed. This action will be incorporated into the planning for current resilience projects relating to access to disaster information, to be delivered across 2022-2023 and 2023-24.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

Council meets quarterly with its Access and Inclusion Reference Group which is made up of a diverse group of members from the community with lived experience of disability, carers and sector



workers who advise on the implementation of the DIAP. Staff from across Council regularly present to the group on draft plans to seek their input to ensure Council's deliverables are accessible and inclusive.

The Reference Group were involved in the co-design of projects including but not limited to the "Live My Experience" Virtual Reality Project, Accessible Nature-Central Coast brochure, and Invisible Disabilities campaign.

The Disability Inclusion Officer attends local Disability Interagency meetings, collaborates with the sector on projects and works closely with local peak bodies and advocacy groups.

### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

Scheduled ongoing quarterly meetings with Access and Inclusion Reference Group.

Recruitment of new members for Access and Inclusion Reference Group commencing 2023.

Quarterly reporting of progress of DIAP actions as part of IP&R framework.

Disability Inclusion Officer provides monthly report to line managers on progress of assigned actions, ongoing community engagement and ongoing attendance at local Disability Interagency meetings.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Central Coast Council continues to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People, women, children, people from CALD and LGBTQI+ people. This work is through various Council committees such as Status of Women Advisory Group, Social Inclusion Advisory Group, Aboriginal Advisory Committee; through development and implementation of Strategies/Plans/Polices such as the First Nations Accord, draft Social Inclusion Charter, Youth Strategy, Positive Ageing Strategy; and through projects and programs such as: Ngura, Maliga, Elders Reading Program; International Women 's Day Forum; If these Walls Could Talk, Home Exhibition, Multicultural Expo.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

COVID-19 shutdown for the majority of the year impacted on the implementation of the DIAP.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Recognition of the role and voice of the Access and Inclusion Reference Group members and the value, knowledge and experience they added to Council and external projects.

### **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Continue to implement and report on DIAP actions.

Continue to support and resource and prioritise the input of the Access and Inclusion Reference Group.

Apply principles and practices of Universal Design across Council work.

Continue to implement innovative education programs internally and externally.

## **Central Darling Shire Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Central Darling Shire Council has reviewed the Disability Inclusion Action Plan. This review was conducted to include consultation with the community which occurred over a six-month period. The

Central Darling Shire community engaged with this consultation, with 20% of the community participating.

### **Creating liveable communities**

Central Darling Shire Council will continue to provide both soft and hard disability infrastructure through the implementation of capital projects. Such projects include identifying and implementing measures to improve the accessibility of public toilets throughout the Shire, improving accessible paths of travel (parking, footpaths and kerb ramps) in our town and village centres to key destinations such as local services, recreation spaces and community facilities, and promoting and supporting access to local services and activities for children and young people with disabilities.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Council is dedicated to inclusivity and will continue to include and encourage people with disabilities by engaging them in meaningful employment. Council has and will continue to support existing employees with disabilities, by providing the appropriate technology to be successful in their work. Council will also continue to liaise with other government agencies, local communities, and businesses to promote and support employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Council is a provider of live better services at our Ivanhoe service outlet, and will continue to ensure that Council publications are accessible, as well as monitor and update Council's website to ensure access standards are addressed and incorporate captioning for video content on our website. Council will continue to raise awareness in the community about local access issues through including information about access in our promotional material and signage, promoting accessibility upgrades to all services and facilities within the Shire and including information about access on Council's website. Council will further ensure access considerations are included in all projects in our annual Capital Works program, include assessment of disability access when collecting information and data about our assets, and include idea.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

#### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

#### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

Council has reviewed its Disability Inclusion Action Plan, with 20% of the community participating in consultation over a six-month period. Council is also in the process of improving access to the Menindee Post Office and IGA public toilets by applying for funding via Round five of the Stronger Countries Community Fund. Disability Access is also highlighted in Council's Town and Village Plans.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Central Darling Shire obtains 50% First Nations peoples in a population of two-thousand, with a vast topography spread over a large area and a wide demographic of people that Council will continue to try and provide for.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

In addressing delivery of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan, Council has contended with a lack of funding and appropriate funding streams to build disability access infrastructure. With no prescribed funding for disability access, the cost of implementing the Disability Inclusion Action Plan needs to be withdrawn from other mainstream funding sources.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Council is, however, pleased to report that any capital improvements to community infrastructure incorporate Australian standards for disability access.

## **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Council is developing a working partnership with Maari Ma Aboriginal Health Corporation to provide a new health facility at Wilcannia, as well as working with not-for-profit organisations in providing affordable housing for low SES communities.

## **Cessnock City Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Council supported and participated in Cessnock's 2021 International Day of People with Disability event held at Cessnock PCYC. Introduced access statement on Council's website and in community engagement promotions to welcome feedback and encourage people to advise Council of any accessibility requirements.

### **Creating liveable communities**

Partnering with Finding Yellow to deliver the 'Including You' tent at the Weston vaccination hub, providing a socially inclusive area for people to retreat to when they needed a quiet space. Holding sensory storytime events at Cessnock and Kurri Kurri Libraries, designed for children with disability, combining story telling with sensory aids to help children feel calm and comfortable.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Profiling local businesses that support inclusive employment practices on the Advance Greater Cessnock website.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Publishing an Easy English version of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan which provides a concise and understandable summary of the plan for people with low English literacy. The introduction of a hearing loop in the Council Administration Building's Customer Service Centre to improve communication options for people with hearing aids and cochlear implants. Reviewed Council's Code of Meeting Practice and including the ability for people to attend in public access remotely via audio video link, improving opportunities for people with disability to participate in decision making processes.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability**

### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

Only this week, I received an email from an employment agency that provided positive feedback on our efforts for inclusion with our community messaging and promotions. The Cessnock City Library also often receives compliments for its diverse and inclusive programming. The feedback we receive is measure of how we are delivering programming and services to people with disability.

### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

We completed an accessibility audit of Council's public amenities to identify actions, as part of Council's Public Amenities Review. The audit will be used for funding submissions and when considering Council's future capital works programs.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

We have been promoting both within the organisation and to other organisations Council's Accessible and Inclusive Events Practice Guide to community event organisers who were planning for Youth Week, Seniors Festival and NAIDOC Week events. We have noticed that the event program has grown in strength with diversity and considerations for access to events and opportunities to remove barriers. We are also now midway in the delivery of the Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan 2020-2024.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Confidence within the community and engaging with activities is still growing given a considerable part of the reporting year required many activities to cease in accordance with the Public Health Order.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Securing grant funding for access improvements for the refurbishment of the Cessnock Performing Arts Centre and creating 'Performance, Arts, Culture, Cessnock (PACC)'. The funding includes a lift that will connect from the ground floor to the first floor upcoming exhibition and maker's space.

## **Is there anything else your organisation is doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Although not a new action, the organisation has been considering and scoping opportunities to increase employment for people with disability.

## **City of Canada Bay**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Partnering with Australian Network on Disability to deliver two online workshops 'The disability confident workforce' and 'Welcoming customers with disability,' which was made available for all staff.

Mental health training delivered to front line staff as well as information and webinars provided to staff.

Formation of a new Access and Inclusion Committee after Council elections.

Promotion of accessible and inclusive practices and events including Braille stickers on bins, creation of CALD videos on transitioning to school, and celebration of International Day of People Living with Disability.

Increased diverse images in Council's publications including the Community Strategic Plan, End of Term report, and Annual report.

### **Creating liveable communities**

Our capital works program has accessibility projects scheduled for next four to 10 years.

The community grant guidelines were reviewed to support the needs of our diverse population.

A set of adaptable housing guidelines were incorporated into the Development Control Plan.

More short term and disabled parking spots have been implemented following a review of the Majors Bay Shopping Village.

12 additional bus stop upgrades were completed in 2021-2022.

A Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan was adopted in July 2021. New pedestrian crossings completed include Gale Street in Concord, Shoreline Drive in Rhodes and Tennyson Road in Mortlake. A footpath was also upgraded at Salton Reserve, Drummoyne. Pedestrian crossing upgrades were completed at Stanley Street, Concord and Rawson Avenue, Drummoyne.

Accessibility facilities planned for Concord Oval such as accessible parking, toilets and seating. Accessible guides and maps for Concord Oval were completed.

Continued to deliver and fund accessible programs including Bay Connection and BayRider bus services, Bayside Kids, Gymability, and programs for people living with disability across the library network. It is noted that staff were needed to run the programs at Five Dock Leisure Centre.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Preparation of a draft Reasonable Adjustment Policy was completed.

Our recruitment policy incorporates a child safety component.

Council's corporate values of working together and being respectful ensure that all staff are valued and respected, including those with diverse background and perspectives, and those who have carer responsibilities. Our flexible working arrangements, which include working from home, access to carer's leave, as well as part-time employment and rostered days off, are in place to support all employees to balance their work and personal responsibilities.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Accessible formats for Council documents including an Easy Read DIAP and Community Participation Plan have been created.

Translated videos to assist Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities' transition to school were developed. This project won a Local Government Professionals Projects Award.

DIAP actions are included in the Delivery Program.

### **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Council's Home Library Service supports carers as well as housebound community members through the provision of Library materials. Deliveries are made by local volunteers to provide additional social connections. The Seniors bus trip program also aims to provide social outings and respite to carers. Council funds community organisations through community grants and Club Grants to support programs that include carers.

The draft Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2021-25 was endorsed for public exhibition in June 2021. Until the plan was adopted in September 2021, the former plan remained in place.

The new Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2021-25 benefitted from the input of people with a disability as well as service providers, carers, the general community and Council staff through a combination of online and COVID-19 Safe activities.

## **City of Newcastle Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

City of Newcastle adopted our new DIAP 2022-2026 in February 2022. This replaced our previous DIAP 2016-2019 which had 57 actions. The previous plan was broad and ambitious, and we delivered fully or in part 55 of the 57 actions within the plan. The remaining two actions were identified as being achieved via other means than via the DIAP. DIAP 2022-2026 has 35 actions across 13 objectives and actions delivered for 2021-2022 relate to some aspects of the previous plan and also some from the newly adopted plan. In relation to attitudes and behaviours, City of Newcastle (CN) has delivered the following:



Hosted an open invitation meeting of the Access Inclusion Advisory Committee for the public to attend and meet the new Advisory Committee

Delivered an Inclusive Conversations Forum on Unpacking Vulnerability in the Newcastle context, which was developed using an inclusive platform to enhance online accessibility

Undertook Library services focused on disability inclusion training and planning

Held public exhibition of Draft DIAP 2022-2026, including creating promotional videos with Auslan embedded within the video and a standalone version (Respective links:

<https://youtu.be/2FdyyqfRDdU> and <https://youtu.be/o57ogUUxraY>)

Engaged members of the Access Inclusion Advisory Committee, people with lived experience of disabilities, employers, senior managers and disability service providers to promote the DIAP public exhibition period, comment on disability inclusion and promote inclusive events

Worked with external stakeholders to assist, develop and support their DIAP actions

Created a new community/voluntary services capacity-building program called NewConnects with a module on Access and Inclusion and held pilot sessions of the program for refinement. Full rollout in 2022/2023

Delivered our third iteration of the Count Us In Newcastle Disability Inclusion Festival including the development of promotional video featuring people with lived experience, view the video aimed at addressing positive attitudes and behaviours

[https://www.newcastle.nsw.gov.au/getattachment/Community/Community-Services/Disability-Access-and-Inclusion/Count-Us-In-2022/COUNT\\_US\\_IN\\_2022\\_1080\\_MASTER\\_Captioned\\_V1.mp4?lang=en-AU](https://www.newcastle.nsw.gov.au/getattachment/Community/Community-Services/Disability-Access-and-Inclusion/Count-Us-In-2022/COUNT_US_IN_2022_1080_MASTER_Captioned_V1.mp4?lang=en-AU) View the Count Us In

2022 program at <https://www.newcastle.nsw.gov.au/community/community-services/disability-access-and-inclusion/count-us-in-2022>

## **Creating liveable communities**

Delivered new accessible park infrastructure in multiple locations

Improved our lift capability at City Hall to provide better access to all areas of the building

Consulted with the Access Inclusion Advisory Committee regarding inclusive events

Presented at the Accessible and Inclusive Tourism Conference for the Asia-Pacific regarding accessible tourism opportunities in Newcastle and the accessible dollar

Planned for accessible and inclusive features to ensure they were effectively delivered via our "New Annual" cultural program that attracts local and regional patronage in the tens of thousands

Delivered inclusive programs via our Libraries, Museum, Art Gallery and other programs

Delivered approximately \$7 million on Local Centre upgrades in the public domain to increase accessibility and hub connectivity

Commenced community consultation and engagement related to the Principal Pedestrian Network, a mapped network of existing and future pedestrian routes that support activity and accessibility into and around key destinations such as neighbourhood and retail centres, schools, parks and transport stops

Delivered West End Streetscape project, which includes increased accessibility features, completed East End Public Domain Project (Stage 1), including new shared paths, commenced Newcastle Ocean Baths upgrade where representation from the Access Inclusion Advisory Committee informed design, delivered new, safer cycleway connectivity on Hunter Street West and Queens Wharf

Continued working with Variety, the Children's charity, to develop the flagship Livvi's Place inclusive regional playground and waterplay area in Foreshore Park Provided a grants stream specifically related to social inclusion to encourage grant applications related to disability inclusion



Provided a grants program via CN's Count Us In Disability Inclusion Program to assist small organisations and other individuals in hosting inclusive events and activities. Examples included accessible fishing at the Hunter Wetlands, inclusive drumming workshops, Families Supporting Families inclusive disco, health and nutrition workshops for people with disabilities and art workshops for the Deaf community.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Continued the work to develop an Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Strategy for City of Newcastle that provides a roadmap for the next four years to enhance develop our maturity as a disability confident employer and an employer of choice for people with disabilities.

Developed an internal Disability Employment Network with a specific dedicated communication channel

Commenced a monthly communication program to facilitate, inform and promote inclusion across the organisation

Provided disability awareness and Auslan training for staff, promotion of flexible working arrangements and carer's leave provisions

CN's People and Culture Staff, including those involved in recruitment and training, attended and supported the Hunter Disability Expo 2022 and various Count Us In events including the Newcastle Business Breakfast

Supported the Art of Digital Storytelling program to enable people with disabilities to learn new digital skills for employment

Participated in the National Disability Co-ordination Officers networks promoting transition to work and further education for people with disabilities.

Undertaken filming for the development of online video clips focused upon increasing and understanding disability inclusive employment. It is hoped these clips will be used for internal and external stakeholders to promote employment of people with disabilities. To view clips <https://www.newcastle.nsw.gov.au/Newcastle/media/Documents/Community/Disability%20Access%20and%20Inclusion/Count-Us-In-Training-2-Minute-Video.mp4> And <https://www.newcastle.nsw.gov.au/Newcastle/media/Documents/Community/Disability%20Access%20and%20Inclusion/Count-Us-In-Training-Final.mp4>

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

CN, via our newly adopted Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026 is committed to WCAG 2.1 AA for website accessibility. This commitment will improve accessibility for three major groups: users with cognitive or learning disabilities, users with low vision and users with disabilities on mobile devices.

Our progress towards more accessible content relies on training more staff to create accessible content and ensure information and Communication Technology (ICT) systems procured by CN are considered in terms of accessibility for people with disabilities, for both staff and community. We have delivered improved in person and chat features to assist manage customer enquiries.

Delivered resources and support on how to create inclusive content.

Established a Customer Experience team that considers access and inclusion across its work program as a normal function of its work.

Provided Customer Service staff with training opportunities related to disability inclusion and accessing information.

Our newly adopted CSP, Newcastle 2040, includes an overlapping theme of inclusion, 'a place for everyone, that is interwoven across four themes.

Delivered the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026 and the CSP Newcastle 2040 in multiple formats, increasing accessibility.

Improved library systems to facilitate easier access for people with disabilities.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

In preparation of DIAP 2022-2026, we held extended consultation for our new DIAP considering the impacts of COVID-19 on the community. This resulted in our new DIAP being adopted in 2022 instead of 2021 as planned to allow for further participation of the community in the development of the plan. We undertook drop-in sessions, hosted online feedback processes, placed the Draft DIAP on public exhibition for an extended period beyond the mandatory exhibition period and undertook consultation with a wide array of relevant stakeholders. We hosted a theme consolidation session where we outlined to stakeholders what we thought we heard said by the community and confirmed and shaped these themes with stakeholders based upon their feedback.

From the public exhibition stage of the Draft DIAP 2022-2026 we addressed each aspect of the feedback and made changes to the initial draft based upon this feedback where it was not already covered. Two examples include changes related to "identity first language" and "intersectionality of disability". This enhanced our adopted plan along with other feedback gathered.

Our community engagement undertaking for the development towards our new Community Strategic Plan ensured that we targeted consultation with people with lived experience and the participant profile was representative of the broader community to ensure the sample was valid and not skewed by any one demographic grouping.

We have enhanced our delivery of documents in multiple formats and also our use of Auslan interpreted messages to the community.

We received positive feedback from the community in relation to the Draft DIAP 2022-2026 and the plan was adopted unanimously by Council. There is always more to be done and one aspect is the backlog of infrastructure works that is common in the local government context. CN has taken an approach to focus upon upgrading local community villages/centres in a holistic manner where improvements to these suburban hubs has the maximum benefit to the local community, overall aiming to deliver hub connected centres.

An additional focus within our DIAP 2022-2026 is to enhance the opportunities for aquatic and coastal improvements for people with disabilities and investment in the upgrade of the Newcastle Ocean Baths and a regional level inclusive PlaySpace on our harbour foreshore will deliver new inclusive play and recreation opportunities.

### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

As mentioned in previous answers above, both the consultation processes for the Draft DIAP 2022-2026 and the new Community Strategic Plan have ensured that these documents have been shaped by community feedback and community desires. The actions within the plans are delivered primarily via the Operational and Delivery Plans of Council. Three approaches that assist in our delivery of projects are, engaging people with disabilities into project reference groups, utilizing the expertise of access consultants and also engaging with our Access Inclusion Advisory Committee for comment and advice.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

City of Newcastle is in the process of developing and potentially adopting our Local Social Strategy. This new social plan has undertaken extensive consultation across the community with over 2000 people being engaged in providing feedback on what makes a caring and inclusive community. Each of the specified groups within the Disability Inclusion Act 2014 have been considered and are equitably represented via these consultations for our social plan and this adds to the consultation already undertaken in preparation of our DIAP 2022-2026.

Intersectionality is identified as a consideration within our DIAP 2022-2026, and consultation for the Draft Local Social included recording and featuring diverse voices and ambitions of our community. For more information and to view these stories, visit <https://www.newcastle.nsw.gov.au/have-your-say/projects/local-social-strategy>

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

The greatest challenge remains resources to address community expectations of delivering a more inclusive community. Council has a broad remit, however responsibility for various services, programs, schemes and infrastructure resides with State and Federal Government. Council can and does play a part and at times, leads, however funding from higher levels of government can hasten local outcomes or enhance existing programs and projects.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

The adoption of DIAP 2022-2026 in February provided an opportunity to highlight both internally and externally what our future focus would be upon via the 35 identified actions within the plan.

The establishment of the new membership of the Access Inclusion Advisory Committee via an expression of interest process is also a wonderful way to have people with disability engaged in the local council processes and providing advice and insight into how to create a more inclusive community.

However the highlight for our organisation internally is developing our Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Strategy that will assist us become a more mature organisation that is a welcoming place for all, with a staff profile that represents the community we serve.

Externally our greatest progress is our delivery of new and improved infrastructure in the public domain, inclusive playground features, increased shared pathways, construction of additional kerb ramps, the roll out of local centre (suburban) upgrades which address long standing accessibility issues is where the community can visualize and actually experience the progress made, better facilitating improved community participation.

To view more information regarding our progress across our organisation visit <https://newcastle.nsw.gov.au/about-us/our-responsibilities/integrated-planning-and-reporting/annual-report>

### **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

As our DIAP 2022-2026 was adopted in February 2022 our actions are newly identified and being progressed. Our ability to capture and inform our community about our progress can be enhanced and we are working on ingraining our DIAP actions better within our reporting processes aligned to the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework. This will ensure greater accountability and provide a broader view of our progress that we can reflect upon and also share with the community.

### **Additional information and comments**

Council is provided with guidance from the NSW Government in relation to DIAP planning and is also informed by the themes and directions of Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-2031 however there is not enough consideration of directing resources/grants towards Local Council to improve how Councils' can make a significant impact at the local level. This is something that should be addressed to hasten the creation of a more inclusive community.

## City of Parramatta Council

### Building positive attitudes

We had a Disability Confidence workforce training sessions attended by over 80 staff and was facilitated by the Australian Network on Disability around practical adjustment which can be implemented within Teams

We had a great series of events (in relation to a program of activities to mark International Day of People with a Disability) in partnership with libraries, our Civic building Phive and Riverside (our Theatre) with a focus on Auslan translation and neurodiverse teens We have a social media campaign, and the reach for our target audiences were well above the benchmark at 2.05%. The Lord Mayor made a statement and there was significant exposure within council and outside via media releases and our Civic building Phive roof was light up in purple to mark the day.

Some of the other activities included:

- 25 November - Christmas Actually show at the Riverside Theatres - Auslan Interpreted 7:30pm
- 29 November - Story Time Auslan Interpreted at the Dundas library 10:30am
- 30 November - Story Time Auslan Interpreted at the Wentworth Point library 10:30am
- 2 December - Story Time Auslan Interpreted at the Carlingford library 10:30am
- 3 December - Story Time (Cancelled due to illness) Auslan Interpreted at the Parramatta library at PHIVE 10:30am
- 3 December – 5 Parramatta Square Illuminated purple at night from 6pm-12am
- 6 December - Story Time Auslan Interpreted at the Constitution Hill library 11am
- 8 December - Wentworth point Library and Hub Showcase Uniting Exhibition in recognition of International Day of People With Disability
- 8 December - STEM Micro:bit for Teens with Autism Parramatta Library at PHIVE from 4pm-5:30pm. Join STEM expert Philip Mallon to learn how to program a Micro bit as a clock and use it to effectively manage time. 12 to 18 years. All materials provided.

### Creating liveable communities

We have three digital wayfinding kiosks around Parramatta CBD to ensure visually impaired people have better access. And hoping for another two by the June 2023

Designed new Council Chambers in Parramatta Square to enable and encourage access and full participation by Councillors and community members with access needs. This has been completed as our new Civic building was opened Sept 2022. The facilities had standing desks and bigger monitors with eReader capability.

### Supporting access to meaningful employment

Commenced implementing Council's Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Strategy to develop a more inclusive workplace by starting with a with a DE&I survey in 2022

Took out Silver membership with Australian Network on Disability (AND) and have activated some of the hours in relation to the Access and Including Index to enable benchmarking.

We have a robust Disability Employee Resource Group (ERG) with about 10 members from across Council and the group organised a successful Disability confidence training which was held recently.

### Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes

Aiming to work towards developing subject matter experts on inclusion and access in each Directorate to support the application of inclusive practices in 2023.

Working towards achieving Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1AA to continually improve access to information in 2023.

Developing inclusive guidelines for content, this includes language, contrast, font/size/spacing, and representation in imagery to ensure accessibility of information produced in 2023.

We have commenced developing a robust Outcomes Measurement Framework and are in the final stages of developing a great Framework. It will track our progress across the focus areas and how we will measure these actions and collect relevant data.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

We wanted to ensure that the new plan is truly reflective of the needs of those with a lived experience of disability, and so we undertook consultations with relevant stakeholders and community members. To ensure that the consultation was substantive and meaningful, engagement was undertaken in four key stages, with each stage building upon and informing the next stage of consultation.

Council sought to conduct in-depth discussions with people who have a lived experience of disability. In the end, 70 people participated in ways that allowed people to contribute in various ways that matched their abilities, including through on-on-one interviews, focus groups, triad interviews (i.e., an interviewer, a person with disability and a carer) and via an online community forum. Participants were able to type or record their voices or videos, which were automatically transcribed to allow other participants of varying abilities to interact with them.

Council also hosted a series of workshops with local services providers, peak organisations and advocates in the disability sector to help shape the vision and priorities for the new DIAP. An initial workshop was held to understand the key issues, challenges, and broad priorities and to develop a shared vision. A follow-up workshop then aimed to test the vision and develop a set of actions and strategies. In total, 36 individuals participated in the sector workshops activities, including five participants who identified as living with a disability.

With other stages we sought feedback from our Access Committee (made up of members from a cross section of the community) which we do on a regular basis. They have given feedback on access and inclusion on a variety of Council project significantly and most recently on Council new Aquatic Centre.

### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

The feedback we received from the community was diverse, detailed, and meaningful.

Creating liveable communities - Community told us that accessible facilities and infrastructure are your priorities for creating a liveable community. Community wanted to have a say in the design of new facilities from the beginning, rather than simply being consulted at a later stage. Community wanted to see the ongoing improvements to public transport, lighting and footpaths for people with disability rolled out across the entire LGA.

Developing positive community attitudes - The community told us that more education and training in the community is needed and called for more opportunities for them to speak to their experience in their own voice.

Supporting meaningful employment - Community felt Council has an important role to play in setting an example by addressing its low rate of employment of people with disability. Building a supportive, welcoming, and respectful workplace where people feel empowered and valued is key to achieving this goal. Council can also promote the meaningful work being done by employees with disability to educate the community and promote inclusion. Other suggestions included mandatory staff training across Council and the development of an accreditation system for inclusive workplaces.



Improving access to services through better systems and processes - Community told us that access to information was an integral part of facilitating access to Council services. While new technologies have increased access to services for some people with disability, the move towards online services is creating challenges for others as it relies so heavily on the availability of internet access.

We have incorporated this feedback into our Current DIAP and as we continue over the next four years we will refresh and seek consultation from the community to make sure we are on track with delivering good outcomes.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Council has developed a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategy that includes the above groups as key pillars for our DEI work. This Strategy is relatively new and will provide the framework to allow Council to better address the needs of these cohorts with a greater focus and progression on this expected in 2023. Council has formal consultative bodies that serve to ensure these groups' specific needs impact Council initiatives such as the Access Advisory Committee who has a member of 10 community members with a range of backgrounds. The Committee meets bi-monthly. Council design and action,

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Council new DIAP was only just adopted in August this year, so we are in the early stages of implementation however we are on track with expected progress so far

### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

We have had such a collaborative approach across Council with so many units across Council and from our Access Committee having great input around the design of the DIAP and our Community engagement was so good that in recognition of the extensive engagement program, the project was Highly Commended at the 2022 International Association for Public Participation (IAP2)

### **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

We hope that with more understanding around access and inclusion we will use this as leverage to get a suite of education for staff in partnership with our Membership with AND. We want to create a toolbox for hiring managers.

## **City of Ryde Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Included positive images of people with disability in Council material and events.

Shared local success stories and initiatives in Council communications to highlight the contribution of people with disability.

Provided networking opportunities for local service providers.

Continued collaboration between Hunters Hill, Lane Cove and City of Ryde councils to sponsor and promote the annual Northern Districts Local Business Awards - Access and Inclusion Award. Hunters Hill-based community transport provider Stryder received an award for its work in providing inclusive services.

Young Citizens of the Year honoured as champions of inclusion through an Australia Day Awards and Citizenship Ceremony and other civic events.



Continued to highlight inclusion as part of the criteria to access Council's Community Grants Program funding.

Provided updates to Councillors, Council staff and community members about implementation of the DIAP and engagement and participation opportunities for development of a renewed plan.

### **Creating liveable communities**

Opened a new inclusive PlaySpace at Riverglade Reserve, with a design informed by the NSW Government Everyone Can Play Guideline and Universal Design and Inclusion principles.

Events held online during COVID-19, making them more accessible to community members with mobility issues.

Ongoing maintenance and review of footpath conditions and access in and around village centres.

Encouraged social connection and inclusion through promotion of a Hunters Hill Connect app, as well as networking opportunities for local service providers and organisations.

Supported local community transport organisation through networking, promotion and grants program.

Provided accessible parking in new public spaces such as the Livvi's Place inclusive PlaySpace at Riverglade Reserve.

Collaboration with NSW Government on an initiative to assist mobility impaired drivers by providing real-time data on the location of accessible parking spaces across Hunters Hill and NSW via the Park 'n Pay app to improve parking experience for people with a disability.

Endorsed concept plans for Figtree Park NSW Public Spaces Legacy Program project that feature an inclusive PlaySpace and accessible amenities block, based on a Changing Places' facility design that includes an adult-sized change table and ceiling hoist.

Home library service provided to residents unable to visit the library due to age, illness, disability or lack of mobility.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Employee Compliance E-Learning Program undertaken with staff, including Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and Prevention of Bullying and Harassment modules.

Continued promotion and implementation of Council's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Policy and EEO Action Plan.

Staff survey undertaken as part of consultation for a renewed DIAP, with data also feeding in to the Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO) Plan.

Promotion of our Council in job recruitment ads as an equal opportunity employer, committed to ensuring a safe, accessible and inclusive work environment.

Application of Working from Home Policy to assist in providing flexible work arrangements for eligible employees.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Completed upgrade of Town Hall and Council administration building access, including an entry ramp, accessible toilets, accessible chamber and wheelchair-accessible compact lift.

Provided information on accessibility of Council facilities in venue and booking hire information.

Improved Council meeting accessibility using online broadcast with captioning, and opportunities for public participation via online meeting tools.

Work undertaken on a new online community directory that includes information on disability, aged and community service providers.

Participated in and facilitated forums, networking and events with service providers.

Consultation with community members, Council staff and other key stakeholders via a range of engagement methods in preparation for a renewed DIAP.

Promotion of opportunities for participation and access to Council services in-person, online and via phone.

New Movement and Transport Advisory Committee formed with a requirement for community representatives to include a member with suitable knowledge or expertise to represent residents with reduced mobility.

Commitment to inclusive participation as part of an updated Community Engagement Strategy.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

Comments were collected from people with lived experience of disability, and other stakeholders, as part of planning for a renewed DIAP.

Our engagement yielded various narratives of peoples' lived experience of disability. These responses revealed that many individuals with disabilities in our community experience inequalities in areas such as recognition, dignity and respect, customer experience, and access to information, services, economic opportunities, and employment.

To foster engagement, a variety of consultation methods and formats were employed. During the consultation period, consultants spoke to a wide range of people. We heard from:

- People with disability and their families or carers
- Service providers
- Relevant Council community advisory committees
- The wider community
- Council staff, including people at the front line, and those with design, communication and leadership roles.

A survey was also conducted, which could be accessed online, and in paper, providing a range of opportunities for people to have their say. A separate survey was conducted with Council staff.

### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

This engagement and feedback has been incorporated in to the planning for our renewed DIAP.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

A steering committee has been formed to develop a Reconciliation Action Plan.

Our Senior Leadership Team was made up of 70% women.

A range of activities provided for children ranging from weekly story time sessions and school holiday activities to an annual youth summit.

Flexible work options and recruitment practices (e.g. advertised for vacant positions accurately, reflecting the role and using non-discriminatory language).

Supporting Sydney Multicultural Services to be involved in events, to reconnect communities following COVID-19 and offering information and support about services and activities that promote and enhance cultural diversity.

Consultation as part of a renewed DIAP seeking feedback from community members who identify as being part of the LGBTIQ+ community.

## What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?

Staffing and resource limitations.

## What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?

Opening a new inclusive PlaySpace "Livvi's Place" at Riverglade Reserve, Huntleys Cove.

## Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?

Improving the parking experience for people with disability by working with the NSW Government to install parking sensors in accessible parking spots in our local government area. Real-time data on the location of accessible parking spaces across Hunters Hill via the Park'n Pay app. This aligns with DIAP action to "Improve parking options for people with disability."

Figtree Park NSW Public Spaces Legacy Program project to be built in 2022-2023, featuring an inclusive PlaySpace and accessible amenities block, as well as accessible pathways through this public space in the centre of Hunters Hill Village. This aligns with DIAP actions to "Upgrade recreation areas including waterways, playgrounds, outdoor gyms and picnic reserves to be more inclusive of people with disability of all ages" and to "Provide an adult change facility".

## City of Sydney Council

Over the last year, the City has continued to deliver priority actions, identified by our community, that advance the inclusion of people with disability. A key focus has been to address physical barriers in our build environment to provide greater access to our parks, playgrounds, facilities, open spaces, and streets. Opportunities for inclusive participation through events and programs and greater access to information in accessible formats have also been a priority.

Included below are some key highlights and key achievements

- Liveable communities - George Street South Pedestrianisation

Delivering accessible and inclusive public spaces and infrastructure is a core outcome the City aims to achieve across all upgrades of public spaces. In 2022 we will complete the extension of the pedestrian boulevard of George Street, Sydney from Bathurst Street to Railway Square.

George Street south, pedestrianised from Bathurst Street to Rawson Place, creates 9,000m<sup>2</sup> of additional car-free space in the city centre, making more room for people and improving the accessibility of our city centre.

- Equitable access to mainstream services - A guide to Council decision-making

The City produced an accessible guide to decision making at Council to ensure that people with disability are informed and can actively take part in Council decision-making processes.

The guide is presented as a web page, with a pdf version that can be printed on request at community centres and customer service centres. It explains the types of activities used to enable direct public participation and how people can get involved. The page has an index of participation channels with links to relevant pages on the City website, creating a clear guide to all the different opportunities for involvement in decision making processes.

There are different ways to participate in Council decision-making. This guide explains the types of activities we use to enable direct participation and how you can get involved.

## Building positive attitudes

### Disability inclusion training

The City continues to implement a program of Disability Awareness and Confidence training and provide resources on disability, mental health, and inclusion topics to employees.

Employees had access to a range of specialist disability access and inclusion training, development opportunities and resources, including:

- Training in creating accessible documents
- Managers guide to inclusive workplaces
- Engaging people with disability guidelines
- Mindfulness for wellbeing and peak performance training
- Mental health diagnosis in children conference.

The City continued to offer a suite of mental health training to support employees in managing their work and life demands in a way that supports their mental wellbeing and that of others.

This range of training also helps improve customer service responsiveness to people with disability.

Employees completed the following mental health courses:

- Mental health first aid
- Managing mental health risks at work
- Approaching an employee you are concerned about
- Workers with mental health illness A practical guide for managers
- Mindfulness and resilience to stress at work
- Building resilience in your team in difficult times
- Workplace wellbeing: How to build confidence and manage stress.

Belgravia Leisure's Mental Health eLearning Program (MHeLP) provided staff access to a two-hour mental health training module. 92 staff have completed the course, including the regional leadership team, centre managers and assistant centre managers.

- 480 employees completed the Inclusion (Disability) Awareness E-learning module in 2021-2022.
- 149 City employees accessed information and completed specialist disability and inclusion training, including mental health training in 2021-2022.
- 272 Belgravia Leisure staff, or 86 per cent completed the YouMeUs Inclusion training.

### Enhancing through City of Sydney programs

The City continues to deliver a range of programming aimed at fostering positive community attitudes toward people with disability, including people with less visible disabilities and people living with mental illness.

Over the 2021-2022 period, the City delivered and supported the following inclusive library and community programs and events:

- City staff produced eight Auslan and English Storytime videos featuring Deaf presenters. A total of 28 Auslan and English Storytime videos have been shared on the City's website and received 15,995 views.
- A mental health first aid training workshop was delivered to local community organisations as part of the Connect Sydney program in May 2022.
- During Mental Health Month a virtual marathon event was held, inviting people to walk, run or ride a marathon distance over the month to raise awareness and to foster encouraging and

supportive communities. This event also linked in with the Wayside Chapel's Long Walk Home event.

- A women's health week event was held at Juanita Nielsen Community Centre with a presentation on the role of food in supporting hormone regulation and mental wellbeing.
- An information session was delivered at Ron Williams Community Centre to increase awareness and understanding of mental health issues in the Chinese community. Free hearing checks were offered to older people at Ron Williams Centre to raise awareness of age-related hearing loss.
- The City designed and delivered the Youth Reconnect Program to improve young people's social supports, mental wellbeing as well as addressing bullying and social isolation as a response to the COVID-19.

86 per cent of attendees of some adult programs where Auslan interpreting and captioning were provided, agreed that they had a "greater appreciation of why library programs should be accessible to everyone."

### **Promoting through digital and print platforms**

A photo shoot was commissioned featuring people with disability for the city centre revitalisation campaign, encouraging people to return to the CBD post COVID-19. A portrait shoot was also commissioned for members of the Inclusion (Disability) Advisory panel.

The City's digital asset catalogue was reindexed to provide easier access for staff to find images for use in publications. 163 images tagged 'disability' are featured in the image library.

Images of people with disability were included in the following strategies and plans:

- Community Strategic Plan: Delivering Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050
- Community Engagement Strategy, as part of the Resourcing Strategy and easy read version
- Inclusion (disability) action plan 2021-2025) an easy read version

### **Creating liveable communities**

#### **Continue to improve the accessibility of streets, parks, footpaths and open spaces in the community**

The City's Pedestrian and Access Program is ongoing. This program focuses on access upgrades and renewal projects to improve safety and accessibility across the City of Sydney area. The program includes:

- Upgrading non-compliant ramps, including ramps at intersections.
- Providing ramps where missing
- Footway renewal, continuation and upgrade
- Intersection improvements to facilitate access.
- Kerb and gutter renewal and upgrade – including the removal of lips on ramps
- Paver infill program – upgrading and improving material across footpaths, ensuring more consistent footway surface

In 2021-2022 the following access and inclusion improvements were delivered across the City of Sydney area:

- 111 access ramps constructed to current standards
- 20 continuous footpath treatments constructed across side streets (removing the need for 38 access ramps)
- 12 raised pedestrian crossings constructed (removing the need for eight access ramps)

In 2021-2022, City staff designed and conducted a footpath survey to identify accessibility issues that people with disability and people with access needs experience in the public domain. We received a total of 258 reports from the survey.

We will consider these reports, alongside the data collected from the planned compliance audit of kerb ramps in 2022-2023, to inform future infrastructure maintenance and upgrade programs.

- New Street furniture
- 330 existing bus shelters replaced with improved accessibility
- 18 new street vending kiosks, designed and placed with accessibility in mind
- 10 additional accessible public toilets to be installed in 22/23.

The Inclusive and Accessible Public Domain Policy was reviewed and approved by Council in August 2022. The Inclusive and Accessible Public Domain Guidelines are scheduled for review in 2022-2023

143 pedestrian access and inclusion improvements constructed, including new kerb ramps, continuous footpath treatments and 12 raised pedestrian crossings

### **Improve access to information about City of Sydney facilities**

- Access briefly

The Access briefly project aims to provide key access features of the City's community facilities on its website. In 2021-2022, City staff expanded the project beyond the community centre to collect and publish access information for another 11 City libraries and four customer service centres to help people plan for their journeys.

- Access Key

The Gunyama Park Aquatic and Recreation Centre continued to implement and promote the Access Key program through its social media channels. The program is currently being rolled out at Victoria Park Pool and Prince Alfred Park Pool and will be in place following staff training.

- Accessibility Map

There has been a total of 2,520 hits on the Accessibility Map in 2021-2022.

### **Additional seating**

Additional seating is being rolled out as part of the implementation of the new street furniture project. 100 new outdoor seats will be installed across the City.

A further 121 new seats are being delivered as part of the George Street South Pedestrianisation project.

### **Advocate for additional adult change facilities**

The number of adult change facilities in the local area remains stable at six. No further opportunities for advocacy were identified during this reporting period.

### **Explore opportunities to provide designated quiet spaces**

City staff completed a literature review on the best practice to environmental design for people on the Autism Spectrum. This document has been reviewed and shared with relevant internal stakeholders. Preliminary findings were presented to key staff members from the Social Policy team, Public Domain team, City Design, City Spaces and Libraries. In 2022-2023, City staff will start identifying opportunities to provide designated quiet spaces in City facilities, including parks and libraries.

The City has embedded accessible and inclusive design principles into all the City's capital works, including when constructing new parks and facilities and when renewing or upgrading existing parks and open spaces. Best practice guidelines, including the Design Across the Spectrum – Play Spaces (University of Tasmania 2016), were adopted in parks and playgrounds project. City staff also



ensured to consider the broader range of sensory, cognitive and social impacts to create inclusive and accessible spaces that foster social wellbeing and inclusion.

Through the Parks and Playgrounds Renewal Program 2021/2022 & 2022/2023, City staff are upgrading the six parks below to ensure they are inclusive and welcoming for people with different sensory needs, including:

- Minogue Crescent Reserve
- Arthur Street Reserve
- Douglas Street Playground
- Prince Alfred Park
- McKee Street Reserve and
- Alexandria Park Playground

### **Charging points**

Charging points are available at our network of 14 staff community centres

### **Access to on-street and off-street accessible parking and drop offs**

The City has begun introducing timed mobility parking where kerb space is changed in conjunction with capital works (cycleways etc). This approach shares access to these spaces across multiple drivers. We continue to monitor these spaces to ensure they are meeting the needs of the community.

The City continues to provide information about mobility parking spaces on the City of Sydney website on the Mobility Parking page and the Online Accessibility Map

The City of Sydney's website has been updated to reflect parking rules for mobility parking scheme permit holders, drawing attention to the fact that Mobility parking scheme permit holders can stop in a no parking zone for up to five minutes to drop-off or pick-up passengers or goods if the driver remains within 3m of the vehicle.

- Number of spaces within 200m of key social infrastructure:
- Community Centres (17 spaces across 10 centres)
- Community Venues for Hire (47 spaces across 23 venues)
- Libraries (21 spaces across 11 branches and library link sites)

### **Hearing augmentation systems**

Since the introduction of the Disability (Access to Premises – Buildings) Standards in 2010, new City community facilities have been designed to include hearing augmentation.

The following community facilities have hearing augmentation installed:

- Alexandria Town Hall
- Darling Square Library
- Erskineville Town Hall
- Glebe Town Hall
- Green Square Library
- Gunyama Park Aquatic and Recreation Centre
- Harold Park Community Hall
- Juanita Nielson Community Centre
- Perry Park Recreation Centre

- Redfern Town Hall
- Surry Hills Function Hall
- Surry Hills Library
- Sydney Town Hall
- Marconi Room, Town Hall House
- Ultimo Community Centre

In 2020/21 an Audit undertaken on 51 of Class 9(b) community facilities and venues was completed which found hearing augmentation systems are provided where appropriate and as required by the relevant standards.

Additional opportunities and actions have been identified to ensure ongoing compliance and improved access for programs and facilities – these include:

- Promote the use of the City’s portable hearing augmentation systems in all community facilities and venues for hire.
- Continue to provide captioning (where possible) to support participation of people who are hard of hearing.

Ensure permanent hearing augmentation systems are well maintained and operational

- Ensure all new buildings and upgrade works include hearing augmentation systems where appropriate and required.

Portable hearing augmentation devices have been purchased for use across all community facilities to support participation of people who are hard of hearing in programs and events in spaces where the use of hardwired amplification is not suitable.

“Fifteen (29 per cent) of the City’s community facilities, aquatic centres, venues, and libraries have permanent hearing augmentation installed.

All community facilities, including libraries, have access to the portable hearing augmentation systems.

Deliver inclusive learning, sport and recreation programs and major events.”

The City continued to offer a wide range cultural and community programming for improved inclusivity and wellbeing. In 2021-2022, 337 adults, young people and children participated in a total of 49 inclusive cultural programs across the City’s Library network.

Cultural program highlights include:

- Production of 18 online Auslan and English Storytime videos with captioning featuring Deaf presenters as literacy role models
- Three Citizen History workshops featuring Auslan Interpreters
- Six Lunchtime Conversation Webinars featuring Auslan Interpreters
- Community program highlights include:
  - Several health and fitness programs with adaptive or modified exercises, including chair yoga, Zumba gold, fitness for all, gentle exercise and cultural dance for people with limited mobility.
  - Several community programs that support psychosocial wellbeing, including assertiveness class, Shen Zhen meditation, acting, singing, and drop-in social sessions.
  - The Transition to Employment, a partnership program with Disability Services Australia, provided paid employment for people with disability as scorers for sports competitions.

Volunteer opportunities were provided for NDIS (National Disability Insurance Scheme) participants through a partnership with Ability Links

- The Street Soccer Program promoted inclusive sports and encouraged people to participate in inclusive sports
- The Seniors Festival Comedy Show at Sydney Town Hall attracted 1,000 participants and featured Auslan interpreters
- The Youth Week Training and Employment program for young people included a dedicated workshop on disability awareness and accessible event planning and management for the 18 participants.
- The Civics Launchpad youth civic engagement program featured captioning, with 30 people participating.
- Refugee Week events at Reginald Murphy Community Centre and Ron Williams Community Centre featured Auslan interpreters, with 92 people in attendance.

Aquatics Centre program highlights include:

- Swim Champs, a swimming and water safety program for children experiencing intellectual or physical disability, was attended by 531 participants.
- Pickleball, a social sport popular among seniors at the Cook+Phillip Park Pool, attracted 2,471 participants.
- Two Wheelchair Sports events were developed and delivered at the Cook+Phillip Park Pool.
- WAVES Group classes continue at Gunyama Park Aquatic and Recreation Centre with attendances averaging 80 to 90 per week.

The City continued to improve event listings and ensure adequate access to information about events and programs is provided to allow people with disability to plan for their journey prior to events.

- What's On gives local creatives, businesses and community groups a free platform to publicise events and attractions in Sydney. The website is also used by the City of Sydney to publicise its events. Visitors to the website can find events by date, venue and type, as well as by its accessibility features. For example, a visitor can browse events that feature audio description or sign language, or are held at venues with mobility access, or assistance for people who are blind or have low vision. Eight access features, with appropriate icons, have been designed into the site and are available to event submitters.
- To support their use, we provide event organisers with three articles in a dedicated help section called 'Accessibility at your event'. We provide guidelines for disability-inclusive events, show how to use the access features and tags in What's On, and provide ways to share events with access features.
- A best practice guide on What's On event listing was developed and distributed internally for City staff, which included an inclusive statement template. This inclusive statement is to ensure all City owned events consider and support participants' access or communication needs.
- More than 400 events were listed with accessibility features between 1 July 2021 and 30 June 2022. Organisers that promote inclusion of people with disability can also tag their events as disability-inclusive. In the reporting period, 92 events tagged disability-inclusive were listed.
- The article 'Disability inclusive things to do in Sydney' was regularly updated and featured across What's On throughout the reporting period. The article received 1,056 page views mostly through Google search. In addition to year-round and new events, the article also provides resources for people with disability to access additional initiatives, events and programs across Sydney.

103 of inclusive and accessible programs delivered (capture online and F2F).

### **Empowering people to manage their stressors and social and emotional wellbeing**

One on one welfare calls to support people in isolation have been maintained during centre closure from July to October 2021.

- Three Online events and information sessions were hosted for RUOK day to support social wellbeing by improving participants' conversational skill. One workshop was held in Mandarin and tailored for older Chinese speakers.
- A range of programs including singing, painting, BYO instrument ensemble, yoga classes, Shen Zhen meditation, Music and movement for older people all use creativity, rhythm and the body to support physiological regulation and wellbeing.
- A weekly workout session for people with mental health conditions have been delivered at the Victoria Park Pool, in partnership with New Horizons. A total of 104 participants have accessed this workout session for the reporting period.
- Take Charge program at Cook + Phillip Park Pool, Ian Thorpe Aquatic Centre and Victoria Park Pool is a health and wellbeing program targeting people experiencing mental health issues. It attracted 141 participants the reporting period.

46 events/programs delivered to manage stressors and social and emotional wellbeing.

### **Major event in line with Inclusive and Accessible Event Guidelines**

City staff continued to deliver and facilitate major events in line with the Inclusive and Accessible Event Guidelines.

Both the Major Events and Festivals' core team members and event staff on a casual or temporary base were provided with comprehensive Disability Awareness training as part of the induction process. This was a live online training session and key learning was also provided to all relevant staff.

Audio description was arranged for several occasions, including the Australian Life and Little Sydney Lives photography finalists, Art and About Tidal, Art and About Here Lies Your Story, the Martin Place Christmas Tree, the Sydney New Year's Eve fireworks and the Sydney Lunar Festival Lunar Lanterns.

There are also designated staff members to provide information on parking and transport options for City produced events.

### **Sydney New Year's Eve**

Sydney New Year's Eve is Australia's biggest public event that displays Sydney as a city of resilience and inclusion.

Sydney New Year's Eve event staff collaborated with the Accessible Working Group to plan and deliver accessible viewing areas and other aspects of the events to ensure it was accessible and inclusive. This Working Group drew on the feedback and experiences of representatives with lived experience and provided invaluable support and guidance to the event's design and delivery process. The Working Group also assisted in training staff of partnership organisations, and disability awareness training was also offered to suppliers.

As part of Sydney New Year's Eve, the City provided an accessible viewing area at two locations. The existing seating area at Pirrama Park returned, with buggy transfers along Macquarie Street to the accessible seating area at the Sydney Opera House. A new accessible seating area was introduced at Observatory Hill with accompanied buggy transfers to the event site as well as to the Changing Places facility located close by at Abraham Mott Hall.

The Sydney New Year's Eve website provided accessible information on vantage points, transport and alternative ways for the community to experience the event. It also contained contact details of the Accessibility Officer to help participants plan for the night.

6 Major Events that comply with the Inclusive and Accessible Event Guidelines.

### **Creative city strategy**

The City continues to encourage grant recipients to offer accessible and inclusive events for everyone, including people with disabilities to be involved as lead artists as well as audience members.

In this reporting period, 26 funded programs delivered over 500 events and activities that were catered to a diverse range of audiences, including those with disability. Whilst all events have been delivered in accessible venues and/or provided online/live streaming services to overcome physical accessibility, many project organisers undertook more significant steps to ensure inclusive participation of people with disability, including but not limited to:

- Audio description
- Auslan interpretation
- Sensory tours, and
- Sharing exhibition layout.
- Many projects also engaged consultancy services for quality staff training and expert advice, had people of disability represented on advisory and board panels, and embedded a broad spectrum of access and inclusion considerations into their organisation's systems and cultures.

These 26 projects engaged a total of 47 artists with a disability, while the level of engagement and outcomes for the artists varies. City staff observed a noticeable trend within the sector to provide better inclusion outcomes for people with disability.

An outstanding example of these funded programs included the ArtScreen by Accessible Arts. This program supported 13 artists with disability in film production and script writing in partnership with Bus Stop Films and exhibited at the Museum of Contemporary Art Australia in December 2021 with overwhelmingly positive feedback.

47 artists with disability supported

26 programs that supported audience members with disability.

## Supporting access to meaningful employment

The City provided "Approaching an employee you are concerned about" for people managers. These courses are courses through Beyond Blue.

Key initiatives and projects for this action are scheduled for delivery in 2023/24 and beyond, including work to capture data to report

- #/% of employees reported that they felt the workplace supported and encouraged inclusion and diversity
- #/% of managers that have undertaken specialist disability inclusion training.

The City established entry level internships appointing two people with a disability into professional roles within the City. The program is planned for expansion in 2022/2023

26 employees formally identified themselves as living with disability, representing 1.5 per cent of workforce

In 2021 staff survey, 51 employees anonymously identified as living with disability.

2 entry level internship, traineeship and apprentice opportunities offered in 2021-2022.

The City's new EEO, Diversity and Inclusion Plan 2022 – 2026 was endorsed by Council in June 2022 as part of the City's Resourcing Strategy, which is aligned with objectives and actions in the Inclusion (Disability) Action Plan 2021-2025.

To inform the development of the plan employees with disability were invited for a CEO Listening session on 24 February...

Further initiatives and projects for this action are scheduled for delivery in 2022-2023 and beyond, including work to measure the #/% of employees that reported that they felt the workplace supported and encouraged inclusion and diversity.

Average employment tenure for people with disability is 15 years as compared to 11 years for other employees.



The Community Wealth Building Discussion Paper was placed on public exhibition, and forums and workshops were held with relevant stakeholders. Key insights and findings will inform the City's Economic Strategy with a policy and actions being developed in 2023.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

The City produced an accessible guide to decision making at Council to ensure that people with disability are informed and can actively take part in Council decision-making processes.

The guide is presented as a web page, with a pdf version that can be printed on request at community centres and customer service centres. It explains the types of activities used to enable direct public participation and how people can get involved. The page has an index of participation channels with links to relevant pages on the City website, creating a clear guide to all the different opportunities for involvement in decision making processes.

As part of the City's new Community Engagement Strategy adopted by Council in June 2022, the City worked with the NSW Council of Intellectual Disability to develop an easy read version of the Community Engagement Strategy, to ensure everyone, including people with intellectual disability and /or limited English can understand how the City engages the community. The easy read version is published online at - [cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/strategies-action-plans/community-engagement-strategy](https://cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/strategies-action-plans/community-engagement-strategy)

The Civics Launchpad program in April 2022 was delivered with accessibility options and widely promoted to youth and disability organisations and networks. The program was delivered online with a live captioning service, allowing better access for participants.

The application process was overseen by partner organisation, Ripple, and did not include identified data of participants' disability status, as this information was not relevant for the on boarding process. For this reason, we do not have any specific data on how many young people with disability, if any, took part in the program. We will look to include it for future programs.

For the reporting period of financial year 2021/2022, a total of six panel meetings have been held, and the Panel provided valuable feedback and advice to a total of eight City policies, strategies and initiatives, including:

- The recruitment process for the new panel members
- Employment and leadership opportunities
- The City's approach to improving footway accessibility
- A recent pilot project run by Music NSW funded through a City of Sydney grant and delivered in partnership with access consultants Morwenna Collett, Judy Harwood and Holly Craig. The project assessed the accessibility and inclusion of live music venues across the City of Sydney area.
- The City's draft Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision and Community Strategy Plan
- The draft Accessible Guide to Council Decision Making,
- The City's programming ideas to mark the International Day of People with Disability
- The Inclusive and Accessible Public Domain Policy 2022 review.

Eight initiatives, projects and/or strategies for which consultation was undertaken with the Inclusion (Disability) Advisory Panel

The City's digital and print accessibility policy and procedures were reviewed and approved in March 2022. The policy scope was broadened to all City employees including contractors and contracted third-parties involved in the procurement, design, development or publishing of web-based applications and websites (including updates), native apps (including updates), online tools and services, digital documents and content and print materials.



The Corporate Communications team continued to promote the City's Digital and Print Accessibility Procedures to all staff. An article titled '5 things I learnt from creating an Easy Read document' was shared in the internal newsletter on 17 June to share learning among staff.

City staff continue to apply Service Principle 3 'Make sure everyone can use the service' across the City's service delivery and projects aimed at improving the customer experience. The City has 448 externally facing forms. All these forms are going through a review process to ensure they meet the needs of our community, are easy to use and accessible to people with disability. The first group of 86 reviewed forms will be available to our community in March 2023 which is when the City's new digital platform is expected to go live.

City staff continued to implement several inclusive communication principles in content development, including

- Writing in plain English
- Diversifying the City's image library, and
- Increasing diverse representation in the images used in City publications.

City Staff also worked closely with local business and identified a range of opportunities to promote inclusive communications, which have been captured in the 2022 Strategic communications plan. Inclusion one of the communication principles in developing our content.

The review of the Grant program went through its second stage in this reporting period. Several workshops were held with external stakeholders to identify potential user experience enhancements.

This included a workshop for people with disability to identify user enhancements which will provide a more inclusive and accessible Grants and Sponsorship Program. The findings from this workshop are being incorporated into the program of user enhancements to be implemented over the next twelve months.

Council approved the City's new Grants and sponsorship guidelines in August. All grant programs now include a new diversity, inclusion and equity assessment criteria against which every grant application will be scored. This means that grant applicants must now demonstrate evidence of diversity, inclusion and equity in the planning of their project. In the grant application form, all grant applicants are required to address a question about how their project ensures participation, access and inclusion across our diverse communities, including people with disability.

## Clarence Valley Council

### Building positive attitudes

Increase Positive perceptions of disability

- Monthly meetings of the Clarence Valley Access Committee held to provide advice to Council on access and inclusion matters/ issues
- Planning underway to update Council's portfolio of stock images in 2023 to use in council publications, presentations etc to include positive images of people with disability.

Raise Awareness about valuable contribution people with disability make to our community

- Consulted and provided advice to local retailers about the importance and benefits of providing good access to their businesses for our Streets of Shared Spaces project Rediscovering Grafton.
- Economic Development team have scheduled a campaign for early 2023 to promote economic benefits of targeting People With Disability and accessible tourism to local businesses in partnership with Social Futures, CV Access Committee and the Access at a Glance campaign.

Increase participation of people with disability in Council-run events, festival and activities

- Go1 Module Training provided for Council staff and community groups involved in the planning and delivery of events as part of their roles.

- Key information about access and inclusion is included in marketing and promotional material for events, festivals and activities.
- Market contracts have been reviewed in line with access requirements and access improvements implemented.
- Council has run programs through our youth service, library service and Gallery that promote and support the inclusion of people with disability including The Vintage Film Club, Home Library Service, Live n Loud, Colour Run, Old Masters, Sprung!! Integrated Dance Theatre.

Undertake community development initiatives to promote and increase access and inclusion

- Partnered with Access Committee in the delivery of community development projects to facilitate access including a staggered implementation of the Access at a Glance project at Council's public buildings.
- Promoted the importance of access and inclusion with an emphasis on engaging community in the creation and co-design of Council new DIAP in 2023

### Creating liveable communities

Draft Public Toilet Strategy completed.

Grant funding investigated for portable changing facilities to be used at key locations and events.

In line with the DDA, accessible facilities and access is included in all new amenities upgrades and construction.

Upgraded accessible facilities including improved access to amenities for this financial year 2022-2023 include Townsend Park, Glenreagh, Wooli Hall, Corcoran Park. Planned accessible toilets include Memorial Park, Hawthorne Park and Ulmarra Park. Adult changing place included in proposed plans for Market Square, Grafton.

A review of cleaning schedule of accessible public toilets has been included in draft Public Toilet Strategy.

Review of accessible toilets in Yamba region was completed and will be reviewed more broadly as part of Open Spaces review to ensure compliance, cleanliness, signage, access, maintenance of facilities across the LGA.

Customer Service team have locations of Council's disabled toilets on their information list for enquiries and promote same.

Accessible pathways completed this year:

- 120m footpath in River Street, Yamba between Queen Street and Beach Street.
- 60m footpath in Yamba between Wooli Street and Harbour Street.
- 175m footpath on Hoof Street, Grafton connects pedestrians and cyclists from Queen Street to the newly upgraded Jacaranda Park.
- 110m footpath on Duke Street, Grafton between Victoria Street and the riverfront.
- 450m footpath on Queen Street, Grafton between Crown Street and Cowper Close.
- 440m footpath in Iluka connecting Denne Street, Spencer Street and Owen Street.
- Repair and reseal of Junction Hill pathway and Gwydir Highway shared user path linking South Grafton and Waterview Heights.

Accessible pathways under construction:

- A shared user path along Big River Way, from McAuley Catholic College to Bunnings, South Grafton.
- A 400m shared user path on Orion Drive, Yamba, between Palm Lake Resort and Yamba Road.

Following the completion of the accessible Zig Zag Path at Main Beach, Yamba earlier this year, we're now working on a new accessible walkway connecting CWA William Ager Memorial Park to Pippi Beach and Convent Beach in Yamba. Highlights of the William Ager Park Walkway: Accessible boardwalk and coastal viewing platform; inclusive, safer and more comfortable walking experience; linked accessible pathways.

Council ensures DDA compliance is integrated into Council Asset Management Plans.

Council has used universally accessible park/street furniture, bubblers, BBQ's, fixtures and facilities when renewing/upgrading open and recreation spaces to improve access to Council owned public spaces and streetscapes.

Council incorporates the delivery of disability access outcomes as criteria when developing project briefs and staging the delivery of - Paths of travel along building lines are monitored and maintained to be clear and continuous.

With advice from CV Access Committee, Council is auditing designated accessible parking spaces in the Clarence Valley to identify the number of spaces available in close proximity to key services and their compliance with access standards and developing a strategy to upgrade and increase the number of accessible parking spaces.

- Two new accessible parking spaces have been installed at the entrance to Grafton Base Hospital in Arthur Street, bringing the total accessible parking spaces outside the hospital to five. Design of these carparks was done with advice from CV Access Committee.
- One new accessible parking space has been included in the redevelopment of Ulmarra CBD. The location and design was implemented with advice from CV Access Committee.
- Accessible parking is incorporated in all new infrastructure.
- Council instigated the creation of accessible parking spaces installed in the new Grafton Bridge carpark.
- Customer Service team have locations of Council's designated accessible car parking spaces on their information list for enquiries and promote same.
- Our Regulatory Services team continue to monitor and enforce non-compliant use of accessible parking spaces.
- Council incorporates accessible parking, toilets and seating when renewing Council's sports grounds and facilities.
- Hawthorne Rodeo Park Masterplan includes accessible parking, toilets and seating.

In Bailey Park Ulmarra and Wherrett Park Maclean we've planned/incorporated accessible and inclusive play elements and a continuous accessible path of travel (CAPT) between the key elements.

Accessibility is a criteria for our sports funding process to strengthen access for people with disability as a priority.

Council works with staff and community pool and sports contractors to incorporate and promote access and inclusion provisions in the delivery of programs and events.

- New design for Grafton Pool incorporates inclusive access to the pool, amenities and facilities.
- The new Corcoran Park Pontoon project includes an accessible pathway linking the carpark to the new pontoon, allowing people with mobility issues, including wheelchairs, walkers and prams, a chance to get down to the water safely.
- Beach wheelchair audit has been conducted and engagement and investigations are underway into more accessible locations for the wheelchairs.
- Access appraisals were conducted of Council's Holiday Parks and priorities for improving access have been incorporated into park upgrades and future projects.

- New website is being developed for Holiday Parks and will provide icons and list accessible features.
- Liaising with sports centre management contractors to run programs that promote and support the inclusion of people with disability in activities at the centres.

Continued to promote and support the inclusion of people with disability in council activities at Grafton Regional Gallery, Treelands Drive Community Centre, Cultural Services and Clarence Valley Libraries.

- The Home Library Service targeted promotion to people with disability.
- Strategic library campaign to promote Large Print, audio books and Dyslexic print books.
- Investigated alternatives for accessing collection for people with disability and planning in place to fund and implement in 2023.
- Gallery delivered programs specifically targeting People With Disability, including Old Masters, Sprung!! Integrated Dance Theatre.

Improve Council's policy and planning documents to strengthen and support access and inclusion outcomes

- Planning in place to review our current policy Clarence Valley Council Adaptable Housing Guidelines (2011) as item of priority in 2023.
- Investigated other adaptable housing guidelines to be referenced in our DCPs in the short term (2023).
- Building surveyors ensure universal design and access standards in development applications as requirement of their role enforcing Building Code of Australia.
- Accessibility is flagged in pre-lodgement meetings and included in written advice.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Council is committed to provide applicants who meet the selection criteria the opportunity to demonstrate or discuss their capacity to perform the inherent requirements of the job.

The physical, cognitive and interpersonal 'inherent requirements' of new vacancies within the organisation are identified to enable recruitment contact officer to provide this detail when people with disability apply.

Clarence Valley libraries have a supported volunteer program at the library that includes People With Disability who are then encouraged to apply for position as their skills develop and opportunities arise.

Increase retention and development opportunities for employees with disability

- Planning is underway to engage with staff who identify as having a disability or primary caring responsibility to better understand and meet their needs.
- Where necessary, workplace assessments are undertaken to ensure the workplace is accessible to meet the requirements of staff members with disability.

Incorporate workforce diversity as part of everyday Council business.

- Access training and forums have been provided for supervisory staff regarding mental health and disability awareness, in partnership with regional councils e.g. Ballina.
- Flexible work practices have been established.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Increase access to information by producing it in a variety of accessible formats to support different needs and capabilities

- Council has provided and promoted new accessible technologies for customers to communicate with Council including Web Self Service and web chat.
- Continue to monitor and update Council's web content for compliance with level AA in the W3C's web content accessibility guidelines.
- Planning in place to review Council's style guide to incorporate the requirements for developing accessible publications, communications, forms and templates including the use of plain English.

Access at a Glance inspection provided a list of actions for Council to consider in 2023 to improve communication including providing education around the provision of communication supports, text to speech iPads at customer service points, subtitles on Council meeting digital broadcasts, captioning for website video content, communication boards and Auslan interpreter options.

Delivery of live streaming of Council Meetings to make them more accessible.

Increase community awareness about Council's services that support access and inclusion.

- Promoted access improvements and upgrades to Council services and facilities as part of the communication strategy with a particular emphasis on sharing stories about accessibility initiatives in Council's new quarterly magazine.

Increase participation of people with disability in Council's community engagement activities.

- Access and inclusion provisions have been incorporated in Council's community engagement processes.
- The promotion of council's libraries as a supported service point to help people engage with Council's online engagement portal. E.g. Library staff can help people access the digital Emu and Koala registers to log a koala or emu sighting.
- Council aims to consult the CV Access Committee in the early stages of design for key projects and when developing master plans.

Improve Council's internal systems and processes so they support the delivery of access outcomes

- Identify disability access outcomes as a key criterion informing works.
- Assess and rate disability access when collecting data about the condition of Council assets to inform the prioritisation of asset renewal and upgrade.
- e-business initiatives have been implemented to enable electronic access to development application documentation.

Increase Council's capacity to provide accessible and inclusive services and facilities

- New kerb ramps have been installed at council facilities with more planned in 2023.
- CV Access Committee has advised Council to consider free training opportunity offered by Social Futures in 2023 to provide training to relevant staff around the use of assistance animals at Council facilities and events.

Ensure all new and or refurbished commercial buildings are accessible for disabled compliant.

- Conditions are imposed on all approvals for new and or refurbished commercial buildings requiring disabled access to be provided in accordance with the Building Code of Australia and or relevant Australian Standards

## **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

Council conducts monthly meetings with the Clarence Valley Access Committee to determine Clarence Valley Council is meeting the needs of people with disability. Feedback and advice from the CV Access Committee is included in monthly information reports adopted by Council. Examples of engagement and feedback from people with disability that have come through the CV Access



Committee to Council include the implementation of the Access at a Glance campaign at council's public buildings, advice on development applications that include public spaces, feedback on disabled parking and access to public spaces, input into playground design, engagement around Grafton's Streets of Shared spaces project and input and co-design of Council's DIAP.

The CV Access Committee is an active and engaged committee with an inclusive and diverse membership of internal and external stakeholders and is supported through attendance at an executive level in the organisation.

Feedback and advice from the CV Access Committee has been incorporated into Clarence Valley Council's current and future planning through the co-design of Council's new DIAP, with the Access Committee and targeted engagement with people with disability in our community. Actions formed in the new DIAP will be a direct result of this engagement and feedback. Actions in the DIAP will also link directly to council's Operational Plan to ensure follow-through and implementation.

### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability? \***

Consistent feedback from people with disability has included issues relating to; accessible parking, access to accessible bathrooms, assistance dogs accessing commercial buildings and the importance of early consultation for new designs and DA reviews

Participants of the CV Access Committee have commented that Council has come a long way in improving their processes, access and inclusion procedures in all plans and procedures

As a result of a range of internal stakeholders attending regular monthly Access Committee meetings, issues raised at meetings can often be actioned quickly and resolved or explained which is meeting the needs of people with a disability in a more timely fashion.

### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

Internal stakeholders are proactively referring to and consulting with the CV Access Committee in relation to co design and DA review earlier

A plan for extensive community engagement in the development of the new DIAP is planned and supported by Council

### **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

In the planning of our new DIAP next year, we have included targeted engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, women, children, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and LGBTIQ+ people. This will ensure Clarence Valley Council is listening to and working with these groups to address their needs and incorporate actions that that will ensure positive outcomes for these groups. Consultation sessions will be supported by Council's First Nations officer to support and conduct engagement sessions. In addition, a number of consultation sessions will be conducted in partnership with Council's Roads Safety Officer who is developing Council's Active Transport Strategy.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

The greatest challenge we have faced implementing DIAP actions this past financial has not been one, but many.

COVID-19 has made it difficult to deliver actions across our four focus areas with staff and community isolated. Engagement with people with disability, including the regular monthly meetings with our access committee, were also impacted severely by COVID-19 restrictions.

We also had severe floods and coastal erosion in early 2022 which also impacted delivering DIAP actions, in particular around Creating liveable communities in undertaking infrastructure projects.



Without funding to support a dedicated project officer to support the Access Committee, DIAP development and implementation progress is restricted, including a lack of funding for associated project costs; venue hire, catering, promotion, resources etc.

Another challenge is the size of our LGA and the number of competing demands and priority areas and the impact of natural disaster on the allocation resources both financially and workforce.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

One of our greatest successes in implementing DIAP actions in the past financial year has been the re-instatement of monthly meetings of the CV Access Committee, starting in early 2022. By having these regular meetings, council is able to seek advice and be advised on access for people with disability and as stated above, proactive and early identification of issues and consultation has resulted in a number of positive outcomes and infrastructure projects being delivered to date.

### **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

We are currently delivering a six-month plan to create and co-design a new DIAP with internal and external stakeholders and community. Part of our extensive DIAP planning includes three months of community engagement targeting key stakeholders and target groups (LGBTQI+, Women, CALD, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, Children and Young People) and identifies community, staff and stakeholder champions to consult with throughout all stages of planning. The planning considers four major focus areas for inclusion and provides an approach to address issues through engagement, planning and co-design of solutions. The planning also looks at how we position the DIAP as core business and integrate with existing planning cycles - e.g. Operational Plan. This engagement and formation of strategic working groups will ensure Council's disability inclusion action planning is inclusive and collaborative.

## **Cobar Shire Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Council will, through the Development Application process, continue to strive to improve accessibility and can work with groups such as the Cobar Business Association to alert business owners of the advantages of improving access.

### **Creating liveable communities**

Council in its commitment to disability access and inclusion within the Shire. Council is committed, through the actions in this plan, to make continual improvement to reduce barriers that people face when living, working and visiting our Shire.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Council's Equal Employment Opportunity plan identifies key actions to be undertaken to address the organisations EEO responsibilities. The plan aims to eliminate and ensure the absence of discrimination in employment, promotion, training and transfers on the grounds of race, sex, age, pregnancy, gender, sexual preference, disability, marital status, political opinion, social origin or religion, past convictions and carers' responsibility.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Council's revised Website is, at a minimum, to have a "AA" rating for accessibility in accordance with Australian Government guideline and to develop a plan for Website content compliance with disability standards with appropriate/easy to read language used. Council Meetings are Livestreamed to provide an additional alternative to attend meetings other than in person.

## How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?

### What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?

There has not been any recent feedback, Council is in the process of updating the DIAP and will conduct consultations and request feedback from the people within the community with disability.

### How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?

All feedback received will be incorporated into the DIAP. This plan has been reviewed and updated to progress current actions and develop new actions in order to demonstrate our vision for the Cobar Shire and its residents.

## How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?

The plan was consulted with our community and is now being scheduled for review this year. This will incorporate the targeted groups.

## What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?

Resources and the communities' participation.

## What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?

A lot of new infrastructure within the communities as per the feedback received in the DIAP Council has installed accessible toilets, new footpaths, and access ramps. Councils' administration building has been improved for access with a new ramp. Improve accessibility at the Great Cobar Heritage Centre, including accessibility ramp and improved accessibility throughout the building, installation of an Accessibility ramp at the CWA Hall, Medical Centre upgrade a new access entrance will be designed and implemented to enable easier patient drop off, collection and access.

## Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?

Yes, planning to have an all-inclusive consultation that directly targets the outcomes required.

### Additional information and comments

Further issues faced would be we have several Aboriginal groups within our community who will work/ collaborate together. We are working towards building relationships to have a larger involvement in building councils plans.

## Coffs Harbour City Council

### Building positive attitudes

Regular meetings of the City's Disability Inclusion and Access Advisory Committee and engagement with the City staff

The Disability Inclusion and Access Advisory Committee has provided extensive input into the design of major developments, including the Cultural and Civic Space Project (Yarrilla Place), the Wiigulga Sports Complex and expansion of the C.ex Coffs International Stadium.

The City has worked to promote positive community attitudes and behaviours towards people with disabilities through:

- Celebrating International Day of People with Disability on 3 December, with a free screening of Peanut Butter Falcon at the Jetty Memorial Theatre in 2020 and release of a community-led video on social media in 2021
- Promoting library services and events to people with a disability as a key audience
- Including community members with disabilities and sharing information about disability services on the MyCoffs Connect Facebook page.

### Creating liveable communities

- Adult Change Places built at Woolgoolga Beach Reserve, Castle Street Coffs Harbour, Coffs Harbour Jetty Foreshores and the War Memorial
- Pool. Two more are planned for the Sawtell and Woolgoolga Pools upgrades
- New all abilities playgrounds at Pearce Drive and the West Coffs Regional Playground, designed on the NSW Government Everyone Can Play Guidelines.
- Upgrading public toilets throughout the Coffs Harbour local government area to ensure accessibility
- Significant upgrades to the footpath network and accessibility upgrades to bus stops
- Installing a Mobi-mat at Coffs Harbour Jetty Beach with a lifeguard service during peak holiday periods
- Upgrading the C.ex Coffs International Stadium including state-of-the art technology and design to ensure inclusive access for sportspeople, support staff, media and community members.

The City is working toward greater access across the LGA and allocated funding in the 2021-2022 budget for:

- Developing a new Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026
- Bus stop upgrades for Disability Discrimination Act compliance across the city
- Develop and implement guidelines to ensure graphic design publications are accessible for people with disability

### Supporting access to meaningful employment

- Flexible work arrangements that support employment of people with a disability and carers of people with a disability
- Altering kitchen and bathroom areas of the Council Administration Building to improve access for employees with a disability
- Disability Awareness training for leaders and staff through Council's online learning management system including Disability Discrimination Act requirements, social models, reasonable adjustment and guides for communication
- Supporting leaders in working effectively with employees with a disability through capability development, as well as one on one support with specific issues. This has included advice on workplace modifications, and considerations around tasks and individual capacity.

### Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes

Social media videos featuring people with disabilities to help promote community participation in the review of the Disability and Inclusion Action Plan

Social media and web pages promoting information relevant to people with disabilities such as access to beach wheelchairs and installation of the Mobi-mat at Jetty Beach

Junior fiction titles available in a print format for young people with dyslexia.

2,000 accessible items were added to the Library's collections during 2020/2021:

- 592 talking books (books on CD):
- 526 eAudiobooks (for download)
- 257 e-books
- 635 new large print books.

Assistive software for people with a disability installed for the library computers and purchase of adaptive technology:

- PEARL text to speech camera with OpenBook software package
- Zoomtext keyboard, and ZoomText Fusion Professional software
- designed for users with advanced or progressive vision loss, ZoomText Fusion provides the features and benefits of ZoomText
- Magnifier/Reader, plus a complete screen reader.

Improving the City's website accessibility to meet Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 standards

Road and Community Safety activations and information about the use of bikes, wheelchairs and mobility scooters

Online delivery of programs including Coffs by Nature Tours, Living Lightly workshops to increase access by community members who may previously have been unable to attend. Captioning was included on

Facebook film content for these programs

## **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

Between March and December 2021, we asked people with disability for feedback on how we can create a more inclusive community.

Council's Disability Inclusion and Access Advisory Committee provided advice and guidance on the consultation process to ensure that all voices were heard.

The consultation included the following activities:

- Presentation to the Coffs Coast coordinated support meeting
- An overview of DIAP review process was presented to the Coffs Coast Coordinated Support Meeting in March 2021.
- Facilitated workshop on DIAP focus areas
- An online facilitated workshop on DIAP focus areas was held with the Disability Inclusion and Access Advisory Committee on 2 July 2021.
- Online survey

From 6 September to 30 September 2021, an online survey was open. The survey was promoted to the wider community via a video on social media and local news. This generated over 6,500 views and 30 page visits to CHCC inclusion page.

The Have Your Say page received 55 visitors and 24 survey responses. Of those who responded, 25% were people with a disability, 25% were paid carers and 25% were friends or family of a person with a disability (the remaining 25% did not specify).

## Disability networks

Information about the review of the DIAP was shared extensively through Council's networks to local disability service providers and a range of disability groups including groups supporting people with lived experience of disability.

## Have Your Say

Throughout the consultation period, Council's Have Your Say included information about the DIAP review process, a link to the community survey and a timeline for the project. Community members were also invited to provide feedback by phone or email to Council directly.

## Community workshop

AA community workshop was held in December 2021 with 13 community members and 14 Council staff. Of the 13 community members, four had lived experience of disability, five were carers of people with profound disabilities and four were from disability support organisations. Community members had the opportunity to engage in-depth conversations with staff on relevant / specialised areas.

Following the workshop, participating staff met to reflect and identify actions that had potential to address some of the issues and opportunities expressed by those people with disabilities.

The majority of people (83%) responding to the community survey felt that the attitudes of the wider community did not support people with a disability.

People attending the community workshops told us that there needs to be more representation in popular media of people with a disability, and that Council should lead by example by including images and stories of people with disabilities in their publications, social media and reporting. They would like to see more avenues for raising social awareness and storytelling about the struggles and achievements of people living with disability, feeling that this would lead to greater levels of acceptance and understanding.

We also heard that decision making processes should be more inclusive. This means gaining a broader perspective by including a wider group of people in planning council services.

In the 2020 Customer Satisfaction Report, people told us that they place significantly high importance on community facilities, parks, reserves and playgrounds, sporting facilities and the creation or attraction of cultural and sporting events.

While most people completing the Disability Survey felt that our community was accessible (including buildings and parks). 75% said that footpaths and cycle ways did not meet their needs.

People attending the community workshop told us there was a need for better footpath connections with accessible crossings and shade over ramps. They also identified the importance of universal design principles including:

- more accessible public spaces with inclusive playground equipment
- accessible amenities
- picnic tables that allowed for wheelchairs.

## **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

The ideas put forward during the consultation were assessed and refined into key actions across the four focus areas.

Some ideas proposed by community were outside the direct control or influence of Council. The draft DIAP prioritises actions by Council and includes emerging issues identified by community and other levels of government. Some existing actions have been updated and carried forward to be done in the next four years.

Council's Disability Inclusion and Access Advisory Committee will be continually consulted on the implementation, progress and evaluation of the plan.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Inclusion of Auslan and diverse language translators for significant civic events such as Australia Day and Citizenship Ceremonies (as required)

Celebration of First Nations traditions and cultures in all Council festivals and events

Ensure effective workforce planning provides meaningful professional employment or volunteer opportunities for a diversity of people

Assess and adapt collection development to ensure Library stock provides for people of diversity and celebrates and acknowledges First Nations heritage and culture

Incorporate strategies and measures into the Community

Engagement Framework to increase opportunities for all community people to engage with Council.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Given the COVID-19 pandemic and NSW public health orders, some of the community consultation was moved to online to ensure the safety of our community. This provided a few challenges in ensuring information and feedback platforms were accessible to all.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Adult Change Places built at Woolgoolga Beach Reserve, Castle Street Coffs Harbour, Coffs Harbour Jetty Foreshores.

Upgrading public toilets at Mullaway to ensure accessibility

Significant upgrades to the footpath network and accessibility upgrades to bus stops

Consulting with the Disability and Inclusion Advisory Committee on the conceptual design of the Brelsford Park upgrade

## **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Planning events, festivals and activities that allow everyone to participate. This means venues are accessible and we provide information about what is available for community members who require additional support

Prioritising the movement of people not cars' with further upgrades to pathways and missing links for people to travel easily within key public areas

Continuing to upgrade public toilets, including the building of Adult Change Places at the Woolgoolga and Sawtell Pools and Wiigulga Sports Complex

Improving transport options by reviewing current accessible parking spaces availability within the Coffs Harbour local government area and developing guidelines for accessible parking spaces

Continuing to improve Council owned public spaces and streetscapes. This includes upgrading key playgrounds to meet the 'Everyone Can Play'

Guidelines maintaining public areas and improving existing facilities to meet current disability standards

Ensuring Council incorporates the principles of universal design in planning processes to strengthen access and inclusion outcomes for the community. This includes additional training for staff.

Ensuring Council's Disability Inclusion and Access Advisory Committee (DIAAC) is an effective advisory body on access and inclusion issues for Council



Raising community awareness and understanding about the importance of access and inclusion, and ways in which Council and the community can work to achieve this

Representing people with disabilities in Council's communications, including celebrating stories and achievements of people with a disability in our community

Providing opportunities for social interaction and connection through Council services and events such as International Day of People with Disability

Increasing workforce participation of people with disabilities by reviewing recruitment procedures, to identify barriers for people to employment

Increasing employment and development opportunities for people with disability

Building leaders and employees capacity to foster an inclusive workplace through training and induction programs

Incorporating workforce diversity as part of everyday Council business

Increasing staff and volunteers' knowledge, skills and confidence through training, to provide a responsive service to people with a disability

Reviewing and updating Council's Communication Strategy and incorporating requirements for accessible publications, communications, forms and templates including the use of plain English

Providing up to date information for visitors and residents on Council facilities and services that support access including mobility maps, accommodation guides and accessible business guides

Exploring ongoing engagement opportunities to assist Council in implementing the Disability Inclusion Action Plan

Developing and implementing guidelines in partnership with local emergency agencies to ensure the needs of people with a disability are prioritised during times of an emergency.

## **Coolamon Shire Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Council has undertaken ongoing actions to ensure that positive community attitudes and behaviours are being developed and maintained relating to people with a disability. These actions have included the provision of information to Councillors, staff and the general community regarding the Disability Inclusion Action Plan via Council's website and newsletters and Council's employee and volunteer induction programs. Council also commenced a review of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan by engaging consultants to undertake community consultation during the 2022 financial year.

### **Creating liveable communities**

Council has undertaken and maintained a number of activities to ensure that the Coolamon Shire is a liveable community during the reporting period including:

- Council's websites having accessibility menus
- The ongoing provision of disability amenities at the Council Chambers, Coolamon Visitor Information Centre, Redgrave Park, Coolamon, Beckom Hall & Marrar Memorial Halls
- Ongoing implementation of Council's Active Transport Plan
- Council continues to undertake assessments of its public facilities to ensure that accessibility issues are considered as part of future upgrades.
- Designated disabled parking available in Cowabbie Street, Coolamon

## **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Council's Equal Employment Opportunity Plan and related recruitment process ensure that everyone has access to meaningful employment and that all staff are supported within the workplace with appropriate adjustments.

## **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Council's policies and procedures relating to community engagement allow everyone the same rights to participate in the decision making of Council, regardless of disability.

## **Coonamble Shire Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Media releases and images used in publicity show diversity in the range of abilities of those photographed, in order to socialise greater acceptance.

### **Creating liveable communities**

A review and upgrade to the Pedestrian Access Mobility Plan has been commissioned.

New footpath projects have been commissioned of up to 2.5m wide to allow the passing of wheelchairs and motorised wheelchairs. Ramps from footpaths to roadways are planned at the correct pitch.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Council is attempting to develop alternative communications tools rather than the written word to ensure that people whose reading ability is impaired have full access to employment opportunities.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Council is only indirectly responsible for systems and processes that improve access to mainstream services. For those services it provides, it ensures physical access is available for people with physical disability and online and telephone service is available for those whose preference is to access services through these media.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

Council relies on people with disability providing direct feedback through formal channels and indirect feedback through various service agencies, with whom Council representatives meet on a monthly basis at a Coonamble Interagency forum.

### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

Responsibility to attend monthly meetings of the Coonamble Interagency are specified in job descriptions, and the process of responding to feedback from the community, including those with disabilities, is systematised to ensure matters are considered and dealt with in a timely manner.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

We have had community consultation with both individuals with disabilities and with various agencies working with these people and have remained open to feedback and further input from people with disability.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

A lack of human resources in our remote and socially and economically disadvantaged region and the inability to attract sufficient staff to fill all roles has meant the DIAP has not been a priority in daily operations.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Making inclusions (to meet the physical requirements of people with disability) standard in all proposed new infrastructure.

Greater involvement with service agencies to increase and maintain grounded awareness of the needs of people with disabilities in the community.

## **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Continuing to implement the goals of the current Disability Inclusion Action Plan. No further plans at the current time.

## **Additional information and comments**

As a small, rural Local Government Area identified as "most disadvantaged" on the Australian Bureau of Statistics' SEIFA scores, the cost to Council of ensuring physical inclusions to cater to the needs of people with physical disability is significant for a very small number of people within the population. In an era when 'better than best practice' is being pursued, funding bodies need to be aware that smaller localities, such as Coonamble, need additional financial support to ensure that new infrastructure caters to the broadest spectrum of the community, rather than provide funding that only allows for the meeting of minimum standards.

## **Cootamundra Gundagai Regional Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Council values the feedback from the Disability inclusion committee and community members. Provided greater accessibility of parks (Livvi's inclusive PlaySpace, Jubilee Park upgrade to include greater disability access). Keeping the website updated with information.

### **Creating liveable communities**

The opening of Livvi's inclusive PlaySpace in Albert Park provides a safe and secure play space for children (and adults) to interact with children (and adults) of all abilities. Ensuring that people with disability can participate in our community and giving them a sense of belonging and encourage feedback to improve liveability.

The new Jubilee Park upgrade will take into consideration accessibility to and within the park and its facilities.

Council provides portable access ramp kits for events to make venues accessible for those with disabilities.

Our library provides a deliver service to drop off and collect books for members of the library.

The PAMP (Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan 2023-2033) is currently being drafted and will have a particular focus on footpaths, kerb ramps and crossing facilities at critical locations. One of the Objectives is to facilitate improvements in the level of personal mobility and safety for pedestrians with disabilities and older persons through the provision of pedestrian infrastructure and facilities which cater to the needs of all pedestrians.

Cootamundra indoor heated pool and the Gundagai Swimming pool both provide access ramps that allow gradual entry to the water to enable disabled, aged and frail people easy entry to the pool.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Council values diversity and equality, and strives to create a culture of inclusion. Council's Equal Opportunity Management Plan 2019-2023 outlines out responsibilities under the relevant legislation to provide a workplace environment that is free from harassment, discrimination, bullying and vilification and provides equal employment opportunities as good management practice which promotes a harmonious and productive workplace, and enhances Council's efficiency and service delivery.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Council provides our monthly newsletters in a reader friendly format. Website updated as information comes to hand.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

#### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

Meeting with the Access Inclusion Committee and encouraging feedback from the public on ways to improved accessibility.

#### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

It has been incorporated into Disability Inclusion Access Plan. Operational Plan, Delivery Program, Community Strategic Plan.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Council has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Cootamundra Aboriginal Working Party which formalises the agreement of the Parties to lay founding principles and set out specific commitments for the ongoing relationship and mutual cooperation with CAWP and Council. The Youth Council provides support and organises events to bring kids together.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Resources and funding.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

The opening of Livvi's Inclusive PlaySpace in Albert Park, which promotes play for everyone is our greatest success in the past financial year. Extensive Community consultation was undertaken in 2020, which included a six week online survey, face to face consultation with key stakeholders such as representatives from Elouera Association, LFE Community Supports, CGRC Access and Inclusion Committee, Lions Club, Scouts and Men's Shed. School Imagineer workshops were held with local schools where 130 students participated and community meetings. The park is designed so that Children and adults with disabilities and special needs can access play areas with ramps, pathways and accessible height play stations allowing all children to play together.

## **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

We are currently upgrading Jubilee Park. We will be moving the Captains Walk and making it wheelchair accessible. Disability access BBQ are being installed. The Park will include wetlands walk, which will be wheelchair accessible.

The PAMP (Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan 2023-2033) is currently being drafted and will have a particular focus on footpaths, kerb ramps and crossing facilities at critical locations. One of the Objectives is to facilitate improvements in the level of personal mobility and safety for pedestrians with disabilities and older persons through the provision of pedestrian infrastructure and facilities which cater to the needs of all pedestrians.

## **Cowra Shire Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Membership to the committee has been extended beyond service providers. Access Incentive funding has been provided to enable local business providers the ability to upgrade their facilities.

### **Creating liveable communities**

A review has been undertaken of the majority of Council public facilities and recreation areas. The assessments highlighted required areas of improvements to the facilities and such works will be considered in upcoming budgetary reviews.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Council supports inclusive employment and has determined to lead by example. Council also supports local community organisations who provide further assistance and guidance with employment opportunities.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Numerous community-based organisations work in conjunction with Council to provide access to required services. Council staff has access to an Employee Assistance Program.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

Engagement has been undertaken through community organisations and members of the access committee. A more in-depth survey has been prepared and will be released for feedback in early 2023.

### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

A detailed survey will be released to the community in early 2023.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Liaising with community organisations.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Lack of availability of committee members to attend Access Committee meetings, due to illness and relocating away from the area.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Reviews undertaken of local community sites and access assessments undertaken of such sites to ascertain compliance with standards and required upgrades

## **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Council's current DIAP is under review - incorporating greater community consultation as part of the review

## **Cumberland City Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Became a member with Zero Barriers and partnered to run a business information night and an awards night

Council campaign's during International Day of People with Disability and Social Inclusion Week

Cumberland Conversations Podcast discussing what Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan is

Art exhibition 'Out of Order' curated by disabled artist Amy Claire Mills and includes a bunch of amazing artists with disability

Art Exhibition "The Art of Ageing" at Auburn Library from 14 October–4 November

"Living Well in Middle Years" information sessions

Displays at Library locations

Purchase of new resources, specifically Chloe Hayden's book "Different, not less"

As a newly merged Bookings and Community Centres Team most of the Team have had cross train to adopt knowledge of the Community sector providing access to local services for all abilities. Knowledge has been a key contributor to a positive approach

Lifestyle and Leisure Links Program: Designed and promoted the program each quarter Lifestyle and Leisure Links – creating awareness and encouraging new members.

'Read speaker' on website: maintaining and monitoring text to voice function – increasing accessibility and understanding.

Feature interview about Disability Inclusion Action Plan on the Cumberland Conversations Podcast (Community Engagement Team)

### **Creating liveable communities**

Developed and implemented a service delivery model to continue to provide key supports during COVID-19 e.g. shopping, meals, social activities (online)

Official opening of the new amenities block at Granville Swim Centre with new and larger change rooms with improved accessibility

Developed processes to include QR Codes on flyers and handouts

Including alt-text in online social media posts

Support provided to the local community throughout the height of the COVID-19 pandemic with the set-up of vaccination hubs across the LGA in collaboration with NSW Health

Future – Reactivation planning has begun of the Friendship Garden at Auburn Centre for Community to create a more useable space for Community to gather and socialise for all abilities

Community Centres are accessible for all abilities with ramp access and being guide dog friendly

All Centres have accessible bathroom amenities, ramps and required equipment can be provided



Zero Barriers Business Information and Awards night (Business Development team)

Homelessness workshop and Homelessness Forum, which featured disability issues as some of the causes of homelessness. (Homelessness Officer)

Ensure accessibility at all Place and Engagement activations such as the Wyatt Park Lidcombe @ Night (Place Team)

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Provided access to a wide range of employment pathways, including the facilitation of Council's work experience/work placement program

Provided support services for people with disability in engaging with Council's recruitment process, including providing translation/interpreter services

Attended a number of career expo events throughout the LGA to advertise Council's employment pathways and opportunities

Cross Training of Bookings Team across the staffed Community Centres to bring awareness of all Team members to Community needs and services within Council

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Supported people with disability to access vaccination clinics, vaccination cards and personal QR codes

National Public Accessible Toilet Map added to Council's website

Adding QR Codes to Library flyers and handouts

Adding Alt-Text to Social Media posts

Assisting and guiding all hirers in using Bookable and providing over the counter service for those with accessibility needs

Developing and maintaining a directory for local ability services

Volunteering webpage: new online application form – "Volabe" - increased useability of page and form.

Writing Style on web - Provided info, advice and support for writing on web and structuring content or webpages – ensuring key messages captured and info is easily understood.

Branding: Continued to apply to all digital and printed designs, ensuring correct font size and colour contrast, maintain the website style sheet current and complies

C19 crisis comms – in person activities transitioned online, online activities and workshops organised with staff, emergency resources & relief services for community members, videos with translations, info sheets, links to external health org to direct residents to official info.

Have Your Say Page (Community Engagement Team):

- o Ensure HYS pages and monthly newsletter are compliant with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2)
- o Increased visibility of accessibility features, and added some new ones with the new 'Accessibility Menu' widget (see below for screenshot) includes options such as Bigger text, extra spacing, dyslexia friendly, highlighted links and more.

Worked with Disability and Inclusion team on Seniors and Disability Annual Survey & Engagement Report

Worked with Disability and Inclusion team on Disability Inclusion Action Plan exhibition & Engagement Report

Accessibility is a focus of our new Smart Places strategy, which is currently in the information gathering stage. (Senior Engagement Coordinator)

## How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability

### What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?

Seniors and Disability Focus Group and planning days

Seniors and Disability Annual Survey

Easy Read Survey about Disability - An 'Easy Read Survey about Disability' was undertaken with service providers, people with disability, their carers, families, staff and the general public between February 2022 and March 2022. 45% of respondents to the survey were people with disability and 39% were carers of a person with disability.

Community Focus group for consultation on the next Disability Inclusion Action Plan

Access Committee Meetings

People with disability have been open and transparent when they need assistance throughout the recruitment process

Engagement – Friendship Garden is not suitable for those with accessibility issues due to the low garden beds

### How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?

Program and event planning

Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026

Program and Event planning specifically with newly appointed Diversity Librarian for remainder 2022, looking into 2023

Human Resources Service Business Plan 2022-2023

Workforce Management Plan 2022-2026

Looking into making the Friendship Garden more accessible for all abilities. E.g. Installing raised garden beds for all abilities, clear pathways for the ramps

### How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?

Consulted with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Committee

Consulted with women and families for the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022 -2026

Contacted local schools and providers during the consultation period

Provided information in five key languages of the Cumberland LGA

### What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?

COVID-19 – Public Health Orders and restrictions on interaction with the public in workplaces

Resources – staffing, budget

### What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?

Continuing to implement actions during the challenges of COVID-19. The items implemented for people with disability during COVID-19 Further advancing accessibility in different areas of Council Consulting on, and developing our next Disability Inclusion Action Plan to build on the work already achieved

## Is there anything else your organisation is doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?

Begin implementation on Disability Inclusion Action plan for 2022–2026

Implement a Council wide reporting system to capture all items and outcomes for people with disability

Focus on consulting with and meeting the needs of the groups specified in the Disability Inclusion Act 2014

### Dubbo Regional Council

#### Building positive attitudes

We have just filled the permanent position of Community Development Officer-Seniors & people with disability

Council continues to promote local events and community programs - council worked with services and groups during Seniors Week 2022 to create short videos which were sent out through social media. Each of the services/groups involved were able to keep the free video for their own marketing promotions.

Each of the Interagencies have been encouraged at meetings to update their details.

Manager Community Services has worked closely with NSW Health and Dementia Australia to support the creation of a local Dementia Friendly Community Alliance. This alliance is growing momentum and will continue in the New Year with the creation of an action plan and deciding on a name.

Council has again supported Activate Inclusion Sports Day (Sports NSW) with the payment of sports complex hire and morning tea for attendees

Council has a representative from the Community Services section attend all the various interagency groups. Council's Community Development Officer for Seniors & people with disability Chairs the Dubbo Aged Services Interagency.

Council's infrastructure and Strategy team schedule audits of council car parks each year

One of the actions that will be confirmed in the newly created Dubbo Dementia Friendly community alliance is the creation of a checklist or support to local business to create greater understanding of truly inclusive and accessible places of business. A focus will be on shops and cafes

#### Creating liveable communities

Dubbo regional council cultural and arts theatres and centre's continue to provide inclusive environments and events. The Western Plains Cultural Centre has a council run cafe which is the place for the monthly dementia friends support group. Community members with lived experience have stated how welcome and comfortable they feel at the cafe and they are confident to come back in their own time and enjoy.

Council's Regional Events team engaged Sky Castle by ENESS. This was about having an event that was open 24/7 to allow all people, ages, working conditions to come and visit. It was fully accessible for wheelchairs, the music was great for children with sensory needs, we provided a morning tea for some seniors groups, plus the library did a rhyme time for the young kids. No charge for this event that ran for four weeks.

Council internal disability and access funding has all been expended. This was a total of \$2M over four years.

Council within the work schedules of infrastructure continue to repair and maintain pedestrian pathways.

The Planning and development team continue to respond to all enquiries making sure all DA applications are directed in the correct way to meet all regulatory compliance.

Council has again supported the Orana Early Childhood Intervention with funding support for their Sibling Group - The Sibling group we propose would be for Siblings of children that have disability or developmental delays. Our family support worker has recently completed training with the SibWise organisation to better support siblings by understanding their needs and challenges.

Council owned buildings display the relevant Access At A Glance stickers related to the building.

A new accessible playground was completed this year in Victoria Park Dubbo. This upgrade also included outdoor exercise equipment.

Council's Dubbo Regional Theatre and Convention Centre has been able to achieve the performances and changes below:

- Guess How Much I Love You – Tuesday 8 March 2022 Relaxed performance\*
- Robot Song – School Show – 30 – 31 May 2022 Auslan – Interpretation service for the 6 pm performance. Relaxed performance\* Social Story\*\*
- Edward the Emu – 31 October 2022
- Auslan – Interpretation service for the 6 pm performance. Relaxed performance\* Social Story\*\*

\* Relaxed Performances welcome audiences who would benefit from a more relaxed environment – this can include but is not limited to people with autism, sensory sensitivities, learning disabilities or dementia, as well as those living with anxiety or who have experienced trauma.

The atmosphere is non-judgmental, and we embrace noisy enthusiasm. Audience members can also bring their headphones to reduce noise if they wish. Specifically for relaxed performances, we leave the house lights on (dimmed), the auditorium doors stay open, and some technical elements may be modified, for example, strong lighting or sound effects are moderated.

There is also the opportunity for children/families that would benefit from a guided tour by a staff member whilst the theatre is empty to familiarise them with the space and reduce anxiety, Council staff accommodate this at no charge.

\*\*A social story is a tool that helps individuals better understand the world around them so they can plan for a positive experience – especially if they are going to a place that is unfamiliar to them. Social stories help individuals know what to expect and what to do in unfamiliar situations by walking them through the experience.

They are often used by individuals on the autism spectrum, children with sensory needs or those with other requirements.

Assisted Lift Chair We are also trialling an assisted lift chair known as 'Kayla' located in row P 1.

We have also introduced wheelchair service for patrons who prefer not to use the external stairs or ramp to the front foyer.

Our ushers are on hand to meet patrons at the car out the front of the Theatre and escort them to the Theatre Foyer.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Council's People Culture and Safety human resource department continue to be open to avenues for new enquiries for meaningful employment placement.

Council has a flexible workplace environment which is inclusive to its employees' needs.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Council is currently working through upgrading its website interface platforms to make it more inclusive and accessible. This is an ongoing process which is not completed as yet.

Manager Community services has written submissions and attended consultations for future developments within the LGA. Advocating for increased accessibility across a range of community needs.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

Council engaged with community feedback following the NRL game which was played in Dubbo during March 2022. Council had strived to create a more accessible event venue which was open to general admission passes. This included free transport for Wellington and Dubbo, an area and access that had clear vision of the game and access to food vendors and amenities that were accessible to all.

There was positive and negative feedback from community members with lived experience who attended the event.

### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

Face to face meetings were also organised with community members to analysis and understand the gaps and areas for improvement.

Through this process a new opportunity arose to have a community member with lived experience join the Event Network meeting. This was to enhance the knowledge and application of positive inclusive and accessible strategies when planning large regional events.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Council will in the new year have another Disability Access and inclusion Advisory committee. This is one of the 17 community consultative committee's that Dubbo regional Council currently has running.

September saw the beginning of the Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group which is a mixture of internal and external community members. The Multicultural Advisory Committee. The Social Justice Advisory Committee. Youth Council and many more.

All of these committee's raise issues that are highlighted within the community and they also report to Council.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Greatest challenge has been not having the position of Community Development Officer-Seniors & people with Disability filled permanently since October 2021.

Another challenge this year has been the disruption and drain on resources with the continual flood and rain events across our region many events and programs have had to be cancelled and or postponed due to these events.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

The commencement and commitment from community members, organisations and services to the creation of a Dubbo Dementia Alliance has been very encouraging.

Also the fact that around 70,000 people accessed the Sky Castle event in Dubbo. Showcasing that events done well can be celebrated by the whole community.

The positive changes that are happening on a regular basis for community members to experience different performances in a venue such as the Dubbo Regional Theatre and Convention Centre.

## **Is there anything else your organisation is doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

As mentioned the reinstatement of the Disability Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee in the new year will be a platform that can harness the current needs of the community in a proactive way.

### **Dungog Shire Council**

#### **Building positive attitudes**

Inclusion tent provided at three Shire events.

#### **Creating liveable communities**

- Extended linkage paths of travel within the public school precinct.
- Path linkage to accessible parking
- Improvements to accessible parking spaces
- Two pedestrian crossings in Dowling Street upgraded

#### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Provision of resources or equipment to support area of need.

#### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Investigating resource options.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

#### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

Annual review of DIAP consultations held in conjunction with the community engagement forums as part of the review of Council's Community Strategic Plan.

#### **Additional information and comments**

Provided support to International Day of People with Disability

Annual review of DIAP consultations held in conjunction with the community engagement forums as part of the review of Council's Community Strategic Plan.

Dungog Shire Access Committee meetings were suspended due to COVID-19, access issues were identified through specific priorities and addressed as received.

Construction continues for Dungog Showground Kiosk Accessibility Upgrade and Clarence Town Village Green Amenities are both set for completion in February 2023.

Review of the quantity, locality and accessibility of public toilets within the Shire to be undertaken in 2022/2023.

The DIAP has been identified as due for review in 2022/2023.

### **Edward River Council**

Significant work has been undertaken in the Waring Gardens precinct this financial year. Work has included refurbishment of the Cressy Street and Harrison Street amenities blocks, including DDA compliance for accessible toilet area and re-painting.

Website structure has been reviewed to ensure it remains accessible and provides an engaging customer experience.



Our Equal Employment Opportunity and Diversity Plan (Plan) provides the framework for building a workplace culture that increases diversity and embeds values of fairness and equality in all aspects of the Edward River Council's business. Through the implementation of this plan Council endeavours to ensure that in the application of Council policies, practices and procedures, no discrimination takes place, diversity is encouraged, and employees enjoy equal access to opportunities within the Council. Staff receive information on their rights and responsibilities for promoting equal employment opportunity through the employee induction program and the plan's aim is to build further understanding of these rights and responsibilities.

In June this year Council launched its "You're the Voice" program, aimed at giving all staff a say and empowering our staff Voice Teams to build solutions to issues identified in the cultural survey. Over the next twelve months we will be undertaking further work to build on the initial results.

We have a diverse workforce with staff having varying personal circumstances. By offering a flexible work program including flexible work arrangements, transition to retirement, rostered days off, variable working hours and working from home opportunities we support the ability of staff to maintain a work / life balance.

Council provides each staff member with training that will enable them to be successful in their own role or to assist them in progressing their careers through annual staff review and planning sessions. In June, twelve of our existing workers took on a traineeship in either Civil Construction Supervision, Project Management or Work Health and Safety. These participants ranged in age from young workers to mature age workers.

Council provides an Employee Assistance Program, providing staff and their immediate family members' access to a free professional counselling service.

## **Eurobodalla Shire Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

#### **Mental health awareness training**

Mental health awareness training programs have been widely promoted to various community groups and have been well attended.

Council undertook an interim role in the distribution of mental health awareness information across the Eurobodalla Mental Health Network.

Council co-hosted the Eurobodalla Mental Health Forum with Resilience NSW and NSW Health where 60 delegates participated in a review and advancement of mental health practices including Mental Health Awareness.

Council facilitated the delivery of Mental Health First Aid workshops for arts workers, artists plus volunteers from a variety of programs including the Volunteers for Bushfire Recovery Program. 1

#### **Inclusion and disability awareness raising events**

Council annually celebrates International Day of People with Disability and participates in advocacy activities and partnerships with disability agencies and networks.

The Eurobodalla Botanic Gardens have been promoted and utilised as accessible venues for bushfire recovery and disability support groups, the annual performance of Shakespeare and a book fair.

Planning for inclusion and disability awareness raising events in 2021-2022 is occurring in conjunction with Friends of the Gardens and Council's Creative Arts Services within the scope of bushfire recovery works and the pandemic.

#### **Seek to recruit a young person with a disability to the Youth Committee**

Young people with disabilities are encouraged to join the Youth Committee with nominations sought annually from local high schools to fill the vacancy in the new term of Council.

## **Deliver a campaign promoting inclusive practices to business, recreation and community groups**

In a collaboration with the Disability Inclusion Advisory Committee, a range of new resources, including the 'Accessible and Inclusive Eurobodalla' webpage and hard copy flyers, have been developed and distributed to enable businesses, sporting groups and community organisations to improve access and inclusion. The resource includes a self-assessment checklist for organisations to audit the accessibility of their services and premises.

A meeting of local Business Chambers and the NSW Business Chamber in 2021 acknowledged the need for an 'access focussed' award to remain part of local Business Awards.

### **Creative arts**

Council's Creative Arts Services has collaborated with strategic partners to promote inclusion and community access events and programs. This work has involved: River of Art, National Museum of Australia, South East Arts, Music NSW and Outlandish Arts.

### **Creating liveable communities**

Community halls and libraries with hearing loops are promoted through on-site signage and via Council's website, which identifies the designated facilities.

All reported access issues identified in Council's correspondence system are investigated and responded to. For example, as a result of input from the community, beach access and signage has been installed at South Rosedale and access improvements have been recommended for public toilets and mobility parking.

All new Council facilities are designed to meet accessibility standards. Community facilities that do not meet accessibility standards are prioritised and progressively upgraded as budgets allow.

A detailed audit of beach was prepared in 2021-2022. The audit identified and prioritised a range of beach accessibility options. The audit was used to successfully obtain a grant to provide beach access at eight of the Shire's patrolled beaches.

Of the 32 young people involved in the YDrive Learner Driver Program, seven are registered as having disability.

One young person with a disability attended the youth climate resilience forum in June 2021, and two people with vision impairment volunteered at the all-age music event in youth week 2021.

A new grant funded volunteer coordinator has been appointed to support bushfire impacted residents. Of the 20 volunteers recruited, one person is registered as having a disability.

All Youth Week marketing material developed is accessible and inclusive with online information accessible to screen reader software. Radio interviews, social media and commercial advertising is used to ensure that Youth Week events are publicised.

Children's Services provides volunteers and links with professional agencies to support children with disability in school, at preschool, Family Day Care and Before and After School and Vacation Care Programs.

The 3Bs playgroups, including the 'Start Strong' Multicultural Playgroup, has built positive supportive relationships with families and provides diagnostic and logistical support to families in partnership with specialists employed by Muddy Puddles. This assists children with disability to enter early education, specialist care and transition to school programs.

The Embracing Participation and Embracing Babies Programs support families with babies with socialisation and understanding of child development.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Council's Economic Development Services in collaboration with the Disability Inclusion Advisory Committee, has developed the 'Accessible and Inclusive Eurobodalla' webpage and resources to be more reflective of contemporary considerations to create improved access and inclusion. New

resources were sent to local chambers of commerce and featured in a business newsletter with subscriptions numbering 1,240 recipients. As a result of this campaign, seven businesses sought additional direct support.

Council's Job Shop Employment Project assisted young people with disability to access vocational training, work readiness and employment.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Council conducted a review of library systems and processes which led to the development of a Library Action Plan and improved compliance with State Library benchmarks.

Council has invested in enterprise website technology for its corporate and business websites that incorporates accessibility features. All content is reviewed prior to publication to ensure WCAG and Plain English writing guidelines are met. Council's electronic newsletter platform supports WCAG features, and all content is reviewed prior to publication to ensure guidelines are met. Accessibility guides and resources are available for staff on Council's intranet.

Livestreaming of Council meetings began in 2016, allowing anyone to watch the Council meeting from their computer or device either live or via recording.

The Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) 2022 was developed in partnership with the Eurobodalla community with engagement occurring in the period July 2021 to June 2022. During this time, Council involved people with disability, carers and key advocates, such as the Disability Inclusion Advisory Committee, in extensive consultation, collaboration and review processes. Engagement activities were primarily conducted online due to the prevalence of COVID-19 and the NSW Health restrictions in place. In line with the Disability Inclusion Act 2014 (NSW) and relevant guidelines, Council will annually monitor and report progress in delivering 22 new actions across the four key outcome areas over the next four years. The key outcome areas are:

Council has worked closely with the Eurobodalla community in the 2021-2022 Financial Year to develop and adopt a new DIAP on 14 June 2022. During the initial engagement period in October and November 2021, 110 people completed a detailed community survey while a further 42 people participated in six online workshops. The results of this phase were presented to Council at official briefings on 1 February and 1 March 2022 along with a Council Report on 8 March 2022 where a recommendation to publicly exhibit the draft DIAP for 42 days was endorsed. The methodology for publicising the draft DIAP and engaging with the community during the public exhibition period for the draft DIAP was as follows.

- Re-engage with the mailing list of 433 individuals and groups by sending a link to the draft DIAP and invitation to comment
- Additional emphasis was placed on engagement with cohorts that were silent in the initial round of engagement such as schools and aged care
- Dedicated page was set up on Council's website
- A media release, two social media posts, a noticeboard item
- Other newsletters such as Council's Business Newsletter and Library News
- Hard copies of the draft DIAP placed in Libraries for the exhibition period.

Public exhibition of the draft DIAP yielded eight (8) submissions. In addition, input was received via two online workshops involving 14 community members with the assistance an Auslan Interpreter. The DIAP 2022 is incorporated into the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework, with all activities to be recorded quarterly and reported annually.

## How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?

### What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?

Worked with Council's Disability Inclusion Advisory Committee to develop a communications plan and community engagement strategy for the development of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) 2022.

Undertook specific consultation for the development of the DIAP from September to November 2021 during COVID-19 restrictions. This included a community survey (110 responses) and eight online workshops. In publicising the survey, social media posts accompanied a media release. Direct email distribution of the survey included 450 community groups and organisations listed in Council's Community Directory. In addition to structured consultation, Council incorporates feedback processes, including regular surveys and feedback with clients with a disability who use Council services, employment programs and workforce planning that considers access and disability factors and experiences, assessment of customer requests for physical barriers and mobility issues (e.g. pathways, public toilets).

### How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?

The DIAP has been a whole of Council process, with all actions incorporated into the IP&R reporting system and timetable, requiring staff from a range of Council areas to action and report throughout the year. Extensive internal consultation and review of disability and access considerations has been incorporated into activities. For example, at the suggestion of a community member an easy English version of the DIAP has been published. Easy English versions of a range of Council documents are now being prepared, including Council's Climate Action Plan.

## How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?

The Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) 2022 includes actions to support a range of target community members and staff, including training for staff, Councillors and the community (e.g. Actions 1.2, 1.7), Affirmative recruitment (Action 3.2).

Council's Aboriginal Action Plan 2020 - 2024 has 30 Actions across three focus areas, developed in consultation with the Aboriginal community that address needs and aspirations.

Council is currently preparing a Youth Action Plan that will include specific actions to assist LGBTQI+ young people, developed in concert with target young people who have been active in the community.

In addition to the actions developed in the DIAP and other corporate documents, Council provides a range of services, programs and supports to meet the needs of women, children, LGBTQI+ and ATSI residents.

Council has youth programs specifically targeting and supporting LGBTQI+ young people and ATSI youth; conducts an annual 'Colour Run' to highlight issues around domestic violence, as well as International Women's day events and programs; facilitates an Aboriginal Advisory committee and recently prepared, in consultation with the Aboriginal community an Aboriginal Action Plan.

Council provides extensive programs for children, including mobile playgroups and an embracing babies program for babies with disabilities to ensure early intervention is in place.

In 2021 Council conducted a community wellbeing survey and a customer satisfaction survey with the whole community. This included specific questions around children's, youth, aged and disability services, as well as broader issues of wellbeing and inclusion. This will further inform future planning and programming.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

COVID-19 restricted our engagement options in the development of the new DIAP 2022. This was overcome with some effective online engagement processes - workshops and survey. However, many of our residents with a disability have more vulnerable health so we had to be careful in how we engaged.

Our Disability Inclusion Advisory committee faced challenges due to COVID-19 and the additional year of the previous Local Government term. A number of committee members would have preferred to only participate for four years, due to a range of reasons, which made it hard to maintain momentum.

Our community was significantly affected by the 2019-20 bushfires (over 500 houses lost and major public infrastructure losses). While there were opportunities to build greater accessibility into many projects as part of the rebuild, the volume of work just to get back to square one made it difficult to pursue additional accessibility projects and activities. Reduced staff - we have had difficulty implementing some actions due to a reduced number of staff (an issue affecting many Councils).

## **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

A significant achievement was Council's hosting of a mental health forum, with over 60 organisations/practitioners participating. Mental health has been a major issue due to bushfires, floods and COVID-19. Hosting the forum enabled all parties to come together, facilitating a greater understanding of resources and how to maximise support for the community. This resulted in more targeted programs for children and youth, as well as additional resources via the LHN.

A second achievement that had a real impact was the preparation of an easy English version of the DIAP. This came about after a submission from a community member with a disability. Council's Communications team actively engaged the young man concerned on the process of preparing the simpler version and he was asked to launch the finished document. A very positive experience for everyone, resulting in better access to the DIAP, as well as additional Council documents being prepared in easy English versions as well.

The development of the DIAP 2022 has been highly successful and inclusive, both in terms of the community and within Council. Given the challenges of COVID-19 etc this has been a very positive result, with meaningful, achievable actions that directly focus on the stated needs of the community

## **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Council constructed the Bay pavilions in 2021-2022. The facility is an Arts and Aquatic facility in Batemans Bay. Our shire has 42% of residents 60+ and 19% living with a disability, so access, inclusion and mobility issues are key considerations. The new facility opened in June 2022. It is all on one level, with additional accessible parking beyond requirements, access ramps, a Changing Places toilet facility, ramps into all pools (including a warm water therapy pool), hearing augmentation and accessible seating. The contractor has partnered with local disability employment providers to encourage people with disability to apply for roles and be supported to do so, and partnered with specialist disability learn to swim operators to assist children and adults with disability to learn to swim and have confidence in the water

## **Fairfield City Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Presentation on community profile relating to disability as well as introduction in to Council's DIAP and accessibility for new staff as part of their Corporate Inductions.



Undertake community consultations with 100 people to develop the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022 – 2026. Consulted with carers during the development of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026

### **Creating liveable communities**

Conducted accessibility/inclusion audits on seven facilities including the SES Fairfield Headquarters, Bossley Park Amenities building, Carramar Early Learning Centre, Council Depot and amenities buildings in Marconi, Knight and Carrawood Parks.

Carried out accessibility improvement works at Bonnyrigg Community Centre including new entry ramp and disability toilet fit out. Works also completed at Fairfield Town Centre and Tasman Parade Early Learning Centre.

Installed tactile Ground Surface Indicators in Fairfield Town Centre (Hamilton Rd, The Crescent and Dale St) to guide and assist people who are vision-impaired with warning or directional orientation information.

Commenced the Zero Barriers project, which aims to remove barriers for people with disability when shopping, using services or participating in activities in their local communities.

Trained the Western Sydney Cycling Network (WSCN) volunteers to use a trishaw for community rides. Storage facility built to house the trishaw. The WSCN will offer rides to members of community, with particular focus on people with disability, the elderly and people with limited mobility

Delivered the Mayor's Wellbeing Register and Fairfield Food Hub Partnership during COVID-19 restriction period to support people experiencing isolation and their carers.

Developed communication materials regarding public health orders to residents and carers during the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure awareness and compliance with the current protocols.

Development of Fairfield City Support Card promoting key services for aged, disability support, youth and family, health and wellbeing, housing, food and Government.

Hosted a Seniors Week event in March 2022 to raise awareness about key services that support aged residents, people with disability and their carers.

Hosted Grandparents Day, which celebrates the diversity of grandparent relationships across age groups and cultural backgrounds.

Delivered Information sessions for parents and carers as part of the Start School Strong program to prepare pre-school children for a successful educational start.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Promoted Council as an equal employer

The following policies and programs enable staff to request council support in achieving a work/ life balance, which enables fulfilment of caring responsibilities outside their employment.

- Flexible Working Arrangements Policy – Subject to operational requirements.
- Appropriate Workplace Behaviour Policy.
- Employee Assistance Program.
- Diversity Management – Equal Employment Opportunity Plan articulating actions that support the objectives of the Carers Recognition Act and NSW Carers Charter.
- Delivery of education that included information on the NSW Carers Charter and Council support for employees who provide care for individuals with disability, illness or are frail aged.



## Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes

Expanded the use of ReadSpeaker assistive technology on Council's website to make information on sub-sites accessible to people with visual impairments, literacy issues and those who cannot read English.

Updated the alternate text for images on Council's website to ensure image information can be articulated by text-to voice applications.

Developed the sport, recreation and leisure activities for people with disability resource directory to promote active lifestyles and awareness of facilities and programs that are available for the community

Updated Council website with information for carers such as the directory for sport, recreation and leisure activities for people with disability.

## How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?

Indicator measures are a method of assessment used in determining how Council is progressing towards achieving the community's vision, priorities and goals identified in the 2016-2026 Fairfield City Plan (City Plan) that relates to the DIAP. Therefore the indicator measures are broken down across the five themes identified in the City Plan and against each service area. It is important to note that the results identified below will assist Council in establishing targets for future years.

44% of the DIAP indicator measures are working towards achieving the community's vision and 31% with no change. The remaining 26% were identified as working away from the community's vision. This is due to a number of challenges experienced during this financial year, such as the availability of resources to meet these targets, public health orders relating to social distancing and adverse weather conditions.

For detailed information see pages 55 to 59 in the 2021-2022 annual report at [https://www.fairfieldcity.nsw.gov.au/files/assets/public/documents/your\\_council/ipr/annual-report/2021-2022-annual-report.pdf](https://www.fairfieldcity.nsw.gov.au/files/assets/public/documents/your_council/ipr/annual-report/2021-2022-annual-report.pdf)

## Additional information and comments

In response to the requirements under the Disability Inclusion Act 2014, Fairfield City Council developed and adopted the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026. As part of this process, the 2017 plan was reviewed and extensive consultation was conducted with stakeholders.

## Federation Council

### Building positive attitudes

Continued to meet monthly with the Federation Disability Access & Inclusion Committee and seek their feedback and advice. Received regular reports from Councillor delegates on the Federation Disability Access and Inclusion Committee.

Considered opportunities for funding partnerships to deliver access initiatives and programs.

Delivered an online campaign as part of Mental Health month including a media release to share information and raise awareness. Community Conversation EDM, corporate social media posts, and corporate email signature.

Ran a special interest piece on local residents, highlighting their achievements and success as part of the International Day of People with Disability.

Delivered with Intereach the Access at a Glance Program across the council area to engage and educate communities and businesses on the value of inclusion for both societal and commercial reasons.

## Creating liveable communities

Ensured DA compliance is a standard consideration for all areas of the council operations.

Maintained footpath as per Pedestrian Mobility Access Plan and maintenance program with prioritization of high-risk areas.

Run a campaign encouraging residents to maintain vegetation on their property and the nature strip to ensure no footpath obstruction.

Ensured the Corowa Aquatic Centre and other public swimming pools are inclusive of people with disability including the Learn to Swim Program with Adult Learn to Swim classes, NDIS private one-on-one lessons, and Aqua Exercise (supported by MLHD).

Incorporated accessibility measures into the Community Grant Funding Program eligibility criteria. Provided free transport to major community events run by Council such as the annual Seniors Festival and Volunteers Celebration.

Increased staff awareness of and information on websites on companion cards. Staff accepting Companion Cards. Promoted Liveable Housing Design Guidelines (LHD) and a universal design approach via website.

Continued regular contact with disability organisations to ensure understanding and awareness of current trends and gaps for people with a disability. Ran campaigns and spoke with service providers to list on Council's Community Directory so people are aware of local or outreach services in the Federation Council area.

Hosted quarterly Federation and surrounds Interagency Meetings.

## Supporting access to meaningful employment

Advocated for community transport and/or on-demand transport in the Federation Council area. Advocated the State government to raise the profile of the challenges of rural schools and services to cater to children with disability.

## Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes

Continued to use and offer non-technology-reliant communication methods such as local papers, newsletters, community and library event flyers, letterbox drops, and tourism collateral.

Upgraded corporate, tourism, Corowa Aquatic Centre, and caravan park websites so they are compliant with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA standard.

## How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability

### What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?

Council has met with the Disability Access and Inclusion Group each month for discussion and feedback. The committee has nine active members from across the LGA who are people with disability or lived experience of disability.

Council contacted three months of community engagement to develop the new DIAP, including meeting face-to-face with people with disability, meeting with local carers group, meeting with Federation Interagency Members and local disability service providers, targeted emails asking for feedback from people who have lived experience of disability, Show Us an Inclusive Federation Competition with schools and the broader community, online and hard-copy surveys, phone discussions and emails, and written feedback to Council. Direct customer feedback to Council via our communication channels.

### How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?

Development of new DIAP 2022 -2026 which includes actions to address issues and barriers raised in the consultation.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Being mindful of the diversity of people with disability.

Regularly meeting with our Aboriginal stakeholders, interagency meetings, discussions with family and children services, and communication with schools. Seeking feedback for services and facilities such as swimming pools that are used by such cohorts.

Working with the community to provide inclusive, safe, and relevant events, facilities, services, and support.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

We have had a high turnover in the last twelve months, which has left areas short-staffed and under-resourced which has made it hard to complete actions.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

The Disability Access and Inclusion Committee are growing and more people with disability are joining and providing valuable feedback to the Council on their experiences and barriers living in our towns and villages.

## **Is there anything else your organisation is doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Not at this stage.

## **Forbes Shire Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

School holiday and other events cater for people of differing needs by provision of low sensory/ quiet areas, events evaluated for their accessibility and inclusion considerations, International Day of People With Disability event, low sensory day for Chill Fest, offered a low sensory resin workshop, participation of people with disabilities in school holiday programs.

Engagement strategies developed by council as well as stakeholder engagement plans consider people of all abilities in how information is provided and gathered.

Event planning and evaluations prompt event staff to implement measures to increase accessibility.

Engagement strategies developed by council as well as stakeholder engagement plans consider people of all abilities in how information is provided and gathered.

Event planning and evaluations prompt event staff to implement measures to increase accessibility.

Adopted complaint management framework and procedures that are able to be applied to all customers of council.

Implemented a new public website with the future functionality to have voice to text and disability enabled services via web pages over time Council plans to invest in this area and digital technology in disability engagement in the future.

Promoted Council projects that improve access to public places through communications using a variety of methodologies to ensure that key messages are transferred to the community

### **Creating liveable communities**

Council ensures all developments comply with Australian Standards including Design for Access and Mobility General Requirements for Access to Buildings and Design for Access and Mobility- Means to Assist the Orientation of People with Vision Impairment- Tactile Ground Surface Indicators.

Steps at Croquet club with tactile markers, footpaths around schools and preschool, automatic doors at LVV, design and scope of improved YACC access.

Accessible parking space installed in Templar Street and consultation with local disability advocates around road and foot path surface when this area was redeveloped.

Continued use of the fishing pontoon and the design and beginnings of install of another footbridge with fishing access at the northern end of the lake WDC.

Support of River Dreaming Aboriginal Corporation fishing event in partnership with Aruma to be completed October 2022.

Continued annual rental subsidy to Home and Community Care in order to enhance service provision to disabled members of the community.

Buses now available in town, need for public transport identified in the Local Strategic planning Statement, included in assessments for housing development at Goldridge Estate.

Local disability service provider Aruma has a bus and visiting maxi taxis service from Parkes and Dubbo.

Participates in MLAK scheme and National Public Toilet Map to ensure access to disabled toilets is available 24 hours a day seven days per week.

Incentives provided to medical professionals to ensure access to medical services

Olympic pool toilets have been upgraded to two bays with adult changing table

Forbes Medicine and Mind pram ramp and disabled carpark have been constructed.

Engaged people with a disability in the design and planning phases of new infrastructure. This aspect of accessibility is included in conditions of consent for all new developments.

New facilities are designed to cater for the needs of disabled people. Accessibility code and certification process ensure compliance

Council is seeking quotes for Accessibility Audit services for Council facilities.

Semi regular WHS/Facilities audits conducted at the Youth Centre, Skate Park; Lions Park and Town Hall to ensure compliance with disability access points.

Adult change table installed at Forbes Olympic Swimming Pool

Renewed line markings in Woolworths' car park. New developments require disabled parking spaces.

Scope and master plan design created for Apex Park with inclusion of replacement disability swing funds set aside.

Outdoor Dining settings around the lake include a space for wheelchair access as per style guide.

Playgrounds etc. installed to standard and with awareness of the diverse nature of disabilities in our community and through active consultation.

All sporting field upgrades are including accessible toilets Hughie Wilson (under construction), South Circle and Grinsted ovals (in planning phase).

Planning has been undertaken for automatic doors on the Council Chambers part of Town Hall.

Parks, footpaths and open spaces are maintained in a way that caters for the needs of people with a disability. Playgrounds etc. installed to standard.

Identify gaps in services for disabled people and advocate for increased government services. Interagency participation ongoing.

Funding secured for heated pool and its carpark, project ongoing

Assist to maintain a supply of housing for people with a disability. Housing strategy includes maintenance of Parkes Forbes Community Housing membership, compliance with BCA. Forbes

Housing strategy looks to consider accessible housing in future land releases, as well as compliance with the accessibility code and the BCA

New Tourist Information Centre venue currently under construction will have automatic doors and accessible toilets

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Council to implement Equal Employment Opportunities and Temporary Placement of Long term Unemployed Disabled Individuals Policy.

Council currently has approximately 5% of staff with a diagnosed disability and provides both adaptive equipment and flexible work conditions to support meaningful and equal participation in work.

Aruma local disability service provider - hold Council contract for overgrown lawns, cemetery, rest areas and Meaghers Lane maintenance.

Council will invest in the installation of a lift in Town Hall to ensure zero barriers to employment across the entire Council operation.

Awareness raising campaign undertaken for employment of people with a disability at the Central West Livestock exchange.

Participation in interagency each month with a number of disability service providers and use of Aruma for corporate gifts.

Identify opportunities to procure goods and services from local businesses who employ people with a disability.

Develop a list of Forbes LGA based businesses who provide meaningful employment to people with a disability.

Review procurement procedures to identify options to procure goods and services from identified businesses.

Utilise Aussie Biscuit facility for gifts for VIP at corporate events.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Funds secured through Stronger Country communities (to upgrade access) and project underway at the Youth and Community Centre.

All events are evaluated for how they included accessibility and inclusion, sensory and quiet area at events, use of Aruma for gifts etc.

A Variety of methods are used to communicate with the community to ensure accessibility. Website conforms to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines conformance level AA.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

#### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

Consultation with individuals on projects and events, feedback from Disability organizations regarding projects and events.

#### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

Planning engagement via an internal and external consultative group to create new DIAP for adoption in 2023

## **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Application has been with the community generally to this point. The new round of engagement for our new DIAP will consider all groups more deliberately and actively.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Resourcing has been an issue - our shire has been subject to two major floods and being Natural Disaster declared three times-and we are working our way through recovery from these.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

A renewed focus on disability and inclusion with a new Council. Also more ideas coming forward from staff and community for us to be able to achieve.

## **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Renewed and deliberate consultation to ensure that disability and inclusion is purposeful and proactive.

## **Georges River Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Council continued to partner with local community groups to showcase the contribution people with disability make in our community. Local disability groups have been assisted financially through our Community Grants Program to support their programs, work, and resources to advocate and raise their profile to work in the community. These included funding under the Capacity Building Grant category for a range of projects:

- Recreation Sports and Aquatics Club Inc. - Side by Side - Never Above You, Never Below You, Always Beside You - A performance and visual arts event by people with disability onstage and behind the scenes.
- Diversity and Disability Alliance Inc. - Doing it for Ourselves - A project supporting independence, and the active involvement of people with disability in the Chinese Community within the Georges River LGA - Helping the Chinese Disability Peer Support Group (CDPSG) become an independent and incorporated entity.
- Wheelchair Sports NSW/ACT Inc. - Get the Community Rolling: Keeping Active in a COVID-19-Safe Way - Purchase of sports wheelchairs and parts to get people with disability active again post-lockdown.
- Guide Dogs NSW/ACT - Access Training for Industry in Georges River - Training for frontline customer service staff to enhance access of spaces, places, and services in Georges River for people with low vision or blindness.
- Sailability NSW Inc. - Kogarah Bay Branch - Safety Winch - Purchase and installation of a more suitable winch to launch and retrieve the branch's safety boat.
- Cerebral Palsy Alliance - Equipment and Technology for Children and Adults with Disability - Purchase of technology and therapy equipment to support the independence and inclusion of children and adults with disability.
- The Shepherd Centre - For Deaf Children - Kidscape - Group Program for Deaf Children in Georges River - A program developing the language, speech, listening and social skills of children with hearing loss, and promoting positive parent-child interactions.



Venue hire grants included:

- Recreation Sports and Aquatics Club Inc. - RSAC Hip Hop Program for People with Disability - PJ Ferry Community Hall
- CanRevive Inc. - Pelvic-floor Rehabilitation Program for the Cancer Patients in the Chinese-speaking Community - Civic Theatre

Jennifer Parry, a local resident and the Chair of Council's Access and Inclusion Reference Group shared her story to encourage others to challenge the way we think about disability and grow a more inclusive Georges River. The video is available on Council's YouTube channel and was developed as part of the International Day of People with Disability in December 2021.

Council ran an arts competition in collaboration with Accessible Arts to select artwork for the DIAP submitted by artists with a disability.

Council's Early Learning Centres (ELCs) continued to work with children with disabilities along with their families and allied health professionals in 2021-2022. An important part of this relationship has been working with all other enrolled children and families and building acceptance and understanding of others, irrespective of differences in ability. The ELCs aim to continue to instil this approach from a young age to strengthen long term positive community attitudes.

Council's libraries continue to engage with disability service organisations for clients to participate in our regular programs, for example:

- Blind Dog Association attendance at Get Crafty Sessions – understanding support needs and working with the facilitator of the program to tailor the experience
- Auslan Storytime to build awareness about Auslan and to provide opportunities for inclusion for children and families. It is anticipated that one Auslan Storytime session will be run per term
- Engaged a support facilitator for the Creative Media Drop In to provide support for participants with identified additional needs

## Creating liveable communities

Following a comprehensive access audit of the Jubilee Stadium in March 2020, Council have completed a project on replacing the tactile ground surface indicator systems at Gate A and Gate D, which are the two largest and most heavily used ingress gates during stadium events.

Council have partnered with Zero Barriers to support implementing changes to reduce barriers and increase access and inclusion for people with disability or in need of assistance in the community.

Accessible Arts were engaged to undertake a "walk and talk" access audit of Council's inaugural arts festival, Un[contained] led to the inclusion of a special one-hour, low light, and low noise session for people with sensory processing disorders. Access ramps were purchased to allow for accessibility to the shipping container art installation spaces at the festival and signage was moved for bathrooms, and signage was installed warning of flashing/strobing lights.

Accessibility information has been included to event listings to encourage people to reach out to support their accessibility needs.

Council has investigated and produced a list of current accessible parking spaces and time restricted accessible parking spaces in the LGA. New accessible parking spaces have been installed at Connells Point Road, South Hurstville, Gloucester Road, etc. Council is currently investigating new accessible parking spaces to be placed throughout each town centre and local businesses. Installation of accessible parking signs within Council owned parking facilities such as Poulton Park, and Peshurst Park.

Council has commenced further assessment to ensure all bus stops in the LGA meet DDA compliance with the installation of access tactiles.

## Supporting access to meaningful employment

Libraries have also collaborated with schools within the LGA who have supported classes for students with disabilities. Moorefield Girls High School visit Clive James Library every fortnight, with the Children and Youth Services team helping them select titles to their literacy level and interests, with age-appropriate themes e.g., use of graphic novels. St George and Sutherland Community College library also have incursions to the libraries as part of a 12-week course.

Council continues to support the Jubilee Arts for Mental Health program. This has had positive outcomes and feedback from the participants and community. The art skills program is offered each term for 10 people with Autism and people managing or recovering from mental illness. There is an opportunity for participants who are repeat attendees to be selected for a paid position as an assistant tutor on future programs.

## Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes

Council engaged with Accessible Arts to develop the Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026, with it currently being translated into an Easy Read version.

Due to the ongoing impact of COVID-19, Council continued to organise meetings via online platforms, including meetings with members of the Access and Inclusion Reference Group (AIRG).

Council continues to use the tool Monsido to regularly monitor the accessibility and quality assurance of Council's website and improve usability and customer experience. Monsido monitors readability, misspelling and broken links to ensure both technical and content accessibility.

Live captioning and Auslan interpretations continue to be provided at major meetings and via online platforms.

Council staff within the Library and Museum and Gallery have attended the National Dementia Alliance Forum, the Accessible Exhibition Design workshop and learning held by Plumtree Inclusive Programming.

## Gilgandra Shire Council

### Building positive attitudes

Continued facilitation of work experience for Orana Living clients at 2WAR FM Community Radio and Australia Post

Orana Living clients undertook, with support, Meals on Wheels deliveries and delivery of Council's internal mail

Needs of people with a disability considered in all planning projects and developments undertaken by Council

### Creating liveable communities

Consideration given to accessibility when planning activities and events run by Council

Creation of additional footpaths to link key facilities - McGrane Oval and Windmill Walk

Council promotes the availability of community transport options

Completion of a specialist disability accommodation promoting independent living for up to 13 people

## Supporting access to meaningful employment

### Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes

Considered of universal design principles for new planning projects and developments undertaken by Council

Ensuring all new policy and services seek to maximise access for people with a disability including delivery of information in accessible formats

Effort being made to ensure language is simple and appropriate

## **Glen Innes Severn Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Council holds an annual Free Family Picnic Day for the whole community. The 2022 event was held on Saturday 14 May 2022 and despite inclement weather on the day was most successful. The event is open to the whole community for people of all abilities and includes education, food, information, inclusion, equality, and healthy activities which is conducted through collaborative partnerships with other local organisations such as schools, emergency services, volunteer groups, gyms, and others. It is a social event that caters for our whole LGA.

The Manager of Community Services (MCS) and the Director of Infrastructure Services (DIS) are proactive members of the Glen Innes Community Access Committee. Council further supports the committee by means of secretarial support. The committee has been hampered by the COVID-19 Pandemic and for two (2) years has been unable to complete 'Abilities Walks' which highlight areas of need within the LGA for people of all abilities. Council has undertaken an identification and action plan for problematic areas of pathways and concrete grinding of said trouble spots has afforded improvements. Council support for the Glen Innes Community Access Committee is once again actioned in the Glen Innes Severn Council Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) 2022-2025.

Have regular contact with law enforcement staff to police community areas to ensure disability parking and bus zones are being used appropriately.

The Manager of Community Services maintains regular contact with local law enforcement (Police and Council Ranger) to ensure appropriate availability and use of all abilities parking spaces.

### **Creating liveable communities**

Council maintains a New Resident Pack that is available at various outlets within the LGA. During the 2021-2022 year the packs commenced review and update with a view to also providing an electronic version.

The community access committee have a role in assessing accessibility and providing information for the updating of the brochure. The annual 'abilities' walk by the committee which identifies and provides information has been cancelled the past two (2) years due to COVID-19. The committee completed a walk during July 2022. This will provide additional information for the revision of the brochure.

Council has developed an Indoor Sports Centre which is available to people of all abilities. The centre contains two (2) courts which can be used for many ball sports including Netball and Basketball. The centre is modern containing office spaces and moving forwards could be used for sporting events for people of all abilities. Work has commenced and on the construction of a shared pathway for people of all abilities from the local High School to the new Indoor Sports Centre. The shared pathway incorporates a distance of several kilometres skirting the CBD and making an accessible link for many residents and other organisations.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Whilst Council does not offer disability specific employment positions itself, it does actively practice Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) as outlined in the EEO Policy. It is mandatory for all staff engaged in recruitment activities on behalf of Council to adopt EEO principles. Council is a Registered NDIS provider and supports meaningful employment opportunities for Participants. Council conducted a Careers expo for all students from local secondary schools during the latter half of 2021-2022. This was well received with all Council Departments represented having displays and discussions with the regarding all of the career opportunities Council has available.

## **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Council's Life Choices - Support Services (LC-SS) and Children, Youth and Family Services work together to provide community services for participants under the NDIS. Individual and group services are available which are planned with having a person-centred approach for each individual. Feedback about consumer and participant experiences, goal achievements and the degree of choice is sought and received at the time of review, via the quarterly LC-SS Newsletter and direct consultation with individuals and groups.

Council approved its new DIAP 2022-2025 at the April 2022 Ordinary Council Meeting. The new DIAP was created following a consultative process across the LGA including community members and Council Staff.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

#### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

Extensive community consultation was carried out during the first half of 2022 in preparation for the development of Council's new DIAP 2022-2025. I would also highlight the increased focus on pathways within the LGA (improving safety of old, creating new). These improvements are of benefit to all who access the community.

#### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

The new DIAP has a new series of goals and benchmarks arising from both the specific DIAP Community Consultation and the Strategic Community Planning Consultation for the newly elected Council.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Glen Innes Severn Council has a strong commitment to the principals of the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014 (DIA), the National Disability Strategy 2010-2020 (NDS) and the United Nations Convention on the Rights for People with Disabilities (UNCRPD). Personal choice and control for all people in society is only possible in a community which ensures access and inclusion for people with a disability, this includes physical disabilities, intellectual disabilities, cognitive disabilities, sensory disabilities, those with mental health conditions, culturally and linguistically diverse, and LGBTIQ+ people. Exclusion leads to disadvantage and discrimination, both of which have significant impacts on all aspects of life including, health, education, welfare and wellbeing and employment.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

COVID-19 and related Public Health Orders (PHO) and lockdowns have presented a significant challenge for the delivery of actions contained within the current DIAP during the last reporting period. With the easing of restrictions we have been able to slowly move forwards.

The other significant factor affecting delivery of DIAP Actions has been staffing. As a small rural Council we have found it extremely difficult to attract suitable pools of applicants for many key positions, some of which remain vacant.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Improvements and access to shared pathways has been the greatest success. We now have all abilities access to both local dental surgeries, smoother safer footpaths due to the extensive concrete grinding process and plans for improved lighting and additional pathways.

The newly adopted DIAP 2022-2025 has also been a successful process which created a framework for achieving greater outcomes for people with a disability as we move towards 2025.

## Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?

Council has incorporated actions and benchmarks in its newly adopted DIAP 2022-2025 arising from the extensive community consultative process earlier this year.

### Additional information and comments

Council adopts a holistic and inclusive approach to all activities, is an active participant on the Glen Innes Aboriginal Consultative Committee, delivers an all-inclusive Free Family Fun Day for the LGA, an International Women's day event a specific cultural event that celebrates all cultures (Harmony Day), we could perhaps improve our consultation and seek specific feedback from other community groups such as LGBTI+.

Having reflected on past practice and referring to the 2022 Community Survey questions which sought feedback and insight from the community generally, I believe there is room for improvement and shall consider this moving forwards.

### Goulburn Mulwaree Council

Completed annual footpath replacement program. Completed new kerbs and gutters for Lisgar and Robinson Streets.

Developed a Road Safety Plan. Completion of line marking and guard rail programs, replacement of signage when required. Construction of Towrang and Carrick Bridges have commenced.

Council employs young trainees and apprentices, this also includes provisions for people with disabilities.

Goulburn Mulwaree Library hosts events and programs suitable for seniors and those in need of support, this includes outreach programs.

All CHSP programs, including Neighbourhood Aid and Centre Based Respite Care, delivered within budget meeting all funding requirements with some programs modified to take COVID-19 into consideration.

Provision of the Leisure Link program under the NDIS with NDIS Service Provision status maintained. NDIS client levels at least maintained and NDIS client satisfaction maintained at a high level.

Endorsed Social Plan in May 2020 with implementation of actions ongoing.

Worked collaboratively to create compelling public spaces and experiences for the community including development and delivery of cultural events, construction of Goulburn Performing Arts centre completed in early March 2022 and officially opened in March 2022. Continued delivery and development of community events such as Pictures and Popcorn in the Park. The regional art gallery provided inclusive exhibitions and workshops for the community, including people with disability.

Inclusive exhibitions and workshops for the community, including people with disabilities

Avenues of Honour (all signage installed, trees planted along approaches and established), Marulan Landscaping (trees and surrounds installed), Recreation Area (various projects).

Services for frail aged people, people with disabilities and those living in remote areas include:

- Goulburn Respite Service provides centre-based day care programs at the Goulburn Community Centre at 1/155 Auburn Street, Goulburn four days per week and the Brewer Centre in George Street, Marulan one day per week. The service is for people who are frail aged, people with disabilities and their carers. Programs are designed to enable them to remain independent and living in their own homes in the Goulburn Mulwaree Local Government area. This program is funded by the Australian Government, My Aged Care – Commonwealth Home Support Program.
- Goulburn Leisure Link is a Peer Support program for people with disability, it provides social, sporting and recreational activities designed to increase community participation and independence. It provides opportunities to enhance social skills and to develop and maintain friendships and networks. The activities are planned through regular consultation with clients



who attend the program. The activities are organised by the coordinator and are supported by volunteers. The program is based at the Goulburn Community Centre at 1/155 Auburn Street, Goulburn. This program is funded by the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) through the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and operates and meets standards outlined in the NDIS NSW Enabling Act 2013 and the Disability Inclusion Act 2014.

- Goulburn Youth Services Youth workers assist young people to engage in a range of programs and activities aimed at building a sense of belonging, enhanced life skills, strengthening peer networks, and providing enjoyment. These are planned using a co-design model with a genuine focus on collaboration with youth. Programs and activities are made available at no or very low cost to ensure disadvantaged youth can participate. Where needed, workers can also link young people to other local youth services. Our Youth workers provide support to young people with school work and further education opportunities, employment assistance and much more.
- Goulburn Neighbour Aid supplies a range of services that provide socialisation, companionship and practical support and assistance to frail aged people, seniors with disability and their carers. The program aims to enable them to remain independent in their own homes, within the Goulburn Mulwaree Local Government area.
- The service is operated from the Goulburn Community Centre at 1/155 Auburn Street, Goulburn. This program is funded by the Australian Government, My Aged Care – Commonwealth Home Support Program.

The Services listed above endeavour to ensure that support services are available without discrimination to people living within the Goulburn Mulwaree Local Government Area. It is important that people are not excluded from access to social support services on the grounds of their gender, marital status, religious or cultural beliefs, political affiliation, particular disability, ethnic background, age, sexual preference, ability to pay, geographical location, or the circumstances of their carer.

Throughout the past 12 months the delivery of some aspects of these programs and associated activities has been modified in response to the ongoing impact and safety requirements of COVID-19.

Improvements to community facilities

Lobbying of state government regarding health and medical facilities

Council does not currently have an Access Committee. Any new developments are assessed for compliance with the legislation to ensure appropriate access for people with disabilities

Council was very involved in advocating for the upgrade of the hospital and worked hard with the State Government to receive funding for the hydrotherapy pool at the Aquatic Centre.

Council continues to operate health facilities in Marulan and is advocating similar facility at Tarago.

## Greater Hume Council

### Building positive attitudes

Updates and inclusion of DIAP in Greater Hume Health and Wellbeing Alliance meetings across service providers with ongoing inclusion on DIA at all meetings.

Partnership with Intereach's Access @a Glance program with successful audits of Culcairn, Holbrook and Henty Council offices and promotion of program through community newsletters.

### Creating liveable communities

AllAbilities swing and changing places facility at Holbrook. Planning for all abilities playground Jindera. Ongoing improvements to council housing for aged and low income housing



## Supporting access to meaningful employment

Greater awareness across all departments of access requirements for example parking, childcare centre access and inclusion, foot paths.

Ongoing employment of a person with disability under a structured skills development program and school based work experience programs for two students.

Functional assessments of new employees identify additional supports needed to assist new employees. Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes

Planning and Engineering Departments continue to embed accessibility guidelines into projects.

Compliant website meeting accessibility guidelines. Holbrook library refurbishment with a focus on improved accessibility.

## How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?

### What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?

Council staff worked closely with key stakeholders to prepare the draft DIAP 2021-2025 which was adopted at June 2022 meeting. Ongoing community feedback is received through customer request system which has been effective in identifying issues around community infrastructure and events which has been taken on board by Council.

### How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?

Feedback is reviewed and has guided the development of the new DIAP.

## How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?

Feedback both positive and constructive has identified gaps. Gaining input through surveys and through committees has been somewhat effective. The new DIAP has provided more extensive consultation and identifies key actions that should meet current needs. A review at the end of each year will ensure council is meeting needs and if not should identify gaps.

## What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?

Events and other programs were still impacted by COVID-19 and distancing requirements. Many vulnerable groups were still reluctant to get involved. People resources and funding for programs has also limited actions.

## What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?

Progressing with improvements to council infrastructure especially AllAbilities swing and changing place at Holbrook.

## Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?

Employment and work experience opportunities for youth with disability in our regional communities is expanding and to be an employer of choice providing more opportunities locally. And yes this is included in our DIAP.

## Additional information and comments

Overall the commitment and achievements have been great considering the difficult environment with COVID-19. There is certainly a greater awareness and implementation of Disability Inclusion.

## Griffith City Council

### Building positive attitudes

Council provides regular information, support and advocacy for people who care for family members with a disability, chronic illness or are frail aged.

Council provides home delivery of library material for those unable to attend the Griffith City Library  
Council staff volunteer during work hours to deliver meals on wheels to residents in need

Funding provided to Aged Support Services to enable social outings and support group gatherings for the frail aged and carers of people with dementia Griffith City Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan was reviewed in 2021. It outlines Council's commitment to improving accessibility and inclusion opportunities for people of all ages who live with a disability. This ensures access to the full range of services and activities available in the community. The Plan was developed and has been reviewed by listening to people with disabilities, their families, carers and local organisations who work with people with disability.

### Creating liveable communities

Yambil Street upgrade with accessible pedestrian walkways

Kooyoo Street upgrade, which is now all on one level and accessible for all

Wood Park includes an inclusive and accessible playground

The new pump track has inclusive BBQ and seating

Griffith Regional Theatre has installed support rails for the back section of the theatre for those who require additional aids along the steps

Additional footpath and shared pathways across the community and villages

Events such as Seniors Morning Teas are advertised as disabled friendly and inclusive events.

### Supporting access to meaningful employment

Concierge assistance to filling out forms for those seeking employment at Council

### Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes

Council's Disability Inclusion & Access Committee meets regularly and includes individuals with a range of abilities and first-hand experiences that provide Council with valuable advice on a broad range of access and inclusion issues.

Support those who are unable to complete Council forms and requests online.

Support community members and carers with details of services within the numerous interagency networks Council has access to.

Connect services with other services to provide the best outcome for Community members.

### How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?

#### What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?

Community consultation - monthly Council Cafes, Quarterly Community Opinion Group Meetings, monthly Disability Inclusion and Access Committee Meetings

#### How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?

Recommendations from Disability Inclusion and Access Committee

## **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Community consultation - monthly Council Cafes, Quarterly Community Opinion Group Meetings, monthly Disability Inclusion and Access Committee Meetings.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Financial constraints

## **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Inclusion of Wheelchair Rugby at the opening of the new multimillion dollar Griffith Regional Sports Centre - with participation of Prime Minister of Australia, Mr. Anthony Albanese

## **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Recommendations from Disability Inclusion and Access Committee

## **Gunnedah Shire Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Gunnedah Shire Council recognises that people with disability are valued members of our community and is committed to fostering a community in which people with disability and their carers live with optimum quality of life, independence and participation, and where the equal participation, access, rights and equity principles of the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 are respected. Council's vision for an inclusive community, as articulated in its current Disability Inclusion Action Plan is to: "Be recognised as both an advocate and champion for the rights of people of all abilities in our community ensuring all of our residents are treated equally and respectfully and have opportunities to enjoy".

Ongoing delivery of the Access Working Group - An advisory group of Council comprised of a range of internal and external stakeholders. The group meets quarterly to discuss ideas, projects and initiatives of Council relevant to enhancing access and cultivating inclusion including those focussed on parking, transport, infrastructure, events etc. The group is solution focussed and seeks to be a change agent while broadening the mindset of internal stakeholders around inclusive design.

Access Working Group worked to finalise Council's "Missed Business Guide". Council provided reprinted copies of its Missed Business Guide and delivered to businesses within the CBD. The guide is a resource manual for business on how to attract more customers by providing better access to their business operations.

Continue to collaborate with community groups and disability support sector to promote positive attitudes to deliver the Access at a Glance window decal initiative.

Ongoing maintenance of Council website to enhance access to information and opportunities with a dedicated 'access and inclusion area on the portal. Positivity statements and copies of the DIAP are available for download (full, easy to read, access friendly versions). To value add to the website, a shared library of appropriate and positive images featuring local people with disability for use in publications has been identified as a future project.

Conversations have been held with a myriad of internal stakeholders to promote the principles of access and inclusion both proactively and routinely.

On 3 December 2022 Council delivered its free Community BBQ at Livvi's Place Inclusive Playground in Gunnedah to celebrate International Day for People with Disability with stalls and activities. Over 100 people attended. Plans are underway to grow the event in 2023.

Council continues to build positive attitudes and access by design principles with the implementation of its annual Section 356 (Access Incentive Grant) to encourage businesses to enhance accessibility in their operations.

Council's \$1.5million inclusive playground 'Livvi's Place' project which was completed in December 2019 continues to raise the focus on access and inclusion. The PlaySpace has developed a strong reputation as a fully accessible destination with intergenerational play equipment, wheelchair friendly BBQs, mixed seating types, ramps, tactile indicators, buddy seats, sensory garden, shade, fencing and shared pathways. It has become a go-to space for events and celebrations further extending the reach of the access and inclusion message.

Staff routinely access inclusion focused online training (virtual forums and webinars) as opportunities arise.

Access design principles continue to be considered in the open space planning further demonstrating that inclusion is becoming embedded as a principle across the organisation. The Access Working Group continues to advocate for greater input in the design elements at the planning phases of these projects to capitalise on opportunities to create inclusive spaces.

### **Creating liveable communities**

Council's Gunnedah Shire Community Directory continues to grow in size. It includes information about a range of organisations in the Gunnedah area and featured services include disability support, health, community groups, child services, employment, training and recreation and leisure. The associated 'My Access' app is disability compliant, and will adjust according to the view required and how it is being accessed. The site has Google translate features.

Council's continued subscription to the disability compliant Grant Guru has made available on its website the Gunnedah Shire Funding Finder which has enhanced the community's capacity to access funding that supports access initiatives and infrastructure projects.

Council continues to deliver its Section 356 Access Incentive Small Grant aimed specifically at supporting businesses and community groups to enhance access for people with disability within their premises. Projects may include the installation of an access ramp to the business or shop front, redesign of marketing collateral (i.e. menus) to appeal to broader demographic, changes to the fit out of premises to enhance manoeuvrability, access and safety for wheelchairs, people with temporary mobility challenges, etc.

In August 2021 Council reprinted its Missed Business Guide and the Access Working Group disseminated a copy to businesses within the CBD and electronically to the Gunnedah & District Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Hard copies are now also available in the front customer service centre foyer.

Across Council, marketing and engagement techniques have expanded to include a range of engagement tools to expand accessibility and appeal to a range of demographics.

Access and inclusion has been incorporated as a category in Council's annual Section 356 Community and Sports Small Grants round. A number of community and sports organisations were successful in 2021/2022 in obtaining grants under the program to enhance access and safety, to increase participation and membership and to purchase equipment to enhance accessibility.

Council routinely provides letters of support to build the capacity of community organisations to access grant for access friendly projects including ramps, accessibility friendly toilet amenities.

Council's Access Working Group continues to work on the development of an access parking map for community use and this has been added as an action in the revised DIAP.

Everyone Can Play in NSW Access Audits tool for existing play spaces are undertaken within the Shire and in August 2021 the Access Working Group endorsed the roll out of access audits in a variety of local play spaces. The Working Group will undertake the audits. The audits will be provided to the Public Facilities Team via a consolidated report for future placed based planning. This activity will also serve as a learning opportunity for members.

An online booking and ticketing system exists for events within Council's Cultural Precinct and cinema has been implemented to enhance access for a broad range of demographics. This system is compatible with assistive technology.

Council supports the use of Companion Cards at all its events and venues, including the Civic Cinema and the Gunnedah Memorial Swimming Pool.

Staff continue to undertake Accessible Design training with Vision Australia, and training manuals have been disseminated to other teams within Council that have a high focus on marketing.

Council maintains the currency of National Public Accessibility Toilet Map in relation to the Gunnedah Shire.

Council continues to implement its Footpath Occupation Policy which is to provide clear and concise guidelines in relation to footpath occupation within Gunnedah's business zones. This Policy ensures that the provision of pedestrian access for all users is not inhibited.

Council's entertainment venues including the Town Hall, Smithurst Theatre and Bicentennial Creative Arts Gallery are accessibility friendly.

Council's Civic Cinema has a hearing loop and provision for access seating.

Council delivers its Wide Angle Film Festival for International Day of Disability and continues to be recurring event.

Council's Pool includes accessible BBQs, wheelchair friendly seating and water station with inclusivity now standard consideration across the open spaces team.

Council's continues to maintain and upgrade equipment in Livvi's Place Inclusive Playground. This accessible and intergenerational playground remains a central activity space, with parents now able to engage in spontaneous play. Prior to its construction, parents and carers of children with disability needed to 'plan for play' by travelling 75kms out of town to the neighbouring Shire.

Council's GoCo Community Care Transport provides safe, flexible and efficient transport services for the residents of the Gunnedah Shire Council area. Clients of this service are predominantly aged, people with disability, frail and socially isolated who do not have access to appropriate transportation.

Council's Library provides a House Bound service. Customers include people with disability, those recovering from surgery, frail aged and those who are either transport or socially isolated.

Council is currently delivering on the completion of a new inclusive playground at Kitchener Park with the space design considering the NSW Department of Planning Everyone Can Play in NSW Guidelines which encourages designs that consider 'Can I get there? Can I play? Can I stay?'

## **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Employment is an identified action in Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan which is a living document. The review of this plan is underway.

Internal engagement across the organisation is ongoing.

Council fully supports and implements its Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Plan and reports on progress as part of the Integrated Planning and Review process.

Recruitment policies, procedures and practices are reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure that a best practice and integrated approach to workforce and diversity planning.

Induction and on boarding programs are also under review to strengthen references to access and inclusion obligations and responsibilities and to foster a supportive, diverse and welcoming workforce.

Principles are reinforced in:

- Staff position descriptions and employment contracts
- Council Employee Handbook



- Council Code of Conduct
- Council Customer Service Standards Management Directive
- Council's Complaints and Grievance policy
- Council's Induction and On Boarding Program o Annual Performance Review process
- Toolbox/safety talks program (e.g. Bullying, Harassment)
- Strategies to attract and retain employees from diversity groups are referenced in Council's Workforce Plan.
- Staff exit interviews (cessations, resignations and terminations) capture emergency patterns and issues.

Council staff with relevant areas continues to developing partnerships and collaborations with schools and employment focussed community organisations, as an opportunity to grow a diverse workforce.

Council has a 10 year contract with Gunnedah Workshop Enterprises, (Recyclit) to process recyclables and to operate the Bowerbird Shop at the Waste Management Facility. Recyclit utilises an onsite building under a peppercorn lease arrangement and a long term contract secures ongoing employment and training for its workers, all of whom have disability. Council allows Gunnedah Workshop Enterprises to also collect

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Council's websites are compliant with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 (Level A).

Council is committed to maintaining websites and platforms that are as accessible as possible to all visitors, including those using its site with mobile devices o assistive technologies such as screen readers, various browsers and slower internet connections.

Council's website features and Access and Inclusion portal to direct customers to key information which includes: DIAP, Access Working Group, National Relay Service, Companion Card, Spinal Cord Injuries Australia and Tips for accessible Complaint Handling.

Council undertakes annual update and currency checks of the National Public Toilet Map as part of the National Continence Program. Additional updates are made throughout the year if the need arises with multiple staff across the organisation trained to do so.

Education around accessibility principles and formatting for marketing and promotions collateral is ongoing.

Community development staff works to disseminate and share a myriad of information and resources to the disability support sector in order to enhance connections to services.

The growth of the new Gunnedah Shire Community Directory enhances the capacity of customers to connect with Council services and agencies providing support to the area locally, via outreach, or online. The inclusion of an accessible app with this platform further enhances the capacity of users to source information.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

#### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

Council delivered a community survey in Late 2021 to gather feedback from local support groups, carers, people with disability and the broader community with 118 respondents. Additional face to face meetings with service providers and carers were also conducted to capture perceptions and views on how Council could enhance access & inclusion in the community. Significant feedback around changing attitudes and the consideration of access design principles in new infrastructure projects such as playgrounds.



### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

Council has considered survey and engagement feedback in the review of the Gunnedah Shire Disability Inclusion Action Plan, and in the ongoing delivery of its Section 356 (Access) Small Grants.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Council is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate.

Recruitment policies, procedures and practices are reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure that a best practice and integrated approach to workforce and diversity planning.

The services it provides are relevant to the entire community.

In 2023, an accessible events policy will be developed.

The updated Gunnedah Shire Disability Inclusion Action Plan includes new actions around inclusive tourism and additional references to the above-mentioned stakeholder groups.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Attitudes around the training commitment needed for employing people with disability is an ongoing barrier that has been identified. This has been identified during the reporting period, both internally and externally in discussions with local businesses already struggling economically in ongoing drought conditions. These challenges are not insurmountable and obtaining buy-in from internal stakeholders and initiatives such as the delivery of the initiatives that raise awareness continue to create a higher level of awareness and conversation around engaging with customers and employees with disability. Council's ongoing maintenance of services to our frail, isolated and clients with disability have further enhanced the conversation.

The Shires' ongoing resilience in the face of numerous back-to-back disaster related events has been tested during the reporting period. These events have including lengthy drought conditions, an extensive Shire wide mice plague and like many other Shires in NSW, an unprecedented series of flood events. All have placed further emotional and financial stress on businesses, community organisations and residents and impacted the capacity of Council, and community organisations to focus on delivering specific access related initiatives.

Resourcing is also another barrier for smaller councils that are reliant on limited operational funding and in-kind support from local organisations to deliver on the actions embedded in the DIAP. Limited external grant funding is on offer particularly for events and awareness activities.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Despite the aforementioned challenges, conversations around access enhancements are becoming more common in the workplace. The DIAP has been used as leverage for office space redesign and on several occasions been championed by staff as an opportunity to lead by example.

The Access Working Group membership has been renewed in the reporting period, with a raft of new members bringing new energy and ideas for implementation and incorporation in the revised DIAP.

The Access Working Group continues to champion internally the need for consultation on and input to key public infrastructure projects i.e. parks and playgrounds within the Shire and for additional access and inclusion efforts in the delivery of council services. I.e. events, equipment, signage, urban design etc.

### **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Council will embed actions around inclusive tourism in its updated DIAP and will be undertaking accessibility audits of its venues in order to identify gaps in design and service. Council's Access

Working Group has commenced actions around embedding the delivery of an annual Disability Expo and intends to deliver a number of access awareness initiatives in the Gunnedah CBD.

## **Gwydir Shire Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Promotion of Good communication, Better Communities app Dementia Australia Information night

### **Creating liveable communities**

Dementia Friendly community is included in the Disability Action committee. Currently working with Dementia Australia to improve the overall experience of those suffering from Dementia. Provision of education to community and Business houses. Working with Council with creation of recreational spaces considering all access.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

No progress at this stage

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Hi Vis for public seating and a walk through to establish needs and develop an action plan with council Support for river pontoon disability access and Kayak access Concrete work, footpaths extra disability parking

### **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

#### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

Gwydir Shire Council has currently a survey out to the community due back on the 15th of December. The Disability Action committee will meet in February to collate the results and develop a new Disability Inclusion Action Plan. Persons with a disability are part of the committee.

#### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

The Gwydir Shire Disability Committee will be meeting in February 2023 to develop a new action plan based on the results of community survey. The committee will inform the Gwydir Shire Council integrated planning and reporting program

### **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

This is always a consideration in any planning

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Impact on COVID-19 and availability to meet face to face Communication to minor groups

### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

All Abilities Park Dementia Australia information nights

### **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Contractor has been engaged to design public recreation green space

## Hawkesbury City Council

### Building positive attitudes

Council's Communication and Engagement Strategy was adopted and is aligned with this Disability Inclusion Action Plan focus area. It also meets the Web Content Accessibility (WCAG) 2.0 to make the content accessible to a wider range of people with disabilities. An International Day of People with Disability Day event was held to contribute to developing positive attitudes and behaviour towards people who live with disabilities.

### Creating liveable communities

Hawkesbury City Council worked with YMCA to deliver an inclusive sports program. Undertook two audits and refurbishments were undertaken at both Richmond Pool and Hawkesbury Oasis as a result. Community Safety Audits undertaken in town centres. Three funding applications were submitted for increased lighting in North Richmond and Richmond. Two applications for access improvement lodged. Review of access and inclusion provisions are undertaken as part of the scoping and design process for capital works. Provision of Auslan interpretation and accessible transport options to events and consultations.

### Supporting access to meaningful employment

Undertook two Hawkesbury Chamber of Commerce awareness training information sessions and one broad dementia friend training.

### Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes

Promotion of our community sponsorship program resulted in an access grant. One advocacy to Transport for NSW to successfully lobby for station platform improvements at East Richmond. Ongoing work with Link Wentworth through housing forums to connect people living with a Disability with Local Health District Mental Health Services. Convening sector-wide interagencies to improve access to services for people with disabilities. Five Letters of Support Provided Support offered to Headspace outreach - which commenced prior to opening of Hawkesbury Headspace in 2023.

### How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?

#### What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?

Hawkesbury City Council has many networks and relationships with a broad range of services, interagencies, sectors, community groups, state and federal bodies and individual community members living with a disability. Feedback and engagement with these groups are key to ensuring we are meeting the needs of people with a disability and this feedback is sought regularly across the wide range of Council's responsibilities.

#### How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?

A key focus for early 2023 will be receiving feedback and undertaking community consultation and engagement from people with disability in developing our new DIAP.

### How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?

Council continues to work with Aboriginal organisations and community to improve access to culturally competent support services for Aboriginal members of community. This will continue to be delivered through the implementation of our Reconciliation Action Plan in partnership with an Aboriginal working group. Council support of Aboriginal health group at Community Nursery since 2018 through provide space for health and cultural service provision.

Council works with local and regional organisations that support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, women, children, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and LGBTIQ+ people. We do this by supporting community events and various interagency interaction.

Internal support is also provided to connect council staff meaningfully to community for consultations and other council planning and initiatives

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

It is important to note that recent years have been challenging for most areas of the community, business and government. The COVID-19 pandemic and multiple natural disasters have had unexpected and unavoidable impacts on elements of service delivery, implementation of some aspects of planned activities and the timeliness of completing certain strategies.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

A successful project considering the challenges of this time period has been the PCEP community development project - Person Centred Emergency Preparedness Project in partnership with Peppercorn Services Inc. The project aims to put in place a collaborative network around NSW people with disabilities to increase their capability to cope with disaster emergencies. The project aim is to provide the NSW Government with knowledge and tools to assess and increase the resilience of people with disabilities to natural disasters. This project has undertaken a wide range of community information sessions, personal sessions and connection to other services for people living with a disability. It has also been providing critical data on the support needs of people with disability in emergency situations.

### **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

In terms of the vision, principles, policy framework and focus areas of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2017-2021, these remain current and relevant. The next phase of this Review is planned to be a consideration of these components of the planning framework to guide any further development of actions in the next cycle of planning (required by November 2023).

## **Hay Shire Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Promote programs through Council media streams.

### **Creating liveable communities**

Worked with local agencies to support people of all abilities and programs. Provided all abilities playground areas. Ensure events and activities cater for people of all abilities.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Identified as an action in Council's 2022-2032 Community Strategic Plan. Planning to promote through Council's media streams. Council proudly supports and nurtures its employees that have disabilities.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Need to improve in this area.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

At the commencement of Plan consultation sessions were held in the community. Receive minimal feedback since the plan commenced.

### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

Included in Council's 2022-2032 Community Strategic Plan and targets set in its 2022-2026 Delivery Plan

## **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Regularly supports local groups and programs and assists in promotion and facilitation of events that targets the groups specified in the DIA.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Staff resourcing.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Upgraded the Visitors Information Centre to enable wheelchair access and easy to manoeuvre spaces within the building and also provides ease of access into ablution area.

## **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Encourage employment of people with disabilities in the community. Ensure any new facilities, amenities, passive and recreational areas are inclusive for all abilities.

## **Hilltops Council**

**Access:** We support fair access to the resources, services, and opportunities essential to meet their basic needs and to improve their quality of life.

**Equity:** We are committed to overcoming unfairness caused by unequal access to economic resources and power. We will support fair allocation of resources and entitlements without discrimination.

**Rights:** We believe in equal rights of all members of our community. Council applies these principles in its decision-making and considers each of the four elements when considering projects and services. The social justice principles have been applied across the eight stages of disability inclusion action planning.

**Participation:** We provide opportunities for people to genuinely participate in discussions about decisions affecting their lives.

## **Hornsby Shire Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Council completed the review of the 2017–2020 Disability Inclusion Action Plan. Council's appointed consultants produced an internal staff survey, a public survey which was widely advertised (1,500 responses received), a dedicated Council Facebook page, and held six public consultations across the Shire. Pop up sessions also took place in Hornsby Mall and the Mount Wilga Rehabilitation



Hospital. A proposed pop up at Hornsby Hospital was cancelled due to COVID-19. Social Inclusion Hornsby, Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2021-2025, was adopted by Council in July 2022.

Council-organised events, and programs and events submitted by community groups and organisations, have been promoted via our channels (website, monthly eNewsletter, Facebook, Next Door, and print advertisements) where appropriate. These include promoting International Day of Disabilities, NDIS in your community and Carers support to raise awareness of people living with a disability.

Council's inclusive approach to all events ensures they are wheelchair accessible and have drop off zones, easy to read signage and accessible toilets.

Accessible events / activities were offered through the grant funded 'Hello Hornsby' program targeting seniors and people living with a disability. All events were accessible.

### **Creating liveable communities**

Council maintains dedicated Access and Inclusion, Living with Disability and Dementia pages on its website. Information includes useful links to information and services, and a list of accessible public toilet locations. Accessible facilities are also included in project and location-specific pages, for example parks and gardens.

Council holds special events for people with a disability and the elderly in libraries across the Shire. These events promote good health, physical wellbeing and mindfulness and are free.

Council has developed a Hornsby Shire Play Plan to ensure consistency and equity across the Council play areas for both existing and future play areas and uses the NSW Government "Everyone Can Play" Guideline 2019 as its benchmark.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Section 8 of Council's Recruitment and Selection Determination encourages employment of people with intellectual disabilities, where possible.

Council has mandatory Equal Employment Opportunity online learning for all staff

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Council uses the Monsido platform to monitor website accessibility compliance to WCAG 2.0 AA.

A new COVID-19 information web page was introduced providing valuable information to the community on local services to provide assistance. A new Facebook page for libraries was launched, and Council commenced utilising 'Next Door', a social media platform. This enabled Council to ensure information was accessible to everyone in the community.

Council's Community Directory is updated annually. The community can easily access information on local NDIS providers and services and other community stakeholders and mainstream service providers

### **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

Continuation of vital services for people who are frail, aged or living with a disability include the Home library service, and E-audio devices loaded with E-audio files and loaned to customers with a print disability or vision impairment. Customers can receive 1:1 assistance with E-devices, including computers, subject to COVID-19 restrictions.

Providing inclusive and accessible spaces such as Hornsby Aquatic Centre and Galston Aquatic Centre with appropriate signage, adult change table, waterproof wheelchair, disability hoist and/or ramps into pools.

Information was provided directly to vulnerable community groups, including five information presentations for CALD community groups regarding Council's services, programs and projects. The groups included the Chinese Seniors group, English Conversation groups and CALD family groups.

The library service is planning to introduce Storytime sessions for children who are on the autism spectrum.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Due to the challenges of COVID-19 with facility closures and social distancing requirements, accessible information was provided through webinars for seniors and the CALD community on initiatives such as a learn to drive program and online Storytime. Promotion of Council's new COVID-19 resource web page and information to the community was widely shared through social media platforms such as Facebook and Next Door.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Success can be defined through our ability to meet the needs of the community by maintaining essential services during COVID-19.

### **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Commitment to Hornsby Shire becoming a dementia friendly community – consultation with people living with dementia, participating in the Northern Region Dementia collaborative, and increasing the community's awareness of dementia through dementia awareness webinars and Council's new dementia information web page to create positive change and a more inclusive community.

Council is developing a Dementia friendly plan in consultation with Dementia Australia.

The link to the National Relay Service is now available on Council's website next to Council's contact details and is displayed on every page of the website.

Council continues to source a range of new images as required from stock image websites, including pictures that represent diversity, inclusiveness, and disability in the community.

Council continues to update and renovate park spaces and equipment to be accessible and inclusive for everyone in the community to enjoy. Council's website allows people to search for an accessible playground to suit their needs through a search function.

All new areas must meet standards outlined in AS 1428 Design for access and mobility standards.

Information on community venues on Council's website displays accessible amenities on floor plans.

Hornsby Council passed a Notice of Motion in October 2020 to establish a Healthy Ageing Hornsby Strategy to support and improve the quality of life for aged residents and people with disability. The Strategy is being developed with an internal staff survey, a general survey which will appear on the Council website and three public consultations across the Shire.

Council is working in partnership with a locally run group dementia café, DCaf, which provides an informal support group. DCaf meets weekly to support people with dementia, their family and carers.

Council has worked with a local group called Studio Artes, who support local people with a disability, to paint community street library book boxes to be established in ten Council parks.

Developed a Dementia webpage to help Council move towards becoming a dementia friendly community collaborating with Council's Strategy and Place team.

## Hunter's Hill Council

### Building positive attitudes

Included positive images of people with disability in Council material and events.

Shared local success stories and initiatives in Council communications to highlight the contribution of people with disability.

Provided networking opportunities for local service providers.

Continued collaboration between Hunters Hill, Lane Cove and City of Ryde councils to sponsor and promote the annual Northern Districts Local Business Awards - Access and Inclusion Award. Hunters Hill-based community transport provider Stryder received an award for its work in providing inclusive services.

Young Citizens of the Year honoured as champions of inclusion through an Australia Day Awards and Citizenship Ceremony and other civic events.

Continued to highlight inclusion as part of the criteria to access Council's Community Grants Program funding.

Provided updates to Councillors, Council staff and community members about implementation of the DIAP and engagement and participation opportunities for development of a renewed plan.

### Creating liveable communities

Opened a new inclusive PlaySpace at Riverglade Reserve, with a design informed by the NSW Government Everyone Can Play Guideline and Universal Design and Inclusion principles.

Events held online during COVID-19, making them more accessible to community members with mobility issues.

Ongoing maintenance and review of footpath conditions and access in and around village centres.

Encouraged social connection and inclusion through promotion of a Hunters Hill Connect app, as well as networking opportunities for local service providers and organisations.

Supported local community transport organisation through networking, promotion and grants program.

Provided accessible parking in new public spaces such as the Livvi's Place inclusive PlaySpace at Riverglade Reserve.

Collaboration with NSW Government on an initiative to assist mobility impaired drivers by providing real-time data on the location of accessible parking spaces across Hunters Hill and NSW via the Park'n Pay app to improve parking experience for people with a disability.

Endorsed concept plans for Figtree Park NSW Public Spaces Legacy Program project that feature an inclusive PlaySpace and accessible amenities block, based on a 'Changing Places' facility design that includes an adult-sized change table and ceiling hoist.

Home library service provided to residents unable to visit the library due to age, illness, disability or lack of mobility.

### Supporting access to meaningful employment

Employee Compliance E-Learning Program undertaken with staff, including Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and Prevention of Bullying and Harassment modules.

Continued promotion and implementation of Council's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Policy and EEO Action Plan.

Staff survey undertaken as part of consultation for a renewed DIAP, with data also feeding in to the Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO) Plan.

Promotion of our Council in job recruitment ads as an equal opportunity employer, committed to ensuring a safe, accessible and inclusive work environment.

Application of Working from Home Policy to assist in providing flexible work arrangements for eligible employees.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Completed upgrade of Town Hall and Council administration building access, including an entry ramp, accessible toilets, accessible chamber and wheelchair-accessible compact lift.

Provided information on accessibility of Council facilities in venue and booking hire information.

Improved Council meeting accessibility using online broadcast with captioning, and opportunities for public participation via online meeting tools.

Work undertaken on a new online community directory that includes information on disability, aged and community service providers.

Participated in and facilitated forums, networking and events with service providers.

Consultation with community members, Council staff and other key stakeholders via a range of engagement methods in preparation for a renewed DIAP.

Promotion of opportunities for participation and access to Council services in-person, online and via phone.

New Movement and Transport Advisory Committee formed with a requirement for community representatives to include a member with suitable knowledge or expertise to represent residents with reduced mobility.

Commitment to inclusive participation as part of an updated Community Engagement Strategy.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

#### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

Comments were collected from people with lived experience of disability, and other stakeholders, as part of planning for a renewed DIAP. Our engagement yielded various narratives of peoples' lived experience of disability. These responses revealed that many individuals with disabilities in our community experience inequalities in areas such as recognition, dignity and respect, customer experience, and access to information, services, economic opportunities, and employment.

To foster engagement, a variety of consultation methods and formats were employed. During the consultation period, consultants spoke to a wide range of people. We heard from people with disability and their families or carers, service providers, relevant Council community advisory committees, the wider community, Council staff, including people at the front line, and those with design, communication and leadership roles.

A survey was also conducted, which could be accessed online, and in paper, providing a range of opportunities for people to have their say. A separate survey was conducted with Council staff.

#### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

This engagement and feedback has been incorporated in to the planning for our renewed DIAP.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

A steering committee has been formed to develop a Reconciliation Action Plan. Our Senior Leadership Team was made up of 70% women. A range of activities provided for children ranging from weekly story time sessions and school holiday activities to an annual youth summit.

Flexible work options and recruitment practices (e.g. advertised for vacant positions accurately, reflecting the role and using non-discriminatory language).

Supporting Sydney Multicultural Services to be involved in events, to reconnect communities following COVID-19 and offering information and support about services and activities that promote and enhance cultural diversity.

Consultation as part of a renewed DIAP seeking feedback from community members who identify as being part of the LGBTIQ+ community.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Staffing and resource limitations

### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Opening a new inclusive PlaySpace "Livvi's Place" at Riverglade Reserve, Huntleys Cove.

### **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Improving the parking experience for people with disability by working with the NSW Government to install parking sensors in accessible parking spots in our local government area. Real-time data on the location of accessible parking spaces across Hunters Hill via the Park'n Pay app. This aligns with DIAP action to "Improve parking options for people with disability."

Figtree Park NSW Public Spaces Legacy Program project to be built in 2022-2023, featuring an inclusive PlaySpace and accessible amenities block, as well as accessible pathways through this public space in the centre of Hunters Hill Village. This aligns with DIAP actions to "Upgrade recreation areas including waterways, playgrounds, outdoor gyms and picnic reserves to be more inclusive of people with disability of all ages" and to "Provide an adult change facility".

## **Inner West Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Major access improvements were designed and created for five Council aquatic centres, nine libraries, three service centres and the Council chamber following intensive collaboration with people on the autism spectrum

A modified easy English version for the Rights and Respectful Relationships course for Inner West Schools and local services was delivered in partnership with Intellectual Disability Rights Service and University of NSW

300 children and young people were included in sports on Activate Inclusion Day in partnership with Sport NSW

Understanding and support for people living with mental health challenges was built through creation of a Mental Health month short video story telling competition with Sydney Local Health District

Council's annual inclusive film festival celebrates International Day of People with Disability with 100 participants

Inner West Disability Pride event was supported in its second year, the only such event in NSW

### **Creating liveable communities**

Council advocacy influenced NSW Government investment to access upgrades including lifts at Petersham and Stanmore stations



A beyond compliance approach and attitudinal and behavioural methods of inclusion were included in Council's Community Asset Needs Study and these have been built into Council's forward Community Asset Planning

Continued promotion of event access guides, accessible formats and audio description training has provided a solid base to guide more inclusive practice for cultural activities and events

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Building capacity within Council as a disability confident employer, including developing traineeships for people with disability

Purposeful engagement with local businesses will grow local employment and this will continue through 2023 and 2024

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Advocacy and planning on the express needs of people with a disability throughout the COVID-19 pandemic

Research on accessibility for people with disability participating in Council's 13 Local Democracy Groups

Re-establishment of Council's Access Advisory Committee and recruitment resulted in new members with lived experience of disability across several of the advisory committees

Easy read and plain English documents were incorporated in Council's style guide

### **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

#### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

In 2021-2022 Council engaged extensively with people with disability, their families and disability support agencies to assess current need and priorities. Council also invited feedback on what needs to be addressed in a new Disability Inclusion Action Plan.

#### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

The early engagement informed a discussion paper outlining what has been achieved, what people said is still needed and proposed actions. The paper was used to facilitate further engagement and discussion in May/June 2022 and the outcomes used to develop the draft the new Plan.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

The 2022 engagement to develop the new Disability Inclusion Action Plan involved reaching out to a diverse audience including these specified groups. In addition, recruitment for Council's Access Advisory Committee enabled new representation of these groups and intersections thereof. While children aren't directly involved parents and family disability support organisations have been.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Access and inclusion barriers are complex and longstanding. Many require persistent strategic effort over several years to activate effective results signalled through the actions within the plan. Delivering actions is disrupted by inconsistencies with other established practices, regulation or professional skills needed to accommodate and realise more inclusive outcomes. The challenge is compounded by competing community priorities, attitudinal bias and generalised low levels of awareness of people with disability. This positions disability as 'other', separate to mainstream need which in turn impedes delivery and resourcing of actions. Effective engagement and input from the



disability community remained hampered during the period by their precautions around COVID-19 and the significant gap in disability supports that resulted.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

The historic Dawn Fraser Baths upgrade continued with accessible water entry designs and a holistic site access assessment conducted in 2022. On completion the baths will be the oldest of only two accessible harbour tidal baths in Sydney and provide a compelling example of unifying heritage and accessibility within a highly challenging marine and park environment.

Delivery of the Australian Human Rights Commission: Upholding the rights of people with disability training. This training was highly successful and engaged staff with new possibilities and approaches. The training reinvigorated internal stakeholder buy in on developing the new Plan and is being repeated later in 2022.

### **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Council's new Disability Inclusion Action Plan was approved for public exhibition. It gives the strategic framework for six innovative and overarching approaches:

1. Create opportunities to increase participation and representation of people with disability, and awareness of disability issues
2. Increased investment in Council cultural programs and programming
3. Grow economic inclusion of people with disability
4. Establish a program to improve the accessibility of infrastructure, venues and facilities
5. Inclusive design, planning, capacity building and partnerships
6. Improve accessibility of Council community engagement and communication with people with disability

New actions included involve:

- Further support the Inner West Disability Pride community led initiative following a second successful event in 2022 with increased participation. Council will continue to support Disability Pride to positively challenge common myths and stereotypes around the lived experience of disability
- Hosting a Disability Employment Roundtable as a tangible way to bring together local business, disability employment and support agencies, people with disability and other key stakeholders to mobilise employment opportunities locally

### **Additional information and comments**

Significant additional policy support is required from the NSW Government including:

- Integration of the Disability Inclusion Action Planning process with the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework
- The Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport requires all bus stops and railway stations to be accessible and these targets are not being met across the state
- The National Construction Code Liveable Housing provisions for accessible housing need more comprehensive implementation

## Inverell Shire Council

### Building positive attitudes

Council continues to work with organisations and groups to educate and advise regarding the needs and requirements of community members with special needs. Council ensures all events are delivered in a form that encourages participation from all members of the community and are accessible by people with special needs and those with a disability.

### Creating liveable communities

Council has an ongoing maintenance and upgrade policy for local parks to provide facilities accessible for the entire community. Council is in the process of upgrading the play equipment in Victoria Park to comply with disability access and also replacing the soft fall which will ensure safe use of the area. Council has constructed a new amenities block at the Inverell Sport Complex that is disability compliant to enable people with a disability to participate more readily in sporting organisations. The Tingha Town Hall has been made wheelchair accessible due to heritage funding from the NSW State Government.

### Supporting access to meaningful employment

Council works with local disability organisations to ascertain any assistance that council can provide in the development of programs and initiatives for the gainful and meaningful employment for community members with a disability. Council has an ongoing partnership with Brighter Access to include the organisation in a range of activities and events produced by council.

### Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes

Council is partnering with disability organisations and employment agencies to improve access to services through an education process designed to inform all sectors of the community regarding the needs of those with a disability. Council participates in workshops and seminars to improve its processes to ensure council is well placed to assist in the ongoing improvement of access to services, so people with a disability are not disadvantaged.

### How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?

#### What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?

Council has engaged with people with a disability through consultation with disability organisations and specific requests via the same to gauge the effectiveness of the provision of services for people with a disability. Any projects developed for the delivery of infrastructure and/or services includes consultation with the community during the planning and decision making process.

#### How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?

Strategies and projects have been included in Council's 2022-2023 Operational Plan, 2022-2023 Community Strategic Plan and 2022-2024 Delivery Plan.

### How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?

Council references the Disability Inclusion Act 2014 as part of the planning process for any projects that are designed to improve access to services and infrastructure for all sectors of people with a disability. Council is committed to the ethos of "A Community for Everyone" - a community that is an inclusive and welcoming for people of all abilities that supports the community's aspirations articulated in the Inverell Shire's Community Strategic Plan.

Council gives "voice" to this commitment and community aspiration by promoting and supporting the equal and active participation by people with disability in the economic and social life of the

community. Inverell Shire Council's Community Strategic Plan (ISCSP) embraces the aspirations for the Shire's diverse communities. The delivery of these aspirations relies on the collaborative and committed effort between Government, business and community.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

The recovery out of COVID-19 has continued to create challenges in rural communities through lack of access to materials with supply chain issues. This has caused delays in commencing or completing projects.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Council delivered a large scale music event "Music Under the Stars" which featured Samantha Jade and Daryl Braithwaite. The event was free thanks to State Government funding and was promoted as being accessible to all members of the Community. More than 5,000 people from the Shire and further afield attended and the cross section of the community there on the night was incredible to see. All sectors of the community were able to participate and hosting the event in Campbell Park ensured that all members of the community including people with a disability were able to enjoy an inclusive event.

### **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Council is continually looking at processes and systems to improve ways to enable greater outcomes for people with a disability. Council will continue to consult with disability services to better cater for the needs and wants of people with a disability to ensure they feel respected and considered in projects for the ongoing social and economic improvement of the shire.

## **Junee Shire Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Celebrated international day of disability. Advocated for improved accessibility and inclusion across council events & functions

### **Creating liveable communities**

Advocated for improved options in recreation & sport - Actively engaged with wheelchair sports NSW.

Upgrading the amenities at the Recreation & Aquatic Centre

Purchased Pool Hoist for the Aquatic Centre \* Upgraded continuous walking paths

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Actively employ four persons with disability

Extended the work experience program to those with disability.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Improved our web based presence

Acknowledged the value and contribution of Volunteers by holding a thank you morning tea & movie

## **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

Junee Shire Council have received numerous forms of feedback and engagement throughout the implementation of the latest DIAP. We have had members of the public email specific staff members with ideas, improvements and congratulations while also receiving verbal feedback on multiple occasions.

### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

As we are in our first year of our current period, we are constantly reviewing our current goals and outcomes. We will hold Bi-Annual stakeholder meetings to gauge our overall success.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Our new DIAP was aimed at all members of our community. Junee Shire Council prides themselves on being an extremely inclusive council as we have a broad multicultural community.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

The biggest challenge implementing our new DIAP this year was getting the required community engagement needed to include all members of the community. With so many other issues happening over the last three years, community engagement was restricted and limited.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Once the new DIAP was implemented throughout the community, we had numerous community groups get involved to advocate for the same outcomes and actions. Our new DIAP has brought the community together in an attempt to create a better lifestyle for all members of the shire.

## **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

As this is the first year of our current DIAP, all outcomes and actions are valid.

## **Kempsey Shire Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Council is currently reviewing its Event Application process to highlight actions and considerations event organisers can implement to improve accessibility and inclusion.

The International Day of People with a Disability (Big Day Out) was delivered on Dec 3rd, 2021 with 700+ people in attendance. Council delivered extensive promotion for International Day of People with Disability in the lead up to and on the day. Council also delivered extensive coverage of the events after they had occurred.

Inclusive event was also delivered for Youth Week.

Council used the opportunity (Big Day Out) to undertake engagement on our updated DIAP and to gather feedback on how Council can improve accessibility and inclusion.

Event planning and council support for the disability inclusive event Glitz and Glamour Ball (15th October 2022).

Event with celebrity guest speaker, Paralympian, Ellie Cole, to launch the new 2022-2025 DIAP. This was attended by key staff from all departments in Council as well as community members with a disability and their support workers/agencies representatives.

The Communications Team commenced a social media awareness campaign highlighting local people from our community living with a disability and sharing their positive stories and what they wished people knew about their disability, to increase acceptance and positive attitudes around disability.

### **Creating liveable communities**

Provide safe and accessible community facilities:

A disability access assessment for key Council assets has been undertaken as an additional works package to the asset condition assessment. This data will be used to develop a priority actions list for allocating multi-year funding to upgrade Council buildings for disability access.

Kempsey Library has been upgraded to provide for disability access.

All new facilities and facilities that are upgraded apply principles of universal design and comply with disability access requirements.

Council is constructing or has/is upgrading the following assets with disability access provisions: Stuarts Pt Community Hall; Smithtown Nestle Park Amenities; Civic Centre; Willawarrin Canteen; and Kempsey Library.

Council secured funding for a new disability chair for Kempsey Pool. Council will be removing the existing Horseshoe Bay Kiosk to make way for master plan developments. The existing kiosk will be replaced with a temporary container Kiosk which will be fitted out with disability access provisions (until funding can be secured for a purpose built permanent facility).

Investigation into the inclusion of Changing Places facility has been included in the 22-25 DIAP

Council staff are on the Macleay Disability Inclusion Group committee.

Council continues to source and apply for grants and funding to upgrade Council facilities and assets to improve accessibility for the entire community.

Council recently reviewed its Engagement Strategy which will include strategies to ensure the needs of the entire community are considered when undertaking both face-to-face and online engagement. Feedback from the Macleay Disability Inclusion Group (MDIG), disability support agencies and their clients will be incorporated into the strategy.

The MDIG was extensively engaged and actively involved in the development of the 2022-2025 Disability Inclusion Action Plan

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Council maintains close relations with local disability service providers, and actively alerts them to job opportunities when advertised.

All Human Resources related policies and procedures have been reviewed for accessibility.

Council has undertaken significant upgrades to both the Civic Centre and Kempsey Library which included infrastructure adjustments to support volunteer opportunities for carers and people with disabilities.

A new volunteering policy has been written.

Council has undertaken significant upgrades to both the Civic Centre and Kempsey Library which included infrastructure adjustments to support volunteer opportunities for carers and people with disabilities.



## **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

The Communications Team has worked to deliver accessible versions of key documents online and to ensure messaging that alternative versions are available on request.

Council has overhauled their websites which has delivered increased accessibility.

Council has prioritised Plain English communication throughout the new site roll out and continues to focus on this in all web publications. Council's Style Guide has been rewritten, with a focus on accessibility and plain English measures.

Where practical engagement activities and events have been held in accessible venues.

With the shift to online engagement due to COVID-19 restrictions, we have ensured that people with a disability and their support services are aware of opportunities to provide feedback and have provided online options for community feedback.

A new Signage Strategy is in the process of being developed.

Council facilitated free access to the Inclusive Tourism conference for local tourism and business owners to encourage further development of private infrastructure development and tourism products to be disability inclusive. Council further engaged a guest speaker Ellie Cole, to provide real engagement and discussion on inclusive tourism.

Council implemented an inclusive cabin within Crescent Head Holiday Park to increase inclusive tourism opportunities within the region. Council has plans to further expand inclusive cabins within the product offering across the Macleay Valley Coast Holiday Parks.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

In 2021-2022, Council sought feedback from people with disability, their friends and family, and service providers. We made sure we heard from people from Aboriginal and culturally and linguistically diverse communities, as well as people with different ages, experiences and types of disability.

The Macleay Disability Inclusion Group provided feedback and guidance when we developed the action plan.

We heard from more than 400 community members at community events and local markets, on the Your Say Macleay website and across social media. Community members told us what was working well and what needed improvement. We also collected the personal stories of five people with disability who call Kempsey Shire home: Clayton, Gavin, Sally, Jacoba and Jake. These stories are included in our Disability Inclusion Action Plan.

### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

Feedback from our extensive community engagement has assisted in informing the actions that have been developed for the period of 2022-2025. Council continues to be actively involved in the Macleay Disability Group, which continues to help us review, refine and enhance our approach to disability inclusion.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Council has and will continue to work very closely with the Macleay Disability Inclusion Group and engage with community and service providers to ensure review how the actions we are taking are working for the disability community of all background, cultures, and sexuality.

In addition to the inclusion group, Council have built strong relationships with many services agencies within our shire that focus on additional support and advocacy a wide diversity of people, and we have and will continue to seek feedback from these avenues to assist in our ongoing

delivery. This will include things such as supporting and attending the annual It's OK on the Macleay event (which promotes inclusion of LGBTIQ+), and seeking feedback from the community.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

The impacts, particularly social disconnection and isolation from COVID-19 have been the major impact on Council delivering on DIAP actions over the 2021-2022 period. Both impacts on Council staffing in delivery actions, as well as staffing in disability services, and most importantly the disengagement of people with disability from community participation due to a higher vulnerability.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Council has made significant progress in building relationships in the disability community, through regular and active involvement with the Macleay Disability Inclusion Group in particular. These strong relationships have assisted us in engaging more productively with people with disability, in turn helping us deliver more effectively what is needed by this community.

The highlights for the year has been the collaborative development of the new 2022-2025 DIAP and the awareness building events and campaigns.

The Big Day Out, in December 2021 to celebrate and raise awareness of International Day of People with Disability, was a fun filled day at Riverside Park, Kempsey, with more than 700 community members participating in a huge range of fun and engaging activities and connecting with disability service providers.

Event with celebrity guest speaker, Paralympian, Ellie Cole, to launch the new 2022-2025 DIAP. This was attended by key staff from all departments in council as well as community members with a disability and their support workers/agencies representatives.

Social media campaign to raise awareness and increase positive attitudes of people with disability. We collected and shared (via social media) personal stories of five people with disability who call Kempsey Shire home: Clayton, Gavin, Sally, Jacoba and Jake. These stories are included in our Disability Inclusion Action Plan. There was an overwhelming positive response to these stories, and we have been approached by other carers of people with disability to share the story of their loved one.

### **Is there anything else your organisation is doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Council will continue to work on delivering on all actions in the 2022-2025 DIAP. Council is currently working closely with the Macleay Disability Inclusion Group on a number of initiatives that will assist in contributing in positive ways to people with disability, including:

- Seeking funding for equipment to improve beach access for people in wheelchair
- Continuing to increase positive attitudes in our community via continued social media campaigns
- Planning further event opportunities accessible and suitable for people with wide range of disabilities, to participate in community life.
- Exploring potential opportunities for creative people in the disability community to share and display their art

## **Kiama Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Annual acknowledgment and celebration of International Day of People with Disability, delivery of Disability Awareness training in house with Council staff, continued delivery of the Dementia-

friendly Kiama Project including activities and promotion of Dementia Action Week in Sept. and the establishment of a Disability Inclusion Planning Group.

### **Creating liveable communities**

Continuous improvement to Council website and information provision, promoting supports available for people with disability to participate in community events and consultations including New Year's Eve celebrations, significant increase in all accessible toilets and facilities within the LGA and upgrades to footpaths and safe crossing points for roads and other pathways, inclusion of all accessible equipment in playground upgrades, upgrades to our holiday parks to include all accessible holiday cabins.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Hosted student placement to develop a Disability Employment Protocol (yet to be implemented)

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Continuous improvement to information provision to be fully accessible.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

#### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

Our first DIAP 2017-2021 has been fully reviewed with outcomes and recommendations incorporated into the review and renewal consultations held to inform a revised DIAP which will be endorsed and begin implementation post November 2023. The review and consultation plan was overseen by the Disability Inclusion Planning Group.

#### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

The review of the DIAP 2017-21 and consultation plan for the renewing of our DIAP was overseen by the Disability Inclusion Planning Group.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

By including these groups in our consultations to inform the new DIAP.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Our organisation is currently experiencing significant challenges which has created a lot of disruption. Our council doesn't have a specified position to resource supporting the various initiatives across council contained in the plan, so successful implementation has relied on the skills and positive attitudes of individual staff. DIAP is a specialist skill and isn't currently well resourced by the state government, therefore it is a real challenge to make consistent and long-term progress when the responsibility is an 'add on' to already established positions. Our council is a small council and therefore most staff positions carry a broad range of responsibilities which makes it hard to prioritise work in this space.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

The Dementia-friendly Kiama Project and upgrading our toilets and other facilities to be fully accessible across the LGA.

## **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

We look forward to being able to finalise our renewed DIAP, but with so many position vacant in our organisation at present along with a whole of organisation restructure currently being undertaken, negotiation of actions, outcomes and measures for the new DIAP is currently on hold until we have a full complement of positions filled to ensure embedding commitment and ownership of agreed actions.

### **Additional information and comments**

Again I strongly encourage advocacy around the state government providing every council recurrent funding to incorporate an Access & Inclusion Officer position within each council.

## **Kuring-Gai Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Ku-ring-gai Council hosted our annual Exploration Exhibition in December at Council Chambers and Gordon Library then at St Ives Shopping Village. The Exploration Exhibition is an exhibition of artworks created by local people with disability. The 2021 exhibition attracted 41 entries and was viewed by 1369 people as well as an unknown number of people whilst on public display at St Ives Shopping Village. Ku-ring-gai Council provided a glossary of terms to all staff members that relate to, and portray, people with disability in a positive light. This glossary has been provided on our intranet and in our monthly staff newsletter.

### **Creating liveable communities**

Ku-ring-gai Council has reviewed our Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan. It has been determined that the principles and goals of the Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan should be integrated into the Public Domain Plan, as an integrated approach to pedestrian planning in local centres, rather than having a series of separate policy and design documents.

Ku-ring-gai Council commissioned an access audit for Council Chambers to advise on any access changes recommended to increase the amenity of the building and ensure equal access to Council for all constituents. Ku-ring-gai Council updated the hearing loops in customer service and Council Chambers. A series of training sessions on Access and Universal Design was commenced to provide up to date information to Council's technical staff. The sessions cover Access and Universal Design - legislative overview, Access and Universal Design in buildings, parks and public spaces and streetscapes. This training is ongoing.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Ku-ring-gai Council provides information for local businesses on improving accessibility for people with disability and employing a person with disability. Ku-ring-gai Council has an equity and diversity policy relating to the employment of people with disability and other minority disadvantaged groups. Ku-ring-gai Council provides training to all new employees through our induction program that covers providing services to and working with people with disability. This training includes information on how to provide reasonable adjustments for people with disability.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Ku-ring-gai Council has revised our website and improved linkages and accessibility of the section "People with disability" including updating the information on parking spaces for people with disability. Ku-ring-gai Council provides information for local businesses on improving accessibility for people with disability and employing a person with disability

## **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

Extensive community consultation for the development of Ku-ring-gai Council's Access and Disability Inclusion Action Plan was conducted and our current Disability Inclusion and Action Plan was formally adopted in late July 2021.

### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

Community feedback informed the development of the current Access and Disability Inclusion Action Plan, the Community Strategic Plan, the Delivery Plan and Operational Plan.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Extensive community consultation for the development of Ku-ring-gai Council's Access and Disability Inclusion Action Plan was conducted and our current Disability Inclusion and Action Plan was formally adopted in late July 2021. The Community Needs Analysis is an important tool for understanding and addressing the needs of the above groups, a review is underway with public forums undertaken in March 2022.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

The NSW Public Health orders (5km rule) in force during the second half of the year resulted in the cessation of all group activities, this had an impact on our ability to provide face to face and group-based activities. The wet weather event in March 2022 caused structural damage to Council Chambers, the remediation works associated with this event has delayed the planned access updates. Cost and time of preparing planning documentation

## **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

The training provided to technical, and communications staff was very well received and attended. Feedback from participants has been overwhelmingly positive. On-line programs for carers and people with disability delivered during lockdown providing an outreach service to vulnerable residents.

## **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Ku-ring-gai Council has begun the process of setting up a Dementia Alliance with the goal of Ku-ring-gai will become a dementia friendly community. This decision is based on the census 2021 results which demonstrate that Ku-ring-gai LGA has a higher than the Sydney average of older people aging at home and therefore a developing need to provide education and support relating to dementia.

Ku-ring-gai Council will begin a new playgroup for children with a diagnosis of disability, chronic medical condition, or other additional needs including developmental delay. The playgroup will also include a MyTime component to provide additional support to parents and carers of children with a disability, delay or medical condition.

Ku-ring-gai Council is exploring becoming a Sunflower scheme supporter, with plans under way to provide education to businesses in the area, and lanyards available to our constituents who choose to wear one. Council staff across all public facing areas will be provided with additional training on recognising and assisting people with disability as a component of the scheme.



## Kyogle Council

### Building positive attitudes

Delivered Inclusiveness Training during all Council Inductions for new employees; Recognised and incorporated disability inclusion requirements as part of Council's contractor procurement processes through distribution of "The tradies guide to good access"

### Creating liveable communities

Identified indicative housing options that may be suited to people living with a disability or for older people by reviewing LEP provisions; Developer contributions and working with the Village communities through the Visions of the Villages Master Planning process; Developed social inclusion programs in partnership with third parties (such as including Social Futures and Real Art Works) to ensure older people and people with disability needs continue to participate as valued community members

### Supporting access to meaningful employment

Pro-actively sought a diverse range of applicants, including appropriately qualified/experienced people with disability, for employment shortlists by encouraging people with a disability to apply for Council positions through statement on job advertisements

Facilitated succession planning, where practicable, for older employees or those that may develop a disability during their work life with Council by implementing phased retirement plans. Employees looking to retire take on trainees and apprentices to ensure the transfer of skills and corporate knowledge whilst enabling the employee to reduce hours of work over time

### Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes

Hearing Loop facilities are provided during formal Council Meetings; Provision of information through accessible platforms such as the web, Facebook, Twitter and Council's Newsletter

### How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?

#### What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?

DIAP development and reviews conducted in consultation with local disability advocacy and working groups

#### How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?

Included disability and mobility access in Vision of the Villages upgrades and installations; Ensured disability inclusion remained a key part of Council's village planning and projects

### How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?

Providing an explicit diversity commitment, including people with a disability, in job advertisements by including the words "Council is an equal opportunity employer and encourages applications from people with diverse backgrounds, people living with disabilities and indigenous Australians"

Ensured disability inclusion remained a key part of Council's village planning and projects

### What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?

Access to resources



## **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Developed public messages and campaigns highlighting disability inclusion requirements and benefits to the community through the outdoor gym project and pool upgrades

## **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Advocated improved access to key buildings and businesses within the LGA through ensuring funding applications for upgrades include disability access considerations.

## **Lachlan Shire Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Council has delivered Cultural Awareness training for staff

Council has an employee Assistance Program which offers a confidential 24/7 counselling service for all employees

HACC newsletters are inclusive and provide information on a variety of cultural activities. Pictures used represent all of the community.

Disability information/resources are available in the HACC office

Review and update of the Code of Conduct policies has taken place

Recognising and celebrating special event days like Seniors Week, NAIDOC, and International Day of People with a disability.

Disability awareness training completed by staff

Children's Services staff are educated to work with children with additional needs.

Children's Services staff work in partnership with specialised services and parents/caregivers to support children with additional needs.

Children's Services staff provide assessment and referral to specialised services with parent/caregiver agreement.

Children's Services has Inclusion & Diversity Policies.

Youth Strategy - Under Community and Culture Actions a statement that through our Disability Inclusion Action Planning, Council will aim to implement actions that will enable the increased participation of young people with disability in community activities.

### **Creating liveable communities**

HACC events are inclusive and accessible to all clients, weekly exercise classes and lunches using a variety of local venues and environments. Exercise classes modified to meet individual needs. Experienced and qualified trainers employed.

Meals on Wheels and frozen meal delivery has increased across the shire

HACC clients have received two reusable bags to use for food delivery and shopping

HACC has a book/ puzzle library

HACC events/activities are inclusive and accessible to all clients.

HACC office is accessible with an auto door, is on one level, and has resource stands that are wheelchair accessible and disabled toilets.

The HACC service and our staff are strong advocates for people living with a disability. In home welfare checks and social support with flexible arrangements to assist clients.

HACC is a vital source of Public Health and COVID-19 information

HACC referral for services has increased in particular clients needing group support and handyman services

Increase in the number of families asking for welfare checks on their senior family members.

Library subscribes to online databases to cater for those who are unable to visit the library

Installed smart TV in Youth Area of Condobolin Library for youth access

Collaboration with Parkes Shire Library for access to their audiobook collection

Introduction of movies at the library once a month for elderly who feel isolated

Children's Service's building is accessible. It is on one level, wheelchair accessible and we have disabled toilets.

All furniture can be adjusted to ensure accessibility.

Learning resources are accessible in terms of appropriate font size and are all inclusive.

Provision of hearing loop to Tottenham Memorial Hall

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

The Training and Development Policy ensures that all employees have reasonable and equitable access to education and training.

All staff undertake an annual staff review which includes the formulation of a training plan which is focussed on the developing the skills and knowledge of the employee.

In the near future Council's E-Recruitment System will be operational. Included on the online application form will be a voluntary question asking if you have a disability and if the answer is yes, we offer support or assistance to help the applicant through the recruitment process.

Council is very supportive of working with the schools within the Local Government Area to host work experience students. The shire has hosted students at the Works Depots, Children's Services and Council's Administration Building. Work experience in conjunction with Condobolin High School for students with a disability.

Council has a Flexible Working Arrangement Procedure to assist the individual needs of employees of Council and accommodate flexibility as much as practicable.

HACC have been offering flexible work arrangements for staff. Changes have been made to HACC staff position descriptions to reflect roles better. Staff have been participating in online training on current Aged Care reforms, caring for the elderly, suicide prevention. Staff recruitment has been made a priority in HACC management plan

Respite has been made a priority in HACC Management plan

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Website accessibility improvements

Council's E-Recruitment System will be operational in the near future. Assistance will be available to applicants applying for positions online. Assistance and use of computers will be available at the Libraries.

HACC staff have been assisting clients online. HACC staff have been assisting clients set up direct debit services. HACC have been utilising Facebook to communicate as well as written media. HACC is going to be using a cloud-based software system (POLIXEN) in the future for database, service rosters and reporting

Library staff have also been assisting the community access essential services online including access to MyGov and Service NSW. Library staff assist community members in the use of various computer programs including Word and Excel and Email, and in the use of their devices including phones and tablets

Children's Services has an inclusive enrolment process and sources funding, where possible, to provide additional support to children with specialised needs e.g. funding for increased one on one time with educators. Children's Services works in partnership with specialised services including regular on-site visits.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

#### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

Council has developed strategies to maintain the level of Indigenous employment within the organisation, currently Council has around 18% indigenous employment.

HACC have conducted their yearly client reviews. HACC have a partnership with Currajong House (Volunteering food delivery). HACC have strategies in place to make the service more accessible to Indigenous community, lowering the criteria age, consulting with current indigenous clients on how to improve service.

#### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

Children's Services staff work alongside parents where children are identified as potentially having additional needs. Open lines of communication with parents. The service works alongside parents to achieve goals set out in plans such as NDIS. Case worker appointed under NDIS reviews goal progress in conjunction with Children's Services staff.

Children's Services does have children enrolled with additional needs.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Through the Lachlan Shire Council Disability Inclusion action plan, staff are required to actively seek representation of people with a disability on Council committee and consultation groups, celebrate diversity ensure inclusion through council imagery, publications and promotions.

Council staff will develop and facilitate a greater of understanding responding to the individual needs of a service user, through awareness training sessions.

Staff are improving accessible paths of travel to key destinations such as services, recreation and community facilities across the shire and are also reflecting the needs of those with a disability in the design and layout of park and playgrounds. A number of improvements are to be made to councils built environment and infrastructure and a creation of sensory play area in Condobolin Library.

The recruitment and induction procedure will be developed to identify individuals with a disability.

The accessibility of Council's new website will be further developed to allow for the use of adaptive technology by service users. Council staff also support diversity and inclusion through the Workforce Plan which incorporates inclusion actions.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Attraction and retention of staff

Capturing those staff identifying or declaring to have a disability to enable the organisation to meet their needs.

HACC staff shortages led to reduced service hours, close on certain days

Weather has affected services, wet, road closures, appointments rescheduled. Wet weather has affected the delivery times of projects

Specialised trades and staff shortages have also affected delivery capacity of works

Difficulty with meeting compliance requirements to obtain funding for students with Additional Needs

### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

HACC are receiving positive advertising and feedback within community after we did a publicity drive, dropping information packs to businesses, expo, show display, newspaper articles, and forums. HACC received further donation from RSL for social support

50 years of meals on wheels service in Lake Cargelligo 2022

Increased cliental

Library scored well in the customer satisfaction survey. Created sensory play areas for young people at both the Lake Cargelligo and Condobolin libraries. Installation of digital display promoting local events and programs at Condobolin Library e.g.: MND, RUOK Day and Diabetes Week displays

Upgrade of the Lake Cargelligo Recreation Grounds Play Equipment, included all-inclusive play equipment and disability access

Disabled access carpark located at the medical centre in Lake Cargelligo

Upgrades and additional footpaths have been installed to allow better disabled access throughout the shire

Disabled access carpark located at the library and dentist practice in Condobolin

## **Lake Macquarie City Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Rename current "Me2" program and continue to offer free inclusive programs to build skills and networks. The Me2 program provides free, inclusive activities for people of all abilities.

Hosted an Activate Inclusion Sports Day in partnership with Variety and Sports NSW at Lake Macquarie Regional Football Facility, providing the opportunity for 140 students with a disability to participate in ten different sports. Partnership with Cricket NSW who had funding through the Woolworths cricket blast program to present two four-week programs with a total attendance of 86 participants.

Supported the Community Family Fun Day at Charlestown South Public School for neurodivergent kids, teens and carers with 200 attending. Purchased a Tovertafel unit, an interactive light project game designed for people with dementia and people with cognitive disabilities, with a view to hiring to community groups and services.

Continue to participate and attend relevant forums to share information and advocate for the needs of the target group. Attended quarterly Hunter Central Coast Collaborative to raise awareness about issues facing older people and adults with disability. This group received funding for an awareness campaign in the city and organised a community event as part of World Elder Abuse Day on 15 June. Maintain and facilitate the Ageing and Disability Advisory Panel in order to seek feedback into Council strategies and represent and advocate for the target group- Hosted five Panel meetings. A new panel was elected and renamed Access and Inclusion Advisory Panel.

Introduce a Disability awareness program within Council. Provided training to Arts Culture and Tourism staff on access and inclusion and provided advice for the review of the Visitor Guide to include accessibility features of new tourism partners.

Work with local businesses to improve knowledge of disability and promote benefits of making businesses more inclusive. Joined and promoted the Zero Barriers project which educates businesses on accessibility, supports them to be more inclusive and recognise and promote businesses and services that are committed to eliminating barriers for people with disability, resulting in 12 businesses joining the project.

## Creating liveable communities

Advocate for improved accessibility and inclusive Council events. Continued to advocate for more inclusive and accessible events and programs when developing a program of activities for NSW Seniors Festival. Attended the Fast and Loud Festival and Carols by Candlelight with the Including YOU tent which provides support and resources for families with sensory needs by alleviating feelings of being overwhelmed by noise and crowds.

Advocate for improved connections between Council and community infrastructure and the built environment. Completed 11 non-discriminatory referrals for Council master plans and development applications for recreation facilities and 126 non-discriminatory access referrals for development applications.

## Supporting access to meaningful employment

For Council to become a disability confident employer. Continue to address and implement the recommendations of the review completed by Australian Network on Disability with the aim to be completed by June 2023. Participated in quarterly Equal Employment Opportunity and Diversity Working Group meetings.

Expand Council's Work experience program to include students from Support Unit Classes. The program was extended to five students and four Council Departments participated.

Increase volunteering opportunities for people with a disability. Participated in regular Volunteer Working Group meetings and developed an annual recognition process for all Council volunteers, including those with disability seeking vocational pathways. Two new volunteers who identified with a disability recruited.

## Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes

Introduce additional resources to Council infrastructure to assist with communication for all of the community. Hearing loops installed in Customer Service Centre reception area and two Administrative Centre meeting rooms. Continued the provision of free master locksmith access keys for accessible changing facilities, to eligible residents, with a total of 161 keys allocated.

Continue to provide the community information through various formats. Prepared and distributed three e-newsletters to 486 individuals and service providers. Continued to update Council's website to include information for people with disability regarding COVID-19 and service alterations. Contract entered for Holiday Parks website upgrade for including Easy English option, Multi-lingual and improved accessibility options for screen readers and dedicated information page.

## How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?

### What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?

Consultation and feedback from Access and Inclusion Advisory Panel.

### How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?

Feedback is taken into consideration when developing various strategic plans including Community Strategic Plan, Ageing Population Strategy and Lake Activation Strategy and various Mater plans and capital works in the City.

## How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?

Through consultation and collaboration with Council's Aboriginal Community Development Officer, Community Development Officer and Community Planner Children and Families, the needs of groups are taken into consideration when planning and delivering programs.



### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Since the isolation period of COVID-19 programs have slowly returned but attendance has been lower due to people are more cautious to attend events.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Expanding the school work experience to students from Support Unit Classes and working within Council Departments to promote the program and offer suitable work experience opportunities. Students benefited from the experience, and it was rewarding to observe the change in students confidence through the experience.

### **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Council was successful in receiving grant funding for an accessible safari tent and access upgrade at one Holiday Park. The tent has not been added to the DIAP however, will be reported under Focus area Livable Communities in 2022-2023 financial year.

## **Lane Cove Municipal Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Kindy Cove and Community Services staff participated in professional development around sensory profiling and underlying developmental profiles to help staff understand their impact on children's behaviour and learning.

Hearing Australia provided free hearing tests from their van parked in the Plaza during March, no bookings required.

The Dementia Café relaunched to meet weekly at a local café once social gathering was permitted under COVID-19 restrictions.

Different Degrees Theatre Group, an accessible theatre ensemble, created a film of their theatre performance piece, Imaginarium. The Group was originally booked to perform live as part of the 2021 Lane Cove Festival. However, COVID-19 restrictions led the group to pivot to an online production. The film was shown on Council's YouTube Channel during the Festival.

Accessibility status is included in promotional material for events as well as information regarding seating and other options that assists those who may have additional needs to prepare for a comfortable event.

Accessibility features of new and upgraded facilities are included in promotional material.

During Mental Health Month a series of events and seminars were provided including: o a presentation from the Black Dog Institute at the Small Business Breakfast o an online laughter workshop o online yoga for wellbeing classes; and o a mood and food cook along

Council's online events continue to use closed captions and have recently enabled closed captioning in Zoom meetings.

To mark the International Day of People with Disability, a pop-up art exhibition was held in the Lane Cove Plaza. Artists with disability showcased their artworks including photographs, paintings and drawings.

Speakers from Positive Life NSW presented webinars during Mental Health Month and as part of World AIDS Day. Speakers included a transgender woman living with HIV.

Council's Citizenship Awards include the Access and Disability Citizenship Award. In 2022 the Access and Disability Citizenship Award was awarded to Dan Graham, a theatre director and advocate for professional performing artists with disability. This award is presented to an individual,

business or organisation that has made a significant contribution to addressing access concerns in the Lane Cove Community or improving the quality of life for people disabilities by promoting high standards of access.

Lane Cove Council was a sponsor of the Inclusion Award as part of the Northern Districts Local Business Awards.

## Creating liveable communities

Information and the location of Council's public toilets were updated on the National Public Toilet Map

Council completed an upgrade at Helen St Reserve Playground –the upgrade incorporates improved seating for carers.

Upgrades at Tantallon Oval Playground included an inclusive swing set and fully fenced playground with seating inside for carers.

Upgrading of buildings, including public spaces and toilets includes ensuring accessibility is now core business.

Nature strip mowing is available for residents who are unable to maintain the grassed nature strip themselves.

Assistance taking garbage bins to the kerbside for collection is available for people who need help wheeling their waste bins out.

Libraries services:

- purchased added new items to the Preserving Memory Collection aimed at community members and their families living with dementia.
- published a book using historical photographs to provide talking points for community members and their families living with dementia.
- are now providing portable scanning pens which read printed text out loud were made available on loan at libraries.
- added new items for the children's Sensory Collection including books in Braille
- updated the Home Library Service brochure and distributed it to local doctor's surgeries and other health providers as well as letterboxed local seniors housing complexes.
- extended access to the Home Library Service (to the housebound) during the COVID-19 lockdown to everyone in the LGA aged over 67.
- improved library technology at the Information Desk for anyone needing assistance, which has included clients with sight and mobility issues.
- held disability targeted sessions including 'Accessing the NDIS' during Law Week and a Cryptic Crossword class funded by the Preserving Memory Project.
- through the BorrowBox app provided access to eBooks using a special font that makes text more readable for dyslexic users and voiceover functionality that includes an optimised eBook experience for the visually impaired.
- A free-standing, height adjustable self-check machine was installed at the Library. People can use the machine standing or sitting. The machine also has adjustable font size and offers information in three community languages as well as English.

Kindy Cove's Strategic Inclusion Plan continues to be actioned including employing additional educators to maximise the inclusion of all children in ways that are meaningful for each child.

## Supporting access to meaningful employment

Council continues to invite members of the community to be involved in Advisory Committees such as Cultural Diversity, Age Friendly and Access and Inclusion Advisory Committees which includes practical input in the areas of event delivery, community engagement and future planning.

The 'Get that Job!' program supports residents seeking employment and is presented in an accessible Council venue with follow up support provided either online or at venues that are accessible.

Council continued a trial working from home policy that will increase flexible work practices.

Council continues to apply its EEO policy to recruitment practice.

Staff training was delivered on the following related topics being Dementia Awareness Training, Mental Health Awareness, Developing Skills to Support Colleagues and Team Members, and Self-Care during the pandemic

## Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes

The Lane Cove Connection, a monthly newsletter for people over 55, continued to be published online; emailed out to almost 800 individuals – with an open rate of 64%; and posted out to over 300 homes. Hard copies are also left at Council facilities including libraries, the civic centre and Living and Learning Centre. The newsletter provides information about local services, events and programs relevant to the target group. Activities and events that are accessible are identified with the international symbols of access.

The DIAP and principles of social inclusion have been included in all planning stages of shared housing developments.

The Library Public Address system was upgraded to allow for clear, scheduled announcements. Intercoms were installed on the sneeze guards at the Library service desks to allow for better communication for the hearing impaired.

Council increased the number of information processes and systems of delivery offering closed captioning and text only versions.

Microphones and hearing loops are used at indoor and outdoor events and programs.

Accessibility logos are added to event promotional material.

The contact number of the Translating and Interpreting Service is provided in programming material, for example Festival programs.

Council continually audits its website to identify ways to improve accessibility which has led to plans for a new website which will include more accessibility features.

Council continued to roll out its 'Surprisingly Simple' customer service strategy that makes it easier for residents and customers of all abilities to access services and information. This initiative includes new online service request capabilities and smart forms that guide customers through the process. The online strategy is supported by customer service officers available on the phone to assist and direct customers to the right information.

## How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?

### What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?

During the first six months of 2022, Council began the development of the new DIAP for 2023-2026. This included consulting with the local community, including people with disability. Consultation was conducted via a survey - online and on paper; focus groups and individual interviews. This feedback has been used to create Council's new DIAP. Council's Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee also met during 2021-2022 and this provided opportunities for feedback from people with disability via committee members.

### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

The feedback received has been incorporated into Council's new DIAP 2023-2026.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Council's Library, Kindergarten and Youth Centre are all registered with ACON's 'Welcome Here' project to let everyone know that LGBTIQ diversity is welcomed and celebrated.

Council's Youth Centre is accessible and is working with local disability services to support young people with disability who want to attend the Centre and participate in its programs.

In 2022, Council provided Aboriginal Cultural awareness training to staff and is working with the Education Officer of the Aboriginal Heritage Office to promote local Aboriginal Culture to the local community. The Aboriginal Heritage Office is also working with Council to create accessible walks so that more people are able to participate in our Bush care programs.

Council works with local community groups to celebrate cultural events such as Lunar New Year, Diwali and Hanukkah and has a Cultural Advisory Committee to facilitate engagement with people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds. Information about local services is available in community languages. Council is a member of the Lower North Shore Multicultural Network which works to provide information and support to the CALD community. Council's Access and Inclusion Committee is made up of a diverse range of people and provides input and feedback about issues relating to the groups identified

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Employing appropriate staff during and post the COVID-19 lockdown. The inability to fill some roles within the organisation impacted on the delivery of some services. The lockdown also led to the closure of meeting spaces and venues for people to gather and this impacted on services that could be delivered as well as limiting opportunities for local organisations to meet and offer services to the community. Cancellation of events due to the COVID-19 lockdown such as the Lane Cove Festival where the Different Degrees Theatre Group was to perform a piece they had been rehearsing all year and the cancellation of the annual Variety Sports Day.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

The COVID-19 lockdown provided the impetus to move from face to face/in person activities and events to learning to connect through technology. One of the actions in the current DIAP is to make Council events and activities welcoming and inclusive. Rather than cancel all events and activities, many were able to be delivered online. For example, the Different Degrees Theatre Group couldn't perform live at the Lane Cove Festival, so they created a video of their performance which was shown through Council's YouTube Channel. It wasn't the same as performing to a live audience, but it did provide an opportunity for the group to perform and showcase their work. The group now also offers a hybrid format for their rehearsals so that people who are unable to attend in person can still participate with the group. Other events were also offered on-line which makes them more widely available to people and closed captions are used in videos.

### **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Council's new DIAP has recently closed its public consultation period and will be ready to implement at the start of 2023. Council has already commenced work with Zero Barriers to help local businesses become more accessible and inclusive. Staff consultations during 2022 identified that staff wanted disability awareness training to improve customer service delivery. This has been included in the new DIAP.

## Leeton Shire Council

### Building positive attitudes

Promoted free Auslan Tutor computer application to celebrate International Day of Sign Language

Offered a free Home Library Service delivery to residents who are housebound, live in assisted living, are carers or who live with disability

Met with Disability Reference Group to plan consultation regarding development of new DIAP

### Creating liveable communities

Final/adopted Roxy Community Theatre Redevelopment design provides for full accessibility and a new disability car parking space has been added in front of the building to improve accessibility

A mobility scooter workshop was held with 3 participants

Older driver workshop held with 2 participants

Completed and commissioned the new Brobenah Road pedestrian bridge linking the shared pathways along Palm Avenue and Brobenah Road

Repaired footpath defects identified via Council's inspection program and/ or in response to notifications by members of the community

Constructed a new section of shared pathway along Acacia Avenue from Irrigation Way (Toyota building) to the end of the existing shared pathway. Provides safer pedestrian access for Griffith Post School Options participants to the main street.

Commenced work on constructing a new section of shared path/cycleway along Maiden Avenue from Acacia Avenue to Saint Francis de Sales Regional College to complete the link of shared path/cycleway around the Leeton CBD. The site has been surveyed and the design is underway

Commenced development of a new Active Transport Plan to replace the existing Pedestrian Access Mobility Plan (PAMP). The Active Transport Plan will guide the development of practical transport solutions that support the active transport needs of pedestrians and cyclists, including older people and pedestrians with mobility and vision impairments

### Supporting access to meaningful employment

Under a social enterprise format, Council developed a stable workplace for My Plan Connect clientele to operate and serve customers in the Lands Office Café at the Leeton Museum and Art Gallery. Participants were trained and encouraged within the Lands Office Café in all aspects of hospitality including several barista courses

Council continues to employ a person living with intellectual disability in Operations one day a week

Council hosts a person living with intellectual disability at the Visitor Information Centre (with their support worker) one day a week.

### Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes :

New website platform (OpenCities) which has a vastly improved capacity for accessibility than our previous platform. The platform went live 30 June 2022.

### How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability

#### What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?

Met with Disability Reference Group to plan consultation regarding development of new DIAP

Conducted community and stakeholder engagement activities which identified a number of needs within the community

#### How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?

This feedback shaped Council's



## **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the Disability Inclusion Act 2014?**

By capturing this data during surveys and also working with organisations that represent these groups. This includes schools, Rainbow Pride Inc, Leeton Multicultural Support Group and the Leeton and Local District Lands Council.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Limited financial and human resources. The position was vacant for part of the year

Competing priorities

## **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

The partnership with MyPlan Connect and the Leeton Museum and Gallery (LMAG) providing a space for people with disabilities to learn skills in a the Lands Café including barista and customer service skills.

## **Is there anything else your organisation is doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Planning to encourage interested people with disabilities to participate in Council's volunteer program • Planning to run art/writing programs on the first floor of the Leeton Museum and Gallery and install a lift so that people living with disability can access those programs

Ensure that images in Council's documents including people living with disabilities

Work with stakeholders to ensure that local community events are inclusive

## **Lismore City Council**

Completed a community wide consultation to inform the development of the 2022-2025 Lismore City Council Disability Inclusion Action Plan.

Provided Auslan-led tours at Lismore Regional Gallery to allow members of the deaf community to form a deeper understanding and connection with the artworks.

Continued to provide Read speaker technology on the Lismore City Council website for a more accessible platform for people with vision impairment.

Continued to provide a hearing loop in the Council Chambers and live-streaming of Council's ordinary meetings and events.

An exhibition was held at the Lismore Regional Gallery in partnership with RED Inc. to showcase the artwork of 14 contemporary local artists with a disability and ongoing work with artists with a disability.

In 2021, Lismore Regional Gallery introduced Accessible Arts - Accessible Exhibition Design for staff and Accessible Arts - Disability Confidence Training for staff and volunteers.

Provided and maintained hoists at the Lismore Memorial Baths and Goonellabah Sports and Aquatic Centre and an adult change facility at the Goonellabah Sports and Aquatic Centre.

Introduced a dyslexia friendly library through collections and resources available for adults and children with dyslexia.

The Richmond Tweed Regional Library further developed the large print, talking books, eBooks, eAudio books and periodicals collections.

Improved accessibility by relocating all large print collection above knee heights at the Lismore Library.

Provision of funding for Auslan interpreters for meetings upon request.

The Lismore Library was upgraded with adjustable shelves and hydraulic desks making the library more accessible for wheelchair users, Wheelchair and mobility device users and the elderly.

Waiving of fees for development applications for accessibility improvements.

Quarterly meetings of the Access and Inclusion Advisory Group to provide advice to Council on disability access and inclusion.

## **Lithgow City Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Lithgow celebrated International Day of People with Disability at Lithgow Library in December 2021. The activities planned included a screening of the Ability Award short films, demonstrations and games on the library's new Tovertafel – a magic table of interactive games, art workshop spaces, a free sausage sizzle prepared by LINC's disability services team and Lithgow's first ever Silent Disco.

Council's Health & Wellbeing Committee promotes Dignity & Respect in the Workplace Lithgow City Council and LINC (Lithgow information and Neighbourhood Centre) created a new community gathering space at Lithgow City Library. This space has been created to promote positive community attitudes and behaviours in relation to people with a disability. People living with disability, their families, carers, and friends are invited to share stories, experiences and enjoy community life every second Thursday of the month

### **Creating liveable communities**

More Accessible public toilets have been installed.

During 2021/2022 seven infringement notice was issued for non-compliant use of disability parking spaces.

The official opening of the Farmers Creek Shared Pathway Project was held in August 2022. With 2,500 metres of new shared pathway constructed. Combine with existing sections of pathway, the shared path network now extends from Lake Pillans Wetlands to near Chivers Close Lithgow – a distance of nearly 6 kilometres.

Lake Wallace – Accessible Fishing Platform was completed with an add-on ramp and pathway. The official opening was held in October 2022.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Council continues to design work flexibly including the expansion of working remotely, variable hours, flexible leave arrangements, and the use of mobile technology

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

In 2021-2022 a total of 2,797 large print books and 1,297 audio books were loaned out from the inclusive collection. A large number of these loans is distributed via the Home Library Service to residents of local Nursing Homes and private homes for people with mobility issues. Furthermore, 4,702 eResources were loaned. Our eResources have continued to include eBooks, eAudio, eMagazines & eFilms In November 2021 and through grant funding, the library purchased a Tovertafel or Magic Table designed to be used by those with dementia or cognitive disabilities to provide stimulation, exercise and social interaction.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

Lithgow City Council is working on community engagement to consult and evaluate next DIAP.

### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

Council continues to use website and communications to highlight accessibility and inclusion at events. Council continues to assess events and incorporate the need for accessibility using the DIAP as a guiding document.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Lithgow City Council is making sure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, women, children, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and LGBTIQ+ people are represented in consultation.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Engaging with service providers to make from the IDPD a permanent yearly event to promote inclusion.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Lithgow City Council has re activated relationships with disability service providers and is planning an ongoing consultation for next year

## **Liverpool City Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

The DIAP Working Group expanded its membership to ensure key representation across community and sector

Participation on local interagencies including South-West Sydney Ageing and Disability Forum as co-convenor.

Council hosted events for both Carers Week, an online program of information sessions, workshops and relaxation/fun activities and International Day of People with Disability, a day of celebration including performances by local people with disability and information stalls and activities

Council continued the review and update of the Positive Ageing Plan 2022-2026 and the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026. Both documents will be finalised in the first half of the 2022-2023 financial year.

Council collaborated with The Multicultural Network (TMN) to deliver post-COVID-19 social activities for older people from Culturally Linguistic and Diverse (CALD) backgrounds at Liverpool Library in April and May 2022.

The My Aged Care• information session was delivered in partnership with the Library Services team and Macarthur Disability Services (MDS) to eight local older people at Casula Community Centre on 20 March 2022.

Council continued to co-convene the South-West Sydney Ageing Forum in partnership with Fairfield and Canterbury-Bankstown City Councils.

Council partnered with Dementia Australia to deliver Dementia Awareness training to 12 staff at Liverpool Libraries. The training educates customer-facing staff on how to identify and support community members who may be experiencing dementia and require assistance.

### **Creating liveable communities**

Council in partnership with Variety delivered Livvi's Place, a fully inclusive play space for all children in Lieutenant. Cantello Reserve, Hammondville.

Council secured funding for the installation of a Lift and Change facility at the Whitlam Leisure Centre which will support adults with disability to access appropriate toilet and change amenities.

Development of a new partnership with Play for All Australia to install inclusive swing seats in various parks and playgrounds across Liverpool.

Council conducted consultations on access and inclusion for major projects including the new Civic Place.

Council provided MLAK keys to residents needing access local amenities.

The Seniors on Tour project was successfully completed. This program was delivered across six workshops over seven weeks in May and June

In 2022. A total of 58 older people attended the workshops, from a range of cultural backgrounds. All were aged over 55 years. This project was funded by a grant from the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ).

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

The Diversity and Inclusion Working Group was developed in consultation with various Council departments to explore ways to improve employment outcomes within specific target groups, including people with disability and their carers, and

Council's Flexible Working Policy continues to provide support for people with disability, their families and carers to participate in the workforce by providing flexible working options including working from home, compressed/flexible working hours, flex time and leave provisions.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

The Liverpool Mobility Map was updated and is available on Council's website, Council's Customer Service Centre, libraries and other community facilities. Information includes locations of accessible parking, toilet facilities and key community services and support groups.

Council continued to provide Master Locksmith Association Keys (MLAK) to community members with disability. These keys provide access for people with disability to accessible facilities including restrooms.

Information was provided to residents in a range of formats such as Braille communication boards, social media posts, newsletters, newspapers, online, telephone and email.

Council shared NSW Health COVID-19 information in various formats and community languages, including Plain English.

Council co-convened the South West Sydney Ageing and Disability Forum. As a member of the Multicultural Network for Ageing Issues and the Macarthur Disability Network Disability Forum, Council attended forums to lobby for regional change and improvements for the ageing and disability communities

An Auslan interpreter and hearing loop is available on request for Liverpool City Council meetings.

Council continues to advocate for access and inclusion to be a guiding principle in the development of plans of management prepared under the Local Government Act 1993

### **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

#### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

Council convenes regular meetings of the Liverpool Access Committee which provides an opportunity for people with disability, their families and carers to provide feedback to Council on matters that are important to them including accessible public spaces, new developments and programs which are designed to meet the needs of people with disability.

### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

People with disability, their families and carers, and relevant service providers are regularly consulted on new developments and programs which are designed to meet the needs of people with disability.

Council is incorporating the needs of people with disability, their families and carers into current and future planning by developing places and spaces that are accessible and inclusive. This includes partnering with "Play For All Australia" to deliver inclusive swing seats across 12 parks in the Liverpool LGA, and a commitment to include these swings in future parks and playgrounds. Council has also delivered two new "lift and change" facilities in Liverpool this year - a "Changing Places" pod at Whitlam Leisure Centre, and purpose-built facility at the new Phillips Park Community Centre.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Council works closely with relevant community groups and organisations to support the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including those with disability. Many of the local First Nations communities are older and/or experience chronic health conditions. Council works with the local land council and Aboriginal health services to raise awareness of health-related issues for First Nations people.

The needs of LGBTIQ+ people in the Liverpool community is an area which council is working to address as part of the next DIAP and in future planning for programs and activities.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

The ongoing risk presented by COVID-19 to vulnerable community members has continued to present a challenge to engagement with people with disability. Further, a change in staff resources in the disability space has led to periods of limited service in that area.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Council's delivery of the Livvi's Place playground at Hammondville has been a huge success. This play space is well attended and utilised by all community members, leading to an inclusive play experience for children with disability, their families and carers.

### **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Council is progressing work on its partnership with Play For All Australia to create more inclusive play spaces across Liverpool's existing playground network.

Council has endorsed a motion to investigate the provision of further lift and change facilities across Liverpool, making for a more inclusive city overall.

Both of these will be incorporated under broad actions in Council's next DIAP, due November 2023.

## **Liverpool Plains Shire Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Council adopting the Disability Inclusion Action Plan in May 2022

### **Creating liveable communities**

Reviewing critical community infrastructure to identify modifications that could broaden access.



## Supporting access to meaningful employment

This is a work in progress.

## Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes

We have modified core services, such as library story time to meet the needs of a broader range of our community.

## How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?

### What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?

This is a work in progress.

### How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?

This is a work in progress.

## How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?

This is a work in progress.

## What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?

Increasing the understanding that accessible also includes independent. 2) Directly involving people of all abilities in the decision making conversations.

## What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?

Having a modified sports day, where over 200 people participated (and competed fiercely) in a range of sports as equal participants.

## Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?

We are encouraging staff to undertake training in design and programming for people of all abilities. We are upgrading our bathrooms to remove an obstacle for people with physical challenges to encouraging people to work for council, visit our administration centre and stand for public office.

## Additional information and comments

Our shire is very small, comprising small towns, villages and farming districts. Given the size of our population it is difficult to run successful events and/or programs for specific demographics (i.e., youth, senior etc). Our goal is to run events and services that cater to a broad range of people and with common interests.

## Lockhart Shire Council

### Building positive attitudes

Financial support was provided to community/ volunteer based committees including section 355 management committees, to support access to programs and events.

Incorporated access and inclusion principles in event management plans approved by Council.

Incorporated access and inclusion principles in Council's development application assessment processes.

Council continues to promote inclusion within the community via its newsletters and events.

### **Creating liveable communities**

Access requirements are applied to projects and developments through Council's strategic planning documents, namely the DCP.

A property has been acquired in the Lockhart central business area and concept plans have been produced to convert the property into a community space and public toilets with all abilities access.

Masterplans have been developed for the Lockhart Caravan Park and The Rock Avenue of Honour.

All abilities access incorporated in all new community infrastructure projects progressed in 2021-2022 including:

- Lockhart recreation ground amenities building
- The Rock Regional Observatory
- Lockhart Caravan Park.

An all-abilities shower and laundry facility was installed in the Lockhart Caravan Park in 2021-2022.

Funding was secured in 2021-2022 for the installation of an all-abilities cabin in the Lockhart Caravan Park in 2022-2023.

Council continues to provide one of its properties in Lockhart for housing for the physically and intellectually disabled.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Council liaises with Riverina BEC to promote local and regional training opportunities.

Council participates in the RDA Riverina platform 'Jobs Riverina' to promote local opportunities.

Council is participating in a "Skills Shortages in Local Government" project facilitated by the Riverina Joint Organisation.

Council has also promoted the dedicated platform for local businesses to register an interest in relation to Project EnergyConnect and Inland Rail

Council provides work experience to a client of Valmar Support Services, a not-for-profit organisation and a leading provider of disability, aged care and community transport services in the ACT, Riverina/Southwest Slopes and Southern Tablelands areas of New South Wales with a presence in Lockhart Shire.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Funds have been allocated by Council for upgrading the technology in Council's meeting chamber to facilitate remote participation in meetings.

Hearing loop in Council's administration building.

Council's website is being upgraded to ensure compliance with relevant standards.

Council monthly newsletters is distributed to all households to ensure access to information (especially for those who do not have internet access).

Council undertook a digital connectivity community survey to gather data to support Council's representations.

## How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability

### What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?

Council liaises with Valmar Support Services, a not-for-profit organisation and a leading provider of disability, aged care and community transport services in the ACT, Riverina/Southwest Slopes and Southern Tablelands areas of New South Wales with a presence in Lockhart Shire.

### How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?

A key action incorporated into Council's Community Strategic Plan and Delivery Plan is: - Work in partnership with community organisations to improve opportunities for people with disabilities to participate in education, training and employment. DIAP – Employment

## How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?

Council has integrated its Disability Inclusion Action Plan into its strategic planning framework, specifically its 10 year Community Strategic Plan and four year Delivery Plan.

## What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?

Financial resources. Recent progress e.g. additional footpaths with pram ramps, installation of all-abilities shower and laundry facility at the Lockhart Caravan Park has been made as funding programs become available.

## What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?

Providing new infrastructure, more specifically:

An all-abilities shower and laundry facility was installed in the Lockhart Caravan Park in 2021-2022.

Funding was secured in 2021-2022 for the installation of an all-abilities cabin in the Lockhart Caravan Park in 2022-2023.

## Is there anything else your organisation is doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?

Council is proposing to undertake an audit of facilities across the shire with respect to disability access. Council is reviewing and upgrading its disabled access parking arrangements in the central business area of Lockhart to ensure compliance

## Maitland City Council

### Building positive attitudes

Over the year we worked in partnership with internal stakeholders and external service providers to encourage and support initiatives that promote inclusion awareness within Maitland.

Administrative Support and Guidance on Grants Community Grants Council's Section 356 Community Grants Program supported disability inclusion and access through the following community managed programs:

- An application from Morpeth Men's Shed Inc. to provide a concrete walkway between their Socials Shed and Workshop to improve accessibility.
- 'Talk Together Connection' provided by The Shepherd's Centre for Deaf Children, delivered a program for parents of deaf children to attend interactive seminars remotely via

videoconferencing, where parents received crucial support and guidance on how to cope and manage their children's hearing loss.

- An application from Maitland Aphasia Communication Group (MACG) to improve their video and audio technology to enhance Aphasia support through video conferencing for participants of MACG. Commemorative and Recognised Days Program.
- The Commemorative and Recognised Days Grant Program assists in the coordination of activities and events that directly relate to National and International Days or Weeks including Commemorative Days. Unfortunately no applications directed at access and inclusion were submitted for the 21/22 Commemorative and Recognised Days Program. ClubGRANTS helps with projects that support disability inclusion and access.
- Maitland Aphasia Communication Group (MCAG) was funded to assist with fortnightly group speech sessions.
- Maitland Neighbourhood Centre was funded for a speech therapist/s to attend the centre's Play Strong Playgroup and provide support and initial assessments to children and families.
- Youth Week Grants There were no inclusion activities specifically for people with disability as part of the program for Youth Week 2022. However, all grant funded activities must meet access and inclusion requirements in accordance with NSW Government legislation.

Community Connections Forum Community Connections Forum has not met since February 2020 due to COVID-19.

## Creating liveable communities

### Communications and Engagement

The communications and Engagement Team conducted a number of on-line sessions to engage people with a disability and who have access issues to have their voice included in the Maitland +10 Community Strategic Planning process. The DRAFT strategy acknowledges Committees or organisations with a specific interest such as the Access and Inclusion Reference Group, acknowledging that communication needs to be easy to understand, easy to find, and easy to use. Engagement needs to take place in accessible locations and use both online and offline methods.

Accessibility information is provided for each flagship event on Council's website. This includes an accessibility page, which details a range of accessibility considerations including the site and surface information, accessible transport options and parking information.

Council continues to accept the Companion Card for our ticketed flagship event Bitter & Twisted whilst all other Flagship events are provided free to the community.

The enforced cancellation of flagship events has restricted the implementation of Including You Tent facilities and other accessibility strategies for the 2021/2022 financial year. An Expression of Interest is currently underway for the Including You Tent to operate for the remainder of the 2022/2023 financial year. The focus remained on improving accessibility to events through developing tools and processes incorporating the Including You Tent - IYT. Communication Boards have been designed for each individual flagship event in partnership with Hunter Prelude and will be included in the IYT resources. Several protocols have been developed and further protocols will be developed for the operations of the Including You Tent. A revision of the "Expression of Interest" form for organisations to facilitate the Including You Tent at our flagship events was completed and Council will be seeking Expressions of Interest for the 22/23 Financial Year. Maitland Aquatic Centre Access and Inclusion for Learn To Swim (LTS), User Group Bookings and Casual User Groups Attendance:

There were 784 Access and inclusion LTS lessons run 2021/2022. A reduction on the previous year of 3,968; due to COVID-19 closures and restrictions on LTS classes, teacher ability & availability and a huge reduction in school programs. Swim lessons recommenced after COVID-19 closure and restrictions 25th October 2021 with entry only available for vaccinated patrons, meaning no lessons occurred July – September. Many Access & Inclusion lesson participants did not rebook due to being classed as vulnerable patrons.

Carer visits 2021/2022 were 2,201 which was an increase of 63 carers over 2020/2021 with 2,138 carer visits.

General feedback is that carers and their clients have continued traveling from outside the local government area to attend Maitland Aquatic Centre, due to our accessible facilities. Accessible change room facilities inside the aquatics venue have been upgraded and are being utilised by a range of user groups.

Maitland Regional Art Gallery Maitland Regional Art Gallery (MRAG) supported access and inclusion initiatives through inclusive exhibition openings and events, the provision of Auslan interpretation, accessible seating, and quiet space. Auslan interpretation was maintained during 2021-2022 with all major events translated and all requests for individual events successfully actioned. The Gallery provides inclusive access to exhibitions, public programs, shop, and café for all its visitors, a wheelchair is available onsite. MRAG implemented new initiatives, including sensory processing assistance tools for gallery visitors. These tools include Social Script and Visual Schedule. The Social Script was developed in consultation with a young visitor requiring sensory processing assistance and their family. The Gallery developed the Script to give visitors with special needs an opportunity to better understand what to expect when visiting the Gallery, and what you can see and do. The accompanying Visual Schedule then provides nine picture and word cards to use during your visit to the Gallery, offering a guide to engaging with art and ideas. MRAG also hosted Connected to Nature, an exhibition by Mai-Wel Creative Arts Maitland, on display from 21 May 2022 – 4 September 2022. Connected to Nature is a celebration and exploration of the natural environment within our local area. Artists from Mai-Wel met at the Gallery each week from February through to May, to produce works that connected with nature through photography, weaving, painting, and ceramics.

Other ongoing initiatives included Journeys Creative Connections monthly workshops for adults with a lived mental health experience. Workshops were delivered in partnership with Flourish Australia and Aftercare, both NDIS agencies, and are facilitated by health workers and professional artists to extend professional skills, build resilience and confidence in a public art gallery environment.

Community Days: Art & Dementia Program. In 2022, the Gallery received support from the New South Wales Government to expand their Art & Dementia program. This saw an increase in onsite sessions, outreach to care facilities, and the development of online art activity sheets and videos. The program improves wellbeing and quality of life for people living with memory loss and their carers through engagement with the visual arts and sensory experiences.

Maitland Library Maitland Library is committed to ongoing strategies to increase inclusiveness and delivered the following services in 2021-2022

- Digital audio collection for general access including for those with low vision or who are blind.
- A weekly home library to the frail and aged, and people with a disability.
- Adult Literacy tutoring offered by staff who have undertaken volunteer level tutoring training, and a community of practice has been established to support practice development and service improvement.
- Coaching to build staff awareness and practice around working with low vision and low literacy customers, includes tips for which font size to use and how to enlarge content on PC screens.

Maitland Gaol Maitland Gaol has an Auslan option in its suite of self-guided audio tours. Maitland Gaol has received grant funding for a new Guard Tower experience. This tour will see patrons climb up into a guard tower and move along the catwalks. The Gaol is working to identify ways to provide a guard tower experience to those who may not be able to access the tower. Maitland Gaol has also received grant funding for major works associated with its published Maitland Gaol Development Plan. Included in the planned works are accessibility improvements to the main entrance, the proposed boutique accommodation, ground floor access to a number of buildings and enhanced accessibility to current tours.

The Maitland Regional Athletics Centre was completed in 2020-2021 and is a fully accessible venue. All the change rooms at this venue are inclusive and have accessible showers within the same



shared space. In the past, accessible showers have always been separate from the main change rooms, this facility bridges the gap in providing an all-inclusive experience for all. During the works for the Athletics Centre a new accessible path was completed at the Maitland Regional Sportsground. This path allows for families to easily access more areas of the facility. MLAK Maitland Park has a Liberty Swing that is operated by a MLAK, which can be accessed at the Maitland Council Administration Building, High Street Maitland.

A review of the MLAK Fees and charges found that Disability Service Groups were utilising the MLAK system for access to disability toilets at the Maitland City Council parks and facilities. Bus Stops Works are on track to achieve 100% standardisation by the end of 2022.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Human Resources continue to incorporate inclusion awareness into staff induction programs through Equity, Diversity and Respect in the Workplace. The Corporate Training Plan CTP is reviewed each financial year. Council provides Respectful Workplace Training to all staff. This training includes bullying and discrimination and covers disability and inclusion. Included in the CTP is EEO training, additionally we have an EEO committee that meets quarterly.

HR regularly review recruitment and employee support to ensure processes are fair and barrier free. HR have an ongoing relationship with local disability service provider Mai-Wel and work together to create opportunities for the community within the organisation. Management work with our current employees who require support to enable workplace adjustments, flexible work arrangements and external support providers to assist in improving their ability to fulfil their role requirements and experience as an employee of Council.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Infrastructure and Works Several works were completed in 21/22 that improved accessibility and met Disability Discrimination Act compliance including footpaths, shared pathways, cycle ways, traffic facilities and carpark surface upgrades. Footpath/shared path and cycleway projects constructed in 2021-2022:

- Steamer St, Morpeth - shared path – Queens Wharf Park to Morpeth Road
- Bolwarra Heights Lookout, Bolwarra Heights - footpath
- Paterson Road, Bolwarra Heights and Bolwarra – footpath – Bolwarra Heights Lookout to Victoria Road
- Victoria Road, Bolwarra Heights (Bolwarra Sports Complex to Paterson Road) & Bolwarra Sports Complex - footpath
- Radburn Estate, Thornton - shared paths and footpath upgrades – Haussman Drive into the reserve and Taylor Avenue into the reserve.
- Church St (Largs Ave to Hunter St), High St (Largs Ave to Morpeth St) & John St (Church St to Morpeth St), Largs – footpaths
- Chisholm Road, Ashtonfield – footpath from South Seas Drive to Worcester Drive
- Regiment Road, Rutherford - footpath – Buffier Crescent to Brigantine St (East side)
- High Street, Maitland footpath refurbishments – Albert Street to Ken Tubman Drive (south western side), Cathedral Street to Hunter Street (north eastern side)
- Victoria Street, Maitland - footpath refurbishments from St John the Baptist Primary School to High Street.
- Bungaree Street cycleway, Telarah – Capp St to railway bridge (commenced in 21/22) Traffic facilities constructed in 2021-2022:
- Paterson Road, Bolwarra Heights and Bolwarra - pedestrian refuges (1.60m east of Hunterglen Dr & 2.30m north of Canna St)

- South Seas Drive, Ashtonfield – pedestrian refuge near the Chisholm Road roundabout Carpark surface improvements in 2021-2022:
- Bolwarra Sports Complex, Bolwarra - carpark
- Fieldsend Oval, Metford – carpark upgrade
- Maitland Park (between Netball and Croquet) – upgraded carpark
- Bolwarra Heights Lookout, Bolwarra Heights –carpark upgrade

The Development Application team rely on Council's current Development Control Plan when assessing Development Applications, we ensure that the proposal accommodates the needs of people who will utilise the development. This includes enhanced requirements for medical centres, entertainment venues and commercial activities. There is a requirement for adaptable housing within residential developments at the following rates:

- Accessible dwelling per 10-15 dwellings
- Accessible dwelling per 16-24 dwellings
- Accessible dwelling per 25-39 dwellings 10% of total dwellings for 40 or more dwellings

Additionally, investigation into what Development Applications require an access report, and how this will fit into the review of Council's Development Control Plan is in progress.

The Workplace Culture and Safety unit supports reasonable adjustments in the workplace where required to support people with ill health or disability.

Play Space Design Council aligned the design of several local play spaces throughout 2020/21 and 2021-2022 following the release of the NSW Government's Everyone Can Play Guidelines. Works included Morpeth Play Space which received \$126,496 in funding through the Everyone Can Play Grant Program for 2020/21 and \$85,000 in funding for Vi-Denny Play Space at Telarah for 2021-2022. The design of Morpeth Common play space is unique to the LGA as it includes exploratory, and nature play equipment which is drawn from the surrounding environment creating an opportunity for unstructured play. The design of Vi-Denny Play space at Telarah is exploratory and imaginative play. Both play spaces are due to be completed in the 22/23 Financial Year. The design considers access that meets Australian Standards and has been moved to provide improved access to car parking and footpaths, with improved sightlines for safety. The site will include an accessible picnic table and rubber soft fall access to key play equipment.

Food Assistance Network Council has continued to facilitate the Food Assistance Network with all organisations that provide food assistance across the Local Government Area. The network has enabled linkages between network members resulting in services being provided with additional meals for distribution and left-over meals from services being distributed to other providers for distribution. Council's community noticeboard on Council's website allows service providers a single point for service providers and community access information relating to food services and other essential services such as financial and mental health support.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability**

### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

Access and Inclusion Reference Group (AIRG) The AIRG provided feedback on numerous Council engagement strategies, policies and designs including:

- Morpeth Common Play Space and Vi Denny Play Space
- Pedestrian Safety Project

Feedback has been provided to and from Council throughout the term including what is occurring in the community.

In addition to this, an evaluation of the benefits and challenges associated with the AIRG was completed in June 2021/July 2022 which will help to inform how Council engages with the AIRG in the future.

The AIRG have not met as frequently throughout the 2021-2022 period due to Council elections impacting the determination of reference groups and what they will look like/how they will proceed, however the AIRG met towards the end of the 2021-2022 period and will continue to meet on a regular basis throughout the 22/23 period.

### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

The Access and Inclusion Action Research Project will report to the Access and Inclusion reference Group to inform the shape of the DIAP for 2023-2025. All other relevant reports and plans are tabled with the Access and Inclusion Reference Group for review and comment.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Based on the recently amended Disability Inclusion Action, the Supports and services provided to specific groups of people with disability must be provided in a way that addresses their needs, and are informed by consultation with LGBTIQ+, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, Women, Children, People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Council is continuing to amend its Draft Community Engagement Strategy to ensure specific strategies are employed to ensure that culturally diverse groups are included and feel safe to access council's services and provide input into future planning.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Challenges in delivering the DIAP include:

- COVID-19 delays to the delivery of projects and programs within the DIAP action plan.
- Resourcing challenges affecting the ability to implement components of the DIAP.
- Barriers to addressing obstruction free kerb ramps and footpaths in relation to street furniture include priority for businesses to be operational, requiring flexibility around street furniture to cater for restricted operating environments associated with COVID-19.

Additional challenges include further works which may be required on heritage buildings and enforcement with limited resources.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

- Council's suite of Guiding Principles align with the direction of the DIAP.
- The new Maitland Administration Centre will provide improved access in comparison with the current building.

The approval and implementation of the Action Research Project with the University of Sydney has increased awareness of access and inclusion internally within Council and improved interest in achieving the actions of the DIAP

### **Is there anything else your organisation is doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

University of Sydney Council approved University of Sydney PhD Candidate Katie Butler, a researcher with a disability to undertake a 7-month action research project with personnel at Maitland City Council. The action research project aims to strengthen empathy and capacity for disability inclusion within local government through role reversal activities. This project aligns with the development of the revised Community Strategic Plan and the DIAP priorities areas for 2022.

The objective of the project is to engage personnel of Maitland City Council voluntarily with innovative strategies designed to improve empathy and capacity for disability inclusive practice and planning. Project participants were engaged through a voluntary Expression of Interest (EOI) process and all EOI applications were reviewed by the Project facilitator in line with research ethics and University protocols. Project participants have participated in two (2) workshop and review sessions. The full day workshop involve 6-7 participants per workshop, 13 in total, in where they experience social, physical or communication barriers which aim to reflect the experience of people with disabilities in everyday life (role reversal activities). The review session involved a four (4) hour workshop. Lastly, a one (1) hour review session with the researcher will be undertaken.

With an understanding of the socially derived nature of disability, personnel have engaged in collaborative action learning processes of dialogue, action, and reflection over a 3-month period integrated into their usual work activities. Participants have used these learnings in an action plan based on the groups identified challenges (including improving accessibility of our website and revision of our Development Control Plan) and champion changes within Council and the community to facilitate better inclusion of people with disabilities. The project is underway and is halfway completed.

## Mid Coast Council

### Building positive attitudes

A partnership between Council, Manning Regional Art Gallery and Dundaloo Support Services resulted in the “We Are One’ Art Project. 300 free art packs were distributed to people living with disability in the MidCoast and participants were invited to create an artwork using the resources supplied.

Approximately 150 artworks from over 20 different service providers and individuals were received which were converted into posters which were displayed on the external wall of the gallery for six months. A grand opening of the exhibition celebrated International Day of People with Disability in December.

### Creating liveable communities

Access to Diamond Beach is now easier and safer with several improvements to the car park, footpath and new shower and picnic amenities after works were completed in December 2021. The works include clearly marked accessible parking, concrete path to assist beach goers with disability to access the beach and provide improved emergency access. An accessible shower block and picnic table were included in the works.

### Footpaths/pedestrian access

The following works were completed during the year:

- Approximately 300-400m of Queen Street in Gloucester has been upgraded, with improvements to pathways and crossings.
- The traffic crossing facility at Cross Street in Old Bar has been upgraded.
- Primrose Street in Wingham has been upgraded to improve footpath and crossing facilities.
- Improved pedestrian/path access from Isabella Street to McCullagh carpark in Wingham.
- As part of the Variety Livvi’s Place (accessible playground) project at Fotheringham Park in Taree, accessible parking and kerb ramps have been provided in River Street and a new pathway has been constructed around the new accessible toilet block to improve access.
- As part of planning to complete a pedestrian link between Gloucester and Barrington, Council worked with RMS to include pathways on the Barrington Bridge. External funding is now being sought to complete the link on either side of the bridge.
- Works were completed along a 300 metre stretch of Isabella Street (between Dennes and Primrose Streets) Wingham to deliver safety improvements for pedestrians. Associated with

roadworks, the kerb and guttering improvements and new footpath along the southern side of the street allow improved access for pedestrians and people with disability. Funded by the NSW Government in association with Council as part of the \$100M Road Upgrade package, this project complements works recently completed on two sections of Primrose Street and at McCullagh Lane carpark.

- Works were completed in March 2021 to improve the footpath opposite 18 Marra Drive and intersection Auvergne Way to the existing pathway as part of the Riverside Estate Subdivision.
- New footpaths were constructed between Evermore Retirement Living and Little Street, Forster improving access for pedestrians and people with disability in the area.
- A pedestrian/cycle bridge over Browns Creek was opened during the 2021-2022 year as the first part of the Figtrees on the Manning development. The new bridge links the Bicentennial Gardens to Nelson/Pitt Street at Chatham and is part of a larger project to create a continuous pedestrian/cycle path from Harry Bennet Park to through to the Regular Grounds to improve access for everyone, including people with disability.
- Works were completed on Diamond Beach Road from the roundabout at the Diamond Drive intersection, past Hallidays Point Public School to the Fantail Rise intersection included new kerb and guttering near the school to improve safety and access around the school.
- Footpath works along Boomerang Drive to link school to north Boomerang Beach area.

### Accessible housing

The MidCoast Housing Strategy was subject to additional consultation for Forster and completed in October 2021. Implementation of the Housing Strategy will occur through the development of the MidCoast Local Environmental Plan and Development Control Plan. This work is underway.

### Accessible buildings

Wingham Library closed its doors on the 24th of June to allow for significant upgrade works to be undertaken. The library is expected to re-open in December 2022 (weather permitting). Renovation includes a ground-floor extension featuring new accessible shelving and an accessible toilet, and restoration of the library's top-floor.

Council undertook asset inspections of Council-owned or managed halls to create a priority list for future improvements. Significant planning and preparation for the Halls Bushfire Recovery Program is in progress. While none of our halls are designated evacuation centres, the natural disasters (bushfires and floods) over the last few years have shown that communities will naturally congregate at community halls. This program aims to increase capacity for those halls during those times, with improved access, generators, etc. Delivery of a range of projects across our community halls has been undertaken with the remaining upgrades due for completion in 2022-2023.

Plans for improvements to Hawks Nest Community Hall to improve access and facilities were finalised and the tender process for the works is currently under way. The Plans were developed after extensive community and stakeholder consultation. The project is currently progressing through the design phase. DA approval included several conditions to be further detailed on the construction certificate submission with the building designer currently finalising preparation off the construction certificate submission.

Construction of the new Beryl Jane Flett Studio at the Manning Entertainment Centre commenced and is expected to be completed by the end of October 2022. The new studio space will host an accessible bathroom, with shower off and access from main entrance doors, accessible amenities off, provision for four wheelchair seating in the front row of the seating area and provision for future installation of lift access to the mezzanine floor. The new theatre also has direct foyer access to the existing MEC studio and associated amenities allowing for disabled access between the new and old spaces.

Wingham CBD Masterplan is progressing. A consultant has been engaged to undertake the detailed design of the Wingham streetscape (specifically Isabella Street from Primrose to Wynter Street and



Bent Street to Farquhar Street) in alignment with the Council approved Streetscape Plan. These designs include changing the levels of the roadway, footpaths and kerbing to proactively improve accessibility to shop fronts and to meet Australian Accessibility Standards where practical. There are a number of existing shop entrances that will not be wheelchair accessible due to the existing levels. This plan is being progressed, plans are expected to be finalised in early-mid 2023

### **Accessible recreational facilities/green space/public toilet and shower facilities**

Federal funding \$100,000 was secured to upgrade Forster's popular Pelican Boardwalk with new decking making it safer and enabling people with disability to enjoy being on the water's edge. Stage 1 and 2 works were completed in winter 2022.

Federal funding of \$70,000 allowed an upgrade to the children's playground at Marjorie Delbert Reserve in Forster. Upgraded equipment is better suited to people with disability.

Omaru Park at Taree was upgraded to include an extended undercover area, new change rooms, storage and referee rooms, as well as public all access amenities. Construction of an all-access pathway, along with improved water diversion and drainage around the building site completed the project. This made possible by \$700,000 grant from the Australian Government's Local Regional Community Infrastructure Fund.

Works to improve showgrounds were conducted as follows:

- Wingham - extensive refurbishments including a new cattle pavilion undercover area a rebuilt spinners and craft shed, and improved access for people of all abilities, funded by the NSW Stronger Country Communities fund and project managed by Council in consultation with the Wingham Showground Crown Lands Manager.
- Nahiabac - main entrance upgrade improving pedestrian and access for people living with a disability. A new dual traffic concrete driveway with a dedicated pedestrian access, new gates and culvert drainage was installed, along with internal concrete pathways to support markets and other events. The works were made possible thanks to an Australian Government Community Grant of \$78,990, an in-kind contribution of \$26,330 from Wallamba Show Society and Council providing an additional \$15,000 funding for drainage improvements.
- Bulahdelah – fully refurbished amenities with two new accessible bathrooms including shower, toilet and hand-washing facilities, and a privacy wall at each entrance point. The change rooms were completely updated, with new shower and toilet fixtures and new change room seating made from recycled materials. Footpaths were added to the perimeter of the building and a concrete apron at the entrance for easier access especially during wet weather. Works were funded by a Crown Reserves Improvement Fund Program of \$150,000 and a Council contribution of \$135,000.

Final concept plans for Tuncurry Water Playground have been approved by Council, with construction work to commence in late 2022. Works are planned for late November once a tender is accepted for demolition of the old facilities. This is the first open space water playground of its size undertaken in the MidCoast with key features including an all-age, all-ability water splash pad incorporating a water slide, water tower and active water play equipment. The water playground is designed with no standing water which excludes the need for lifeguards. The new playground is a water-wise design which recycles water onsite, passing through full filtration and chlorination processes and returning clean water to the playground. The new amenities block will include a fully accessible amenities block with a disability hoist and an all-age change table. This was a \$2 million project, including \$670,000 from developer contributions. The project is expected to be complete in early-mid 2023.

The following improvements were made to amenities:

- Pebbly Beach (Forster) – replacement of existing facilities. The new facilities include three unisex toilets, a baby-change facility and an accessible toilet, with the design matching earlier new Forster amenities at Main Beach and Little Street. Existing underground infrastructure meant the toilet block had to be rebuilt on the same site, but landscaping around the facility was upgraded to improve visibility of the toilets from the playground and barbecue facilities.

- Black Head Surf Life Saving Club – facilities were demolished and replaced with new amenities including general change rooms, a family change room, unisex and ambulant toilets, an accessible bathroom and new outdoor showers. Works were completed by Council on behalf of the Surf Club committee with funding from the NSW Government’s ‘My Community Projects’ program.
- Gloucester’s Community Recycling and Waste Management Centre – work commenced to renovate to create two new bathrooms - one accessible bathroom and one ambulant bathroom. The facilities will provide improved access for visitors to the tip shop and recycling centre
- John Wright Park (Tuncurry) – works commenced to replace existing facilities as part of the program to upgrade amenities across the MidCoast. Built on the existing footprint, the new amenities face the outdoor amphitheatre. A new concrete pathway provides access from the car parks. Improvements include a greater number of unisex cubicles, upgraded disability and new baby change facilities. The project is scheduled for completion in August 2022.
- Old Bar beach – a new toilet block was constructed including improved access for people with disability. The works are part of a range of improvements for the Old Bar Beach foreshore area, including the renovations of the nearby surf club and the installation of the all new, inclusive playground. Funding for the foreshore revamp has come from a range of State and Federal Government.
- Providence Bay Park (Hawks Nest) - planning was completed and construction commenced for new public amenities. The new facility includes seven unisex toilets an accessible facility, two change room cubicles and outdoor showers and improved pathway access to the facility. Construction is scheduled for completion

Funding was secured to upgrade the Tea Gardens Pool. Works will include an upgrade to the entrance to the site, construction of accessible paths and buildings, and an accessibility ramp into the pool, with an entrance and exit pod as an extension to the existing pool. Work has commenced and is due to be completed in early November 2022.

Pacific Palms Surf Life Saving Club underwent maintenance to the deck, improving safety and access, thanks to \$9,207 in Federal funding.

Two new inclusive play spaces were installed on the MidCoast, near Tuncurry’s Rockpool and at Old Bar Park. At Barry Stoneham Park near the Tuncurry Rockpool, the new playground includes a combination slide tower which stands just over eight metres tall, a combination swing including nest swing, toddler swing, strap swing and a cub seat swing, and a flying fox. At Old Bar Park, the new play items include a tower with slides, combination swing including nest swing, strap swing and an expression swing, musical / sensory play and a junior play area. Both playgrounds were completed with landscaping and shade sails. The projects are funded by the Australian Government’s Local Roads and Infrastructure Program.

Gloucester’s community parks received upgrades. Works included new playground equipment at King George V Park making the playgrounds more accessible for all abilities and installation of new electric BBQs, accessible timber seating and solar lighting at Gloucester District Park.

The grandstand seating for Gloucester District Park was upgraded with seating for 484 people, along with new steps, handrails and an accessible seating area. Works were made possible thanks to \$655,500 from round two of the NSW Government’s Stronger Country Communities grants.

Federal funding was secured to rebuild the 35-year-old tidal pool supports at Coomba Park. A new boardwalk will be built to improve access to the site. Site investigations have been completed and approvals are currently being finalised to progress the project.

## Supporting access to meaningful employment

A partnership with disability support organisation Valley Industries has been established to assist their ‘Valley Plastics’ initiative by introducing a hard plastics recycling program. Council conducted a staff census during 2020/21. The voluntary survey asked staff to disclose whether they had a

disability and the nature of the disability (vision, mobility, hearing etc). The census also sought information on whether staff had caring responsibilities for a person with disability.

The Community Development Team contacted staff who had disclosed information in this way to invite them to be involved in an internal reference group to inform the development of the new Disability Inclusion Action Plan. Staff were also invited to for a support group for the organisation to better understand their needs and provide appropriate support.

Australian Network on Disability were engaged and planning progressed for a Recruitment Review of Council's recruitment processes.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

ReadSpeaker is fully functional on Council's website, enabling customers to listen to a page in audio, or highlight any section of text on any page to listen to the selected text.

Council's website continues to be improved in terms of quality and streamlining of forms on our website. Information on road projects has been greatly improved.

Council invested in a new Have Your Say page on the website, using UserWay technology to make it more accessible

Council meetings are now live streamed for the community by video and audio, with a full recording available after the meeting, making the meetings more accessible for everyone in the community.

A wheel in/out service is offered for a fee, for customers who don't have ability to wheel their bins out for weekly collection. Residents can report illegal dumping online, eliminating the need to visit a council office, or make a phone call. The mobile Community Recycling Centre continued to visit remote communities to assist them with disposal of problematic waste such as paint, gas bottles, oil and batteries.

Library Services continues to invest in and enhance its services, including:

- a significant collection of large-print and audio books;
- home library lending service, delivering books to people who have difficulty leaving their homes;
- substantial dyslexic and literacy collections;
- a significantly expanding collection of eBooks and eAudio – usage of these services increased by 11%
- delivery of virtual story-time for children;
- Author and workshop events being held by Zoom – open to all residents;
- a wide variety of online databases and other resources; availability of 24/7 online services, including access to the catalogue and membership details.

## **Mid-Western Regional Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Events and activities facilitated by Council's Cultural Team and Community Development and Youth Services Officers, in particular, welcome participation by a broad range of community members and do not discriminate against people with disability. Interagency meetings and communications also promote disability awareness and opportunities.

### **Creating liveable communities**

Increased consideration of access and inclusivity when building new or renovating old Council facilities. This past financial year, shade sails were installed over a liberty swing in a public park in Mudgee to increase useability throughout summer months.

## **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Updated Equal Employment Opportunity Policy endorsed by Council.

## **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Increased opportunities for engagement and participation in Council Library, Theatre and Gallery activities, as well as ensuring access and inclusivity is considered when planning major events.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability**

### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

Council advertised for new members for its Advisory Access Committee and consulted members with respect to the most recent reiteration of its Disability Inclusion Action Plan.

### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

Council continues to consult with Access Committee members and intends to do so into the future.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Targeted consultation with the specific groups identified above has been a challenge as our small communities do not tend to have specific formalised groups for us to start building the consultation process with so a broader approach is necessary.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Targeted consultation with the specific groups identified above has been a challenge as our small communities do not tend to have specific formalised groups for us to start building the consultation process with so a broader approach is necessary.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Policy has been developed and endorsed with respect to protecting those vulnerable members of our community (including those living with disability) and a supplementary procedure is also available for staff as required. Staff have also completed an Understanding Access Legislation and Universal Design in Buildings course.

## **Is there anything else your organisation is doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

A community plan proposal will be included within the next Council budgetary process for the employment of a specific Disability Inclusion Officer.

## **Moree Plains Shire Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Moree Plains Shire Council established a Council Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee that has been meeting quarterly with a high number of community representation. Acknowledgement and promotion of International Day of People with Disability on 3 December 2022 through social media and Community Groups.

## Creating liveable communities

Moree Council have continued to implement improvements to Council infrastructure such as kerb ramps and crossings in Balo Street. A extension was completed on the shared pathway in Amaroo Drive Disability Parking was installed in Heber Street near Moree Secondary School and in front of the Pallamallawa Community Hall A Council Community Donation was given to the Moree Tennis Club of \$24k for the construction of a disability access ramp to the clubhouse

## Supporting access to meaningful employment

Council continues to invite people with disability to apply for more roles and then providing meaningful employment opportunities Council continues to encourage a culture of inclusion across our workforce and mindful of removing barriers so that our workplaces are accessible to all.

## Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes

Encourage and support collaboration with stakeholders Council is developing disability awareness material and resources to training within the industry and Community Groups

## How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?

### What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?

Moree Plains Shire Council established a Council Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee that has been meeting quarterly with a high number of community representation. Council encourages members of the Community to contact Council with feedback and suggestions

### How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?

Reviewing Council DIAP Designing community infrastructure, events, programs and services that are inclusive, non-discriminatory and satisfy the diverse mental and physical needs of the community

## How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?

All activities, consultations and deliverables are inclusive of everyone needs.

## What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?

COVID-19 Floods Difficulty in getting commitment from stakeholders and Community members' knowledgeable representatives Lack of resources to carry out audits and support activities

## What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?

High volume of disability infrastructure was completed in Moree and surrounding Villages. The increase in staff completing Disability Awareness training

## Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?

Increase public awareness of disability inclusion at a local level Develop and promote a culture of inclusion and customer service among Council staff to increase opportunities for feedback from, and ongoing engagement with, people with disability and carers



## Mosman Municipal Council

### Building positive attitudes

Council supported consultation through the Access and Mobility Community Consultative Committee that met four times.

There were four community consultation workshops held to help shape the 2022-2026 DIAP along with an online survey.

In 2021 Council's biennial community survey recorded a resident satisfaction score of 6.78 (mean score out of 10) for services and facilities for people with a disability

A Youth Inclusion Group met online between August and December 2021. The Group consulted on how the service could better include people with a disability and from diverse backgrounds in programs and worked on an International Day of People With Disability initiative

Inclusion Tree utilised in various spaces/events to promote inclusion and gather community aspirations and expressions of inclusion and hope.

23 staff, 100% of new staff trained per year in disability awareness to ensure staff recognise providing accessible information, processes, services and facilities as a core responsibility; this includes ensuring frontline staff know where to refer customers for information. 100% staff reporting increased confidence following training

Youth Services delivered an online presentation to all Council staff on its youth consultation, including information about Inclusion & Diversity from a youth perspective – re-iterating importance of inclusion for Youth Services and our community more broadly to a diverse range of internal stakeholders

Child and Families services partnered with other agencies to run two education sessions for parents around speech and language development and mental health wellbeing.

Community Development Teams (Library, Gallery and Community Services) led on a Voices Project for International Day for People with Disability that included:

- Youth Internal Day of People with Disability online campaign/videos
- Community submissions that were promoted on social media
- Book events in the library
- Held two events on Zoom for International Day of People with Disability. One for children Megan Taylor StoryTime and the other an Adult Author talk with Carly Findlay OAM

Other events included:

- Inclusion Tree Project promoting inclusion and providing opportunity for community submissions around an inclusive society
- Postcards workshop for young people for the development of the new MOSPLAN. This promoted inclusion and created positive aspirations and hopes for an inclusive society including issues around access and disability.
- 3 x "Aunty Time" workshops held at the Youth Centre with a focus on de-stigmatising difference including conversations around disability.
- Intergenerational project around wellbeing and mental health targeting older people with dementia and young people

Council liaised with Uniting Care LAC and promoted relevant information from them and other disability & community services providers to facilitate inclusion.

In 2021-2022 Mosman Community Care promoted inclusion through the Northern Beaches Council newsletter.

Internal survey on inclusive volunteer engagement has been completed and an action plan developed to increase opportunities to engage volunteers with disabilities. Inclusive volunteer engagement training delivered to relevant staff in 2021. Connections made to Centre for Volunteering to engage people with disability.

Numerous items published re inclusion and actions taken, including in the Mosman Daily Council Round-up, Council's online events hub, social media posts for International Day of People with Disability and promotion of library events in the weekly MosmanNow advertisement. A program of inclusive playground upgrades was also widely promoted across external and Council-owned channels.

Youth Submissions and winning Slam poetry recorded and promoted on social media. Youth International Day of People with Disability online video campaign promoted to community through social media channels

Connections have previously been made with the Chamber of Commerce and the Chamber participated in a community forum in May 2019 and in DIAP consultations in early 2021, which included disability providers.

Members of the Chamber attended community consultation events to help with the development of an ageing framework including discussions around older people, care and disability.

In February 2019 presentation was made by the NSW Office of Sport highlighting Participation Plans for Sydney Districts.

All In! Inclusion Guide links were provided to all clubs in August 2019. Council's Venue Coordinator is equipped to respond to access enquiries when processing bookings club and casual sports.

The in person International Day of People with Disability event was not held in 2021 as a result of COVID-19 restrictions. However, the Voices project and smaller team led programs went ahead.

Regular quarterly meetings were hosted by Library Services to engage with local Principals to seek feedback on Council services for their schools and to provide an update on Council programs and initiatives in their areas.

Quarterly Children's network meeting and emails highlighted services that can assist to increase knowledge around inclusion and accessibility. Quarterly meetings were held with KU inclusion team to share information around inclusion and accessibility.

Youth Services meeting held with Student Support Officers Network with inclusion as a key point of discussion.

Continued through LNS Youth Interagency with roundtable planning meeting facilitated by Youth Services at Youth Centre in Feb 2022 where inclusion was a key priority area.

Relationship established with Mosman High School SSO with ongoing consultation regarding young people requiring support and pathways to create greater inclusion for individuals with greater psychosocial needs

## **Creating liveable communities**

Regular cross-council attendance at access committee meetings.

An access audit walk was held around Mosman's 'high street' (Military Road)

Five (5) stairs and hand rails were audited and fixed

Four (4) school catchments were audited in to promote "walk to school":

- Queenwood Junior
- Blessed Sacrament
- Mosman Prep
- Beauty Point Public

With any new or refurbishment works, compliant pram ramps are established on a needs basis.

Community requests for pathways or new pram ramps are prioritised based on pedestrian counts and safety, and works undertaken based on budget availability.

Improvements were made to pathways at Clifton Gardens playground and fully accessible picnic tables added adjacent to Spit West playground.

- Pram Ramps – 5
- Footpaths – 430m
- Stair cases – 5
- Accessible toilets – 2

Footpath renovations were undertaken to alleviate trip hazards

Accessible and ambulant public amenities are being constructed at Memory Park & Allan Border Oval (ready for use August 2022 & 2023)

Mosman Swim Centre upgrade has improved access to facilities and one toilet in both ladies and gents has been upgraded to “Ambulant”. Handrails were installed at Balmoral Baths.

A ramp providing access to the water was built at Clifton Gardens in 2020. This facility incorporates guiding rails along its length into the water.

Council’s Venue Coordinator is equipped to respond to access enquiries when processing bookings for foreshore reserves

A Draft Walking & Cycling Strategy 2022-2027 was prepared and discussed at the Active Transport Working Group (ATWG) meeting in June 2022

Additional wayfinding signage has been installed in a number of areas further expanding Mosman’s updated signage.

An expanded rollout of new street name blades commenced in 2021-2022. The new blades feature the latest technology manufacture with improved retroreflective base printed in a more readable typeface with good contrast/LRV performance and a matt over laminate to minimise stray light reflection. During December 2021 updates were made to internal and external public signage for COVID-19 due to changes in government regulations. Artwork was in line with Government signage and maintained highly visible text in combination with recognised pictograms.

A criterion has been established to process requests for mobility parking permits.

Council regularly seeks grants from State Government for safer road crossings. Three improvements have been implemented and a further two planned during the reporting period.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

All job advertisements promote Council as an Equal Opportunity employer.

All candidates asked this question (if they have any particular needs to make the application and selection process accessible) prior to attending interview

100% of requests for reasonable adjustment to process that are made

100% training sessions including focus on inclusion and reasonable adjustment

23 staff trained per year in promoting an inclusive workplace culture through induction training

There has not been any specific requests from Council staff regarding facilities to access. However all requests regarding desk and chair ergonomics at the work place have been addressed

Software is reviewed prior to procurement to ensure appropriate accessibility options are available

10 volunteers with disability were recorded in 2021-2022

1 volunteer referral made to Community Visitor Scheme grant program in Lifeline Northern Beaches

Advice has been provided to the Chamber of Commerce regarding local disability employment services.

## Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes

Council reviewed and adopted 12 policies in 2021-2022 however only one was directly relevant in terms of access and inclusion, namely the Code of Meeting Practice which now includes webcasting provisions, substantially improving access and inclusion in the Council meeting cycle.

Council's website was developed with WCAG compliance front of mind and a similar approach will be adopted with the forthcoming Mosman Art Gallery website when ready for design and development

An inventory of existing software for ease of accessibility has been completed

Encouraging all software suppliers to improve accessibility with new updates is an ongoing exercise

The digitisation project, to improve accessibility of records and information, has progressed significantly with ever increasing access to digital records. However completion of digitisation of legacy records remains some way off.

New print forms are designed to follow accessibility and readability standards as appropriate. Most forms have been migrated to online and are designed with standards in mind.

Ensuring customer facing staff identify people's preferred forms of communication and share this information across sections of Council, so people do not have to make the same request to different sections is an ongoing exercise.

Council's website <https://mosman.nsw.gov.au/community/disability> has information on accessible facilities plus links to advocacy and linkages services. The Playgrounds page provides info on each facility's accessibility rating: <https://mosman.nsw.gov.au/recreation/playgrounds> and the Parks and Reserves page also provides information on accessibility ratings as well as displaying accessible toilets: <https://mosman.nsw.gov.au/recreation/parks-and-reserves>

Mapping on Council's website and MyMosman app features mapping with the ability to show various assets such as disabled toilets and an interactive map of accessible parks has been established on Council's MyMosman app.

Accessibility requirements collected on event registration information to ensure participants with access/needs can be accommodated. An accessibility checklist has been circulated. Consideration is given to accessibility in event promotion

Key Council venues are wheelchair accessible with accessible toilets and parking.

Council has delivered 806 hours of service to young adults with disability at the monthly support group and weekly Drama Group. COVID-19 impacted both groups ability to meet in person. In 2021-2022 Community services delivered services to 20 young adults with disability.

23% of clients in Mosman Community Care over the age of 60 were people who identified having some sort of disability.

Encouraging local service providers to identify options for activities that are inclusive of people with disability e.g. art workshops is action. Although this has been impacted this year by various COVID-19 restrictions.

Within guidelines, use of Council venues is proactively provided to local organisations.

A local disability service, FightingChance is a regular market stallholder and is supported by Council through its Community Grants program.

A hot desk was trialled Feb-June 2018 however NDIS LAC discontinued the hot desk after the trial.

There is regular promotion of **Curl** services at Mosman Markets.

Council's Complaints policy and systems have been substantially reviewed. Complaints and accolades are now reported to Council annually and statistics are published in the Council's Annual Report.

Key Council venues are wheelchair accessible with accessible toilets and parking

## Murray River Council

### Building positive attitudes

Community Services engaged with agency networks with a focus to improve physical, cultural, and equitable access to vulnerable persons living in MRC LGA

### Creating liveable communities

Three accessible community transport buses purchased. Sub-Regional Community Transport Network established to maximise use of adjoining Council vehicles and common routes

### Supporting access to meaningful employment

Review of council recruitment processes to remove unintentional barriers for people with disability and increase opportunities for all roles to be inclusive has begun and a workplace adjustment policy and process is being drafted

### Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes

Community services established the Vulnerable Persons Service Provider Network which aims to connect agencies and individuals that support vulnerable persons residing in MRC.

Establishment of new Council office in Moama that improves the use and access for people with disability.

Community Services Hub at Barham built and available for use.

### How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?

#### What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?

The Plan was developed in consultation with our community, with an emphasis on engaging with people with disability. In May 2022 we hosted a community consultation session and invited people with disability, and organisations that represent people with disability, across our communities. These consultations co-led with Get Skilled Access provided us with a great opportunity to hear directly from people with disability, their family and carers on their day-to-day experiences of living in our community.

#### How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?

Feedback from the community consultation sessions on how Council can improve its service delivery and remove barriers to participation informed the actions within our DIAP, providing guidance for future planning across the key pillars.

### How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?

Ongoing feedback from our staff, clients and community will be sought throughout the life of the plan, and will help determine the success of the plan's current and future actions.

### What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?

Limited resources and declared natural disaster for our LGA has resulted in delays in having our DIAP move through the required channels to receive final adoption (scheduled for December Council meeting after public display).



## What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?

As our DIAP is new and awaiting final adoption (December), our greatest success is our consultation and development of plan with accompanying actions

## Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?

There are no further actions outside of our DIAP as it is awaiting final approval.

### Murrumbidgee Council

- Pedestrian Access & Mobility Plan (PAMP) crossing
- Developed a Masterplan for lift and change accessible amenities in each town
- Received NSW Government funding for new amenities in Darlington Point. Amenities will be provided Coleambally and Jerilderie when funding becomes available
- Received a NSW Government Grant of \$750,000 through the Stronger country Communities Fund to upgrade the Monash Park netball precinct. This will include new amenities with disabled/accessible access.
- Upgraded the amenities and change rooms at the Coleambally Sports Precinct with sports ambulant and disabled facilities.
- Applied for funding through the NSW Government Active Grant for Interconnections to ensure high Work Health and Safety and environmental considerations
- Began review of disability Inclusion Action Plan.

### Muswellbrook Shire Council

#### Building positive attitudes

Community education of inclusion and acceptance, a partnership activity with Ability Links, this involved a try a sports day inviting people with disabilities to participate in a sport such as netball, football etc and was held at Karoola Park Muswellbrook.

Wider Promotion of existing Art Exhibitions for adults and children with disability, a supported exhibition talks and workshop was provide to people who are hearing impaired with the provision of an signing interpreter, this was well received by participants and carers.

Provision of accessible events, Australia Day Community Awards, Australia Day Family Fun Day, Citizenship Ceremonies, Easter Family Fun Day, Blue Heeler Film Festival, Muswellbrook Regional Arts Centre Exhibition openings and workshops, Library activities in Muswellbrook and Denman.

#### Creating liveable communities

Muswellbrook Shire Libraries has secured funding to develop a sensory courtyard that will provide a safe space for children with mobile and sensory disabilities to play and interact with the environment.

Improved accessible public toilets at the Denman Memorial Park has provided facilities for families and individuals to participate in community events and spaces in particular the inclusion of accessible toilets with an adult change table.

Footpath renewal programs has enable the redesign of footpaths and pram ramps this has provided people with disabilities connectivity and ease to move about their community independently.

## Supporting access to meaningful employment

Improved understanding in assistive technologies, an auditory audit of the Council Administration was carried out a final report was provided, recommendations were implemented where relevant to improve access for employees with hearing impairments.

Supporting people with disabilities to work from home during COVID-19 restrictions, relevant equipment was provided to ensure that this was achievable.

Ensuring that buildings and workplaces are accessible for people with disabilities ensuring that all spaces are physically accessible by the installation of ramps, elevators, toilet facilities.

## Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes

Improved understanding in assistive technologies, an auditory audit of the Council Administration was carried out a final report was provided, recommendations were implemented where relevant to improve access for employees with hearing impairments

During the COVID-19 lockout periods the Muswellbrook Shire Libraries innovatively developed a click and collect program for all residents of the Muswellbrook Local Government Area, this program proved to be vital for our vulnerable community members providing them with reading materials delivered to their door and much need social contact.

Provision of the Muswellbrook Shire Council Facebook and website provides regular information to community members about events, projects and importantly emergency information such as fires and flooding events.

## How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?

### What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?

People with disabilities and their carers were consulted in the development of this plan. As matters arise in our community people with disabilities and their carers meet with relevant sections of council to discuss these matters and raise any other issues or concerns that are impacting their wellbeing.

The Community Services Section convene and facilitate interagency networks that consist of disability support workers who advocate for the needs of people with disabilities, these issues are captured in our internal council planning processes.

Muswellbrook Shire Councils Client Request Management systems has a prompt question for officers to identify customers who have a disability, the issue is then tasked as a Disability Inclusion Action, this provides council officers with addition information to prioritise issues for people with disabilities.

### How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?

Muswellbrook Shire Council regularly surveys our community about their needs and issues, during this reporting period the Community Satisfaction Survey 2021, Community Panel report 2022, Operational Plan 2021-22, Muswellbrook Active Transport Study and the Community Strategic Plan 2022-2023 identify actions and strategies to address needs of people with disabilities are endorsed by Council.

## How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?

Consultation has occurred with the recognised Aboriginal groups within our community including the Wanaurah Local Aboriginal Land Council Elders Group as well as the Muswellbrook Shire Council Aboriginal Reconciliation Committee. Surveys were distributed through the Land Councils members list to direct consultation with executive members at their monthly meeting.

Women and children were a part of all consultation meetings and their issues were included in all planning processes.

Muswellbrook Shire Council has a small portion of people from culturally linguistically diverse backgrounds some people identified in our planning processes and contributed specific issues such as access to easy information on Council Social media platforms. Councils Community Partnership Officer has an established network with Northern Settlement Services who predominately provide support to people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds this service has represented and advocated for their consumers throughout this reporting period. Muswellbrook Shire Library Services ensure that a diverse range of resources in other languages are provided at the Muswellbrook and Denman Branches, these resources are borrowed and used by community members.

LGBTIQ+ communities are not specifically consulted on their needs moving forward improved networks need to be established.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Resourcing and supporting strategies of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan. COVID-19 Public Health Orders continue to impact on the delivery of services to people with disabilities as well as the ability to effectively engage and consult with people with disabilities and their carers.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Muswellbrook Shire Libraries secured funding and installed a sensory courtyard. This space provides a safe space for children with mobility and sensory disabilities to play and interact with the environment. The Library Service has seen an increase of individuals and groups accessing the Library purposely to use this space, this interactive space has been incorporated alongside the children's reading area, glass sliding glass doors connects the inside and outside areas allowing children and their parents to enjoy a contained space to learn and relax together.

### **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Council officially adopted the NSW Public Spaces Charter in 2022, the Charter focus on ensuring all community members can access public spaces to enjoy and relax. Council continues to plan and deliver projects using the Charter.

## **Nambucca Valley Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Monthly Access Committee meetings have continued to be a challenge over the past couple of years, with some meetings cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions and members being unwell. Meeting minutes are presented to Council for its information or endorsement of formal recommendations for action.

Community meetings are mostly held at Council-owned community facilities which are accessible. Also a portable PA is available for on-site or outdoor meetings to assist people to hear the business being conducted.

Some improvement with a small increase of people with disability in images being used. Council now has a library of images of local people in local environments which includes older people, people using mobility scooters and wheelchairs. These continue to be used across Council documents.

The main results in this area (accessible business, accessible tourism) over the past year have been in tourism infrastructure and there have been numerous projects. One example is the work undertaken at the V-Wall, Wellington Drive Nambucca Heads.

## Creating liveable communities

Improvements for Fletcher Street Nambucca Heads commenced. Work commenced on new public toilets in Ridge Street Nambucca Heads. Refurbishment of the public toilets at the Weir Reserve in Scotts Head.

Toilets at Gordon Park were completed in 2017-2018. Design development, Development Approval and construction-ready plans were completed for new toilets in Ridge Street Nambucca Heads. The facilities will include one new unisex disabled toilet and one ambulatory. The Nambucca Heads Library extension project also includes new toilets, including a new unisex disabled toilet. Refurbishment of the toilets in the Gallery of the Community and Arts Centre has been funded and plans have been developed. Construction will commence after the new Ridge St toilets have been commissioned.

The National Toilet map has the following: Valla Beach (3), Nambucca Heads (15), Macksville (5), Bowraville (3), Taylors Arm (1), Scotts Head (2). All Council owned public toilets are listed. Listings for new amenities include photographs.

During this reporting period the 2011 Macksville and Nambucca Heads Pedestrian Access Management Plans (PAMP) have been reviewed in collaboration with the Nambucca Valley Council Access Committee. The following have been completed:

- New 1.2m footpath Patridge Street/Star Street Macksville
- New 2m footpath River Street (east side of bridge to East Street) and 3m footpath River Street (west side of bridge) Macksville
- New blisters and kerb ramps Cooper Street (Pacific Highway)/Wallace Street new blisters, kerb ramps and refuge, Macksville
- New 1.2m footpath Wellington Drive, Nambucca Heads
- New 1.2m footpath Short Street/Lee Street (near Pacifa) Nambucca Heads
- New blisters, kerb ramps and refuge, Bowra Street/Fraser Street/Back Street, Wellington Drive

Other completed projects:

- Upgraded footpath near Nambucca River Marine Rescue to Gordon Park Nambucca Heads
- New footpath: 118m x 2.5m includes upgrade of Access ramp to current standards (Gordon Park)
- New viewing/fishing platform (Gordon Park)
- New footpath Skyline Close Subdivision Macksville: 250m x 1.2m
- Shelly Beach, Nambucca Heads beach-access
- New footpath Valla Beach Road: 196m x 1.2m and 36m x 1.2m
- Wellington Drive, Nambucca Heads
- Gordon Park, Nambucca Heads
- Fishing Platform - Gordon Park Nambucca Heads
- Skyline Close subdivision, Macksville
- Beach-access - Shelly Beach, Nambucca Heads
- Valla Beach Road Accessible fish cleaning station, adjacent to accessible fishing jetty.
- Stuart Island, Nambucca Heads Improvements to pedestrian access and accessible car parking – Wallace Lane, Macksville
- Improvements to pedestrian access and accessible car parking at Wallace Lane, Macksville

Gordon Park playground (Nambucca Heads) and Hennessy-Tape Oval playgrounds were constructed under “Everyone Can Play” principles.

## Supporting access to meaningful employment

In June 2021, Council reviewed the Equal Employment Opportunity Management Policy and adopted the Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan 2021-2023 (which supersedes the Workplace Equity and Diversity Strategy). The purpose of the Nambucca Valley Council EEO Policy and EEO Management Plan is to:

- foster a culture that values diversity and inclusion;
- remove barriers to participation and progression in employment and training; and
- encourage innovation and flexibility through different ways of working.

Council wishes to report the following actions:

- Special events – BBQ, morning teas, theme days to promote causes such as RUOK and encourage inclusion.
- Code of Conduct and Respectful Workplace training.
- Core corporate values of ethical conduct and teamwork are included in every Position Description.
- The Induction for new employees covers the Code of Conduct
- The Staff Newsletter, published every month, recognises employees who demonstrate our values of professionalism, accountability, community focus, teamwork, value for money, safety and leadership.
- The Staff Newsletter also promotes mental health awareness activities and the Employee Assistance Program.

Part of Council's COVID-19 response included working from home arrangements, consideration of special needs i.e. staff with compromised immunity, splitting teams to prevent risk of virus being spread.

Applicants for vacant positions are given the option of requesting special assistance via a standard question which prompts the need for consideration by Human Resources.

A number of items of equipment were purchased and changes to the workplace were made during the past year e.g. prescription safety glasses, specialised ear protection, stand-up desks and a compact portable sit/stand option for short term use in response to employees specific disability needs.

An Employee Assistance Program is in place to assist people with health and well-being.

The Nambucca Valley Council has work practices which provide for Carer's Leave and flexible leave for people requiring long-term recovery or rehabilitation.

There is also a Return to Work program and Ergonomic Assessments to assist people with special needs to re-engage in the work place.

## Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes

Location of accessible facilities, parking and toilets will be available online is ongoing as facilities are upgraded, moved or constructed.

Council's website meets WCAG (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines)

A new Tourism website which meet WCAG was initially completed in 2017 when the tourism website ([www.nambuccatourism.com.au](http://www.nambuccatourism.com.au)) was revamped. This website has been replaced by a new tourism website ([www.nambuccavalley.com.au](http://www.nambuccavalley.com.au)) which has been developed by the Nambucca Valley Tourism Association Incorporated – an organisation independent to Council.



## **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

Council's main point of regular contact with people with disability is via its Access Committee. Council also undertook a survey of people with disability when developing its new DIAP which was adopted in June 2022.

### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

Via the Integrated Planning and Reporting process - the Community Strategic Plan and the Delivery Program.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Overall this is managed by the Community Strategy, Specifically this is a work in progress and challenge - how do you manage to not single these people out from a small community but still engage with them? Council is being advised by the Access Committee as to how to better engage.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Implementing the DIAP is not a challenge if you create realistic expectations and set realistic goals.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

A new DIAP was prepared and adopted in June 2022.

## **Narrabri Shire Council**

In June 2022, Council adopted its second Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) for 2022/2026, after extensive community engagement and consultation. Actions identified in the DIAP are integrated into the Operational Plan each year and are identified as such under the Principle Activities section of this report.

During 2021/2022 the Access and Inclusion Committee met quarterly and examined how to amend their Terms of Reference to enable the Committee to become more accessible and inclusive. These changes will be implemented in 2022/2023.

As part of a combined event Social Inclusion Week / International Day of People with Disability held in December 2021, the community was invited to listen to inspirational stories from disability advocates who either have a lived experience or are carers for a person with a disability. The morning tea event was attended by about 30 people by a cross section of the community and was well received.

A Council representative continues to attend and participate in the Narrabri Interagency monthly meetings. As there is a variety of service provider participation in the interagency monthly meetings, Council can maintain working relationships and networks with important community groups and government organisations. Together participants and Council assist with local events and identify gaps for services in the area. One initiative from consulting with members of the disability community was the development of the Disability Interagency which was implemented in collaboration with BEST Employment, who specialise in disability services.

Council continues to attend bi-monthly Narrabri Dementia Friendly Community Steering Committee meetings. During 2021/2022 Council continued to be committed to having all front-line staff complete online Dementia Awareness training to assist when dealing with customers who may be affected. It is intended that the Dementia Friendly training get imbedded into new Council staff Induction training.

Throughout 2021/2022 Council's Human Resources Team worked to encourage and support people with a disability to apply for positions at Council. This Team continues to identify and promote employment and volunteer opportunities for people with disabilities.

In 2021/2022 Council, in consultation with the Access and Inclusion Committee, developed a brochure to assist and educate local businesses on how to be more accessible and inclusive. In 2021/2022 the Access and Inclusion Committee, with assistance from Council, commenced preparation for a wheelchair tour of Narrabri, Wee Waa and Boggabri central business district to raise awareness of barriers and encourage businesses to become more accessible. This tour was held in October 2022 (in the 2022/2023 financial year). Findings from the Tour will be used to update the brochure to further assist and educate businesses.

Council, along with the Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee, will continue to work together in 2022/2023 to implement the actions in the 2022/2026 DIAP.

## **Narrandera Shire Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

When the opportunities arise, Council promotes persons living with a disability in our media releases or newsletters - our friends at Kurrajong Waratah for example are frequent users of the Narrandera Shire Library and like the VR equipment that we have there, there have been a number of stories about how they have returned to the library following the relaxation of COVID-19 restrictions.

Our Community Support staff offer assistance to many in the community and where there may be special events, the staff make sure that vulnerable members have the opportunity to attend.

Road safety is very important for the disability sector, in particular mobility scooters. Council's Road Safety Officer delivered a 65Plus workshop providing advice and safety tips when driving, riding, walking, using a mobility scooter or catching public transport.

Outcomes were a community that is more aware of the disability services available not only from Council but from other service providers within the community. Members of the community that are more aware of general road safety and personal safety.

### **Creating liveable communities**

Pedestrian Access & Mobility Plan (PAMP) projects continue making it easier for persons with a disability (also the general community) to move more easily amongst the community.

Compliance with the Building Code of Australia and relevant Australia/New Zealand Standards is essential when assessing Development Applications.

Outcomes were Infrastructure that is 'fit for purpose', Inclusivity for persons living with a disability.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Students with special needs from Narrandera High School have been welcomed at the Narrandera Shire Library.

An employee with a disability is accommodated within the Narrandera Shire Administration Centre with the workspace, access and amenities modified.

Outcomes were Persons living with a disability are able to feel actively involved in meaningful and regular work, promoting self-esteem and awareness of achievements beyond what they may have thought possible. Social interaction and the building of a support network.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

The website of Council is compliant with WCAG2.0AA with our Communications Officer versed in how to make documents audible.

A review of the existing Community Engagement Strategy is almost complete, the proposed version will be presented to Council at its December 2022 meeting for exhibition purposes.

Outcomes were the website of Council is more appealing to persons with a visual disability with more documents becoming audible. An overarching strategy document which Council will abide by, promoting inclusivity and consultation with stakeholders.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability**

### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

During the 2021-2022 reporting year it was necessary for Council to review its Community Strategic Plan, so Council took the opportunity to also review the Disability Inclusion Action Plan. Council outsourced the review and development of the new plans to a third-party who consulted with the community as a whole using a number of engagement tools such as face-to-face community and individual sessions, an online survey, a QR based survey as well as meeting with key stakeholders and service providers. The feedback received effectively developed the new CSP and the DIAP and has made the plans more contemporary.

### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

The consultation and feedback received has formed the development of the new Community Strategic Plan and the Disability Inclusion Action Plan making the actions and outcomes more relevant and achievable.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Addressing the needs of the persons identified above is delivered both in the new Community Strategic Plan and the Disability Inclusion Action Plan. Council has a strong working relationship with the Aboriginal Elders and often seeks guidance and advice on projects or current events occurring within the community, Council staff are educated that as an organisation we are committed to the principles of Equal Employment Opportunity and that discrimination either direct or indirect is not acceptable.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

- Financial - restrictions both in capital funding and recurrent funding
- Lack of staff time to action and progress outcomes - in a small rural Shire, staff generally have a diverse range of duties and sometimes there is just not enough resources and time
- COVID-19 restrictions.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

A proactive Human Resources team, Narrandera Shire Library staff and Community Support staff that have made sure that persons with a disability are included in employment opportunities, technological opportunities as well as general engagement opportunities.

## **Is there anything else your organisation is doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

The newly adopted Disability Inclusion Action Plan has a number of new initiatives such as:

- Through the Australia Day Committee consider an award recognising a significant contribution to the disability sector or the promotion of inclusivity and/or accessibility.
- Use media resources to promote disability awareness within the community.
- Commitment to disability awareness when considering, designing and executing projects.

- Promote Council as an 'employer of choice' by considering flexible working arrangements for staff to facilitate a better work/life balance.
- Identify and work with disability employment organisations to assist with opportunities for employment at both Council and advocate to other workplaces where possible.
- Strong voice of advocacy.

## **Narromine Shire Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Council has facilitated opportunities and activities such as Zumba for all abilities which provide classes for locals with disabilities to feel comfortable, welcomed, and included while staying fit and healthy. Other classes that have been run in council facilities include limited mobility classes for elderly and all abilities. All these inclusive activities create positive community attitudes and behaviours while keeping fit and healthy.

### **Creating liveable communities**

A large project undertaken in the Shire was the upgrade of footpaths in the Trangie town ship. This upgrade of facilities has made the shire more accessible for wheelchair users. The new footpaths are levelled and wide enough to ensure a public spaces are safer for users.

The Trangie pool has also had a heated blanket installed to encourage longer swimming season for residents.

The addition of an accessible wheelchair swing at the Dundas Park precinct has created a usable space for children of all ages with disabilities to enjoy.

The addition of an electric wheelchair hoist at the Narromine pool has also added possibilities for people with disabilities to enjoy the facilities and enjoy no that both pools are full accessible.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Council annually offers new opportunities for traineeships to school leavers. Each year budgets are available to offer traineeships in the different departments of the council. These are advertised and marketed directly to the local community and careers advisers at the local schools, to support employment and training opportunities. Upgrades to council's facilities to ensure that they are accessible means that individuals with disabilities have equal opportunities for employment at these facilities. Our new recreational spaces include disabled friendly toilets, ramps and full accessibility.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Council's social media platforms are updated regularly, and all information is shared on multiple platforms and in print, to ensure that all residents no matter their choice of platform can remain informed.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

#### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

Council has engaged feedback through discussion with social planning groups and through interaction with our local organisations as they are attending our all-abilities activities and classes such as Zumba. We have gauged through regular dialogue with the group leaders where we are lacking and where we are doing well with meeting the needs of people with disabilities.

#### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

This feedback has been documented using the council's Customer Request Management system which outlines in a clear and concise manner any feedback or information given. This is then

directed to the managers for each department and used for reporting on the requirements and needs for future planning.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Using our Customer Request Management reporting systems, we can see as actions created, what is outstanding and what has been completed. Reporting on these as well as keeping open communication with the user groups has been our way of determining that we are addressing the needs of the targeted group. We can ensure our resolutions and implementation of the action plan is being done in a timely and satisfactory manner.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

The main challenge that the Narromine Shire Council had while implementing the action plan for the DIAP was the limit on supplies and contractors in the area due to the worldwide shortage in the construction industry.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

The greatest success of the past financial year would be the upgrade to the streets and footpaths in Trangie, upgrading the streets accessibility has created new opportunities for engagement for disabled with local businesses and the recreational facilities in the town.

### **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

The focus for new actions are to upgrade the connection and accessibility for facilities in Narromine, including more wheelchair accessible footpaths throughout the town and in our recreational spaces,

## **North Sydney Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

North Sydney Council (NSC) hosted two events to celebrate International Day of People with Disability and to officially launch Council's new Disability Inclusion Action Plan. The events were launched by Mayor Zoe Baker and included disability advocates, Paul Nunnari and Naomi Deck. Other contributors included Early Ed, Guide Dogs NSW/ACT and Studio A.

NSC has committed to including disability awareness and confidence training in Council's onboarding for new staff.

NSC recognises and celebrates diversity and inclusion through Casual Dress day held once a month

### **Creating liveable communities**

Upgraded signage has been installed at Neutral Bay Community Centre to improve wayfinding and access to community facility Auslan interpreters utilised at NSC events, including International Day of People with Disability.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

NSC has joined The Field to promote employment opportunities for people with disability NSC has introduced an Aged Management Plan to support older staff transitioning to retirement NSC has supported staff to access EPA



## **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

NSC has built and launched a new website with accessibility considered throughout the process. User testing was carried out prior to the website being launched.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

## **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were consulted during the community engagement phase of the development of our new DIAP. People from CALD backgrounds and LGBTIQ+ people were invited to participate in the development of our new DIAP.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

The greatest challenge has been staff resources to implement the DIAP whilst developing a new plan.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Developing a new DIAP which builds on what we have achieved in our existing plan. Council completed audits of its most commonly used parks and buildings as an action in our previous DIAP. These audits have helped guide Council's decision making and facilitate improved access to facilities and Council amenities.

## **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Our new DIAP has a strong emphasis on creating more opportunities for people with disability in employment. Council also plans to develop a Disability Advisory Group made up of people with disability to oversee and support the implementation of Council's new DIAP.

## **Northern Beaches Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Our Library Service provided promotional activities for Mental Health Awareness Week and International Day of People with Disability. In addition to the Dementia Friendly training undertaken by staff, a Dementia café commenced at Mona Vale Library this year, facilitated by Dementia Australia.

Other programs delivered and practices improved include:

- Our Gatekeeper program which trains community members in suicide prevention. 736 people on the Northern Beaches are now trained, and another 55 are in progress
- recognition by Dementia Australia as working towards being a dementia friendly organisation. 710 staff have completed the dementia friendly training, and seven out of 10 dementia audits have been conducted on identified Council facilities
- implementing our Event Accessibility and Inclusion Guidelines across Council services. Examples include Council meetings as well as programs run by our Events team, Community Development, Children's centres, Libraries, Coastal Environment Centre, Bushcare volunteers' plant nursery, and aquatic centres

- inclusive media, using positive images of people with disability in our publications, e.g. more use of accessible media such as easy read documents, infographics, video footage and website content which meets international accessibility standards
- mandatory annual staff training on inclusion and disability, including induction of new staff
- encouraging businesses to be inclusive of people with assistance animals, by providing direct advice to food businesses and guidance in our newsletters and website
- promotion of and judging the annual Access and Inclusion Award at the Northern Beaches Local Business Awards - this recognises and encourages inclusive local businesses.

## Creating liveable communities

Community Development Officers have a broad range of skills, including specialist disability knowledge. They provide ongoing information and referral to community members and distribute a monthly Disability Newsletter to over 1,300 readers.

Several improvements have been made to our online Disability information hub, and a new filter category was added to the What's On calendar function for disability events. Staff attend regular networks with local services including other levels of government and ongoing implementation of the NDIS.

Community Development staff work with service providers to build partnerships, provide information and referral to community programs, events and local services, and identify opportunities for advocacy.

Council continues to sponsor the Disability Inclusion category of the Northern Beaches Local Business Awards, providing comprehensive promotion of this category, targeted business engagement, and a recent trial of free online disability customer service training.

Accessibility audits were conducted in various buildings, amenities, parks, parking spaces, kerb ramps, footpaths and wharves to help prioritise sites for improvement. Collaroy, Manly, Dee Why and Mona Vale are being audited for accessible bus stop locations and footpath gradients and will be updated on Council's online accessibility map when finalised. Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plans for Avalon and Manly were prepared in conjunction with Place Plans, which recommended improvements to connectivity and accessibility.

This year accessibility works included:

- various buildings, paths, kerbs, bus stops, wharves, and carparks, including Dee Why Town Centre streetscape, and Warriewood Valley pedestrian and cycleway network
- playgrounds at Clontarf, Little Manly, Quarry Reserve (North Manly) and Gunyah Reserve (Avalon)
- opening of the new fully accessible Mona Vale Surf Club, and improvements at other surf clubs with accessible amenities, stairs, balconies, and lifts. Construction continues on the new accessible Long Reef Surf Club
- public amenities at East Esplanade and Soldiers Memorial Hall (Manly), LM Graham reserve (Fairlight), Clontarf, Jacka Park (Freshwater), Reub Hudson oval (Curl Curl) and Apex Park (Mona Vale). Accessible amenities are also being integrated into all new and improved Council buildings and facilities
- accessible ramps at North Narrabeen Rockpool, Collaroy Beach, and Clontarf Beach
- improvements to recreational trails at Manly Dam and McKillop Park (Freshwater), to provide accessible connections through to bushland and the foreshore
- better library access at Forestville, Manly, Mona Vale and Warringah Mall libraries, with mobile shelving allowing the creation of inclusive spaces. There are now more inclusive library resources such as improved digital devices for e-Audio offerings for Home Library Service clients, a Dementia Friendly collection, and hearing loop technology was installed at Mona Vale Library. Regular children's programs now include sign language resources and online

broadcasts. Accessible programs and events were provided through the year across a range of services. Accessibility has been embedded in the planning stage for choice of venue, accessibility features and amenities, and, where needed, outdoor events are provided with mobile accessible bathrooms.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Council adopted a new Workforce Management Strategy 2022 - 2026. One of the key themes is 'Diversity and Inclusion', and contains actions to:

- research the eligibility for inclusive employer certifications
- review and improve staff training in relation to inclusion and access
- review recruitment processes and practices to ensure they are inclusive.

Our Local Strategic Planning Statement is guiding the development of commercial centres, with actions on improving access and inclusion to help increase local employment opportunities.

Our environmental volunteer programs in Bushcare, community nurseries and the Coastal Environment Centre are all-inclusive, providing sustainable and social outcomes to all participants.

Council's bush regeneration program also works closely with Bushlink which employs young people with intellectual disabilities.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

The community participated in a review of our Community Engagement Policy and Strategy, including feedback on implementing Principle 3: to create open, accessible and diverse engagement opportunities. We are considering how to diversify our engagement activities to enable participation from the whole community, including any underrepresented communities. Community Engagement Plans for all projects address inclusion through physical access and timing of events; visual and audio products; and inclusive submission options.

Other improvements made to improve accessibility of Council's systems include:

- online information, forms and booking systems improved for readability and ease of use
- more information and services available online for all residents, providing greater inclusion for accessing services, bookings and payments
- new Council documents, web content, media and meetings online accessibility standards for visual content and readability, including the use of a range of formats. Video is developed with audio descriptors, transcripts and closed captions
- the online accessibility map which continues to have more features added to it each year, for easily finding accessible facilities and routes across the Northern Beaches e.g., buildings, amenities, playgrounds, rock pools and more.

Our regular Disability Newsletter continues to provide a platform to promote the availability of accessible systems and processes and to seek feedback on how to improve these further.

## **Oberon Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Greater community acceptance of additional requirements of improved mobility in Development Controls.

### **Creating liveable communities**

Oberon Council has worked towards greater path accessibility and old pathway renewal with mobility in mind. There has also been the creation of disability parking spaces within the town.

## Supporting access to meaningful employment

Oberon Council is an Equal Opportunity Employer and is active in its workforce plans in the matter.

## Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes

Council has redone its website to ensure it is more understandable and friendly to all users

## How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?

### What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?

A scheduled review in February 2023 will be undertaken through a community survey, this survey will provide structured feedback in this matter and assist Council's future policies.

### How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?

As per the above, once the community survey results have been received Council will look to incorporate into future planning.

## How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?

Oberon Council is an Equal Opportunity Employer and provides strong commitment through our statements, culture and wellbeing programs.

## What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?

Budget constraints

## What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?

Improvements to access and accessibility in and around the town centre.

## Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?

A scheduled review in February 2023 will be undertaken through a community survey, this survey and review will be used to create future plans, policies and improvements to be implemented from 2023/24 onwards

## Orange City Council

Orange City Council- adopted the Orange, Blayney and Cabonne Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2017-2021. The plan identified actions to build on work currently undertaken by Council to improve access and inclusion for people with varying levels of ability through:

- An ongoing dialogue with people with disability
- Improved access to public services and facilities
- Increased awareness and understanding of access and inclusion issues across the local government areas.

The actions were developed in line with the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014 four focus areas and council is pleased to report the following achievements across the 2021-2022 financial year.

## Building positive attitudes

Business group meetings included awareness regarding the importance of inclusion for people with disability for business outcomes. A “Missed Business” guide was distributed to local business owners.

The Disability Inclusion Action Plan is covered in the employee induction including a video on diversity and inclusion.

Council develops a comprehensive annual training plan for all staff. Council’s Learning and Development Officer can also provide career development advice and support to staff

Increased number of promotional materials including positive images of people with disability.

Ageing and Access Committee reformed and includes members who have lived experience of disability, disability services, service providers as well as interested members of the community. Chaired by a Councillor with a disability. The Committee develops and reports on an action plan to Council.

International Day of People with a Disability celebrated at a Community Colour Run event held at Anson Street Public School. The school provides specialist and intensive support in a dedicated setting for students with moderate to high learning and support needs.

Early planning with Gender Equity Committee to merge it to our EEO management plan and make the group about a Diversity and Inclusion Committee established by combining Council’s Gender Equity

## Creating liveable communities

Council’s Future City project progressing. The project addresses barriers and inclusion in design considerations for the future development of the city including renewed street furniture in the CBD, upgraded footpaths and wayfinding. All compliant with accessible standards or guidelines. New accessible seating installed in the main street of the Orange CBD.

New concrete paths continue to be installed across the city of Orange.

Accessible play equipment with consideration to the NSW “Everyone Can Play’ guidelines has been installed at Matthews Park.

New accessible toilets have been installed at Robertson Park.

Seniors Showcase held during Seniors Week 2022 featured a range of service providers to provide information and potential referrals.

The Orange Mobility Map for information that will assist in accessing the City of Orange in the safest way. It is designed for people with mobility impairment or for those who may have difficulty negotiating the environment. The map includes information on public facilities, as well as locations for parking, toilets and rest areas.

Information available on Orange City Council website about accessibility at local parks and sports grounds to enable the community to plan their visits.

Accessibility and inclusion incorporated into Council’s event registration paperwork.

Council youth and disability services purchased wheelchair accessible buses for transporting participants.

## Supporting access to meaningful employment

Induction review is included consideration of content is accessible, cultural awareness is within the content and information about the disability inclusion action plan.

Recruitment includes requests for any reasonable adjustments.



Information on Council's recruitment processes are available on our website. Human Resources also includes both phone numbers and email addresses on all job advertisements so interested candidates can make contact if they have any questions or require any assistance.

Council considers and supports a broad range of requests for work experience placements for students enrolled in education institutions.

The Volunteer Policy includes reference to equal employment legislation and ensuring volunteers are appropriately supported. Each area promotes their volunteering opportunities and applications are assessed on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the policy. If necessary and deemed appropriate, reasonable adjustments are made to the work environment to suit the needs of the individual.

All job candidates are asked when applying for positions to outline any reasonable adjustments they may require to participate in the recruitment process.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Accessibility with Language – Orange City Council Website is compliant to WCAG - Accessibility - Orange City Council (nsw.gov.au). This will now be expanded to ensure that the internal intranet is also accessible.

The Access and Inclusion Learn to Swim program members integrated with Learn to Swim classes.

Audio loops regularly maintained.

Mobility Map reviewed, updated and printed. Available in hard copy and online.

After School and Vacation Care program for young people with disability expanded to a younger age group

Orange City Council continues to support people with disability through providing group homes for adults with intellectual disability, services to provide support in home for people with disability and after school and vacation care for people with disability.

Compliance with NDIS Audit.

Continuous Improvement Register maintained by Disability Services and reported every three months to Orange Council's Ageing and Access Committee.

Planning and consultation for the updated Orange, Blayney Cabonne Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026 completed through online survey, face to face consultations with specific service providers, people with disability and their families and carers, Wangarang Industries which is a not for profit Australian Disability Enterprise (ADE) and registered NDIS provider, based in Orange, established to provide a range of jobs, training and a range of support services for people with a variety of disabilities throughout the Central West region of NSW, and the general community. Further consultation with the general public in shopping centres at the four main shopping Centres in Orange.

## **Parkes Shire Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Council updated the Event Management Plans associated with major events, including the Parkes Elvis Festival and Overture, to incorporate accessibility requirements, such as accessible viewing platforms, accessible toilet blocks, accessible parent/carer rooms, designated drop-off and pick-up zones and allocated disability viewing areas.

Council introduced disability viewing areas near the Main Stage in Cooke Park and lower Clarinda Street at the 2022 Parkes Elvis Festival.

Council introduced designated disability drop-off areas in Browne Street and Welcome Street at the 2022 Parkes Elvis Festival.

Council introduced disability viewing areas near the Main Stage in Cooke Park at the Overture event held in April 2022.

### **Creating liveable communities**

Council delivered two strategic link footpaths in the Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan including Brolgan Road extension and East Street extension.

Council was successful in obtaining \$440,000 in State Government grant funding for the delivery of two projects in the Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan, including the extension of the foot paths in Captain Wilson Avenue and Clarinda Street.

Council delivered new amenities at the newly constructed Cooke Park Pavilion with disabled access.

Council completed upgrades to the existing amenities at McGlynn Park to include disabled access.

Council's Visit Parkes website was updated regularly to include information on Accessible Activities including parks and amenities

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Council commenced a review of the existing Council website ([parkes.nsw.gov.au](http://parkes.nsw.gov.au)) to ensure WCAG2.0 AA compliance.

Council implemented a new Customer Request Management (CRM) system which allows residents and customers to engage with Council via an online portal to ask a question, report a problem, make a request or provide feedback

## **Penrith City Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

The focus of Penrith City Council from July 2021 to June 2022 was on the engagement efforts and development of a new Disability Inclusion Action Plan (The Plan) for Penrith City Council. The outcome was a new Disability Inclusion Action Plan for Penrith for 2022-2026. The Plan was formally endorsed by Council on 27 June 2022 and seeks to address the barriers people with disability encounter in everyday community life – including physical, attitudinal, communication and social barriers. It outlines our priorities for the next four years to support access and inclusion through direct actions, partnerships and advocacy efforts.

In relation to Focus Area One – developing positive community attitudes and behaviours - 11 new actions were identified against three core strategies. The strategies are: to increase awareness and knowledge of access and mechanisms for inclusion for Penrith City Council staff, raise awareness and promote the benefits of inclusion to the community, and raise awareness and promote the benefits of inclusive customer practices with local business

Actions reflect the different roles Council plays to influence a shift in attitudes, including being a leader, advocate and capacity builder and include:

- Staff training and online resources to support more inclusive workplace practices and customer focus across all areas of Council business (e.g. training in accessible communication).
- Local campaigns on various forms of media celebrating people with disability, diversity and inclusion.
- Supporting local businesses in our city centres with practical advice for their premises and services to be more inclusive for all.

Through the development process of the new Plan and early implementation, there has been a shift in how disability is spoken about and positioned in the organisation. Following advice from the Access Committee, Council refers to 'visible and invisible disability' throughout our work to ensure different experiences are top of mind.

Staff from across the organisation are learning from the recent DIAP engagement process and training to strengthen how Council engages people with disability, their families and the disability sector in our work.

The outcome of these efforts will be a consistent and quality experience tailored to the needs of people with disability. This extends to our advocacy work and creating opportunities for people with disability to share their own experiences.

We look forward to sharing more detail about the highlights from year one of implementation in the next reporting cycle.

### **Creating liveable communities**

In response to community feedback, 30 new actions were identified in the DIAP 2022-2026 against seven core strategies to create liveable communities.

The strategies are: deliver accessible and inclusive community events, programs and services, increase access and participation in recreational and sporting opportunities, support participation in the creative arts for producers, makers and audiences with disability, improve accessibility within Penrith City's town centres, provide accessible Council buildings and facilities, improve accessible transport and pedestrian movement in and around Penrith and support people with disability to be prepared, respond, and recover from emergencies, shocks and stresses.

Actions reflect the different roles Council plays in achieving liveable communities, including being action owners, advocates for change, capacity builders and partners with other key agencies. In particular, Strategy 10 and its focus on emergency preparedness and community resilience highlights a distinct local experience. The impacts of recent floods, bushfires and extreme heat reinforced the importance of Council's work to empower people with disability living in Penrith during an emergency.

We look forward to sharing more detail about the highlights from year one of implementation in the next reporting cycle.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

In response to community feedback, four actions were identified against two core strategies to support meaningful employment. The strategies are: increase employment of people living with disability within Penrith City Council area, support employment of people with disability within local businesses.

The actions in this area build on the success of commitments in Attitudes and Behaviours. Specifically, how we build the knowledge and skills of local businesses to support inclusive employment opportunities and increasing inclusive practices and understanding in our own workforce. By considering the interconnections of these focus areas, we're seeking a sustained approach to change within Council and local employers.

Although efforts were focused on engagement and development, planning has commenced for two key projects for delivery in 2023-24 to support access to meaningful employment. This includes a local employment summit and awareness campaign, promoting and supporting the significant contribution people with disability make in the Penrith community and local economy.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

In response to community feedback, four actions were identified against three strategies to improve access to mainstream services. The strategies are: increase engagement and participation of people living with disability in Council decision making, embed inclusion focused outcomes in Council planning processes and program and service design and increase access to information.

Actions in this focus area address core business and functions of Council, including our business planning and service design, Council meetings, payment of rates, communications and community engagement.

A longstanding and ongoing action for Council is our commitment to listening and learning from people with lived experience of disability via our Access Committee, to advocate for liveable communities in Penrith Local Government Area. The committee has held six meetings this review period, recently celebrating 30 years of service – a significant milestone with many achievements to improve access and inclusion in Penrith. This includes development application and projects advice to make sure accessibility is front of mind across private and public spaces, and advocating for more accessible facilities such as adult change facilities.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

From July 2021 to June 2022, Council undertook extensive research and engagement to develop a new DIAP. Listening to people with lived experience of disability in our community to understand their needs and aspirations was central to the new Plan's development.

There were two stages of engagement. Stage one focused on listening to the community's aspirations to inform the focus of Council's draft commitments. Stage two was conducted through a formal public exhibition process.

The draft DIAP was shared publicly and we asked 'did we get it right?' Despite the challenges of COVID-19, there were 85 participants in stage one and 70 participants in stage two. A range of methods were used to support equitable participation in both stages. This included online surveys, in-person focus groups, live captioned video calls, one-on-one conversations and emails. Picto-communication, Auslan interpreters, support workers and a large print summary supported this work.

People and groups we engaged with include Council's Access Committee, people living with disability, carers, disability workers, community organisations, and other people living, working, or studying in Penrith. We also heard from staff throughout Council about challenges and opportunities.

During phase one we heard that few participants had heard of Disability Inclusion Action Plans or the Your Say Penrith site. We understand this to mean that we were able to reach beyond the usual participants and include voices of people who hadn't previously participated in Council decision making. During stage two, further intentional, targeted efforts to increase awareness resulted in approximately 400 unique visitors to the Your Say Penrith page titled 'Make Penrith More Accessible'. This is double what was achieved in stage one (199 unique visitors).

Data shows that 91% of visitors were first time visitors to Your Say Penrith. Some of the top themes that emerged included the need for inclusive transport, safe pathway networks, inclusive events and programs, meaningful employment pathways, understanding of different forms of disability, and accessible buildings and facilities. Overall, the Plan's development included the following key steps:

- Review of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2017-2021 implementation outcomes.
- Desktop research – to identify current best practice approaches to improving access and inclusion outcomes, including within a local government context.
- Demographic research – to identify the profile of people living with disability in Penrith City, including the preparation of a Penrith Disability Snapshot 2021 report.
- Community and stakeholder engagement – to capture feedback from residents, community services sector, and the Access Committee and listen to what is working well and what Council could improve upon.
- Staff engagement – to hear from teams across all Council departments about what is working well, the opportunities to improve access and inclusion in their work and ideas about what Council's priorities should be for the next four years.
- Data analysis – to review and consolidate feedback and identify key issues, needs, gaps, aspirations and priorities.

- Drafting the Plan 2022-2026 – prepare draft documents and review with Council’s Access Committee.
- Public Exhibition of the draft Plan 2022-2026 – present the draft to the community, asking the community ‘did we get it right?’
- Review feedback and amend Plan 2022-2026.
- Final Plan 2022-2026 – Council endorsed the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026 on 27 June 2022. Full details on the stage one and stage two engagements are found in the Engagement Outcomes Report on Council’s website.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Intersectionality – overlapping forms of discrimination and marginalisation – often has compounding impacts for people with disability. This was front of mind when designing the engagement approach, throughout the development process and is reflected in the Plan.

During stakeholder mapping, staff identified stakeholders who were trusted by their respective communities and sought their collaboration on focus groups, workshops and promoting the online survey. For example, during stage one engagement, staff presented at interagency meetings comprised of community organisations that support women, people experiencing homelessness, people with disability and/or ageing, young people and culturally and linguistically diverse people. We promoted the opportunity to participate in newsletters to these stakeholders and posters in public facilities, such as Children’s Services, Council Libraries and Council’s leisure centres. There were 85 participants in stage 1.

To ensure cultural safety, disclosing information about type of disability and demographic data was optional, and in some instances in the participant’s own words. At least four participants identified as culturally and linguistically diverse and two identified as LGBTIQ+. There were six respondents who disclosed that they have full-time unpaid caring responsibilities. Many of the issues raised, such as experiences on public transport, pedestrian safety and inclusive events and programs, were consistent with other members of the community. Three specific actions were identified in response to targeted work with marginalized communities. They are:

- Prepare a study into the impact and needs of people living with disability who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander or coming from a culturally diverse background.
- Prepare a study into the impact and needs of people living with disability who identify as LGBTIQ+.
- Work with partners to develop improved emergency response and resilience measures for people and families living with disability, including in the area of domestic and family violence.

There were 70 participants in stage 2. Of the 70 participants, one person identified as gender and sexually diverse, two were from culturally diverse backgrounds, and eight are Aboriginal and/ or Torres Strait Islander. Further targeted efforts were made to test the draft DIAP with communities that were underrepresented in stage 1. For example, there was one focus group with people who are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, and a second in social housing. Both were facilitated by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women who were known to participants. Overall, 91% of all respondents during public exhibition were satisfied that the draft DIAP responded to community needs and priorities. The experiences shared importantly, there are four different types of actions in Penrith DIAP. These reflect the different roles Council has to support more inclusive communities, including:

- Owner: actions where Council has direct ownership over an improvement, such as how inclusive Council events and programs are.
- Advocate: actions where Council is not directly responsible but can advocate on behalf of our community for change and improvement.



- Capacity builder: actions where Council will identify needs of others and use our resources and influence to create change.
- Partner: actions where Council will work with other stakeholders and agencies to achieve change together.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Penrith City Council's efforts this past financial year were on DIAP development. Council adapted well to the challenges presented by COVID-19 to ensure high quality engagement despite the constraints on in-person engagement methods. By leveraging our relationships with community organisations, we were able to offer tailored focus groups including picto-communication, Auslan interpreters, video calls with live captions, online forms, emails and 1:1 phone calls.

With this approach, staff found the top 15 themes were validated between stage one and stage two, with a 91% satisfaction rate on the draft Plan during public exhibition. These deep insights produced targeted, specific actions and detailed implementation notes for staff to reference. We're proud that we've been able to resource actions against 15 strategies that directly respond to and reflect the community's needs. Further to this, Council has a long history of listening to lived experience through our Access Committee. In the reporting period there were five meetings held. The level of influence on items presented to the Access Committee ranged from inform to consult and involve. Items included:

- Disability Access Improvement Fund Allocation
- Access Committee Revised Terms of Reference
- Three development applications including Glenmore Park Town centre, St Marys Corner Community and Cultural Precinct and the old Council Chambers building due for demolition with new retail and commercial uses.
- Disability Planning, including highlights from the 2016 to 2021 plan and the engagement and development for 2022 to 2026
- Penrith DCP Review – Accessibility and Adaptability chapter
- Review and Update of the Penrith Accessible Trails Hierarchy Strategy.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

All actions identified in The Plan have been prepared within budgeted commitments over the next four years. Council also contributed an additional \$220,000 towards four 'stretch projects' that will be commenced in the first year of implementation in response to identified needs. These are:

A public awareness campaign on the contribution of people with disability to the city and why access is important, assisting to shift attitudes on disability.

Autism-Friendly PlaySpace Guides (social stories) that support families and communities to visit and make use of some of our great PlaySpaces through supported specific user guides and templates.

Boost Meaningful Employment Summit to showcase the contribution that people with disability can make to an organisation, during a period when most businesses are struggling to employ enough staff. It is timely to raise awareness about the benefits to people with disability and employers when they make their workplace physically and culturally fit for employees with disability.

Undertaking Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plans (PAMP) to develop a plan for pedestrian facilities that are practical and cater for the needs of different users in Penrith, St Marys, and Kingswood including the hospital, as well as around the river.

2022 marks 30 years of the Penrith Access Committee's contribution to making Penrith a more inclusive community. The development of this formal advisory Committee was one of Council's earliest initiatives to improve access to Council services and facilities for people with disability.

Council acknowledged the work of the Committee and officially launched the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026 at a Civic Reception on 19 September 2022. The Mayor Tricia Hitchen, who was appointed a community representative on the Committee in 2008, gave a speech about the significant contribution members have made over 30 years. Matthew Roger, a committee member shared his personal story and advocacy work since medically retiring. The media release for this event was picked up by Local Government News, spreading the word about the important role of access committees to influence decision making.

Finally, Council's first easy read summary was commissioned and is available on Council's website at Penrith. City/DIAP.

### **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

All actions identified in The Plan have been prepared within budgeted commitments over the next four years. Council also contributed an additional \$220,000 towards four 'stretch projects' that will be commenced in the first year of implementation in response to identified needs. These are:

- A public awareness campaign on the contribution of people with disability to the city and why access is important, assisting to shift attitudes on disability.
- Autism-Friendly PlaySpace Guides (social stories) that support families and communities to visit and make use of some of our great PlaySpaces through supported specific user guides and templates.
- Boost Meaningful Employment Summit to showcase the contribution that people with disability can make to an organisation, during a period when most businesses are struggling to employ enough staff. It is timely to raise awareness about the benefits to people with disability and employers when they make their workplace physically and culturally fit for employees with disability.
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Finally, Council's first easy read summary was commissioned and is available on Council's website at Penrith. City/DIAP.

### **Additional information and comments**

We note that during this reporting period Council was in the DIAP development phase for its new DIAP. From July 2021 and June 2022, Council embarked on the development of a new Penrith Disability Inclusion Action Plan (The Plan) for 2022 to 2026. The Plan was formally endorsed by Council on 27 June 2022 and seeks to address the barriers people with disability encounter in everyday community life – including physical, attitudinal, communication and social barriers. It outlines our priorities for the next four years to support access and inclusion through direct actions, partnerships and advocacy efforts. We look forward to reporting on year one of implementation in the next reporting cycle

## Port Macquarie-Hastings Council

### Building positive attitudes

We have supported and celebrated our diverse community to help create a positive impact on our community by:

Support opportunities which enhance social cohesion through connecting people from diverse backgrounds, building unity and reducing inequity.

Promote positive attitudes and behaviours through promotion and education of key significant dates that recognise and celebrate our community's diversity.

Assist with encouraging an increased youth voice across all diversity groups in the community including those with a disability.

Established an Inclusion Stakeholder Network with local service providers to provide information to and gain feedback from, on key community issues which will help with identifying the gaps in our community to assist in future planning.

Established strong relationships with key stakeholders such as schools, Police and relevant organisations to address key social issues.

### Creating liveable communities

We have supported and celebrated our diverse community to help create a positive impact on our community by:

Support opportunities which enhance social cohesion through connecting people from diverse backgrounds, building unity and reducing inequity.

Promote positive attitudes and behaviours through promotion and education of key significant dates that recognise and celebrate our communities' diversity.

Assist with encouraging an increased youth voice across all diversity groups in the community including those with a disability.

Established an Inclusion Stakeholder Network with local service providers to provide information to and gain feedback from, on key community issues which will help with identifying the gaps in our community to assist in future planning.

Established strong relationships with key stakeholders such as schools, Police and relevant organisations to address key social issues.

### Supporting access to meaningful employment

We have worked towards creating an accessible, inclusive and diverse workforce by:

Promote positive attitudinal and behavioural change amongst Council staff by creating opportunities for greater awareness of inclusion and accessibility practices.

Promote and encourage a diverse workforce by exploring the current gaps within Council and investigate the ability of having targeted positions.

Investigate ways to make diversity, accessibility and inclusion a key consideration for strategic workforce planning.

Ensure education around Council being an inclusive workforce is integrated into all staff inductions.

### Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes

We have ensured accessible ways for community to interact with Council are available by:

Identify ways to engage people with disability to facilitate community involvement in and understanding of our decision making.

Review and update accessibility resources, brochures and maps annually where appropriate and ensure they are available in accessible formats.

Ensure our Community Grants Program is accessible for all and encourage not-for-profit community groups to apply for funding to support projects that enhance community, people, places and spaces.

Build the capacity of community groups by facilitating workshop opportunities each year to help develop their skills.

Develop, implement and review Community Emergency Response Plans annually for our communities and ensure that the information is accessible for all residents.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

#### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

We completed a Community Engagement survey of our Community to help identify the gaps to assist us in creating our Community Inclusion Plan and prioritising actions for our Operation Plan.

#### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

This has helped to create the actions in Councils adopted plans and also assist in the prioritisation of projects in our Operation Plan.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

We have created this Community Inclusion Plan (CIP), which sets out our objectives, and proposed plan of action to help develop a socially just, resilient, connected, inclusive, liveable and engaged community - a community that respects the rights of all people and encourages self-determination and equity for all.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

The biggest challenge is the community themselves, feeling like they are more important than the next personal and not understanding that everyone is equal which is why Council is moving forward with a holistic plan for the community.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Creating more awareness in the community and workplace about inclusion and leading the way in fostering a better awareness of the lived experiences of people from various cultures, backgrounds and abilities.

### **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Continuing on with the current actions and continually growing the awareness and importance of making sure all that we do is inclusive for everyone.

## **Port Stephens Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Awareness and education campaigns targeting business owners via BIZ Link network, newsletters and business chambers to foster and encourage the following initiatives:

- Develop companion card friendly initiatives which enables free entry to certain venues/events for carers to accompany people with a disability. This will raise awareness of the needs of people with a disability access issues.
- Wheelchair staff challenge, 12 staff worked for a day using a wheelchair to get around and complete set challenges including crossing roads, utilizing the footpaths in the main street and navigating the Council administration building.

## Creating liveable communities

The Mobile Library now has a disability lift at the rear of the truck to enable access. The libraries have ongoing provision and expansion of assistive and adaptive technology including large print books and Audio books. This has created increased awareness and support for people with a disability and increased livability.

Council have advocated for all pathways to be inclusive in new developments within the Port Stephens LGA. Reviewing the outdoor dining policy to ensure adequate footpath allocation for pedestrians at all times. Inclusion of tactile devices in new path/ramp construction projects.

Assessment of Evacuation Centres has been undertaken to ensure that they are suitable and accessible for those with disabilities.

Ongoing access to children's services programs for children with additional needs of Outside of School Hours Care (Raymond Terrace and Medowie), Port Stephens Activity Van and Family Day Care. Currently enrolled: Preschool one child, Family Day Care, no children. OOSH 58 children across 10 services with no external funding.

Ongoing provision of wheel in wheel out garbage bin service (Blue Dot service) for people with a disability living at home

Manage the use of Grahamstown Aquatic Reserve for use by Sailability for ongoing access to recreation facility.

With the assistance of grant funding, we constructed accessible public toilet facilities at Shoal Bay Foreshore and another at Bettles Park Raymond Terrace. We completed a shared pathway connecting Mallabula to Lemon Tree Passage, as well as shared pathways along the Raymond Terrace Levee Bank, with the assistance of grant funding.

We were able to increase accessibility to the Nelson Bay stage thanks to a Streets as Shared Spaces funded project.

Thanks to grant funding, we revitalised Robinson Reserve, Anna Bay and transformed it into a community hub with a skate and scooter park to cater for all ages and skill types. With the assistance of grant funding, we recently upgraded the Mallabula Sports Complex, making it another great facility that not only encourages young people to be active and healthy, but fosters a feeling of inclusion and belonging by giving them a space to share their passions and hobbies.

Signed up for the LED rollout which provides better quality lighting for footpaths and ramps around the LGA. Construction of an accessible SCUBA Dive entry at Nelson Bay.

Construction of Brandon Park Accessible Amenities. Construction of accessible Longworth Park BBQs

## Supporting access to meaningful employment

Council investigates options to improve understanding of policies and procedures for people with a disability. Removing obstacles for people with a disability to enable achievement of positive and sustainable employment outcomes. Continue to offer candidates an option to disclose whether or not they have a disability during the application process so that Council are able to ensure that applicants with a disability are and feel supported throughout the process



## **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Implementation of a new Council website in January 2022 aligning with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 requirements. We have also updated the website to offer more self-serve options including a Read Speaker function which converts text to audio for people who are vision impaired or have difficulty reading online text. By having the text read aloud the information on the website can be accessed and understood more easily. This was an action in the Customer Experience Roadmap. We had 300 people access this function within the first few weeks.

Updated the 'calling for submission' advertisement to include all formats. For example, please note, submissions may be made in any format, which is able to be sent via email and is less than 10mb in size. This may include a video file or audio voice recording in addition to more traditional written format.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

Our Livability Index was introduced to better understand what our community valued most and how they rate their neighbourhoods. Council teamed up with Place Score to complete our first place census. Over 3,700 people told us what they value (CF-Care Factor) and how they rate their neighbourhood (PX-Place Experience). The results allow us to focus on the things most valuable to the community and help us make decisions that will have the biggest impact on the community's wellbeing.

### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

This information has told us that the top liveable priority that we must continue to improve on is Access and safety of walking, cycling and/or public transport. One of our strengths that was rated as performing well was Access to neighbourhood amenities. Council is in contact with the Amateur Fisherman's Association who have provided so much consultation results for Local Government Areas with Waterways.

Port Stephens has a large population of people over the age of 55 years including people with a disability, so people have mobility needs.

Council has just gained funding and installed an accessible DIVE ramp, with the consideration of many more marine accessible components to our waterways being included in funding applications. The Amateur Fisherman's Association is an excellent collaborator and supporting organisations for these funding applications for additional infrastructure to assist people with mobility constraints

## **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Council prioritises the improvement of sports and recreation infrastructure and town centre revitalization through advocating to other levels of government. The additional funding of \$730,000 allows for the rejuvenation of town centres and over \$3 million for high class multi-functional sports complexes including a 'hub' space for community groups, youth groups and LGBTIQ+ people with a hearing loop and accessible design for events and activities.

Signed Agreement Yabang Gumba-Gu (Road to Tomorrow) as an action plan for the Aboriginal Strategic Committee (Worimi and Karuah Local Aboriginal Land Councils). Actions include the creation of learning and development and employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Our goal in the Community Strategic Plan is to encourage Port Stephens to be inclusive and access friendly.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Natural disasters, rain, flooding and the pandemic have caused disconnection, destruction of property and limited services. Projects and Works were postponed or cancelled and supplies were limited. The positive aspect of this is we learnt more about the impact of these disasters on the vulnerable, at risk and people with a disability. Lessons learnt for emergency management means we are better prepared for future disasters.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

The quantity of footpath constructed which has contributed to the extension of the pathway network as a whole in the Local Government Area.

## **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Little Beach Accessibility Precinct

- Playground upgrades including new accessible equipment and new soft fall. Other upgrades include seating, pathway connections and an accessible water bubbler. Also building two new amenities buildings. These buildings will replace the existing single amenities block. They will feature three unisex toilets, one accessible toilet, two change rooms, and four external beach showers.
- The dedicated Changing Places accessible toilet provides wheelchair circulation space, an adult-sized change table, hoist, an automatic door and privacy screen. It also provides space for beach wheelchair storage.
- A beach access ramp will also be constructed to improve accessibility for all to the sand.
- A new 2.5 m wide shared pathway will connect Little Beach to both Fly Point and Halifax Holiday Park and include a section of retaining wall replacement. A new BBQ shelter and furniture will be installed. New park furniture and concrete slabs are to be constructed using recycled products.

Road and parking improvements - including a raised pedestrian crossing, speed reduction humps, and a 40km/hr speed change to improve safety on Beach Road Footpaths and ramps and bus stops. Undertake review of footpaths and ramps in high traffic pedestrian areas within the LGA to determine which infrastructure is compliant to Australian Standards Develop methodology for the prioritisation of footpath construction to ensure consistent and equitable approach 16 new shelters currently funded to be completed under CPTIGS

Community Development - Support community service providers who work with people with a disability through regular community information distribution, funding and collaborative events and activities.

Cultural Development - Increased activities and events for people with a disability to be involved both in the development stage and the implementation stage. This includes Accessible Art activities with the Strategic Arts Committee Ongoing outdoor and accessible art and recreation opportunities for people with a disability including exercise programs and outdoor art exhibitions. Events and Activation Erect and support the use of the Accessible Event Tent at Council events and work with volunteers for large scale external events in the Local Government Area. The Event Tent is designed for people to relax and escape noise and large crowds, in particular people with a disability. Promote events as accessible Include accessibility in event application.

Continue to engage with the community utilising the liveability index to determine accessible priorities throughout the Local Government Area.

Human Resources - The application process has the option for people with a disability to disclose their disability at the application stage. Consider any reasonable adjustments that can be made to

the successful candidate in assisting them to successfully complete their role. Council investigates options to improve understanding of policies and procedures for people with a disability. Remove obstacles for people with a disability to enable achievement of positive and sustainable employment outcomes. People with a disability included as the priority council works with business to activate them for employment.

Promote Port Stephens as a destination for people with a disability to visit, with promotion of accessible environment and activities through Destination Port Stephens.

Equity and Diversity Committee - Staff awareness and induction processes to be implemented to create an enhanced awareness of working with people with a disability. Additional actions to be developed and included as part of the Committee's road map. Inclusion of people with a disability in Council's engagement strategies and events

Continue to collaborate with Business Port Stephens to create greater awareness of making your business accessible. Communications: Update Council image library to include a more inclusive image representation of the Port Stephens Community.

Libraries - ongoing Adaptive technology to assist people with vision impairment. Audio Navigators, Vision impairment packs (include magnifiers etc.), noise cancelling headphones, Children's sensory suitcase (includes tent, noise cancelling headphones, weighted blanket etc. for children with sensory issues), Dyslexic book collection for children with dyslexia, large print books and audiobooks, eBooks and eAudios, DVD collections with subtitles, and a Homebound Delivery Service. Public PCs run the Windows 10 Operating System, which has a number of accessibility features.

Implement a web chat function on the website as an additional form of communication with the Council. Implement a content experience platform for Council website. Develop an engagement plan process that includes demographic analysis of stakeholders and diverse engagement method identification. Prepare communications plans that include live streaming and video where possible

Investigate offering interpreter service for Council's Customer Experience team.

Investigate the installation of Hearing Loops for community facilities, in particular where public events and activities are held.

Emergency management - Roll out of P-CEP (Person - Centred Emergency Preparedness) awareness information available to community members.

Volunteers Management - Include factors for engagement and orientation of people with a disability in Council's Volunteer opportunities, including Place Plan Town Teams. Review of volunteer nomination form and induction and town team management accessible processes

Civic Events and strategies - Employ Auslan interpreter for citizenship and civic events for Australia Day including Annual Awards.

Prioritise Council's Community Strategic Plan and strategies to be easy read versions. Commit funding to train graphic designers and strategic planners to develop strategies and community communications and strategies- including Place Plans into Easy Read documents for people with a disability to be able to interpret.

## Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council

### Building positive attitudes

Establishment of a QPRC Diversity and Inclusion staff committee which drives progress across Council in a wide range of areas, such as LGBTIQ inclusion, gender equality, mental health, disability and inclusion awareness

Inclusion of a sensory friendly hour for major community events, such as Christmas in July

Annual Seniors Week expos with a range of service providers held in Queanbeyan, Bungendore, Braidwood and Captains Flat

Engagement of an inspirational Paralympian speaker for Road Safety Week who presented to QPRC staff

### **Creating liveable communities**

Completion of construction of Bungendore Playground which has many accessible features such as wheelchair accessible spinners and swings and accessible footpaths, allowing everyone to play

Continuation of the Zero Barriers Project in QPRC region, with over 15 local businesses becoming Zero Barriers accredited and a local business Bean Central, winning the Zero Barriers business award for our region at the Awards Ceremony in Sydney

Completion of an Access Audit of Monaro Street in Queanbeyan which will inform the final detail design for the project

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Recruitment of two disability identified traineeship positions and two Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identified positions

Council employment application packs included inclusive statements encouraging applications from individuals with diverse backgrounds or those with disability

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

QPRC Access Committee met five times during 2021-2022 to discuss a range of issues impacting on people with disabilities in the QPRC, such as accessibility in car parks, disabled parking requirements, and feedback on the design of the new Queanbeyan Civic and Cultural Precinct and the Monaro St Upgrade project.

Completion of Easy Read document design training by the QPRC Communications team allowing for improved accessibility of Council document, forms and website

### **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

#### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

We have recently completed our new DIAP

Internal Diversity and inclusion working group

Access Committee chaired by a Councillor

#### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

We will continue to be involved with internal and external groups

Council will work with the Access Committee and continually look to improve and work on the DIAP

### **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

We have a small Community team Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer, Community Development Office, Program Facilitator and Program Coordinator Community. We run and are involved in all interagency groups (services). We run Committees of Council Access Committee, First Nations Consultative Committee and Youth Committee. Engagement at community events and projects.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Funding and staff resources

## What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?

Access Committee, Zero Barriers (Business engagement)

Accessible playgrounds

## Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?

Actions to work on in the DIAP and bigger funding applications (Braidwood) refurb

## Randwick City Council

### Building positive attitudes

- Ranger Services staff issued 758 infringement notices to persons parking illegally in designated accessible parking spaces.
- Ranger Services also rolled out the Roads and Maritime Services Mobility Parking Lost and Stolen Hotlists into the Pinforce management system, which are uploaded monthly to enable Parking Patrol Officers to check MPS permits live in the field and take appropriate action against non-compliant permit owners.
- Council delivered training in:
  - Disability Awareness
  - Creating an Inclusive Environment.
- Council also hosted Lifestyle Lunches for all staff covering the topics of:
  - Homelessness
  - Coping with Change in Challenging Times
  - RU OK? 365 Days
  - Welcome to Country.
- The Access Advisory Committee did not meet in the reporting period due to COVID-19. However, the Access Advisory committee members were very much involved in the work of Council as they are members of interagencies convened by Council and worked as partners on particular projects.
- Staff throughout Council have reported on DIAP initiatives throughout the 21/22 year, via the quarterly and annual reporting processes.
- Council's Community Project Officer (Ageing and Disability) meets every fortnight with various Council staff members to provide information and obtain feedback.

### Creating liveable communities

Issued 758 infringement notices for the misuse of designated disabled parking spaces. This was a significant increase from 2020-21. One contributing factor to this increase may be the resumption of more proactive parking patrols by Council officers following reduced operations throughout the COVID-19 lockdown periods.

Installed 'No Parking' zones in preference to 'No Stopping' zones to allow for persons to drop off and pick up persons – which can be helpful for persons with limited mobility.

Due to the COVID-19 situation, Council opted not to hold a single large forum. The following actions were taken instead:

- Delivered a range of online information and education sessions to help older people with disabilities and their carers to raise awareness of available support services and programs, both formal and informal. This included information on navigation pathways to accessing help and



using complex information platforms such as My Aged Care, Carer Gateway and the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

- Delivered online information sessions on the NDIS, the role of Local Area Coordinators and new programs providing tailored support for people from non-English speaking backgrounds to access the scheme. These sessions were done in partnership with La Trobe Community Health and Ethnic Community Services.
- Coordinated a series of webinars on Death Literacy and Choice in Life and Death for residents, carers and local service providers.
- Delivered a series of online information sessions to raise awareness and understanding of dementia, referral pathways and available support programs and services for people living with dementia and their carers.
- Supported the City of Sydney and Eastern Sydney Abuse of Older People's Collaborative to develop promotional videos and webinars to raise community awareness about elder abuse

Promoted a range of community programs and events through eNews, Facebook and Instagram, Council's website and through various interagencies and external networks.

Delivered a range of online information and education sessions to help older people with disabilities and their carers to raise awareness of available support services and programs, both formal and informal. This included information on navigation pathways to accessing help and using complex information platforms such as My Aged Care, Carer Gateway and the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

Delivered online information sessions on the NDIS, the role of Local Area Coordinators and new programs providing tailored support for people from non-English speaking backgrounds to access the scheme. These sessions were done in partnership with La Trobe Community Health and Ethnic Community Services.

Supported Catholic Healthcare Hoarding and Squalor Resource Unit to promote the 'Buried in Treasures' program to residents with problematic clutter and hoarding disorders and to provide support coordination for residents and promote new health and wellbeing initiatives for older isolated residents living in South-Eastern Sydney.

Conducted outreach via the Seniors Network to create awareness of library services for seniors who are housebound, vision impaired or have mobility issues.

Facilitated community outreach with the Spark Library Outreach Vehicle, creating greater community access through cross-generational, inclusive outdoor events.

Held a series of online and in-person events to ensure access, inclusion and participation for people with a range of disabilities. These included webinars on Anxiety and Depression, Healing Grief and Loss, Misuse of Alcohol and other Drugs and Building Resilience, as well as Mindfulness Photography and Art Workshops.

Continued to support community organisations such as Autism Swim through our community investment program and social media promotion.

Provided financial support to a range of local community service providers through Council's Community Investment Program.

Convened and resourced five Eastern Sydney Aged and Disability Services Interagency meetings involving community service providers as well as Local, State and Federal Government officers. Regional issues are discussed at these meetings, and opportunities for joint projects and local initiatives are developed.

Participated in the NSW annual Homeless Street Count in February and worked in partnership with the Eastern Sydney Homelessness Assertive Outreach (ESHAC) to advocate for an increase in dedicated fortnightly patrols providing outreach to people who are experiencing homelessness or rough sleeping in the Randwick LGA.

Supported the City of Sydney and Eastern Sydney Abuse of Older People's Collaborative to develop promotional videos and webinars to raise community awareness about elder abuse.

Convened and resourced five City of Sydney and Eastern Sydney Ageing and Disability Interagency meetings, as well as a planning day to provide networking opportunities for local services, to identify priorities and service gaps and to support and strengthen the sector.

Designed and built new and upgraded buildings in accordance with the relevant Building Code of Australia (BCA) and Australian Standard access requirements.

Undertook upgrade works at bus stops for access compliance.

Constructed 2.99km of footpaths to improve pedestrian access and mobility. This included 1.0km of new footpaths and renewal of 1.99km of existing footpaths. These works included construction of new kerb ramps.

Promoted a range of community programs and events through eNews, Facebook and Instagram, Council's website and through various interagencies and external networks.

Provided accessible entry and exit paths for people using wheelchairs, preferred wheelchair seating allocation and accessible toilets at Council events.

Continued to facilitate online Precinct Meetings. Attendance at Zoom-based Precinct Meetings was up compared to previous in-person events. This was largely due to increased accessibility to the meetings for both able-bodied people and people with disability.

Held a series of online and in-person events to ensure access, inclusion and participation for people with a range of disabilities. These included webinars on Anxiety and Depression, Healing Grief and Loss, and Building Resilience, as well as Mindfulness Photography and Art Workshops.

Enabled persons with limited accessibility to 'attend' events via live streaming of community events such as the Anzac Day Service and a virtual tour of the La Perouse Museum exhibition.

Provided several online and in-person events to meet the identified needs and interests of people with disability, both visible and less visible, and carers. These included Back to Prince Henry, The Spirits of Prince Henry Twilight Tours, Paranormal Prince Henry and the 'Bravery, Bandages and Bedpans' photographic exhibition exploring the evolution of nursing at the Prince Henry Nursing and Medical Museum at Little Bay.

Implemented 'UNSEEN', a multi-media exhibition illuminating the hidden experiences of women's homelessness and housing insecurity. The exhibition was delivered in partnership with Blur Projects and included a launch and talk with participating artists.

Provided a series of accessible community film screenings, including:

- 'Kusama Infinity', a biographical documentary film exploring the art and life of Japanese artist, Yayoi Kusama. The film explores issues of sexism, racism and ageism and was screened during Seniors Week.
- 'Picturing Home', a biographical documentary film which follows the life-changing journey of Jai Jaru, who escapes to Sydney but ends up homeless on and off for 20 years. The film was screened during National Homelessness Week and included a panel discussion.
- 'Human Flow', a documentary film directed by renowned international artist and activist Ai Wei, giving visual expression to mass global migration. The screening was organised to mark Refugee Week.

Acquired and tenanted two new Transitional Housing properties for women and children escaping domestic violence, in partnership with Women's Housing Company

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Made external procurement information accessible on Council's website. Major procurement opportunities are advertised on the tendering portal and Council's website (Council no longer purchases advertising from the SMH).

Reviewed and updated Council's recruitment process to be more inclusive and accessible for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

All new footpaths are constructed with compliant kerb ramps.

Made ongoing improvements to the accessibility of Council's website content by ensuring the use of plain English, integrating a greater use of online forms, reviewing the visibility of web pages, and making the Council's website more readable on mobile devices.

Made more services, events and forms available online.

Launched a new online system to apply for sustainability rebates. The functionality and visual layout are user friendly and consistent.

Refreshed the online services portal for better readability.

Reviewed the content and structure of the Council website to make services more searchable and understandable.

Continued to update Council's Brand Guidelines to ensure photography, language and typography is accessible and representative of the diverse communities of Randwick City.

The Access Advisory Committee did not meet in the reporting period due to COVID-19. However, the Access Advisory committee members were very much involved in the work of Council as they are members of the interagencies convened by Council and worked as partners on particular projects.

## **Richmond Valley Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Improved access through incorporation of more accessible paths, play spaces and infrastructure upgrades, including Evans Head Razorback Lookout, Casino Drill Hall, accessible paths in Rappville and installation of tactile markings at crossings in Casino.

### **Creating liveable communities**

Ensuring public events are accessible for all by reviewing Events Practices and revising Events Manual to ensure participation levels and experiences of people with disabilities at Council events. Providing continuous accessible paths of travel between facilities and services in town centres and public areas.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Council acknowledges that not all people will declare they have a disability. Council is acutely aware that not all disabilities are visible, and we continue to support our people according to their individual needs. Mental Health has been a core focus for the organisation and making provisions to accommodate those in times of need has been supported. This aims to promote support for individuals and equal employment opportunity, inclusion and understanding. Council undertakes continuous review of its recruitment procedures.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Continual examination of our own processes and policies to ensure inclusion of people with disabilities. Positive inclusion of the abilities and strengths of people with disabilities in our community and providing accessibility for all throughout Richmond Valley. Working with community groups, businesses and government organisations on inclusion and wellbeing. We have provided an up to date, easy to navigate Council website, and offer a social media page to communicate the latest news in the Richmond Valley. This was highly utilised during major weather events that occurred during the financial year.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability**

### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

Richmond Valley Council has taken a collaborative and region-wide approach to consultation for our Disability Inclusion Action Plan, working with six other local Councils to ensure a coordinated approach was taken and to share resources.

Overall, community members feel that there is a positive presence and inclusion for people with disabilities, for example, in accessible playgrounds, and promoting access to public buildings. However, accessibility varies greatly for people of different abilities and in different situations e.g. more public buildings could improve accessibility and support available could be more widely promoted.

Access could move beyond the physical barriers to more support for sensory disabilities, mental health issues and other 'invisible' disabilities. For example, Council's Community Survey prompted two responses asking for accessible toilets for halls in Casino and Coraki, and for a disability access ramp to the Coraki riverside. The consultation process emphasised how important it was for people with disability to be consulted and have their needs, aspirations, experiences and voices included at all stages of information dissemination and maintenance and creation of public infrastructure and services.

### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

This feedback will be incorporated into the next iteration of the DIAP.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Council works with agility when it comes to diversity and inclusivity, we are proud of our continuous improvement approach to initiatives alongside our programs that have been labelled 'best practice' with the State Government actively promoting our success to other councils in the pursuit of our programs being rolled-out across the state.

The Youth Employment Strategy is one of the biggest, most acknowledged, and awarded employment programs, our statistics show that this program has increased the employment of women, Aboriginal men and women and those with disabilities. We have increased Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment through the YES program, with 68% of the Aboriginal workforce being Generation Z. Implementation of an Aboriginal Liaison Officer who mentors, supports and advises Aboriginal staff.

Applied for and obtained multiple grants from the State Government to be more inclusive of women in the workplace resulting in greater employment, acknowledgement, and promotion of women in Council. Try-a-Trade continues each year, aimed at offering women opportunities in trades. Implemented multiple Try-a-Trade campaigns targeted at school students, single mothers and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women resulting in full-time employment for women in the field with 25% of applicants identifying as Aboriginal women.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

The COVID-19 pandemic has made the engagement of trades difficult, together with supply chain issues and difficulty in obtaining materials. Flooding in February/ March 2022 meant that Council's efforts have been focused on recovery, and many planned projects have been delayed, including the development of new Integrated Planning & Reporting documents.

## What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?

In the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2017-2021, Richmond Valley Council's Vision for Inclusion is that of a sustainable, equitable and accessible community, where the diverse needs, aspirations and strengths of all residents and abilities are supported, promoted and celebrated. Creating liveable communities is one of the key focus areas, providing continuous accessible paths of travel between facilities and services in town centres and public areas has been identified and is to be actioned as part of this Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan (PAMP).

## Is there anything else your organisation is doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?

Improving accessibility of systems and processes – ensuring all information is available in different formats for all abilities. Continually striving to change attitudes and behaviours towards people with disabilities in the community. Providing continuous accessible paths of travel between facilities and services in town centres and public areas. Continuous accessible paths of travel included in new master planning exercises and continue to increase in regular maintenance of current paths. Further improvements to Council's website to standardise access.

Regarding the Richmond Valley DCP 2015, elements of road infrastructure are discussed in broad terms, for example road design requirements for subdivisions; development in, on, over or under a public road; and lane widening and access to narrow streets. The DCP however does not provide specific detail for example, on where pedestrian infrastructure is required or desired, or to what standard pedestrian infrastructure should be constructed. As such, when developing land in the Richmond Valley LGA, whether or not pedestrian infrastructure is incorporated into the design of a development would generally be ascertained by an engineer, who would be basing their decision on the provisions of the Northern Rivers Local Government Design Manual. The PAMP will further guide pathway and pedestrian infrastructure inclusions and standards.

## Additional information and comments about the information provided

Richmond Valley Council's Vision for Inclusion is that of a sustainable, equitable and accessible community, where the diverse needs, aspirations and strengths of all residents and abilities are supported, promoted and celebrated. This Vision for Inclusion is inspired by our Community Strategic Plan's Vision, Mission and Values, which are as follows.

- Vision - A great community with a relaxed lifestyle, beautiful environment and vibrant economy
- Mission - To provide the best possible services and facilities to make our community the best it can be

Creating liveable communities is one of the key focus areas, providing continuous accessible paths of travel between facilities and services in town centres and public areas has been identified and is to be actioned as part of this PAMP.

## Shellharbour City Council

### Building positive attitudes

Highlights include: Continued to host and support events held in recognition of International Day of People with Disability as an opportunity to promote positive community attitudes and behaviours. This included the reshooting of the 'Not All Disabilities are Visible' short films on social media that we produced in collaboration with Wollongong City Council as an Internal Day of People with Disability activity in 2020.

Partnered with La Trobe University to explore Council's role in end of life. A highlight of the project was the production of four short films where local residents tell their stories about their experiences with end of life, death and dying and how these experiences have enriched and added to the way they view and live life.



Supported POPA (Prevention of Older Person Abuse Network Illawarra/Shoalhaven) with their artwork project and short video 'Stop the Abuse'. The artwork in the project was created by Lorraine Brown and Narelle Thomas, Aboriginal women of the East Coast Saltwater People, sisters and Elders in Coomaditchie United Aboriginal Corporation.

### **Creating liveable communities**

Highlights include:

Developed a Community Facilities Strategy and related Action Plan that outlines a set of priorities, strategies and actions to guide how Shellharbour City Council provides, manages, and activates its community facilities over the next 10 years, for the benefit of the Shellharbour community. Access and inclusion are key considerations of the strategy.

Increasing the accessibility of our beaches through the provision of a beach walker.

Continuing to provide comments on new plans and development from an access and inclusion perspective as part of the Social Impact Assessment. With at least 42 sets of plans being reviewed.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Engaged with Council staff to gain support for our participation and benchmarking of Council's access and inclusion performance against the Australian Network on Disability's Access and Inclusion Index. Engaged staff to inform the next Disability Access and Inclusion Plan.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Highlights include:

Council's commitment to the participation and benchmarking of Council's access and inclusion performance against the Australian Network on Disability's Access and Inclusion Index for three years commencing March 2022.

Increasing the diversity of the programs available from the libraries through the purchase of books for people that are dyslexic or have dementia, increased marketing of inclusive activities and hosting two sensory concerts.

Developing a guideline Disability Compliance Access Prevention - bollards on existing footpaths - Gateway treatments for vehicular access prevention with disability compliance

### **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

#### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

The engagements targeted people with disabilities and their carers; service providers for people with disability; schools and preschools; seniors; community event attendees; staff and Councillors. The methods used included but were not limited to workshops and pop-up meetings; a 'Let's Chat' page; social media campaigns and discussions with community groups and committees. We spoke to 79 service providers; 193 people attended workshops and pop-ups; 477 people visited the Let's Chat page with 51 survey responses received and we reached 42,181 people on our social media.

#### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

The engagement covered the four focus areas and will be used to inform the next DAIP and influence actions for 2023-2027.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Engagement strategies included targeted consultations with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, women, children and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. This

included the Illawarra Aboriginal Community Based Work Group (IACBWG), Multicultural Communities Council of Illawarra (MCCI), schools and preschools.

The need for all of council activities and services to be accessible and inclusive were highlighted as well as the need documents to be available in easy read formats and for all abilities toilets (adult change facilities) to be provided.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Funding and COVID-19 restrictions.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Committing to the participation and benchmarking of Council's access and inclusion performance against the Australian Network on Disability's Access and Inclusion Index for three years commencing March 2022. Production of the Healthy End of Life short films and supporting the production of the Stop the Abuse resources

### **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Completing the Australian Network on Disability's Access and Inclusion Index Comprehensive Self-Assessment to benchmark council's access and inclusion performance and identify areas for improvement. The 2023 – 2027 plan will include the following actions:

Complete the Australian Network on Disability's Access and Inclusion Comprehensive Self-Assessment Index and submit for benchmarking.

Improve Council's inclusive employment practices through the completion of the Access and Inclusion Index audit and the development of a Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.

### **Additional information and comments**

A formal four-year review of the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP): 2017 to 2021 an Inclusive City has been completed. The next DAIP to cover the period of 2023 -2027 in being finalised.

## **Shoalhaven City Council**

Shoalhaven City Council's (SCC) Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) was adopted on 27 June 2017. The DIAP was prepared in accordance with the NSW Disability Inclusion Act (2014) and was prepared in consultation with community members living with disability, their supporters and service providers.

Annual Commenced 31 actions were completed, 17 commenced and three not resourced/funded

### **Building positive attitudes**

Demonstrate and promote a culture of disability awareness and inclusion

Provide training on disability access and inclusion within staff induction training program and as part of toolbox talk resources - commenced

Conduct a training needs analysis to support Disability Inclusion Action Plan and implementation completed

Source or develop training for staff to support Disability Inclusion Action Plan implementation commenced.

Allocate a specific budget to the Disability Inclusion Action Plan commenced

Incorporate Disability Inclusion Action Plan measures into Council's existing process for collecting Delivery Program and Operational Plan measures commenced

Update and increase the photo stock available to staff to enable broader depiction of disability diversity in general publications completed.

Promote events supporting disability inclusion and awareness e.g. International Day of People with Disability, Mental Health Week etc completed.

## **Creating liveable communities**

### **Progressively increase the availability of accessible toilets across the Shoalhaven**

Plan to progressively increase the number of accessible public toilets within the local government area reflecting the priorities identified by people with disability completed

Identify Council projects that could accommodate a lift and change facility and lobby for funds to provide them completed.

Make available current and accurate information on the location of accessible toilets completed.

### **Plan to progressively increase the amount of continuous accessible paths of travel to key destinations within the Shoalhaven**

Consult annually with people with disability on priorities for the maintenance and upgrade of footpaths, kerbs, and ramps completed

Identify priority locations to increase the continuous paths of accessibility travel across the Shoalhaven in consultation with people with disability completed.

Collaborate with NSW Government agencies (e.g. NSW Roads and Maritime Services, Transport for NSW) to improve access and to Transport within the Shoalhaven local government area completed.

Review the accessible pathways and crossings around Nowra Aquatic Park, Nowra Youth Centre completed

### **Increase accessibility and inclusion of events held in the Shoalhaven and of Council meetings**

Source or develop accessible and inclusive event and meeting guidelines for use within Shoalhaven City Council. Commenced

Progressively increase the number of Council events that have an access and inclusion plan. Commenced

Create an access checklist to support the inclusion of people with disability to attend meetings held at Council. Commenced

Support Shoalhaven Aboriginal Network of Disability Services, Aboriginal Ability Linkers and other community organisers of cultural events e.g. NAIDOC Week, Reconciliation Week to include access and inclusion plans. Completed

### **Progressively increase accessibility and inclusion of places of recreation, learning and leisure**

Continue to deliver acquire and promote library and art gallery resources in accessible formats and accessible technologies. Complete

Deliver four "Art Engage" type sessions within the workshops that incorporate access and inclusion elements (budget dependent). Complete

Commission art exhibitions and/or touring shows exploring the experience of living with disability or catering to people with specific types of disability. Complete

Develop a range of inclusive and accessible activities at Council's pools, swim and fitness centres. Complete

Improve the availability of access and inclusion information on beaches, waterways and other sites of interest to residents, tourists and visitors. Complete

Investigate options for beach access for people using wheelchairs and/or for access to calm water non- beach swim sites.

Promote information to a fenced play area for families seeking these facilities. Complete

Strategically identify parks for provision of accessible pathways, toilets, accessible park tables and barbecues. Complete

Plan for progressively increasing the accessibility of sporting ovals including parking, toilets and pathways.

### **Increase awareness of accessible parking in the Shoalhaven**

Develop a strategy for Ranger Services to patrol accessible parking spaces particularly in commercial centres and points of public destination. Complete

### **Improve access to Council operated buildings and providing better way finding**

Investigate the feasibility of having lower height service desks at the Entertainment Centre Kiosk and Bar. Complete

Investigate reserving accessible places in the Entertainment Centre for early booking and internet booking by people with disability. Complete

Review Council halls and progressively replace stairs with ramps of suitable gradient and install accessible toilets. Complete

Review the placement of stalls at the Information Centre (Nowra) to enhance access by people using wheelchairs, walking frames or prams. Complete

### **Continue to encourage, support and promote accessible tourism in the Shoalhaven**

Ensure tourism website is at WCAG 2.0 AA standard. Complete

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

#### **Review recruitment and employment processes to ensure they are barrier free to candidates who have a disability**

Review Equal Employment opportunity policy to reflect the organisation's commitment to disability inclusion in the workplace. Commenced

Establish relationships with local Disability Employment Service organisations. Complete

Collect data in relation to disability access and inclusion as part of the on-line recruitment process. Complete

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

#### **Progressively enable the provision of inclusive forms of communications and alternative formats when required**

Develop guidelines for staff to author accessible and inclusive documents (including to enable web accessibility). Complete

Develop guidelines or procedures to produce documentation in alternative formats for attendees of Council hosted meetings. Complete

### **Progressively improve Council websites accessibility and publications posted on the website and on social media**

Undertake an audit of Council websites and intranet against Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 standards and develop a staged and costed implementation plan to improve web accessibility. Complete

Ensure all contact details on Council websites also refer to the National Relay Service and how to access or request alternative format documents. Complete

### **Review all Council complaint and feedback processes to ensure they are accessible to people with disability.**

Incorporate information from resources from NSW Ombudsman into feedback and complaints information across Council in relation to making these accessible to people with disability. Commenced

### **Develop a process to ensure that access and inclusion is systematically incorporated into policy development**

Progressively review and update Council policies (prioritising service delivery focused policies) to ensure access and inclusion are addressed. Commenced

Develop a check list for policy developers to consider impacts on access and inclusion for people with disability. Commenced

## **Singleton Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Consultation undertaken as part of the development of Singleton's Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026 identified that developing positive community attitudes and behaviours was the most essential element of improving access and inclusion in our community.

As such plans were developed to take on two major projects in 2022/2023 including holding a whole of community event in celebration of International Day of People with a Disability and for Council to look at a dedicated program that directly addresses attitudes and behaviours at a community level. The Singleton Disability Advisory Committee worked with Singleton Council to find funding sources to undertake both projects.

Council has also had a focus on all community events being fully inclusive for all and have coordinated a range of accessible events to encourage as many people as possible to participate together in recreation and leisure opportunities. An accessible events checklist is utilised for all community events which included making provisions for accessible toilets, signage, seating, public transport, parking and assistance dogs. Council's Fire Light event was a true example of an accessible and inclusive event with people attending and enjoying the event no matter their physical ability, age, cultural or social background.

### **Creating liveable communities**

Singleton Council is committed to Creating liveable communities, the following have been completed as part of this commitment during 2021/2022.

Accessible toilets continue to be a priority with upgrades completed at Burdekin Park and Townhead Park

A sensory garden was re-established and linked to the car park and accessible toilets with footpaths, as part of the development of Townhead Park.

Shared pathways and footpaths have been installed at Broke, Singleton Heights and downtown Singleton with almost 3km being completed this financial year.



Upgrades have been made to local school crossing to improve kerb ramp accessibility Pedestrian refuge have been installed in priority areas.

Additional disability accessible car parks have been installed.

A redesign of Bailey's Union Park saw improvements made to accessibility including footpaths that provided connection along John Street.

The new Arts and Cultural Centre is a fully accessible facility that has a strong focus on being a fully inclusive space for everyone in our community.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Singleton Council has partnered with JobAccess to undertake a review of employment opportunities and to address any barriers that may be unintentionally occurring within Council, that will encourage and support people with a disability to be employed by Council.

Singleton Council has also worked with local schools to provide work placement opportunities for young people with lived experience of disability.

In addition, Singleton Council is undertaking an Employment Pathways Program which assists people to link into employment opportunities and while this is for the whole community, process and strategies are in place specifically to assist people with a disability to engage in meaningful employment.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

As part of Council development of Singleton Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026, a number of systems were identified that could be improved.

The first was providing more information on events on our website so that people can use that information to plan out their event and utilise their online e-readers for those who need assistance with vision or reading. Information identified included food vendor menus, location of parking and toilet facilities.

Customer experience also identified opportunities to learn how we can better address access barriers or to learn what it is we do well (so we keep doing it) as part of our community and customer surveys.

Both of these have been addressed as a direct response to consultation that was undertaken in 2021/2022.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability**

#### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

Singleton Council has undertaken extensive community consultation during 2021/2022 as part of the development of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026. 87% of those surveyed thought Singleton Council was doing between an Ok to a Great job in improving access.

Singleton Council also has a Disability Advisory Committee who meet bi-monthly who are encouraged to provide feedback at every meeting.

#### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

Access and Inclusion is addressed in every department within Singleton Council to ensure that anything we do, either day to day or in our future planning addresses best practice and our communities' expectations of access and inclusion.

Our Community Strategic Plan and associated Delivery and Operational plans have an access and inclusion element, Council's 10-year capital works program has identified access works incorporated within it and this is used to support funding opportunities as they arise.

Consultation and feedback are also utilised when planning for future funding applications such as Resources for Regions and Stronger Country Community grants.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Singleton Council has a Community Development Strategy 2022-2026 that directly links with Singletons Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026. The Community Development Strategy specifically looks at Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, women, children, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and LGBTIQ+ people as well as Seniors, young people and carers.

In addition, Singleton Council also has a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) that directly addresses needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Actions across all three strategies ensure that when delivering on our actions we take a whole of community approach and address any specific barriers to inclusion that may be present for those who have additional requirements to participation. We also acknowledge that there are times when targeted actions are required and work directly with the community to deliver these.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

2021/2022 saw the end of one Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2017-2021 and the creation of the new version 2022-2026. This meant that while a lot of work was still happening, a lot more was on future planning for the 2022/2023 financial year. In addition, Singleton also experienced multiple declared disasters in the form of floods, which took Council staff and resources away from day-to-day operations and into emergency and recovery actions for our community.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Singleton Councils greatest success in 2021/2022 was Singleton Firelight event. The reason I believe this was our greatest success is because it wasn't designed as a specific action for people with a disability but rather is a wonderful example of if you make something accessible then it becomes accessible for all. Around 22,000 people participated in the weeklong event, and it was great to see people from all backgrounds, and all physical and social abilities coming together to enjoy a wonderful inclusive event.

### **Is there anything else your organisation is doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Singleton Council have been successful in receiving funding through Recourses for Regions for an Access Inclusion Enhancement Program which will see a dedicated position working closely with community to improve access and inclusion for all.

## **Snowy Monaro Regional Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Continued direct service provision of National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) services

An event was held to celebrate International Day of People with Disability 2021

Community consultation opportunities held in public spaces to improve engagement

### **Creating liveable communities**

Accessibility upgrades to pedestrian infrastructure during maintenance and as business as usual

Improved accessibility to Council facilities as part of asset upgrades and facility management

Ongoing advocacy to relevant State and Commonwealth departments to support accessible service delivery e.g. public transport, accessing health and telehealth services

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Information on inclusion and Inclusive Communities made available on Council website

Ongoing relationships with TAFE NSW and specialist Disability Employment Services providers, and increased advocacy to open employment market

Ongoing commitment to providing a safe and inclusive workplace

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Trialled implementation of accessible space in Cooma office to provide improved real-time participation in Council meetings

Council's website was upgraded; transition project included improved accessibility features

Continued implementation of service delivery models which are adaptable to online / virtual offerings

### **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

#### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

Continued engagement with community groups, networks that include people with a disability and service providers

Consultation with service recipients and their families/carers

#### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

Project planning is underway for the new SMRC DIAP. This will include new actions for engagement with people with disability. Determining, meeting and reviewing the needs of people with disability is included in new suites of draft and endorsed documents such as the Community Engagement Strategy.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

We still have some work to do in ensuring that the voices of these demographics are specifically captured and considered. Our current 'mainstream' engagement processes feel like they're robust enough to meet this need but we recognise the capacity to do more for inclusion for these groups and look forward to considering new ways of ensuring meaningful engagement.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Staff capacity and changes in staffing teams

Cost - in particular retrospective accessibility upgrades and implementing new ideas

Organisational awareness of the DIAP and its objectives

Capturing meaningful feedback from people with disability

### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Many new ideas and actions will be incorporated into our new DIAP

## Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?

Many new ideas and actions will be incorporated into our new DIAP

### Snowy Valleys Council

#### Building positive attitudes

Actions completed in the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2017 - 2021 during the past financial year as per Snowy Valleys Council Annual Report 2021 - 2022 are as follows:

Council's values 'Do what is right' and actions are inclusive of all people

Council planning processes includes the rights of Person with Disability (People with disability)

Council takes a leadership role in removing barriers to People with disability fully participating in society

Establish a Snowy Valleys Council (SVC) Disability Inclusion & Access Reference Group (DIARG)

Support education initiatives that raise awareness of the needs of People with disability carers

Develop a database of local disability networks and service providers

Utilise International Day of People with Disabilities to promote inclusion to the general community

Integrate access principles into the planning of Council supported events

Snowy Valley Council is recognized as a Council championing and promoting inclusion and access

Outcomes for people with disability that have been achieved in the past financial year are as follows:

Council staff became more aware of the issues that people with disability (People with disability) face each day and have become more considerate in their planning and service interactions.

The practice to have Council Managers and Coordinators attend Disability Inclusion Access Reference Group (DIARG) meetings to discuss relevant Council topics, enhanced positive internal cross functional relationships.

The inclusion of strong principles added in the 2022 – 2026 DIAP which advocate for People with disability, strengthen Councils to resolve in developing positive attitudes and behaviours.

#### Creating liveable communities

Actions completed in the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2017 - 2021 during the past financial year as per Snowy Valleys Council Annual Report 2021 - 2022 are as follows:

Include signage and update to comply with AS142

Provide resources for business and industry to do an access and mobility audit

Community grants include consideration of disability and inclusion criteria

Develop / Support shared pathways education campaign to reduce conflict between pedestrians, bicycles and scooters

Accessible transport to events within the Council area

Source funding for 'all abilities' to improve recreation facilities

Maintenance of playground & recreation equipment to include access

Investigate the options for collection of large waste and green waste

Outcomes for people with disability that have been achieved in the past financial year are as follows:

Improvement of signage to make the Village safer for elderly residents who raised concerns on the speed limits and flow of traffic, especially for those using mobility scooters who were finding it difficult to negotiate traffic going the wrong way and too fast.

## Supporting access to meaningful employment

Review recruitment and HR Policies for compliance with DAI e.g., Positions advertised welcome applications from People with disability/Carers

Offer work experience and work placement to People with disability

Provide NDIS services

Provide opportunities for People with disability/Carers to volunteer in Council

Continue the MOU arrangements with Valmar Support Services and continue to seek similar arrangements for other Council Services Outcomes for people with disability that have been achieved in the past financial year are as follows: Council provides flexible work arrangements which supports People with disability and Carers.

## Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes

Website is compliant with WCAG 2.0 guidelines

DIARG participant in consultation processing including planning and design projects

Promote the NSW Carers Charter

Develop and maintain a register of interest people in receiving Council information in alternative formats

Investigate Portable Counter Hearing Loops

Use Disability Inclusion & Access Reference Group when developing the Community Strategic Plan and evaluating the DIAP Outcomes for people with disability that have been achieved in the past financial year are as follows:

- Website is compliant with QCAG 2.0 Guidelines.
- NDIS Transition Funding was received to complete action.
- Staff have knowledge of Carers Charter
- Hearing loops available

## How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability

### What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?

The draft SVC DIAP 2022 – 2026, was written after consultation with Snowy Valleys communities and the Snowy Valleys Council Disability Inclusion Access\Reference Group. Over one hundred participants gave feedback through a range of consultation options which included six community workshops, two online community workshops, an online survey, one-on-one interviews, targeted sector discussions, and phone consultations.

Community responses identified more inclusion and access, an increased level of advocacy for the disability sector, added employment support and job opportunities, and increasing positive attitudes and behaviours towards people with disability.

### How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?

The feedback obtained through community consultation and the Snowy Valleys Council Disability Inclusion Access Reference Group feed into the review of Councils previous DIAP and the development of the adopted SVC DIAP 2022 – 2026.



## How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?

The needs of groups specified in the Disability Inclusion Act 2014 are addressed through the SVC DIAP, Snowy Valleys Council First Nations Liaison Committee, 2022 - 2023 Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan, Snowy Valleys Council Disability Inclusion Access \Reference Group and the complaints and feedback process. Council continued to meet the needs of People with Disability through:

- Disability considerations are included in event planning documents, to enable better access to events.
- Disbursement of Master Locksmith Access Keys allocated across the Local Government Area for access to amenities after-hours.
- Awareness disability training of staff to enhance understanding and practice.
- Bi-monthly meeting of DIARG to exchange information to Council for feedback that has been provided from the community.

## What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?

One of the biggest challenges was meeting the committee's Term of Reference to attain a quorum. A concerted effort was made to increase the membership of DIARG to have better representation of People with disability and although the advisory committee consist with members of People with disability, carers and organisation who support People with disability, the achievements and support of the 2017-2021 DIAP actions undertaken, it delayed decision making for the recommendation to adopt new committee members.

## What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?

Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) provides a framework for Council to make progress towards achieving its vision. Specifically, progressing actions within the DIAP has assisted and will continue to the reduction and removal of barriers for people with disability and foster a more inclusive community.

## Is there anything else your organisation is doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?

Feedback from surveys and consultations to develop the 2022 – 2026 DIAP were mixed in response to how well Council delivers on services, and Council ability to facilitate services and foster attitudes outside of Council for People with disability in the Local Government Area (LGA).

Acting on this feedback to deliver the 2022 – 2026 DIAP, to improve services, relationships and attitudes will be a focus in the coming year.

The lack of suitable signage for parking, for People with disability, was highlighted in the consultations. This feedback, along with the development of the SVC Parking Strategy will provide insight into what is needed to improve parking that is safe and appropriate to People with disability in the LGA.

## Strathfield Municipal Council

### Building positive attitudes

Partnership with Australian Network on Disability for staff training 'Welcoming customers with a Disability' for all Library and Community Development staff. This training assisted staff to identify ways to develop an inclusive and accessible environment for employees, customers and stakeholders.

Following completion of the training, staff was able to:

- Understand the importance of disability confidence for individuals and the whole organisation.
- Have greater awareness of what disability is in the Australian society
- Be confident in using the right language and doing the right things
- Understand the value of inclusive behaviours and environments ◇ Understand how they can support customers with disability
- Have greater awareness of workplace adjustments
- Know where to find further information and assistance

### **Creating liveable communities**

Council's Customer service has an accessible ramp for entering and exiting the Service Centre. Two wheelchair accessible counters at the Service centre and one accessible parking space.

Council's Library has an accessible ramp for entering and exiting the centre, an accessible lift and toilet, two accessible parking spaces.

Footpaths are chosen for repair or replacement as per audit, inspection and community consultation as part of the Budget and Operational Plan, new footpaths comply with design standards and accessibility requirements as per AS 1428.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Strathfield Council is committed to providing reasonable adjustments to new and existing employees. These include and are not limited to additional support and training (including education), job rotation and work, health & safety measures, technological measures and support.

Council is also committed to promoting meaningful employment and accessibility to local business, organisations and the wider community for people with disability valuable contributions.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Strathfield Council promoted International Day for People with Disability 2021 an information section at Strathfield Council Library. This included 'Escape the Noise' kit from St Vincent's De Paul Society with noise-cancelling headphones and earplugs, and 'Xtra Eyes' kit from St Vincent's De Paul Society with magnifying glass and visual enhancer. This information was promoted via Strathfield Council's social media channels.

Strathfield Council has provided accessible toilet facilities for all Council events (particularly social and recreational events), whether in permanent amenities buildings or brought in temporarily in the form of porta-loos.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

#### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

Council has consulted with people with disability, local disability schools, disability service providers and organisations to provide feedback on the community, plans and better accessibility for people with disability living, working, studying and visiting the Strathfield LGA. This consultation contributed towards Strathfield Council's Community Strategic Plan 2035. This included feedback about current and emerging issues for people with disability, such as transport, parking, social activities and recreational and open spaces.

#### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

Strathfield Council currently have two out of five wheel chair accessible buses in our fleet. They have air hydraulics system that automatically lowers the bus when the door opens up, there is also a pull out ramp to assist wheel chairs, push walkers and prams to be able to board our bus with ease. Council always prioritise having at least one Hino Poncho on route, when and if available.

Council regularly responds to requests from residents and business owners on providing disabled parking spaces, with new spaces being subject to Traffic Committee approval and regular review to ensure the spaces are still being used, and existing spaces being upgraded if necessary to meet current standards to ensure access for all.

Council undertakes patrols, checking for illegal use of disability parking bays in Council's Car Parks and street parking in both residential and commercial areas. Compliance is generally good, with 48 PIN and three warnings issued for breaches identified in 2021-2022 period.

Monthly NDIS Connection Desk run in Strathfield Library with Settlement Service International. Promotion of many programs for disability inclusion and information including: - Settlement Services International Entrepreneurship Program for people with disabilities - All Abilities Touch Football Program - Physical Disability Council of NSW workshops for people with a disability and their carers - Australian Centre for Disability Law workshops for students of all ages with disability to advocate for reasonable adjustments and learning support.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Strathfield Council is committed to addressing the needs of vulnerable people across the above demographics. As the Strathfield LGA is very diverse, we are always committed to provide translated resources for people of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. This includes both printed and digital translated information for people with disability from CALD backgrounds.

Similarly, our partnership with SSI and the Connection Desk, which offered drop-in conversations about NDIS support and other disability questions, had a bilingual caseworker that spoke English as well as Mandarin and Korean, which are two of the largest languages spoken in Strathfield's community.

The Connection Desk also provided printed resources specific to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and LGBTQIA+ people with caseworkers trained to address the needs of these peoples.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

The largest challenge for Strathfield Council and implementing DIAP actions has been participation from people with disability has been limited. This has included 'drop-in' connection desk for NDIS support was stagnated in returning back to usual participation rates. Unfortunately, the provider is unable to continue this service in financial year of 2022-2023, however Council is exploring other options.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Inclusive recreational dance activity for older people of the Strathfield LGA. This allowed people from varying mobility needs to participate and engage in recreational activity, such as dancing, with a qualified instructor that had experience delivering a session with people with neurodiverse needs, such as Dementia/Alzheimer's, Intellectual Disability and Parkinson's Disease. Additionally, there was seated and standing options which greatly contributed to all attendees to participate joyfully in a shared environment where no one was left behind. All attendees provided

Monthly NDIS Connection Desk run in Strathfield Library with Settlement Service International. Promotion of many programs for disability inclusion and information including: - Settlement Services International Entrepreneurship Program for people with disabilities - All Abilities Touch Football Program - Physical Disability Council of NSW workshops for people with a disability and their carers - Australian Centre for Disability Law workshops for students of all ages with disability to advocate for reasonable adjustments and learning support.

## Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?

Strathfield Council is planning on working closer together with industry experts to deliver advocacy and empowerment opportunities for all people with disability. This will be focused across key groups of identified needs such as children, culturally and linguistically diverse people, women, LGBTQIA+, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders people and older people.

### Sutherland Shire Council

#### Building positive attitudes

Community Development staff give advice and guidance regarding issues related to access and inclusion.

Inclusion Guidelines have been implemented within our Children's Services, to inform daily practices.

ShireAbility Film Competition celebrating 'ability and inclusion' for International Day of People with Disability.

ShireAbility Family Fun Day for 200 children, families and carers held at Skillz4Me All Abilities Centre.

Council supported Tune In Festival for Mental Health Month providing various and online events for the community.

Supporting mental health and wellbeing, 'R U Ok Day' was promoted across Council with a whole of council morning tea and coffee connection initiative.

Disability Confidence Training provided for executive team and councillors exploring concepts of disability, its definitions and the myths and facts surrounding it, as well as respectful language and communication.

Carers Week initiatives included Virtual Trivia Night, Carer's Morning Tea & Information Session and Free Movie Sessions as a way of recognising and supporting the important role of carers in the community.

Hazelhurst Arts Centre offering two exhibitions showing of the work of artists with a disability – Archibald Prize and Hazelhurst Art on Paper Award.

#### Creating liveable communities

Accessible beaches program reviewing other locations to implement the Mobi mat on a permanent basis and trialling permanency of the Mobi mat at Cronulla beach

Accessibility considerations have been incorporated in the development of Sutherland Entertainment Centre.

The Cronulla Esplanade upgrade will provide a continuous graded pathway, removing mobility barriers and provide accessible seating.

Cronulla Esplanade Accessibility Compliance - \$1,013,906

Cronulla Esplanade Peninsular Walkway - \$1,200,529

Footpath upgrades (various) to enhance accessibility - \$2,546,589

Bus Stop Infrastructure - DDA Compliance and associated works - \$380,758

More than \$150,000 spent on ramp and pedestrian facility upgrades to enhance accessibility around shopping centres and schools.

Cronulla Town Centre - Kingsway Upgrade - \$2,291,004

Masterplan for Cooper Street Reserve, Engadine includes an all-abilities playground and change facility.

Playground upgrades by Children's Services and at Burnum Burnum, Woronora and Kalang Lane Reserve, Yowie Bay; providing for inclusive play for all children of all abilities.

Plans developed for upgrades creating more accessible parks include Kalang Lane Reserve, Yowie Bay, Billa Road Reserve, Barden Ridge, Canberra Road Reserve, Sylvania Veno Street Reserve, Heathcote

Sutherland Library Lift Renewal

A 'planning accessible events' checklist is included in our events tool kit, available on our website to assist event planners.

To increase accessibility to Council we continue to utilise the new audio/visual system in our Council Chambers which allows automatic connection for people using hearing aids and provides audio recordings of each Council meeting.

Customers can communicate with Council via the National Relay Service.

Our Libraries and Community Services are providing Auslan interpreter services at their key events.

Home Library Services deliver to any community member with format and content tailored to customer preferences and assistance is provided to use technology to access content.

Libraries purchases dyslexic-friendly formats and readers/audiobooks, hold regular sessions for school groups with disability and children's programmes include content that portrays children of all abilities.

Continuation of "The Cubby" – a sensitive story-time and calm corner for children with autism at Engadine Library.

I-pad featuring Auslan sign-language interpreted stories in Sutherland Children's Library.

More audio book options available so book groups can be more inclusive of people with low vision.

Active member of St George & Sutherland Shire Dementia Alliance.

Enhanced access to Leisure Centre pools for people with disability, including online virtual classes.

Provided engagement and inclusive programs for people with disability and people with lived experience of dementia at Hazelhurst Arts Centre.

Delivered two x EDIE for carers virtual reality education programs that allows people to walk in the shoes of a person living with dementia.

Over \$80,000 by way of grants, subsidies and other community development programs and initiatives to not-for-profit organisations and groups for projects/programs supporting people with disability.

Upgraded push button accessible door installed at Cronulla Beach.

Connection Café is held monthly at Sutherland Library, for people with dementia and their carers to create a social opportunity with others who understand limitations and behaviours. This is run in collaboration with Anglicare who provide professional Dementia support resources.

Hazelhurst Arts Centre offering Auslan and Gesture tours for people with a disability.

## **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

We have a varied range of employment types and employees to add diversity at Council. Meaningful employment opportunities are provided, giving a sense of purpose, belonging and value.

Further training was provided to staff to strengthen cultural values and leadership and a focus on improving wellbeing throughout Council.

Children's Services have continued to provide employment and volunteer work to support people with disability.

Council's Parks area continues to support people with disability through specific identified positions and one two year full-time rotating position.



Through our annual Access and Inclusion Award, local businesses are motivated to consider access and inclusion and a diverse workforce as good for business.

Formation of a working group in collaboration with the Disability Interagency to increase Employment opportunities at council and local business

Disability employment provider used for Council's internal catering.

Partnership with Disability employment provider and School Leaver Employment Support volunteers at Council's ShireABILITY events. 218/19 update

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Action items from the Access and Inclusion Committee are investigated and outcomes reported back to the Committee in a timely manner.

Consulted with Access and Inclusion Committee and the disability sector to better understand access need for our new website platform.

Council's Children's Services staff continue to provide quality inclusive practices so that children's needs are being met and responded to appropriately. We work collaboratively with the Inclusion Support program agency to embed inclusion strategies and practices, increase knowledge, skills and confidence of educators, all centres have developed a Service Support Plan.

Masterplans have included accessibility considerations and focus groups with people with disability have been undertaken to inform design for accessible and inclusive facilities e.g. the inclusion of Changing Places to facility upgrades planned at North Cronulla Surf Life Saving Club and Cooper Street Reserve, Engadine.

Community consultations for supporting people with disability through COVID-19 were held and support programs promoted across the community.

We continue to strengthen our connection with disability services in the local area, promote disability sector development, and investigate ways we can respond proactively to the NDIS via the Disability Interagency.

Working from home continues to provide access to Information Management and Technology systems and programs that enhance accessibility and collaboration through online platforms.

Council's Operational Plan 2022-2026 Strategy includes action: Support the rights of people with disabilities and enhance access and inclusion through development of Disability Inclusion Action Plans (DIAP)

Facilitation of Council-wide DIAP Working Party to review the 2017-2022 DIAP, provide feedback and input for planning the 2022-2026 DIAP and champion its implementation.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability**

#### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

Regular meetings with the Disability Interagency Network, Coordination and consultation with Council's Access and Inclusion Sub-Committee.

#### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

Actions included in council's Delivery Program and Operational Plan.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Our DIAP was developed in consultation with a wide range of stakeholders including youth interagency network, child and family interagency network, multicultural and network specific focus groups with CALD community members and local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

COVID-19 impacted the opportunities to deliver on some actions.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

The involvement, dedication and commitment by the whole of council to improving lives of people with a disability in our community. WE have consulted regularly with people with a disability and sought feedback and input on council improvements, programs, events and infrastructure projects.

## **Is there anything else your organisation is doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

We have added many new actions across the focus areas and have included them in the 2022-2026 DIAP

## **Tamworth Regional Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Tamworth Regional Council's Disability Access Working Group (DAWG) continued to meet during the 2021 – 2022 reporting period, providing provide strategic advice to the Council on access issues to ensure a future Tamworth will offer an enhanced quality of life and prosperity for people with disability in alignment with Council's Blueprint 100 vision.

Regular reports were presented to Council from DAWG Meetings detailing issues and priorities relating to access and inclusion

Access Awards for Individual, Community Group and Business were included as categories in Councils Community 'Local Legend' Awards event in 2022

2022 Youth Week activities featured an Accessible Sports Day event at the Tamworth Sports Dome. This event was youth-led by a Youth Councillor with lived experience of disability.

In 2022, the Tamworth Country Music Festival Council's Event team worked to ensure portable ramp access was provided across all stages in the main CBD area of the festival.

Tamworth Regional Council's Library Service facilitated fortnightly STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math) activities at the library for local Disability Services. Activities have included virtual reality experiences, robotics, engineering challenges and arts and crafts.

Tamworth Regional Council's Library Service facilitated a weekly story time group for local Disability Services at the Library featuring a variety of stories, sensory products, and listening/singing to modern and classic music.

Tamworth Regional Council's Library Service is the national group convener for the ALIA (Australian Library and Information Association) Disability Network Group. Five meeting were held in 2022. Tamworth Library also presented at the ALIA National Conference on the diverse and inclusive services Tamworth Library provides to the Tamworth community.

### **Creating liveable communities**

Tamworth Regional Council undertook design of the Changing Places facility and accessible transport hub, with a majority of construction completed by June 2022. Funding was received from the NSW Government's Regional Tourism Activation Fund for the construction of a shelter over the accessible transport hub with works scheduled for 2023.

Tamworth Regional Council engaged with the DAWG and key disability stakeholders for feedback on the Changing Places facility, Accessible Transport Hub and their surrounds to help ensure they would meet the anticipated needs of the community. Council Officers met with the DAWG and key stakeholders onsite during construction to explain the facilities. Acted on concerns previously

provided by DAWG regarding inadequate circulation space for concrete hardstands for furniture, and installed a concrete hardstand for covered accessible furniture near the Accessible Transport Hub that would provide sufficient circulation space for mobility devices.

CNRL launched the CNRL Speech Language Pathology Collection in November 2021. The collection is a resource for parents, educators and CNRL staff. It supports early language and literacy development. It is searchable through the catalogue and age groups and speech language targets are clearly defined with the notes of the collection. There are also tip sheets that include typical expressive language/speech milestones. The books expose children to developmentally appropriate speech and language targets and also give extension ideas.

South Tamworth Library had a display of the autism spectrum disorder collection. This resulted in 60% of the items being borrowed.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Tamworth Regional Council's People and Culture team coordinated a work experience opportunity at the public library as part of a School Leavers Employment Support program through Joblink Plus. The student required an NDIS support person to be with them for the duration of their placement. The initial trial went for a period of six weeks and was a great success. People and Culture then support an extension to the work experience placement for a further 2-month period. Positive feedback was received from the team that supported the student in completing work experience.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

A consultation session was held with the Disability Access Working Group to discuss access improvements to communications systems and processes as part of the development of a new Tamworth Regional Council Communications Strategy, which will include and action to undertake an accessibility audit on the council's website.

The Tamworth Library was successful in winning an Australian Libraries and Information Association grant to enable the library to provide online story time sessions. These are currently in development.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

#### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

Council regularly meets and consults with the Disability Access Working Group. Engagement and feedback was received on Inclusive and Accessible Events, Communications Strategy, a proposed Skywalk project, Changing Places Facility and Disability Hub, Peel River Path project, Youth Week Inclusive Sports day event, and the Disability Inclusion action plan.

Council units also collect program specific feedback from participants, carers and partner organisations.

People with disability are also represented on other Council Consultative Committees and Working Groups, including the Tamworth Regional Youth Council.

#### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

Feedback is used in decision making and future planning of strategies, projects and service delivery.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

The Disability Access working group has a diverse membership of community members with lived experience and diverse backgrounds.

The Tamworth Regional Inclusive Culture Advisory Committee (TRICAC) also provides strategic advice to the Council in relation to diversity and other specific cultural matters, within the region and

makes recommendations regarding priority areas for development and or support. TRICAC recognises and encourages diversity across the Tamworth Regional Council area.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

In relation to the DIAP actions, unfortunately not a lot has moved in this space, partly due to the huge amount of recruitment that went on last year, however, we have considered creating further talent pipelines and alternate employment avenues to Council as part of our People & Development Strategy and see work experience as being a key part of this.

The sheer volume of recruitment on the go in 2022 meant we weren't able to reassess our processes as much as we would have liked, however we have some temporary resources coming on board in 2023 and aim to be able to achieve more in this space.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

The establishment, consistency and momentum of the Disability Access Working Group.

### **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

In 2023, Council aims to incorporate disability employment services into standard advertising channels / groups that we promote our job opportunities to, to ensure we have a direct link to people with a disability who may be looking for work.

## **Temora Shire Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Access and inclusion criteria have been included in the Event Application form.

Direct Me guide has been developed and updated in March 2022. Direct Me uses a diverse range of images and includes information on NDIS & disability services.

Ongoing review and improvements where new development requires upgrades to existing entrances. Access Assistance Fund has been created for assisting businesses to improve shopfront access.

New accessible toilets provided at Temora Library and the Temora Art Centre.

### **Creating liveable communities**

New home constructed, for people with disability, with two tenants occupying. Two vacancies for additional tenants (pending individualised Supported Independent Living funding).

Upgrades to Temora Recreation Centre completed with new accessible change room and toilets, new paths and automatic door entry, accessible gate exit. The upgrade of the olympic swimming pool is underway which features significantly improved accessibility.

A disability hoist has been installed at the heated pool and the Splash Park has been installed providing an accessible water playground.

Consideration of access issues at sporting grounds is ongoing in conjunction with Access and Equity Committee.

Access improved at Gloucester Park – new paths connecting play equipment, BBQ facilities and toilets.

Plans for upgrades to community facilities are presented to the Access and Equity Committee for their review and input at the design stage including Aurora St Pedestrian Refuge, pathway between the Recreation Centre and Bowling Club and the Hoskins Street Upgrade. Input was also sought

from the Access and Equity Committee on the Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan (PAMP)'s plan and the Local Access Assistance Fund.

Review of existing accessible car space provision is ongoing in conjunction with Access and Equity Committee.

New accessible car parking spaces provided at Temora Art Centre.

Ongoing improvements to Council footpaths in accordance with footpath plan and in response to new development demands.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Progressing community-based employment opportunities by reviewing Council's procurement policy to address local and social benefit is ongoing.

Working from home or remote environments has been well tested over the past two years with staff working remotely due to COVID-19 restrictions. Flexible work practices are also the norm given the number of part time positions. The impact on the rest of the organisation always needs to be considered in these instances

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Stock photo images have been taken to include people with disability engaging in the community. Publications including Direct Me and Narraburra News, along with social media and websites all include a diverse range of images.

Pinnacle Community Services promotes NDIS and continues to support clients to navigate the NDIS system through assistance with plan reviews, plan implementation and support to liaise with allied health and GPs.

- Pinnacle Community Services promotes available NDIS support services through social media and other opportunities as they arise.
- Pinnacle Community Services has a presence at local interagency meetings.

Council's website also provides linkages to NDIS.

Health services are promoted through Direct Me.

Client survey undertaken in relation to extending the hours of operation of community transport to include weekends and public holidays – poor response to extending the hours of operation.

There has been an ongoing management of staffing levels to continue to maintain home and community care service level provisions to meet the needs of all Pinnacle Community Services clients.

- Encouragement and support provided to Support staff to complete relevant training to increase knowledge and skills to enable optimum client care.
- Ongoing recruitment of support staff will continue to be monitored to ensure ongoing service provision levels can be maintained.

Undertaking systems mapping to support collective impact for disability inclusion across the Interagency Network is ongoing.

Council representatives attend local interagency meetings

Council acknowledges the contribution of volunteers by hosting an annual volunteers afternoon tea.

Narraburra News, Temora Independent & Facebook used to recruit volunteers.

Pinnacle's MOWs support persons with disability to volunteer for MOW delivery to residents, enabling social connections that would not otherwise have occurred.

Temora Library also supports persons with disability to volunteer with suitable tasks.



## Tenterfield Shire Council

### Building positive attitudes

Actions we were undertaking:

- Disability Inclusion Access Advisory Committee meetings occurred when possible.
- Distribution of information and any potential funding opportunities.
- The library promotes the services available for people living with disabilities on Council's website, in Council's newsletter and the online Tenterfield in Touch newsletter when and where appropriate.

Progress that has been made:

- Council's yearly Code of Conduct training promotes Dignity & Respect in the Workplace.

### Creating liveable communities

Actions we were undertaking:

- All events consider inclusive planning for our community.
- Infrastructure projects are planned considering creating more liveable communities.
- Funding proposals and grant applications consider how to best create a liveable community for our Shire.
- Seniors Week and Youth Week planning ensures activities are inclusive.
- Sport and recreation access planning takes into account access to sport and recreation opportunities and ways we could do better.
- The Sir Henry Parkes Memorial School of Arts venue provide inclusive accessibility for our community to enjoy events and screenings.
- Special private screenings of blockbuster movies at the Sir Henry Parkes Memorial School of Arts theatre were organised for local aged care residents to reduce risk of exposure to COVID-19.
- The Tenterfield public library venue and services are accessible for people with disability
- A free Tech Savvy program provides accessible skills training in the use of digital systems for community.
- Free weekly children's programs are offered in the library to ensure activities are inclusive for the whole community

Progress that has been made:

- Library access hubs are being established at Urbenville and Drake for community who experience difficulties to travel to Tenterfield.

### Supporting access to meaningful employment

Actions we were undertaking:

- Recruitment practices – Tenterfield Shire Council has a number of staff with disabilities on the payroll including audio visual dyslexia, autism and numeracy and literacy issues.
- Council has implemented an Equal Employment Management Opportunity Management Plan.
- Council has reviewed its Workforce Plan and has promoted itself as an Equal Opportunity Employer.
- Council offers flexible work options including working remotely, flexible hours, leave, and the use of mobile technology.

Progress that has been made:

- Council provides a third party onsite and counselling service that supports positive health and wellbeing for all employees

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Actions we were undertaking:

- The Tenterfield public library provides Home Library services for community who may have accessibility issues and includes two aged care facilities
- The Tenterfield public library provides free access to computers, internet and scanning services to all members of the community
- An extensive range of large print, talking books and online digital resources via a free Tenterfield Public library membership for people with a disability.

Progress that has been made:

- Planning is underway to extend Tenterfield public library's Home Library services to Drake and Urbenville for community who may have accessibility issues.
- Further development is in progress of Tenterfield public library's online digital resources to provide greater accessibility to a broad range of learning and literary collection resources.
- Library refurbishment is being developed to provide further accessibility enhancements through furnishings and adaptable spaces.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Financial constraints and resource limitations provide barriers to DIAP delivery

Some of our small businesses have toilets down a number of stairs and a lot of entrances into the shops have a big step up. Heritage considerations also apply to many.

As the CBD is heritage listed, business access can only be approved when building owners apply for an upgrade of their facility through the development application process. We actively encourage building owners to upgrade their entrances to their business.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

### **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Tenterfield Shire Council is reviewing its Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP). We want to update the Plan to ensure it includes current issues that are important to people with a disability and their carers.

Infrastructure planning includes better outcomes for people with a disability – ways in which to enhance access and contribute to a more liveable community.

Our recovery planning contributes to better outcomes for people with disabilities.

Youth Advisory Committee encourages young people to contribute and have a say in increasing opportunities and outcomes for any in our community that may experience a disability.

## **Additional information and comments**

Our Shire has an ageing population. We are in a rural, regional area and have to cope with transport, communication and access-to-services challenges.

## **The Hills Shire Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Commitment to exploring e-learning modules for managers to build inclusion and awareness knowledge amongst all staff.

### **Creating liveable communities**

Ongoing review of community facilities for capital works projects for access improvements.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Economic Development team partnered with Sydney Hills Business Chamber to deliver an event focused on people and staffing and highlighting opportunities and advantages for recruiting people with a disability.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Council's website was recently externally audited by Vision Australia.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

Council consulted with people with disability and those supporting people with disability during the review and planning stage for DIAP 2022-2026.

### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

A DIAP Reference Group will be established for regularly consultation and input with people with disability.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

The Community Development team work with interagencies and community organisations for input.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Some changes in staffing across the organisation.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Engagement with greater number of service providers across the LGA and the promotion of our updated DIAP across a greater network.

## **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Adding a new event to acknowledge International Day of People with Disability.

## Tweed Shire Council

### Building positive attitudes

Community Services and Communications and Customer Experience Units collaborated to update content on Council's Community Support webpages. This included current data and information, and new video content promoting access and inclusion awareness, the Tweed Equal Access Advisory Committee and Tweed Disability Network as forums that community can participate in and advocate through.

Brochures with information on weekly and monthly activities run by many community groups and clubs were updated and published in electronic and hardcopy format, so residents can participate and improve their physical and mental health and build important social ties. These groups include 20 social and friendships groups, 41 creative arts and educational activities and groups, 28 sports, recreation and exercise-based groups, and 10 activities related to learning, and building computer and technological skills to stay connected.

Council's Equal Access Advisory Committee, in partnership with Community Services Unit and Communications and Customer Experience staff, created and published three videos promoting awareness of inclusion and access matters in Tweed. One video also focussed on acknowledging and celebrating International Day of People with Disability 3 December 2021. Council published these to its website and promoted their launch through social media channels. In the first week, the videos attracted nearly 300 views from Council's website and 28,000 views of social media posts and 76 survey responses and in-person, telephone and email feedback were received.

Council's Community Services Unit held a COVID-19 safe lunch celebration for International Day of People with Disability 2021, with members of the Tweed Equal Access Advisory Committee, invited disability support providers and people with disability, to celebrate their contributions to the Tweed community. Council's Community Services staff, with members of Tweed Equal Access Advisory Committee presented information and perspectives of disability to members of the Tweed Business Chamber to raise awareness about access and inclusion, and encourage participation in a community survey to inform a new Tweed DIAP.

In February 2022, Council's Community Services Unit convened a workshop with newly elected Councillors on the current Tweed Access and Inclusion Plan and evaluation of actions delivered to date, the emerging priority issues and feedback received from community, and proposed directions for a new Tweed DIAP. Tweed Equal Access Advisory Committee convened six times to work with staff across Council, and partners including state government, providing advice and perspectives on access and inclusion matters for a range of operational and strategic projects and programs. These nine projects are detailed below:

Emerging issues resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic and impacts of public health order and safety measures on community and support services sector.

Draft concept design for Goorimahbah Place of Stories – Inclusive Park and PlaySpace and review of Easy English and screen-device accessible documentation for the public exhibition of draft concept design.

Involved in user acceptance testing of Council's new redesigned websites to ensure access of information and functionality of the website was optimal for people using assistive technology or with limited computer skills.

Draft Norries Headland Masterplan, with formalised car parking and additional accessible parking bays, toilets and PlaySpace, and continuous pathways between amenities, optimising safety and viewing experiences for people with disability.

Draft Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan (PAMP) and Bike Plan.

Accessible car parking options at Fingal Beach.

Draft Tweed Transport Plan, prepared by Transport for NSW.

Draft Tweed Access and Inclusion Plan 2022-2026 development of priority issues, consultation strategies and preliminary draft actions. Members reviewed and advised on the Easy Ready community survey and coordinated presentations to community advocacy groups and the Tweed Business Chamber.

Designed, produced, and starred in three videos created to celebrate International Day of People with Disability on 3 December 2021, and promote the community survey for the draft Tweed Access and Inclusion Plan.

Council's Building and Environmental Health staff completed qualifications - CPP50711 Diploma of Access Consulting Course for Building Surveyors - gaining technical skills and knowledge, so our built environment complies with building access standards.

Council's Compliance Unit, working with staff from the Community Services, Parks and Active Communities and Sustainability and Environment Units, identified the need to investigate Disability Discrimination and Companion Animal legislation and best practice policy with a view to inform Council policy and education programs about managing assistance animals on different public and private lands.

Council's Community Services Unit supported connections and collaboration with over 100 local and regional disability support services and carer groups operating in the Tweed.

The Tweed Disability Network and Tweed Community Care Forum also comprise people with disability, their families and carers, as bi-monthly and monthly forums (respectively) to consult and collaborate on projects, advocate on issues, and share perspectives and information or updates about sector reforms.

Council's Community Services Unit supported local community groups and associations to access services through Owner's Consent for Council's 45 public halls, community and childcare tenanted facilities.

Council's Building Surveyors provided detailed accessibility requirements and advice on Council buildings and proposed development through the Development Assessment process, supporting Council's planning and development assessment staff and private developers understand compliance with Building Access Standards.

Council's Community Services Unit partnered with Council on the Ageing (COTA) and NSW Health to deliver the "Living Longer Living Stronger" program to the Tweed, which involved training local fitness professionals and exercise physiologists and promoting community as a safe, personalised balance and fitness program for people over 50 years, including people living with disability.

Council worked with the Centre for Intellectual Disability to develop Easy Read versions of the draft DIAP community survey

## **Creating liveable communities**

Council continued to implement the Open Space Strategy 2019-2029, which incorporates a universal design approach for public open spaces and associated facilities, meaning that a foundation principle of design is that it meets the needs of people of all abilities. The strategy provides for the following four key open space assessment criteria for the design of all public spaces:

- design for inclusive access,
- access through the site and welcoming entrances,
- connections to existing paths, car parking and other facilities, and inclusive wayfinding and signage.

A masterplan design for Norries Headland (Cabarita Beach) with improved access and safety for all visitors embedded in the design, was adopted by Council.

Tweed Equal Access Advisory Committee, disability service providers and their clients, provided advice and perspectives on the accessibility of proposed design options. In August 2021, Council



adopted the concept design for Variety Livvi's Place Goorimahbah – Place of Stories Inclusive Play Space and Park.

Council's Parks and Active Communities team worked with Variety Children's Charity, Plummer and Smith (Landscape Architects), Council's Community Services team, Tweed Equal Access Advisory Committee and Aboriginal Advisory Committee, and led an inclusive community engagement program with disability support providers and people with disability to inform the draft and final Concept Design. Easy English versions were prepared for the consultation survey and outcomes report, as well as the Concept Plan.

Council implemented the NSW Government 'Everyone Can Play' program to improve access and inclusion in children's playgrounds. Staff from Council's Parks and Active Communities, Community Services and Sustainability and Environment collaborated on a pathway in Pottsville Environment Park with the aims of improving access. Parks and Active Communities staff start drafting Pottsville open space masterplan.

Council's Community Services Unit in partnership with Tweed Holiday Parks and local Surf Life Saving Clubs continued to make beach and all-terrain wheelchairs available for public hire (through Tweed Bookable). Beach matting is installed at Cudgen Reserve and managed by Cudgen Surf Life Saving Club. Council's Sustainability and Environment Unit have rebuilt the beach viewing platform at Cabarita Beach. Council's Community Services staff have workshopped access and inclusion priority criteria with the Tweed Access Advisory Committee to inform the Foreshores and Waterways access study.

Council's Roads and Stormwater staff are undertaking the following programs:

- Developing the Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan and Cycling Plan. This has involved consultation with the Tweed Equal Access Advisory Committee and inclusive strategies to engage people with disability, their support providers, carers and families.
- Installed signage on shared paths so that all pedestrians and path users have safe accessible paths to travel. Council's Building and Environmental Health Unit revised the Footpath Trading Policy with input from Council's Community Services Unit. All communication with affected business draws attention to the renewed Policy, which aims to facilitate easy traffic of pedestrians and other users of pathways, including people with vision impairment.

Council's Roads and Stormwater Unit advised private property owners on requirements for installing well-located disabled parking bays, so patrons have improved safe access to premises and services.

Council staff continued to participate and host Local Traffic Committee meetings and lead discussions on public transport issues. Staff across Council participated and engaged with Transport for NSW in the development of draft Tweed Transport Plan to advocate for the community to improve access to public transport. Council continued to seek funding to upgrade bus stops under the Country Passenger Transport Infrastructure Grants Scheme.

As part of Council's Brand Refresh Project, Council commenced drafting a new and improved Visual Standards Manual and a Signage and Painting Manual with significantly stronger focus on accessibility requirements and directional systems. This is currently in progress as two key guidance documents for Council's approach to accessibility and inclusion for brands, publications and signage.

Council developed a Video and Multimedia Guidelines document for staff use that explains minimum standards for creating accessible video content including captions and video. Closed captions and subtitles are standard on all Council video options and our YouTube channel. This project is completed and now part of our business as usual processes. Council has a comprehensive set of our guides that cover accessibility and document production ensuring documents or PDFs we create. These are as follows:

Tweed Shire Council Visual Standards Manual,

Tweed Shire Council Signage and Painting Manual,

Communication and Writing Style Guide,

Guide to Creating Accessible PFDs from Word. Council introduced FlipHTML5 as an e-reader format that is available and can be embedded on our website to encourage viewing and online reading of large documents.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Council's Human Resources Unit delivered the following three initiatives:

Collaborated with recruitment consultants to require job advertisements to be available in accessible formats.

Continued to discuss unconscious bias in recruitment training.

Continued to include information to raise awareness about access and inclusion in staff orientation programs.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Council's Communications and Customer Experience Unit developed and implemented the following three projects, which are ongoing and part of business as usual:

**Websites:** Council redeveloped its four main websites into a fully accessible OpenCities platform. The product has strong partnerships and collaboration with Vision Australia as their accessibility partner. An audit with the Centre for Accessibility was conducted to ensure compliance with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG). Customer user testing with Council's Equal Access Advisory Committee members was also carried out to ensure accessibility of information and functionality of the website was optimal for people using assistive technology or with limited computer skills. Our four new websites are listed below:

<https://www.tweed.nsw.gov.au>

<https://museum.tweed.nsw.gov.au>

<https://gallery.tweed.nsw.gov.au>

<https://trac.tweed.nsw.gov.au>

This project is completed and all new site development uses the same platform and site accessibility and standards are now part of our business as usual processes. In the coming years we will transfer some remaining sites into the OpenCities platform.

**Webforms:** Council commenced a 12 month project from July 2022-June 2023 to replace all PDF forms on our websites with fully accessible webforms using OpenForms platform. All new customer forms are made in the OpenForms platform, all existing forms will be replaced over the next 12 months on a priority and highest use basis to ensure our forms and customer experiences are integrated, improved and accessible from any device.

**Customer Experience:** Webchat is now available as an additional customer touchpoint.

Council launched a comprehensive Communication and Writing Style Guide that sets standards for writing, communication and plain language in Council documents and publications. It is available to all staff, hard copies and digital copies are available for staff. It is part of the induction process and a key internal document for standards and accessibility. A future project of internal training, template use and plain language is being considered. The project is complete and now part of our business as usual processes. In addition, the team has produced a Guide to Creating Accessible PFDs from Word. This document focuses on educating staff about creating PDFs and attachments that are user friendly and have compliant accessibility requirements for metadata and other functions.

Finally, in response to the flood event in February-March 2022, Council's Community Services Unit prepared and distributed disaster emergency, relief and recovery information in an accessible format, so people with disability, their families and supporters with limited access to the internet or computers could access critical services and supports. The resource was updated with ongoing changes and published to Council's emergency dashboard, circulated to disability support services

and carer networks in electronic and hardcopy formats and distributed to Council's Contact centres, libraries, community centres, and post offices, general stores in the rural villages and other isolated communities in the Tweed.

## How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?

### What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?

Council's community development programs including the evaluation and development of its DIAP, is informed by analyses of empirical data and local sector and community feedback through various engagement strategies. Empirical data is accessed from a range of research sources, including: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare reporting, Australian Bureau of Statistics Census data, Australian Bureau of Statistics People with disability in Australia data and Australian Bureau of Statistics Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers data.

National Disability Insurance Scheme participant outcomes reporting for Tweed Local feedback is collected through local networks, including the Tweed Disability Network, Tweed Community Care Forum and Tweed Equal Access Advisory Committee, which comprise approximately 200 community members representing people with disability, their families and carers as well as provider services that care and support for approximately 10,000 Tweed residents. These networks meet monthly, bi-monthly and quarterly to collaborate and share information on:

- local issues, needs and gaps,
- multi-sector collaboration and partnerships,
- local activities, services and programs,
- funding and learning development and training opportunities, and
- policy reforms.

Council accepted direct feedback from people with disability, their families and supporters via a community survey which launched on 23 November 2021 through Council's Your Say Tweed engagement website, and officially ended on 25 January 2022.

The Tweed Equal Access Advisory Committee and the Centre for Intellectual Disability worked with Council to design the survey in easy read language in order to reach as many people as possible. The survey asked questions focusing on the three areas being How people access or get around their places, information and work, how easy or hard it is and why?, How welcome or part of community do people feel and why? And How did Council's service and programs support improve people's access and inclusion, or not? Different engagement methods were used to encourage people with experience of disability, whether living, or family, carers, friends to participate. An online and screen reader accessible word and Easy Read hardcopy version with simple clear language and images was made available.

Tweed's current DIAP was available in PDF, word document and Easy English versions, and two videos produced by the Tweed Equal Access Advisory Committee were published to Council's website, which explored what access and inclusion means in the Tweed. Council's Your Say Tweed webpage included an Ideas Tool function for people to post their ideas, drawings, comments or upload their own photos and videos.

Community Development staff met with and held conversations with community individuals and stakeholder groups over the phone and via email, and received submissions in writing. The Tweed Equal Access Advisory Committee were consulted with throughout 2021 to evaluate the current Plan and develop a community engagement strategy. Presentations were also given to the Tweed Aboriginal Advisory Committee, Blind Citizens Australia Tweed chapter, Tweed Heads Chamber of Commerce, Tweed Disability Network and Community Care Forum.

A total of 76 recorded responses from community were received. 48 (63%) of respondents identified as a person living with a disability, 33 (43%) identified as a parent, carer or family member of a person with a disability, 19% identified as an interested member of community, 7% identified as a

person of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander heritage. Further, supplementary feedback has been received through consultations conducted since the February-March 2022 flood, as part of Council's recovery programs.

### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

The priorities and emerging directions of the new DIAP are strongly informed by the community and sector feedback received and empirical data analysed. Some priorities are outlined below, and will be refined in consultation with Council staff in order to align with the organisational operational and delivery plans over the next four years. Further community consultation of a draft DIAP will also be conducted during exhibition stage. Focus Area 1: Developing positive community attitudes and behaviours

Promoting understanding and positive attitudes among community and Council staff, including on complex and often invisible nature of disability and the rights of people with disability.

Supporting community connections and supporting a empowering 'voice' project for people with disability that reflects and promotes the range of diverse abilities in the Tweed

Listening to people with disability through establish networks and advisory committees of Council. Focus area 2: Liveable and accessible communities

Understanding and prioritising access issues with community to identify barriers and actions to improve access.

Progressively increasing access in the local community and to Council facilities, such as foreshores and inland waterways through physical upgrades and accessible information formats on access features and amenities in the Tweed.

Promoting and implementing universal design to staff responsible for developing and delivering projects related to the built environment and liveable communities.

Supporting business and community to remove barriers and improve access and inclusion of people with disability, including recreation and inclusive tourism ventures. Focus area 3: Supporting access to meaningful employment

Exploring greater employment and volunteer opportunities for people with disability in Council, collaborating with researchers, advocates and partners in disability education and employment sectors.

Ensuring Council's recruitment process is accessible, including language and information technology, advertisements, application submissions and staff training. Focus area 4: Improving access to services through better systems and processes

Building access to online information and services through a range of information formats, hardware and software applications.

Providing accessible information through a variety of channels.

Providing and sponsoring inclusive community events.

Building accessible and inclusive policy and corporate practice

### **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Council's multidisciplinary Community Development team operates across community cohorts to develop community development programs for families and youth, older people, people with disability and of Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander heritage.

Council's Community Development Officer, Inclusion works closely with colleagues to engage with stakeholders and community networks on the needs of each groups and to target sub-groups including culturally and linguistically diverse and LGBTQI+ people.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Council's capacity to deliver the current Plan and develop a new DIAP was significantly impacted by the flood event experienced in February and March 2022. Limited staff resources were diverted to respond to the immediate needs of our affected community and to support their ongoing and long-term recovery of this natural disaster. In addition, ongoing reforms to the disability and aged care sectors, COVID-19 pandemic impacts and the flood has significantly impacted the capacity of community groups and support services sector to partner and engage in programs.

Impacts are wide-ranging and cumulative, and include direct physical health and safety risks and loss, financial hardship, loss of access to affordable, accessible housing and services, support sector human resource and labour shortages as carers and people with disability were isolated by border closures and migrated away from the region, as well as the emotional distress and toll on social cohesion across community from experiencing collective and compounded trauma.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Council's Community Services Unit have continued to support local networks including the facilitating the Tweed Equal Access Committees (EAAC), Tweed Disability Network (TDN) and Tweed Community Care forum (TCCF).

The EAAC provides community members an opportunity to participate in local civic decision-making processes and advocate on access, inclusion, cultural and social issues and awareness. The EAAC celebrated International Day of People with Disability 2021 by creating three videos to promote awareness of the day, and a community survey for the Tweed Access and Inclusion Plan. The videos attracted nearly 300 views from Council's website and 28,000 views of social media posts and 76 survey responses and in-person, telephone and email feedback were received. The TDN comprises approximately 85 members representing provider services that support over 4200 Tweed residents. This is equivalent to approximately 65% of Tweed people in need of assistance. The TCCF comprises approximately 100 members, who meet monthly to advocate on policy reforms, local needs, and gaps, multi-sector collaboration and partnerships, information exchange about services and programs, funding and learning development and training opportunities.

The benefits of these networks to Council and community are significant. Council, state government staff and elected delegates gain knowledge and understanding of social issues and community perspectives and experiences. This was particularly important during the extended period of the COVID-19 pandemic and flood emergency crisis. For example, the EAAC continued to meet eight times during 2021-2022 to discuss 34 projects and matters, presented and workshopped with 16 staff from Council, state government and private industry.

The Tweed Disability Network and Tweed Community Care Forum met 16 times during 2021-2022 with presentations, updates and initiatives relating to critical state and national legislative, public health and care sector reforms in response to COVID-19, National Disability Insurance Scheme and Commonwealth Home Support Package reforms. During the flood crisis, these relationships and partnerships with community groups, state agencies, private and NGO service provider and other stakeholders were fostered and supported with information and resources, and critical for local needs and gap assessments.

Community and Council staff were engaged and supported to build understanding and skills to prioritise community access and inclusion issues in their project development, communications and engagement, and information systems and processes. For example, Community Development staff worked collaboratively across various Council areas to apply the universal design approach in the planning and development of our built environment, facilities and infrastructure, and to ensure communications and engagement on Council projects is inclusive of people of different abilities.

Projects included Council's website redesign project, which included Equal Access Advisory Committee members involved in the user acceptance testing process, draft concept design and



engagement of the Goorimahbah Inclusive PlaySpace and Park, accessible information on flood emergency and recovery services and packages.

### **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Council's newly formed Inclusive and Creative Communities Unit is developing and supporting crisis recovery and resilience building programs with community, and ensuring they are disability-inclusive. The following three projects are examples of programs and partnerships that aim to promote social calm and connection, safety and self-efficacy and hope for all cohorts of community, particular our most vulnerable.

- The "Together Tweed: Let's Reconnect" program involves 13 community led events held from September 2022 to March 2023. Each event is supported to invigorate and reconnect the community through a range of shared experiences and common interests that rebuild social bonds and re-establish routines. All events are free, proudly funded by NSW Government, and have a range of accessible and inclusive features. Accessible Arts NSW were engaged by Council to support local event organisers make their event accessible and inclusive of people of all abilities.
- "Leave Nobody Behind" research project with the Centre for Disability Research and Policy, The University of Sydney. This project is designed to commence in early 2023 and involve disability sector, community groups, people with disability and their families, carers and supporters in a Disability Inclusive Emergency Planning (DIEP) forum and to access Person-Centred Emergency Preparedness (P-CEP) education and resources.
- Promoting positive and empowering stories and a greater representation of people with disability in Council communications and marketing.

## **Upper Hunter Shire Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Mental health first aid training, Council staff participate in a range of community services interagency meetings, Council representative on Transcare Board of Directors to support good governance, Council supports services in the disability sector through capacity building, networking and promotion, inclusivity is listed as a project aim for Council's Cultural Activity Grants, Council hosts a range of inclusive well-being and recreational activities across the shire to raise community awareness and Council includes positive imaging of people with disability in promotional material and relevant reports.

Staff and community members completed mental health first aid certificate. Course was free for all participants, increasing understanding, capacity and support networks in the local community. Through facilitation and participation of community service network, staff have a strong knowledge of services in the disability in the sector and are able to facilitate good referrals and provide best practice. Council promotes inclusivity and access at all their community activities and events to ensure that people with disability have choices regarding participation and feel connected in their community.

### **Creating liveable communities**

Council uses a range of consultation and feedback processes to ensure it is responsive to the needs of people with disability living in the area, Council continues to investigate opportunities to enhance infrastructure, increase services and address barriers and challenges for people with disability, Council advocates to local business to increase access for people with disability and Council develops partnerships with services and other groups to increase inclusivity for people with disability.

Council and community infrastructure has been developed and modified to better meet the needs of people with disability including pathways, parking, pram ramps, accessible toilet facilities and

improved signage. Council facilities, activities and events are inclusive and accessible which provides better opportunities for participation and interaction for people with disability. Council promotes these opportunities in a range of formats to build awareness of what's happening in the community.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Council regularly reviews policies and procedures to ensure inclusivity and best practice, Council provides regular staff training to build capacity and ensure sensitivity to the needs that staff with disability may experience in the workplace and Council promotes employment opportunities in an inclusive manner.

People with disability are provided with user friendly procedures to support recruitment which ensures an inclusive workplace for all employees. Council staff are skilled and understanding of the challenges that people with disability experience.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Council has reviewed a range of public documents and made available in accessible formats. Council actively pursues funding opportunities to enhance the delivery of activities, programs and services. Council promotes inclusivity and representation from all community groups for committee membership and participation in consultation processes.

Council documents and the website are more accessible with consideration of large print and oral material. Council processes encourage participation, consultation and feedback from people with disability to ensure they have greater input into the services that most affect them.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

#### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

Targeted meetings with people with disability and key stakeholders were organised to formally review the DIAP and the actions. Council has a range of feedback mechanisms to encourage regular feedback from community members. This is widely promoted in accessible formats.

#### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

Council is committed to inclusivity and addressing the needs of all community groups. We do this by promoting understanding, raising awareness, enhancing access, providing information in an accessible manner and encouraging feedback.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Council is committed to inclusivity and addressing the needs of all community groups. We do this by promoting understanding, raising awareness, enhancing access, providing information in an accessible manner and encouraging feedback.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

The greatest challenge has been strengthening knowledge and skills within Council to ensure that all staff have strong inclusive practices in their sections during a period when we are particularly short staffed and under resourced.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Our greatest success has been securing funding to provide free mental health first aid training to staff and community members in the smaller towns in the Shire. Not only did this enhance skills and knowledge, it also built community connections that were impacted by COVID-19.

## **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Greater consideration is being given to promoting accessibility of Council facilities and inclusivity in the workplace. This is evident in the images we use and the language in our documents

## **Upper Lachlan Shire Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Community directory distributed. All events accessible. Applications/grants incorporate accessibility and enjoyment for all in design.

### **Creating liveable communities**

Priority lists and works schedule developed. Priorities for funding identified with the above scheduling and accessibility being improved as per Operational Plan.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Recruitment open and non-discriminatory.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Review current communication methods to ensure compliance with accessibility standards completed April 2020.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

Engagement through the Pool and Creative Capital Funding projects and Office of Sports grants and infrastructure surveys. Positive in rating accessibility for the Shire and appreciative that Council has taken the time to ask the questions and engage with all sections of the community.

### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

Engagement plans incorporated this year.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Positive feedback and employment of some abovementioned groups.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Council has limited resources.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Success in incorporating DIAP to support funding applications.

## **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Access Committee reformed. Further engagement will take place with DIAP review.

### **Uralla Shire Council**

#### **Building positive attitudes**

The new DIAP was developed.

People with disability were included and had their say.

#### **Creating liveable communities**

Supporting Accessibility.

Improved circulation space in the renovated Visitors Information Centre more conducive to wheelchairs and other mobility aids;

Tech Savvy Seniors program at the Library and well as home deliveries to housebound residents;

Planning for improved accessibility to McMaugh Gardens for residents and visitors with doorways to be widened and a ramp extended at the main entrance;

\$50,000 allocated to extend the wide accessible pathway in Plane Avenue, giving improved access for pedestrians and people on mobility devices as well as young parents with prams to commence in 2022/2023 financial year;

Crossing upgrades for several local schools are underway;

A new accessible bus for Tablelands Community Transport is imminent.

Multiple pieces of equipment supplied to residents by Tablelands Community Support to enhance mobility, communication, community access medication delivery.

#### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Have changed recruitment processes and advertisement wording to be more inclusive and encouraging to people with disability;

Working on a volunteer strategy to encourage participation from people with disability leading to gaining skills to increase employment opportunities.

No outcomes yet

#### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

No requests for this area and no complaints received relating to barriers in this area.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

Excellent feedback in relation to the fully accessible change room, toilet and shower at the pool complex, the accessible buses and the various equipment purchases to enhance mobility, communication, community access medication delivery.

### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

To incorporate accessibility into all new Council builds.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Whilst Council has had had contact with individuals from all of these groups there has been no specific concerns raised on behalf of any group mentioned in above in relation to accessibility or inclusion.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Council's main objective was to get the new DIAP developed. This was achieved, despite COVID-19 and extreme flooding.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Broad community consultation and increased understanding within Council particularly the improved understanding of barriers and terminology Council wide.

## **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

To focus on inclusion and accessibility in all areas of Council business. This was already in the new DIAP.

## **Wagga Wagga City Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

The previous financial year really involved undertaking extensive community consultation in order to review and reflect on the previous DIAP and develop and update a new All Abilities Inclusion Action Plan. The assigned action items from the previous plan completed this past financial year included the following:

- a suite of inclusive programs offered across Council's cultural facilities that include targeted programs, shows and exhibitors for people with disabilities
- promote programming in cultural facilities to services working with people with disabilities and included in Council news
- include images that represent our community
- promote days and weeks that celebrate ability and diversity, including mental health month and international day of people with disability

Outcomes achieved include:

- art exhibitions from those with disability in collaboration with Riverina Community College
- sensory sessions or quiet spaces included in events (for example, ice skating rink in the winter offering)
- 103 community members put through Youth Mental Health First Aid for free by Council

### **Creating liveable communities**

The previous financial year really involved undertaking extensive community consultation in order to review and reflect on the previous DIAP and develop and update a new All Abilities Inclusion Action Plan. The assigned action items from the previous plan completed this past financial year included the following:

- Upgrades to existing parks and playgrounds are undertaken in line with existing works schedule to increase accessibility where possible



- support funding for community groups and services to improve accessibility and apply principles of universal design in building and service delivery
- review options to increase accessibility to Lake Albert for recreational fishing
- permanent and accessible lift is fitted to the access stage area and accessible backstage toilet (Civic Theatre) Outcomes achieved:
- The successful completion of the Riverside precinct stage 2, which has accessible and inclusive play equipment and the inclusion of additional disability parking
- Civic theatre underwent renovations and now has accessible lift to stage area and accessible backstage toilet

Successful Wagga Wagga City Council annual grant winners included:

- Sunflower House Incorporated \$5000 A five month art program for Sunflower House members which includes expressive drawing, acrylic painting, portrait painting, clay sculpting and mural painting
- NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors \$4300 to assist with Multicultural Women's Arts Group – a weekly creative engagement program for women from refugee backgrounds.
- Alphabet Soup Youth Group \$3000 Alphabet Soup Youth disco and Alphabet Soup educational youth screening aim to create an inclusive and supportive environment for the young LGBTQI+ community.
- Mitchell Kingsland \$3000 Funding for disadvantaged students to participate in the Duke of Edinburgh Award at Wagga Wagga High School.
- Bella Ingram \$3000 A series of three small live music events designed to connect young people to their community, also featuring guest speakers on youth mental health and wellbeing.
- Bidgee Dragons Inc. \$1000 Provide boat rides for disability groups 'TRIBE Challenge' on Lake Albert, featuring a six on six reverse tug of war where two crews face off in a dragon boat.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

The previous financial year really involved undertaking extensive community consultation in order to review and reflect on the previous DIAP and develop and update a new All Abilities Inclusion Action Plan. The assigned action items from the previous plan completed this past financial year included the following:

- Increase number of people with a disability employed at Council towards a 10% target
- Provide training to all employees on bullying and harassment
- Provide Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) training to all employees as part of corporate training package

Outcomes achieved:

- All employees receive training on EEO, bullying and harassment and follow up (where required) for refresher content through training portal
- Increase has occurred closer to 10% target

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

The previous financial year really involved undertaking extensive community consultation in order to review and reflect on the previous DIAP and develop and update a new All Abilities Inclusion Action Plan. The assigned action items from the previous plan completed this past financial year included the following:

- Conduct annual consultation both internally and externally to monitor Councils progress in delivering commitment to the DIAP

- Amend events guide to include an accessibility checklist for anyone organising an event

Outcomes achieved:

- Council staff engage monthly with local Wagga Access Reference Group to discuss and update on Council's deliverables in the DIAP.
- There was also extensive consultation undertaken in this financial year in order to develop content for Council's updated All Abilities Inclusion Action Plan
- Council is obtaining the All Abilities Inclusion Action Plan to be professionally turned in to an easy to read document, as well as screen readable online through an external contractor
- Events have begun developing accessibility checklist

## **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

We undertook significant community consultation despite the barriers of COVID-19, which saw a number of our local Disability services close and move remote and those with lived experience scared to attend in person etc. This was in order to develop our updated All Abilities Inclusion Action Plan. We held four community wide consultations, both with an option in person or online via TEAMS. There was also opportunity provided to have smaller one on one consultations to services, individual appointments in person or over the phone. 12 Disability service providers were engaged, along with 50 online survey submissions.

In addition, Wagga Wagga City Council were a founding member and still represent on the Wagga Access Reference Group, which meets monthly to discuss issues and proactive measures to tackle these for those with lived experience, as the group is made up of key services as well as equal parts individuals with lived experience.

### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

It fed directly into our endorsed All Abilities Inclusion Action plan and provided new focus areas for the next four years. It also impacts daily work with things like events, programming opportunities, when new works are undertaken and new sports and recreational places and spaces.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

We ensure that in our consultations with those with lived experience, their carers, family and service providers that we are intentional about directly holding targeted consultations to the identified groups above.

We also ran approximately five youth forums across the financial year with particular forums focusing on our First Nations and CALD young people.

We also run and/or sit on a number of community interagency groups including the Aboriginal Interagency, Multicultural Interagency Network, Wagga Youth Interagency, Mawang Gaway (Aboriginal Consultative Committee), Alphabet Soup (LGBTQI+ youth group).

We also have strengthened our Annual Grants program to be responsive to the needs of these specified groups and have demonstrated successfully that we advocate and support these groups in particular in both the weighting of the scores when judging at the panel but also because we have awarded funds to these particular cohorts.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

COVID-19 had significantly impacted the Disability sector and it was very slow to return. This made it extremely difficult to consult with those with lived experience, their carers and families but also

made it hard to navigate when trying to deliver programs or events for those with disability. The main response we received was that they didn't want to risk COVID-19 and that the threat to them was very real and they weren't willing to take any chances.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

There has evidently been more consideration given to ensuring programs and events are accessible and inclusive. At a number of our larger offerings, we now include a sensory space or quiet zone. Another success was having disability principles included in the development of Council's Riverside precinct.

### **Is there anything else your organisation is doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Through the monthly WARG meetings we have identified transport as the biggest issue facing our community members with lived experience. Council is advocating and supporting the group to engage with Transport NSW to discuss these ongoing issues. To date there have been meetings with the point to point commissioner and so we feel we are assisting in ensuring their voices are heard at the level they need to be heard at.

## **Walcha Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Each year we advertise for people with a disability to join our community care advisory committee. This committee liaises with Council in regards to its community care and NDIS area, and it is a great way to give input into our programs. Unfortunately, we have again received no applications, however we will continue to reach out to encourage feedback.

### **Creating liveable communities**

Funding has been received that will see the installation of additional disabled parks and an extension of the footpath network, which links residences to education, business, community and sporting complexes within our local government area. This work should commence shortly.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Council is an equal opportunity employer, with two members of our small staff having disabilities. Additional supports (physical or mentoring) are provided to these employees to ensure that they have are not disadvantaged in the workplace.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Work has commenced on a new Council website. We hope to have this rolled out in early 2023. It will feature accessibilities

### **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

We started work on updating our DIAP in May 2022. This involved sending out a survey, and having public information sessions. The response was very disappointing with only one person attending. This person however was very active in the community and has given us some excellent feedback. Along with our survey responses we have put together a document that will give some guidance into the future.

### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

Footpaths and accessibility were highlighted as one of the largest barriers to physically accessing the business and recreation areas. Council will be applying for funding to improve the footpaths and gradients of the laybacks to ensure that they are in fact accessible.

We will be installing disabled parking, disabled access toilet and footpaths at one of our larger sporting facilities to help reduce the barrier of accessing sport as a participant, volunteer or spectator.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

This section was not highlighted in our updated DIAP. We plan to work on a new DIAP during 2023/24 that will include these specified groups.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Being a small rural council, funding improvements is always a concern. Grant funding assists greatly, and when any new infrastructure project is planned, all-ability access is planned. However grants are not always available, meaning our progress can seem to be slow.

Staffing levels are low, with the same compliance burden as larger Councils, time constraints mean that not all issues can be dealt with. If issues are raised directly with Council by residents, they are dealt with, however time available to be proactive in this space is very limited.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

### **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Works are being planned for the library that will enhance the access and useability of the library spaces. The library facility has free Wi-Fi and computer access – moveable and outdoor seating that is suitable to people using a wheelchair will make this space more inclusive.

### **Additional information and comments**

Engaging our community in the development of the DIAP is a challenge. As we will be working on a new DIAP in 2023-2024 we hope to have more engagement and input from our community members.

## **Walgett Shire Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Council continues to consult and work with services and providers, carers and people with a disability across the Shire. Activities and community inclusiveness is at the forefront of all Council events and programs. Council promotes the value of all people - an inclusive Shire creates positivity and inclusive mindsets, attitudes, behaviours and perceptions.

### **Creating liveable communities**

All Council new build and upgrades are inclusive on access and spaces for people with a disability and carers to engage, recreate and access. Every program Council implement is specifically aligned to ensure inclusiveness is available for all people. Our communities value all our residents, everyone has a role to play, and everyone is important to the general wellbeing of community. People with a disability play a vital role in all community life within our Shire. Diversity and uniqueness are what sets our outback local government area (LGA) aside from others, we also promote those differences are also reflective of community- abilities and our people - this is a strength we tap into and celebrate.

## **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

At particular times throughout the year or when opportunities of staff leaving Council has a series of options and at times opportunities for people with disabilities to gain employment with the Community Development Department at its libraries, youth centres and other areas of Council. We currently have two people working within our system who contribute extensive and genuine feedback in regard to workability in our spaces and their contribution to us is priceless

## **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

This is an area we are continually working towards as systems are always changing, we have the general assistance in access and supports for young people with disabilities in all our youth centres and Libraries and community VIC. our promotion of supporting access to services is an area we intend to focus on in the community years.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

We are somewhat relatively small in regard to size of community however those the work, plan and support our DIAP feedback consistently. Word travels fast in smaller towns and Council is proactive in seeking feedback to guide its processes. Once we complete the final stages of our review (postponed towards end of 2022 due to major isolation flooding) and our fresh, new DIAP is in play we can then begin to prioritize actions going forward with needs and identified areas of concern. The continued formation and support of cross community working/ advisory group will again support the work and direction of Council in meeting targets as identified within the DIAP.

### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

Our DIAP - Disability Inclusion Action Plan is our guide to how we are going to work with the community to make it more accessible, and how that will benefit all of us. The DIAP is supported by many overarching Council plans and aligns with all aspects of Council business. It supports the direction Council is heading by guiding and informing of needs and process around inclusiveness for all. When we undertake our review (delayed due to isolation of and final community consultations we will be better informed of our progress to date and our priority issue going forward.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Our Shire has a significantly high first people population and a significant multi-cultural population also. We consider this a strength as we can utilize the cross cultures to address the needs for harmony in decisions and we gather feedback form individuals representing a multitude of groups. Inclusiveness in the forming and implementation of our current DIAP involved ALL the identified groups. We will continue to sustain our relationships with marginalized groups as the work we do, is reflective of the DIAP.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Our past year has seen many challenges, from our anticipated Shire wide review (still yet to be undertaken due to major flooding for sustained periods), to accessing communities whilst COVID-19 was still impacting services and community folk alike. Small communities all 85klm apart makes for a challenge in itself. However, we are committed to making a positive difference and this will be achieved by involving the people our decisions effect in the decision-making processes.



## What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?

Seeing and witnessing outcomes on the ground in regard to inclusiveness for all to participate, seek a service or join in a program is something Council is proud to be a part of now, and going forward. By regularly meeting with support services and those with a disability we gain a better understanding of what is making a difference.

## Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?

Once everything settle's down we can have all participants and service/ agencies and people with disabilities that have shown a desire to be included in our review process in one space our completed DIAP will be set to make further positive change in the four key areas: Developing positive community attitudes and behaviours, Creating liveable communities, Supporting access to meaningful employment and Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes We are committed to continuing to make positive change within the Walgett Shire for people with disabilities and their carers.

## Warren Shire Council

Implementation measures of the DIAP have included:

- Construction of a disabled access toilet at the Noel Waters Oval Nevertire,
- Disabled toilets in the GBS Falkiner Lounge at the Warren Showground/Racecourse,
- Installation of public seating in the Warren Central Business District.

During 2021/2022 Warren Shire Council completed an Accessible Toilet including the installation of an on-site treatment plant, access pathways and gardens.

Future grant applications to support DIAP actions included disabled toilets on the second level of the Warren Sporting and Cultural Centre, the construction of a disabled access toilet at Lions Park and in the Warren CBD.

Provided a grant for installation of access lift at the Warren War Memorial Swimming Pool.

Work is complete on the new Council Chambers/Community Centre/administration areas of Council's main office building. Council commenced planning 15 years ago and this year through restricted funding will complete this \$2.1 million project. The new chambers will allow all members of the public to attend this building as it is fully accessible. The facility was officially opened on the 2nd December, 2021.

Works underway or completed as part of this (Warren Skate Park) development include the construction of a splash park, playground, cricket and soccer fields, LED Sports lighting and amenities, BBQs shade structures, tree planting, accessible footpaths and parking. This park will be accessible and 'everyone can play' friendly. It allows all age groups to mix and grow as a community (approximate cost \$3 million).

The DIAP is due for review in 2022-2023.

## Warrumbungle Shire Council

During 2021-2022 Council was focused on completing the actions outlined in the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2017-2021 (DIAP) and included in Delivery Program adopted in 2017. The DIAP has been extended until June 2023 and another plan will be developed for 2023-2027. Feedback from community members will be incorporated into the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2023-2027 and community consultation on the draft plan will incorporate direct contact with individuals and disability groups to seek their feedback on the plan.

The DIAP outlines Council's commitment to uphold and promote the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Council strategy is to support and improve the inclusion of

people with a disability as part of its core business and to remove barriers to access and participation. Council adheres to equal employment opportunity, and all employment and volunteer opportunities with Council are inclusive. Council buildings are accessible for staff and visitors

Council regularly hosts events that promote inclusion and seek to build positive attitudes towards diverse abilities in the community, such as the Community Care Expos held in Coonabarabran and Mendooran, an Inclusive Sports Day held during Youth Week in Baradine and “Colour Runs” held in Coolah and Binnaway.

The libraries progressed a range of projects, including processing new resources for inclusion in the collection, developing online content and sessions, and processing items relating to oral and local history photographs. Assistive technology was purchased for customers, including special contrast keyboards and mouse balls.

Council continues to work on options to meet accessibility accreditation for Council’s website to provide a fuller range of options for people of all abilities to contact and interact with Council.

Warrumbungle Community Care (WCC) provides a range of programs across the Shire to assist the frail aged, people with a disability and their carers. Programs include: Community Transport (vehicles and wheelchair accessible bus), Meals on Wheels, In-home Respite, Social Support and Home Maintenance. WCC is also an Approved Home Care Package provider (HCP), allowing WCC staff to provide in-home domestic and personal care individually tailored to their needs.

The range of services support people to continue to live independently in their own homes. WCC provides services to over 800 clients across the Shire. These services are provided by a dedicated and passionate team of six permanent staff, five part-time/casual staff and a team of approximately 190 volunteers.

## **Waverly Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Community awareness Information and resources continued to be promoted. Staff information and Q&A session was conducted by people with an intellectual disability to address disability discrimination. The 2021 Business Award for Inclusion was delayed due to COVID-19. Business Awards will resume in late 2022. The Business Resource Centre on Council’s website includes accessibility resources.

### **Creating liveable communities**

Council’s disability and children’s services continued essential face to face services throughout COVID-19 lockdowns. The Seniors Centre remained closed until March 22 due to COVID-19. Small Grants remained available to local community networks. An Access and Inclusion grant to support participation in mainstream activities or employment is in development.

Online forums continued to be held with the service network to understand the impact of COVID-19 and to support continued service delivery for vulnerable people. A Social Isolation and Loneliness Forum was held in April 2022 with service providers and coordinated with neighbouring Councils Information resources were promoted to support vulnerable people during the COVID-19 pandemic, including information and advice from NSW Health.

NDIS, Disability and Carer Gateway and My Aged Care were promoted.

Draft Inclusive Events Guidelines were prepared and scheduled for completion in 2022-2023 financial year. The inclusive Bondi Story Room was developed in this period and will open in September 2022

A number of cultural and recreational initiatives remained impacted by COVID-19, such as the cancellation of the 2021 Bondi Festival

Council endorsed a concept design to refurbish a social housing apartment consisting of studio, one and two bed units block to universal design principals The annual homelessness Street Count was completed.

Bondi Pavilion restoration progressed and temporary accessible amenities and changing places were available. Mill Hill Centre and Boot Factory refurbishment in progress. Design and planning on the Bondi Surf Bathing Life Saving Club and Bronte Surf Life Saving Club are aligned with disability access standards.

Bondi Beach matting is made available three times a week, weather permitting. Initial work began to identify locations for accessible pick up and drop off (PUDO) parking spaces and an audit of mobility parking spaces.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Individual learning and skills support continued. Support for internships, traineeship, and apprenticeship delayed due to the impact of COVID-19. Volunteering policy and supporting documents drafted in preparation for Council endorsement in the later part of 2022.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Action to improve website navigation pending implementation of IT strategy and resourcing strategy. A new Access and Inclusion Panel was recruited and provided input and recommendation in the development of a consultation strategy for the next DIAP 2022-26 and design advice on key projects including the Bondi Story Room.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability**

#### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

A new Access and Inclusion Panel was recruited and provided input and recommendation in the development of a consultation strategy for the next DIAP 2022-2026 and advice on key projects. Community consultation held with a diverse range of people across the region from 25 October to 20 February 2022 to inform the actions in the DIAP 2022-26.

#### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

Access and Inclusion Panel met three times to provide input into key projects. Community consultation informed actions for the DIAP 2022-26.

### **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Targeted community consultation to inform the development of the DIAP 2022-26 was held with indigenous people, and key groups representing diverse needs e.g.: ACON, Dementia Advisory Services, Disability Interagency, Ethnic Community Service Cooperative, and Wairoa School. Council also receives ongoing input and feedback from the Multicultural and Reconciliation Advisory Committees.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

The impact of COVID-19 on resource allocation and staff capacity and closures impacted programming and service delivery.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

The Bondi Story Room is a new installation within the newly refurbished Bondi Pavilion, which will be launched in September 2022. The Story Room is a living archive of stories about people and places linked to Bondi. Inside the Story Room, a large touch screen wall becomes an interactive story mural. Community members with lived experience of disability, Waverley Access and Inclusion Panel and digital access consultants were engaged over six months to make the Story Room inclusive. This co

design approach will enhance the Story room experience for everyone. The mural includes variable interactive zones accessible to wheelchair users and is compatible with audio screen readers' access by smartphones. Tactile elements and a QR code will assist people who are blind, or vision impaired people, to access the stories. There will be an allocated quieter time each day for visitors with sound sensitivities.

### **Is there anything else your organisation is doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Council consulted with a diverse range of people across the region to inform the development of the Waverley Council Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-26. Further information can be found at <https://www.waverley.nsw.gov.au/>

## **Weddin Shire Council**

Council adopted the Disability Inclusion Action Plan in the 2018 financial year. The plan demonstrates Council's commitment to improving access and inclusion and identifies what Council can do to promote and achieve equality for residents and visitors to the Weddin Shire Local Government Area (LGA).

Library continued housebound service and deposit stations at Greenethorpe and Quandialla. Access to state library eResources maintained.

## **Wentworth Shire Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

In preparation for updating the existing Disability Inclusion Action Plan council undertook extensive community consultation with targeted groups and the general community in conjunction with the Community Strategic Planning process, to gain an updated awareness and understanding of the needs of people with disabilities.

Ongoing participation in Seniors Week activities and library programs has wide ranging impact and are constantly reviewed to ensure accessibility, inclusion and participation for all.

Council's updated Community Strategic Plan has identified actions for Council to promote a welcoming and inclusive community that strengthens positive attitudes and behaviours towards people of all abilities.

### **Creating liveable communities**

Council continues to monitor its Pedestrian Mobility Access Plan to identify future works for new and upgraded footpaths and shared ways. Council submitted a funding application for three projects under the NSW Active Transport funding round.

Based on community feedback Council undertook a safety assessment of footpaths in the Wentworth CBD area and an access assessment of the Dareton Library/Senior Citizens building.

Council's updated Community Strategic Plan has identified actions for Council to promote and foster an accessible community that encourages access by people of all abilities.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Council is an equal opportunity employer and actively encourages applications from individuals with diverse backgrounds or those with disability. Council's updated Workforce Management Plan includes a focus on Council's recruitment framework to ensure the Council's recruitment practices are inclusive and accessible and give people with disability every opportunity to gain meaningful employment with Council. Council's updated Community Strategic Plan has identified actions for Council to promote the benefits to the community on employing people with disabilities.

## **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

During the year Council joined the Local Government NSW Ageing and Disability Network.

Ongoing Social Media presence and local advertising outlining the range of information available about Council's activities and services. Council continues to utilise social media platforms as well as more traditional media formats to promote Council information and activities in order to make as much information available as possible. Where possible this information is provided in easy to read formats.

Council's updated Community Strategic Plan makes a commitment to advocate for community and business organisations to review and change the way they do business to ensure people with disability can have equal access to information and services.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability**

### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

In 2021 Council undertook a targeted survey to identify the barriers that people with disability face in the Shire and to identify their ideas for improvement. Council regularly engages with local Senior Citizens' Groups obtaining feedback and suggestions for improvement. A broader community survey was also undertaken which provided additional insight into issues impacting people with a disability within the Shire. Council also referenced ABS Data including Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers Summary of Findings of 2018 to help identify needs.

### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

Engagement and feedback has helped inform Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026, Community Strategic Plan 2022-2032, Council's Operational Plan for 2022-2023 and Delivery Program 2022-2026. Actions have been targeted and prioritised having regard to the identified barriers and suggested improvements.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

Council is a member of an Interagency Working Group bringing together agencies within the Shire working across social determinants of health, education and community to discuss areas of focus, actions and organisations' activities. This includes community service organisations, government departments/agencies, disability advocates, and Aboriginal Liaison.

Council has set a focus in its Community Strategic Plan for inclusive and targeted consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people from a CALD background, women, people with disability, older people and young people.

Council is increasingly utilising social media platforms as well as more traditional media formats to promote Council information and activities in order to make as much information available as possible. Where possible this information is provided in easy to read formats.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

It is challenging engaging within a small rural community where there are still perceived stigmas associated with disability and a hesitant approach to inclusion of people with disability in all activities. A reluctance within the community particularly the aged community to identify as requiring assistance within the sector is an associated challenge.



## **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Building and improving accessibility within the physical environment. Developing our new DIAP with specific actions to improve community awareness and inclusion is included as a success - lacking the exposure of larger towns and cities to multicultural communities and diverse community members, the demographics of the community poses a challenge in fostering positive community attitudes and behaviours. It is considered our plan provides us with a great tool to effect positive change in this area.

## **Is there anything else your organisation is doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Council is heightening its focus on business and tourist attractions in the Wentworth region encouraging, supporting and promoting accessible businesses and inclusive tourism.

## **Willoughby City Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

Lower North Shore Commonwealth Home Support Volunteer training sessions provided on Duty of Care and Dignity of Risk and Wellness & Reablement practices.

Lower North Shore Annual Volunteer Expo took place at the WCC Dougherty Community Centre.

Induction process for all new volunteers includes a session on access and inclusion.

Webinar with Professor Susan Kurrle on Healthy ageing and reducing the risk factors associated with dementia.

Children with disabilities are welcomed into Youth and Children services, Nominated supervisors have supported staff to support children and their families.

Children and Youth Staff Development Day focused on access and inclusion practices.

Council's on-boarding process for staff includes a module on Equal Employment Opportunities including access and inclusion.

Council Website includes text to speech plugin (ReadSpeaker) has been activated across all websites and sub-sites. Allows on-screen text including linked documents -to be read aloud ("Listen" button).

The media and marketing operating procedures now includes, as part of business as usual, inclusion of people with disabilities in a range of digital and print collateral (social media, website, promotions and print newsletter).

Better Business Partnership provided webinar with Ben Gauntlett, the Disability Discrimination Commissioner at the Australian Human Rights Commission, who provided his insights into the challenges, opportunities and solutions for SMEs and government organisations on how to be inclusive.

Council has partnered with a number of organisations to provide events that raise awareness of and promote access and inclusion. These include:

- Dance to the Nines Disability Dance for over eighteens -returned to live format at the easily accessible Dougherty Community Centre.
- Connect, Collaborate, Celebrate art completion celebrated Social Inclusion week and International Day of People with a Disability.
- The winner receiving a solo exhibition at the accessible Dougherty Community Centre's Blend Art Space.
- Seniors Festival took place in March/April 2022 and comprised of some 30 plus events across various accessible facilities within the LGA

- Willoughby City Council Men's and Women's Shed moved to their new location and reopened
- Be Connected Tea and Tech Sessions
- Lower North Shore Disability Interagency Forums.
- Lower North Shore General Agency Forum
- Blend Art Exhibition Space
- Lower North Shore Volunteer Exhibition

Council provides community services for people with a disability including Meals on Wheels, Linen and Out & About transport and Social Support group services.

Council's People with Disability and Older Adults webpages were updated with links to various support services including the NDIA, Carers Gateway, providers and employment services, My Aged Care.

Council's Disability Action Plan 2022-2026 was developed and uploaded on Council's People with Disability webpage.

### **Creating liveable communities**

The WCC Access & Inclusion Committee met (both face-to-face and via Zoom) with the aim of increasing inclusion and access across the Willoughby Local Government Area.

Access and Inclusion committee have provided advice on access and inclusion issues within the LGA on projects such as:

- Consultation and Renewal of DIAP 2022-2026
- Thomas Street Disabled Parking
- Tactile Kerbs Indicators
- Install footpaths along the entire length of Rembrandt Drive, Middle Cove.

Audit of existing bus stops across the LGA was completed in 2021. 50% of works have been completed and will be finalised over the next two financial years pending available budget.

Members of Access and Inclusion committee 'road tested' a number of upgraded bus stops.

A focus of the Safe City Unit Plan 2021-2022 is to ensure that disabled parking areas are available for people with disabilities.

Measures are in place to ensure Mobility Parking Scheme Cards are used in accordance with the conditions of use and such use is only enjoyed by bona-fide persons.

The Safe City unit also has a focus on keeping paths and other pedestrian areas free of obstructions that would compromise the access of people with disabilities.

Redevelopment of Willoughby Leisure Centre is schedule to take place 2022/2023 and will include an accessible adult change facility (Changing Places) and other accessible features including an extra accessible toilet and ramped swimming pool.

Refurbishment of Dougherty Community Centre 2022 included installation of two ambulant toilets and disability toilet to meet AS1428 standards, accessible reception desk and accessible servery within Blend Community Cafe

Market Garden Community Garden built two accessible raised garden beds suitable for wheelchair users with a grant received from Council.

The beds were trialled by Mel Harrison -founder of 'Sitting Low Reaching High'.

Event information on websites and marketing materials includes accessibility information including best travel routes on how to get there.

Every effort is made to ensure all activities at all events are accessible with the provision of ramps to grassed areas, clear signage, seated and wheelchair accessible spaces, disabled toilets, lifts from carpark to green spaces.

Council endeavours to have all art installations at ground level but when a platform is required, ramps are installed to ensure access.

All marketing material, print and digital, meet accessibility standards so information is readily available and easy to understand/read.

Development and rollout of Willoughby City Council Resilience Plan

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

A statement on Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and Inclusion is included in all job advertisements and is referenced in Position Descriptions.

With the implementation of a new Council wide IT system a component will be added specifically on EEO and Inclusion focusing on recruitment and training which will further improve awareness.

Equal Employment and Inclusion training will be provided to all staff who are part of the interview panel process.

A Work Health and Safety checklist is included within the induction process and includes access and any adjustments if required.

All Position Statements for new/replacement roles are reviewed to remove any barriers that are not essential requirements. For example, we no longer require a driver's license unless essential and any other unnecessary physical requirements are removed.

As part of Council's Wellbeing strategy there will also be a focus on design from a mental health point of view.

Discussions on sourcing are also held in relation to roles that could be used for traineeships or development including how to support people with a disability.

As part of all recruitment (pre and post interview) candidates are asked if any adjustment or access requirements are needed. These are then managed by People & Culture Unit. This has been in place since July 2019

At induction an ergonomic adjustment hand-out is included and discussed. A WHS Specialist is employed on an as-needed basis to conduct work place assessments.

Working from Home also allows a wider range of people to apply for roles and to ensure appropriate adjustments are in place.

People & Culture Business Partners discuss any specific needs during the HR induction.

PEEP awareness is provided to Emergency Management team and wardens in regular training.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

IAP progress is embedded in the Integrated Planning and Performance framework and reported bi-annually in Councils progress report and Council reviews the delivery of the plan.

Council's webpage for People with Disabilities provides information and links to disability services including NDIS, Carers Gateway, employment services, support and social services and accessible parks and playgrounds.

Council's webpage for Older Adults provides information and links to aged services such as My Age Care, Carers Gateway, support services such as Meals on Wheels, Linen, Out and About transport, social support group and individual services.

Willoughby Leisure Centre provides facilities and classes that are inclusive.

A dedicated page for accessible parks/playgrounds is promoted on the People with Disability page. <https://www.willoughby.nsw.gov.au/Community/Community-services/People-with-Disability/Accessible-Parks-and-Playgrounds>

As parks and playgrounds are upgraded, the Web Team and Open Space team work together to ensure all accessible features are listed on the individual parks pages and linked to the above page.

Information on Dance to the Nines disability dance appears on the Council's People with Disability webpage and is distributed through Council's disability networks.

Council's Dougherty Community Centre provided Tea and Tech sessions and the Internet Kiosk program to enable greater access to and training on accessing systems and services, information on Council's website.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?**

### **What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?**

Council provided an Access and Inclusion Committee to gain feedback from community members regarding access and inclusion issues.

Council participates in and provides a venue for the Northern District Disability Network.

Council participates in and provides a venue for Lower North Shore Interagency Meeting -Bush to the Beach.

Access and Inclusion is embedded within community consultation and engagement for major capital works including upgrades to parks and facilities.

Council engaged extensively with the Access and Inclusion Committee and residents on the development of Willoughby's Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026

Dance to the Nines Working group provides venue and support for planning Dance to Nines quarterly dance to make it totally inclusive.

### **How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?**

Council will continue to provide an Access and Inclusion Reference Group

Council will continue to be part and provide venues for Northern Sydney Disability Network Meeting, Lower North Shore Interagency Meetings- Beach to the Bush

Council will continue to embed access and inclusion within community consultation and engagement for major capital works including upgrades to parks and facilities.

Council will continue to provide a working party and venue for quarterly Dance to the Nines Disability dance.

Council will continue to provide the Connect Collaborate Celebrate Annual art competing where people with disability can showcase their art.

## **How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?**

During community engagement opportunities Council uses its extensive networks to ensure the needs of groups specified in the Disability Inclusion Act 2014 are included.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Ongoing review and reporting against Disability Action Plan without funding or designated Disability Officer.

## **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Successful refurbishment of Dougherty Community centre with improvements to access and inclusion.

Seeking funding to undertake the second stage of refurbishment of the Dougherty Community Centre which will include an accessible adult change facility (Changing Places).

Upgrade of Willoughby Leisure Centre scheduled for 2022-2023 to include an adult change facility and other accessible features.

Successful community engagement and endorsement of Willoughby's Disability Inclusion Action 2022-2026.

## **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Review of Access and Inclusion Committee and Terms of Reference.

Affordable Housing Project -implementation of adaptable and accessible features. Affordable housing options within the LGA currently housing a number of people with disabilities and will continue so into the future.

## **Wingecarribee Shire Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

The Creating and Thriving Art Exhibition was displayed in the new Atrium Gallery in the Civic Centre over the months of December 2021 and January 2022 as part of celebrating the creativity and diversity of people living with disability. This inclusive art exhibition was launched on International Day of People with Disability (3 December 2021). The artworks were submitted by people with disability, with many made available for purchase by the public.

The official bulb planting for the 2022 Tulip Time celebrations included a local aged care accommodation and service provider and the 2022 Tulip Time Ambassador, Australian Paralympian and Southern Highlands local Eliza Stankovic-Mowle.

A number of accessible and inclusive initiatives were funded as part of the Wingecarribee Community Assistance Scheme 2021-2022, including Wheelchair Bowls, a School Leaver Employment Support Program, a Braille camp concert event and a sensory play area.

### **Creating liveable communities**

Refurbishments to the Moss Vale Civic Centre included installing a new lift to enable first floor access for people with disability, as well as the installation of a more inclusive customer service interface including self-service kiosks. The refurbishment also included four meeting rooms, new office space and accessible toilet facilities. These refurbishments mean that meetings and events held at the Civic Centre will be more accessible into the future. Refurbishments to the Moss Vale Library, including new facilities such as a haptic learning tactile desk.

A range of Community Meetings were held across the Shire's towns and villages to ensure that members of the community could ask questions directly to Council representatives without having to visit the Moss Vale Civic Centre. In addition to these meetings, an Executive listening tour was held in 18 locations across the Shire to provide local residents an overview of Council's current focus, introduce the new executive and take questions from the public.

The Renwick Shared Path was completed, which connects Renwick to Mittagong Railway Station via a footpath of approximately two kilometres in length. This includes a new accessible bridge over the rail line, improving access to transport for the community around Mittagong and Renwick. The Seymour Park play space and amenities have been upgraded, funded through a NSW Government Grant. The park now has two accessible parking spaces and an accessible toilet block.



## Supporting access to meaningful employment

Flexible working arrangements have been made available to staff who require them, and a Flexible Working policy and flow chart was developed to detail the application process for flexible working arrangements. All job advertisements acknowledge Wingecarribee Shire Council is an Equal Opportunity Employer that provides an inclusive work environment and embraces the diverse talent of its people.

## Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes

The Master Locksmith Access Key (MLAK) system is continually reviewed to ensure that the key is easier for residents with disability to obtain, for them to gain 24 hours a day, seven days a week access to a network of public facilities including wheelchair accessible toilets. A link has been added on Council's website to the National Public Toilet Map website, which provides details of public accessible toilets across Australia.

During COVID-19 Public Health Orders, a Click and Collect service was introduced by Wingecarribee Public Libraries to ensure library members could continue to access collections and materials by placing their library order online or by phone. This ensured library services could continue to enhance community wellbeing while keeping people safe, including people with disability, older people and others who are immunocompromised.

Council's website has continued to meet level 2.0AA of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. Steps to improve upon this rating have been taken, including adding audio playback functionality to the website to make it more accessible for people who are blind or have vision impairment.

Building inspections and Development Application processes have been made more accessible and efficient. An accessible MyInspect booking system has been launched so that people can book civil or building inspections online, and the Development Application tracker has also been made available to improve the ease of engaging with Council for development matters.

Internally there has been a move to using more online forms to reduce paper waste and reduce the need for printing or scanning, which improves procedural accessibility for staff with disability and staff who work from home.

## How have you determined that your organisation is meeting the needs of people with disability?

### What engagement or feedback have you had from people with disability?

While continuing to deliver against Council's 2017-2021 DIAP, Council also performed extensive external community consultation and engagement with stakeholders to inform the development of Council's 2022-2026 DIAP. Planning originally commenced in 2021 to develop engagement strategies to ensure that the views and opinions of local residents and service providers were captured in Council's new DIAP. This community consultation included a survey seeking comments and feedback from all sectors of the community. 146 surveys were completed through Your Say Wingecarribee, and an additional 41 surveys were completed during face to face consultations held at disability services, group homes and a pop up stall in Bowral. 15 people participated in community focus groups.

### How has this been incorporated into your current and future planning?

The data gathered through this community consultation contributed to the development of Council's 2022-2026 DIAP, which outlines Council's commitment to improving the level of inclusion and access to Council services, facilities, information and programs over the next four years.

## How have you determined that your organisation is addressing the needs of groups specified in the DIA?

The community consultation to develop Council's new DIAP involved hearing from people with disability who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, women with disability, carers and

parents of children with disability, young people and children with disability, people with disability who identify as LGBTIQ+, and people with disability from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

We have met and consulted with disability services and group homes to ensure a range of perspectives fed into the development of our new DIAP. We will continue these relationships with services, homes and local people with disability to inform the implementation of the new DIAP moving forward and ensure our actions and activities address the needs of these specific groups.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest challenge in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

Resourcing has been a major challenge in implementing the DIAP actions this past financial year, in terms of both staff and funding.

Council had a number of staffing changes over the course of 2021-2022 and these have resulted in delays to accessibility improvements as well as gaps in organisational knowledge regarding DIAP implementation. In recent months we have been employing quite a few new staff so will have improved staffing resources moving forward.

In terms of financial resources, while we have applied for funding to improve the physical accessibility of our Shire in various ways, these applications have not always been successful or have been limited to certain areas. This has been a challenge and a source of frustration to community members.

### **What has been your organisation's greatest success in implementing DIAP actions this past financial year?**

A key success over 2021-2022 was the refurbishment of the Moss Vale Civic Centre to include accessibility improvements, meaning that the Council's Civic Centre is more accessible to local members of the community who come to ask questions, pay their rates, attend meetings or use the library.

### **Is there anything else you're doing or planning for the future to contribute to greater outcomes for people with disability?**

Council has prepared a new implementation framework for our 2022-2026 DIAP, and will be forming working groups to ensure the embedding of the DIAP into our day-to-day activities. These groups will involve internal Council staff, with and without disability, and community members with disability.

We will also continue to apply for funding to improve the accessibility of our Shire, including a range of accessible and inclusive Community Development projects.

## **Wollondilly Shire Council**

### **Management and provision of infrastructure**

The following actions have been incorporated into core business

Advocacy for completion of access upgrades to all Bus Stops, for upgrade of all Train Stations and Strategic Commitment when we work to a minimum standard to upgrade our Council Buildings and Facilities

The following actions have been completed

- Public toilets strategy development and implementation
- Playground upgrade in Warragamba to be an inclusive playground in partnership with Touched by Olivia foundation

## Looking after the community

The following actions have been incorporated into core business

- Quarterly Disability Information Forums to inform the community in an inclusive and accessible setting
- Provision of Accessible Community Bus available to hire to transport and socially disadvantaged groups in the Community
- Advocacy for Services to have a presence in Wollondilly and provide services where gaps are evident
- Community Engagement Strategy to include a checklist on inclusive consultation

The following actions have been completed

- Utilise International Day of People with Disability to promote inclusion to the greater community
- Include National Relay Service (TTY - Teletypewriter) contact details in all generic Council publicity and advertising materials and information provided has been completed

## Efficient and effective council

The following actions have been incorporated into core business

- Engage external facilitator to develop and deliver comprehensive Inclusion Training
- Continue to employ Ageing and Disability Officer after salary subsidy ceases 30 June 2018
- Council wide annual inclusion & diversity month with all teams working on a mini inclusion project
- Flexible working hours for staff to facilitate and support staff work life balance, family and caring commitments and support staff who have disability
- Review recruitment processes, forms and language for accessibility
- Identify and work with a disability employment organisation to assist with opportunities for employment and Job Access to support employees in their role
- Customer Service Training delivered to all staff (including new starters) to include Disability Awareness
- Use plain English in our communication
- Promote that Information is available in a range of formats on request
- Develop and implement plan to ensure web content compliance with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 of AA standard as required by the National Transition Strategy
- Disability Access Advisory Committee

The following actions have been completed

- As part of Council's Workforce Management Strategy, include and develop new guidelines for inclusion and Equal Employment Opportunities
- Develop an Inclusion and Access tool for Council staff to use when organising public events and activities Complete
- Council internal Steering Group to implement the DIAP and track progress
- Investigate closed captioning of Council archived videos

## Wollongong City Council

Council is striving to make Wollongong an inclusive city that provides equal opportunity for people with disability to participate in all aspects of community life. Our aim is to be a leader in promoting and supporting the social and economic participation of people with disability. Our Disability

Inclusion Action Plan (Plan) sets out what we will do to support inclusion of people with disability in our city. It was developed after extensive community engagement to make sure the priorities reflect what is important to our community.

The Plan will assist us to meet requirements for local government in the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014.

Our plan has 91 Actions across four focus areas. Two have been completed, 80 in progress and nine not started.

### **Building positive attitudes**

Council delivered a range of projects to promote positive community attitudes and behaviours towards people with disability, including:

- Delivered two online ‘Conversations About Inclusion’ to recognise and celebrate International Day of Person’s with Disability. 34 Council managers participated in the conversations with people with disability. The aim of the conversations was to provide an opportunity to raise awareness, build understanding and continue the discussion about inclusion.
- Drafted an Inclusive and Accessible Event Guide which is expected to be available on Council’s website in 2022.
- Delivered Inclusive and Accessible Events Training for 21 Council officers.
- Worked with Flagstaff as part of the Bike City Program to draft a training module for tourism venue accessibility.
- Created a Quiet Space in the Youth Centre including dimmable lights, fidgets, and sensory items.
- Designed and facilitated workshops in collaboration with Relationships Australia for Neurodiverse LGBTIQ+ Young People about healthy relationships.
- Continued to deliver a range of programs via our Youth Services including TeenZ Connect program, tours of Wollongong Youth Centre and Belong workshops to increase participation of young people with disability.
- Created a partnership between Beaton Park Leisure Centre and Rainbow Club to deliver a learn to swim program aligned to NDIS (National Disability Insurance Scheme) funding. 18 participants are enrolled.
- Continued to deliver exercise programs for young people with disability at Lakeside Leisure Centre. Ten-week programs are delivered in line with school terms. 20 students were enrolled in each program.
- Provided the Quiet Space as part of the annual Comic Gong festival. The space was popular, and many participants made it their home base for the day, dropping in and out to decompress from the excitement of the day. Almost 200 people visited the space.
- Delivered an inclusive session of Create Features for people who are blind or have low vision and the Deaf community to come along and find out more about native animals. Touching and holding the animals was a highlight.
- Continued the ‘Visually Impaired Knitters’ group in Wollongong City Library.
- Hosted ‘Gingerbread House’ making workshops at Wollongong City Library. One with an Auslan Interpreter and two in partnership with Guide Dogs NSW for people who were blind or had low vision.
- Worked with Disability Trust to provide artwork for UCI (Union Cycliste Internationale) event decoration. Works will go into the Ethel Hayton Walkway and the Arts Precinct and include 2D and 3D pieces.
- Provided Access2Express Art Tours for 50 students with disability from Kiama and Dapto high schools.
- Continued to facilitate ‘Art and Dementia Tours’ at Wollongong Art Gallery.

## Creating liveable communities

Council delivered a range of projects to improve access to the built environment for people with disability, including:

- Installed a new unisex accessible toilet and two new ambulant toilets at Corrimal Beach Tourist Park.
- Installed a new 'Changing Place' accessible adult change facility at Port Kembla Beach which can be used 24 hours.
- Installed 16 new footpaths and associated kerb ramps.
- Upgraded eight existing footpaths and associated kerb ramps.
- Installed five new cycle/pedestrian shared paths and renewed two cycle/ pedestrian shared paths.
- Renewed six Council car parks including the accessible car parking spaces.
- Installed a new carpark with accessible parking at Cringila Hills.
- Installed a new bus stop at Dapto Mall.
- Renewed Bulli Beach Reserve playground which included the addition of a range of accessible and inclusive elements such as accessible parking, continuous accessible paths of travel, a wheelchair accessible carousel, variety of accessible swings and signage.
- Purchased five personal transfer hoists for use at our aquatic facilities to transfer wheelchair users to pool wheelchairs where required.
- Installed an accessible barbecue with continuous accessible path of travel to camp kitchen at Windang Tourist Park.

Council delivered a range of planning and design projects, including:

- Commenced design work for an accessible adult change facility for Western Suburbs Pool, Unanderra.
- Designed new access ramp for Port Kembla Beach.
- Commenced work on planning improvements to accessible parking in Wollongong CBD.

## Supporting access to meaningful employment

Council has provided opportunities for people with disability to participate in work experience, including:

- Employed two people with disability via the cadet apprentice and trainee program.
- Worked with the Disability Trust to continue to deliver a one-year work experience program to provide a work experience program in our library for a person with disability.
- Provided work experience for four people who indicated they had disability.
- Delivered a social procurement workshop for Council officers at which a disability provider presented information about the services they provide.

Council has delivered a range of learning and development opportunities for Council officers to promote and support their understanding of disability, including:

- Delivered Diversity Awareness Training for 35 Council officers.
- Delivered Autism Awareness Training for six Council officers.
- Delivered Dementia Awareness Training for ten Council officers.
- Drafted a Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging training strategy.
- Attended a tour of Flagstaff Group employment services for people with disability. 18 Council officers attended.



## Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes

Council revised policy and planning documents to strengthen and support access and inclusion outcomes

- Adopted revised version of Wollongong DCP 2009- Chapter E1 Access for People with Disability.
- Drafted an evaluation framework to monitor and measure the outcomes of our Disability Inclusion Action Plan.

Council undertook projects to increase access to information, including:

- Completed training on developing accessible print and PDF documents and writing in plain English to assist us to produce accessible publications that are accessible from a design and text/copy viewpoint.
- Provided a range of communications including more than 30 media releases about access including promotion of new accessible playgrounds at Cringila and Bulli, the new 'Changing Place' accessible adult change facility at Port Kembla Beach and to recognise International Day of Persons with Disability.
- Developed Easy English versions of our Community Strategic Plan, Our Future Our Wollongong 2032 and a Tree Removal or Pruning on Private Property Guide.
- Upgraded three websites to meet access standards and include information about access Tourist Parks, Leisure Centres and The Vale Golf Course.
- Created new web content to promote beach accessibility and the location of hearing loops in our community facilities.
- Provided social stories for Comic Gong 2022 and Paint the Gong REaD.
- Promoted Council services for people with disability at the Illawarra Disability Options Expo.

Council has continued to engage people with disability, including:

- Engaged people with disability to inform Council projects and updated community engagement tools and resources to meet access standards.
- Convened the Walking, Cycling and Mobility Reference Group. This group includes representation of people with disability and their carers and provides advice to Council to inform our projects, policies, and plans.

## Woollahra Municipal Council

### Building positive attitudes

Completed review of style guide - Style Guide includes recommended font size of no smaller 11pt and also recommends typeface. We have included inclusive image use and our primary corporate colours provide good accessibility requirements. We promote use of dark text on light background and avoiding large amounts of reversed out text which is difficult to read and scan.

Policy and Procedure template has been designed for use by Governance and is accessible and easy to read and follow.

The Preschool has a high educator to child ratio and ordinarily employs a permanent full-time Inclusion Support Teacher who facilitates reflective practice to address any inclusion barriers. Expertise and knowledge of the team is high, however increasing knowledge through training is ongoing - this is especially important for new staff to ensure consistent best practice across all educators. New staff will need training in Autism, Circle of Security and Positive Behaviour Support.

Located on HPE there is an Event Management document template that includes accessibility (continuous paths of travel, accessible parking, accessible venues / locations / toilets /parking, inclusive promotional material (language and imagery). This document is accessible to all staff members via HPE and is a prerequisite when organising a community and cultural event.

Council delivered a two day accredited Mental Health First Aid Training Course for members from community organisations which was conducted by a NSW Health Course Facilitator in June 2022.

The Building Resilient Teenagers: A Survival Guide for Parents was held via Webinar in May 2022. This was conducted by The Resilience Centre and focused on building the skills of parents to better manage and contribute to their child's growth and development in a supportive and positive way

Due to COVID-19, rather than hold an International Day of People with Disability event in 2021, Council arranged for social media posts, it was subject to the GM's staff update. There was also an article published in the staff newsletter in regards to International Day of People with a Disability.

Staff are aware of the process for anyone in the community who requires assistance.

Continued to provide training for staff on the National Relay Service

Communications & Engagement have contacted Disability Services Australia (DSA) regarding an image library that includes appropriate images, for external events and are awaiting a formal response however images need to be sourced locally with permission. In the last two years

Council has developed a good working relationship with the marketing representatives at Inala and Holdsworth and now has images with permission for use.

4 EEO sessions delivered at Induction (face to face an online) with 39 staff attending nine one-on-one Recruitment training sessions delivered via Zoom and in person. 100% of staff sitting on interview panels undertook training prior to participating in interviews.

Mental Health and Disability Awareness training requirements met as required. Conducted Mental Health Awareness Training for all staff with 253 staff having attended (64%).

Training in designing dementia friendly environments provided as required.

### **Creating liveable communities**

Develop a policy and procedures for Council organising for bins to be brought out for those unable to.

Council's website features a range of accessible amenities and parks and playgrounds. New features are added as they occur and when assets are upgraded. Social media posts promoting accessible facilities are scheduled throughout the calendar year.

In the last six months' stories promoting the accessibility of the new Woollahra Gallery at Redleaf have been published and the Communications Department are currently working (July 2022) on a story with Inala on accessible facilities and locations in the LGA to promote greater use.

Watsons Bay Baths is a seasonal mention scheduled for Sept - Dec each year.

Accessibility is listed on the Woollahra Council Website including Woollahra Libraries being fully accessible to people with disabilities. There is also access via the online library. The accessible venues include Woollahra Council Chambers, Woollahra Library at Double Bay, Paddington Library, Watsons Bay Library, Cooper Park Community Hall, Cross St, Studio 1, EJ Ward Paddington Community Centre, Rose Bay Cottage, Sherbrooke Hall, The Bay Room, The Gunyah, and The Studio at The Drill Hall. All of which are listed on the website including accessibility features.

Council continues to fund Holdsworth to run programs and activities for the community. During this reporting period Council developed a new three year funding agreement with Holdsworth commencing in 1 July 2022.

The Seniors Week 2022 brochure promoted a monthly bus service to Woollahra Library at Double Bay, placing waste bins out for weekly collection and mowing grass verges. This is targeted for those having difficulties due to age, ill health, hardship or disability.

The Woollahra Council website also promotes Verge Mowing Service.

The Preschool Inclusion Support Program is in place and continues to provide support for children with additional support needs.

A number of events were held in the accessible venues including the Thornton Room, Woollahra Art Gallery and Woollahra Library at Double Bay, all of which have accessible access (i.e. lifts, toilets, signage, and hearing loops). The Inclusion (Disability, Aged & Carers) Advisory Committee, key local disability service providers and the wider community were consulted when developing the DIAP 2022 to 2026. Due to COVID-19 programs and events were held via Webinar which enabled a more inclusive audience. Council funded Holdsworth to provide Community Transport.

Regularly monitored the availability of aged and disability housing. Developed an upgrade plan to increase the number of Council's community venues for hire and community buildings that are accessible.

Council hosted Inala Disabilities Exhibition at the Woollahra Gallery at Redleaf in 2022.

Council's Engineers are currently preparing the Draft Active Transport Plan (ATP). Once the Draft ATP is adopted by Council, this strategic document which sets out a plan for a number of walking projects, will assist in preparing a long term program of works to audit footpaths. In conjunction, Council's five year footpath renewal program will also assist in determining areas that require improvements as we continue to roll-out reconstructed footpaths. This investigation is still on going.

Council's Engineers deliver a five year footpath renewal program which includes identified sites where new kerb ramps are to be installed. Throughout FY2021-2022, Council implemented 15 new kerb ramps across the Municipality.

Council's Engineers are currently reviewing the website to determine what information is best provided for mobility parking applications to residents. This investigation is still ongoing.

Council's Engineers are currently reviewing the health carers parking permit to improve any issues or complications with the application process. The current scheme operates effectively however Council will explore opportunities to widen the term 'health carer' to allow varying carers to be eligible. The investigation is still on going.

Council's Engineers have advocated for the NSW Government to upgrade public transport infrastructure. Council has advocated for improved access for mobility impaired people at Edgecliff Station and an accessible ramp via New McClean Street has been established, as well as a lift within the centre.

The total number of Home Library members currently registered with the service is 93, with 51 participants living in their own home and 42 living in an Aged Care Facility within Woollahra. The service loaned 3,972 physical items, 465 eAudio, 52 electronic devices, and made 30 courier delivery runs during this reporting period. The Bus to Books service has been trialled on a monthly basis between February and June 2022. The service provides an intermediary stage for Library members living within the LGA who are limited due to mobility or access to transport. Members are picked up from their homes to visit the Library, and dropped back home via Holdsworth Community cars. This service has been promoted widely through Council Newsletters and an advertisement in the Wentworth Courier.

Woollahra Libraries updated all printed collateral during this period. The new welcome flyer includes the following text. "Woollahra Library at Double Bay has lift access to all levels, height adjustable self-checkout machines and a hearing loop in our Event Space. All libraries are wheelchair and pram-friendly, with ramp access and disabled toilet".

Library Venue Hire page highlights the accessibility of the Woollahra Library at Double Bay [https://www.woollahra.nsw.gov.au/library/using\\_the\\_library/bookings/spaces\\_for\\_hire](https://www.woollahra.nsw.gov.au/library/using_the_library/bookings/spaces_for_hire)

All Library web event listings state: 'venue accessibility: fully accessible'.

The audit of all parks and public spaces has not yet commenced. Accessibility features and continuous path of travel are key design features when planning upgrades to our parks and toilets. Some recent examples which have been completed featuring these features are the Plumb Reserve Playground upgrade and Moncur Reserve seating and play elements. Two current projects which are in the design phase include the Trumper Park Pathway Upgrade and the Lyne Park Playground Renewal.

A feasibility study into braille in wayfinding signage has not yet commenced. However, braille in wayfinding signage and disability inclusion has been considered in the draft Woollahra Active Transport Plan. The inclusion of braille is considered and implement where feasible on new signage. An example of this is the new Redleaf Wayfinding signage which has been recently installed. The feasibility study into including braille will be undertaken as part of a Wayfinding Signage Strategy which is yet to be funded and commenced. Wayfinding signage is including as a key aspect in Council's draft Recreation Strategy and draft Crown Land Plans of Management. The inclusion of signages will continue to be included in all future Masterplans and Plans of Management.

Develop and implement a policy and procedure for the mowing of road verges for those unable to mow their own.

Access Consultant are engaged to review architectural plans before any major building works are undertaken to ensure all upgrades are DDA compliant.

Signage package highlighting that the customer service centre and council chambers are accessible is currently being finalised and signage will be installed by December 2022.

Install accessible toilets at Chiswick Gardens. Completed

Ensure housing options for people with disability through the provision of adaptable housing

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Ongoing monitoring and evaluation of opportunities via Job Access (parent organisation). Council's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Policy endorsed and communicated at all levels. All hiring managers have undertaken EEO training. Reasonable Adjustment Policy implemented. Reviewed for currency on 1 February 2022.

Review of EziSuite recruitment process completed.

Adverts include a statement encouraging diversity and inclusion.

Variety of options offered to enable access.

After Council participation in AccessAbility Day in FY 2019- 2020, Council remains open to collaborating with local Disability Employment Services (DES) providers and offering tailored job experience to people with a disability.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Update Council website to include accessibility features of Council's venues and facilities

Review Council's website against standard WCAG 2.0

Consider and include actions to quickly communicate with people with vision or sight impairment during a crisis as part of Council's crisis communications and business continuity plan.

Children with additional support are able to access funding and it contributes towards the employment of an additional Inclusion Support Teacher. This process is ongoing and there are policies and procedures around this which staff follow and are made aware upon the child's enrolment at the preschool that are located on HPE for staff members to access as well as hard copies at the preschool.

Test the usability of the Small Sculpture Prize large print exhibition guide.

A new bi-monthly printed What's On Woollahra guide has been established to promote all of Council's events and programs. This guide uses the recommended accessibility font size.

Review Customer Service Charter to ensure commitment to assisting all customers and directing customers to the appropriate service if it is not provided by Council is complete. Customer design projects have been run which put the customer at the centre of future decisions and technological enhancements.

Test the usability of the Library What's On large print guide is complete. A new bi-monthly printed What's On Woollahra guide has been established to promote all of Council's events and programs. This guide uses the recommended accessibility font size.

Increase the number of community activities held in accessible venues is ongoing. During this period Library face to face programming delivery resumed after COVID-19 restrictions were lifted.

Woollahra Libraries hosted 305 in-person events from Jan - June which includes Under 5's, school holidays, youth, Local History, adult/seniors & Tech Connect Express across our three accessible libraries. Additionally 12 online programs were hosted featuring closed captions.

Continue to allow registration for events and activities through a range of accessible options is ongoing. Events can be booked by phone, in person at our Customer Service Centre or online.

Investigate the development of a regional Community Information Directory for services for people with disability is ongoing. The current listings on Council's website includes services provided in neighbouring areas.

Promotional flyers to use plain language, consider inclusive illustrations and details about accessibility of the venue is ongoing. Some documents require more technical information but there is an emphasis on Plain English and accessibility.

## **Yass Valley Council**

### **Building positive attitudes**

On-line disability awareness training sourced. Community Services and Library staff promote availability to staff.

Online information on making your event accessibility guide to local and regional event organisers available on Council's website as part of event information.

A Youth and Family Interagency group has been set up which includes all community and provider services (including disability services).

Utilised International Day of People with Disability to promote inclusion to the general community.

Audit report distributed to Committee Members 10 Sept 2018. Access must be considered as part of any approval for publicly accessible buildings and is routinely part of pre lodgement discussions.

### **Creating liveable communities**

Project brief prepared in relation to undertaking an audit of designated accessible parking spaces on-street and in car parks in the CBD, town, and villages to identify the number of spaces available in close proximity to key services and their compliance with access standards and develop a strategy to address needs.

Installed automatic doors at the Yass Visitor Information Centre.

Considered prioritisation of DIAP actions in the development of the Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan (PAMP) and annual budget allocations.

Developed and implemented a program for installing and upgrading kerb ramps and footpaths to improve continuous accessible paths of travel and deliver access outcomes. Priority locations included Town and village centres, Council buildings linked to designated accessible car parking and key transport nodes as part of the PAMP.

### **Supporting access to meaningful employment**

Relationships being developed to work with disability services employment organisations to identify opportunities for employment and work experience at Council and within the community.

Reviewing Council's recruitment processes, forms and languages for accessibility is a continual process.

Staff facilities have been adapted to accommodate staff with disabilities.



Three staff with disability worked for council during 2021-2022.

### **Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

Format for printed documents altered so captions included for all illustrations/ photographs and colour contrasting being used is completed.

New website was launched August 2018 compliant with the relevant standards.

Access Committee representative joined working group to review format.

A new website is planned for 2023 with improved communications for customers with disability.

Ongoing advocacy undertaken seeking upgraded facilities at Yass Hospital.

All Development Applications are required to be assessed against the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and the Building Code of Australia. Report to extract information from Council's Development Application Register not yet designed.