

# Minutes

## Minutes of the Equal Access Advisory Committee Meeting held Wednesday 15 November 2023

### Venue:

The Harvard Room, Tweed Heads Administration Office and online via MS Teams

### Time:

10:00am

### Present:

Pat Miller (Chair); Kyle Sculley; Karen Sculley; Colin Usher; (Community delegates).  
Cr Meredith Dennis (Tweed Shire Council delegate)

### Ex-officio:

Shannon Carruth (Acting Manager Inclusive & Creative Communities), Lisa Francisco (Team Leader Community Wellbeing); Giselle Benitez Hetherington (Community Development Officer Inclusion/Secretariat/Minutes Officer).

### Guest:

Jodie Hewett (Recreation Planner, Parks and Active Communities Unit) (Tweed Shire Council).

### Apologies:

Suzanne Hudson; Vanessa Riggs (Committee Members); James Owen (Tweed Shire Council delegate).

### Agenda Items:

#### **A1. Meeting open and Acknowledgement of Country – led by Pat Miller, Chair.**

Pat Miller welcomed all in attendance and invited Shannon Carruth to introduce Lisa Francisco.

Giselle advised members that Wendy Buckingham (community delegate) has recently given her resignation. Giselle acknowledged Wendy's contribution on the Committee since her appointment in early 2021. Pat proposed that the Committee writes to Wendy to thank her for her service, acknowledging her contribution and wishing her all the best.

Giselle confirmed the members in attendance formed a quorum.

**Moved: Pat Miller**

**Seconded: Meredith Dennis**

**RESOLVED** that the Committee writes to Wendy Buckingham to acknowledge and thank her for her contribution to the Committee since her appointment in early 2021.

#### **Action Item:**

1. *Chair drafts a letter on behalf of Committee, to Wendy Buckingham to acknowledge and thank her for her contribution to the Committee since her appointment in early 2021.*

#### **A2. Tweed Business Chamber Breakfast Forum – 12 December 2023 6.30am to 8.30am**

Colin gave an update on the planning for this event, with the program and speakers being finalised. This includes Kyle and Giselle, speaking to personal experience of disability and the Tweed Access and Inclusion Plan 2023-2026, respectively.

Giselle announced the recent news received that Council was successful in its application to participate in the 'Inclusion Works' program, delivered by Council for Intellectual Disability, as one of 6 NSW Councils selected for the 2024 program.

Members discussed inviting Council's People and Culture staff and other targeted members of the Tweed Disability Network involved in disability employment services, to attend the Tweed Business Chamber breakfast forum. Members were reminded of the invitation to attend as guests, and to confirm with Colin via email with full name and dietary requirements. Members agreed there was merit in a post-event story via Council's media and the Business Chamber monthly newsletter with information about local disability employment services and EAAC achievements.

**Action Item:**

2. *Giselle and Colin to coordinate invitations and RSVPs for the following stakeholders to attend the Tweed Business Chamber Breakfast Forum:*
  - a. *Council's People and Culture staff;*
  - b. *targeted Tweed Disability Network members in disability employment;*
  - c. *all EAAC members.*

### **A3. Committee mid-term performance review and member self-assessment**

Giselle presented the results of the member self-assessment task with group discussions:

- 3 member self-assessment responses were submitted.
- Committee performance in accordance with the Terms of Reference was ranked as 4 out of 5 stars (ie. 'Somewhat well' in addressing the needs and concerns of people with disabilities in the community).
- Committee participation and collaboration with staff was ranked as 3.3 out of 5 stars ('Neutral-Somewhat effectively' in effectively collaborating and communicating with Council staff to achieve the Committee's goals). Members discussed a challenge experienced at some meetings, where some members felt they were observers and could not contribute equally to discussions. The group acknowledged the importance of attending meetings and reviewing material beforehand to ensure discussions were informed and meetings were productive. It was also noted that, as an advisory committee, not everything members suggest will be accepted or implemented by Council.
- Committee meeting achievements and impacts was ranked at 4 out of 5 stars ('Somewhat helpful'). The group discussed the possibility and merits of introducing a standing agenda item on emerging community issues for council staff and members to bring for discussion.
- Goorimahbah - Place of Stories concept design project was a common highlight and achievement. The group considered contributing factors were that their early and genuine involvement in the project and regular updates allowed members time to think and delve into project details.
- The Committee's top 5 priorities for future work were:
  1. Inclusive employment
  2. Disaster risk reduction and preparedness programs
  3. Informing draft policies
  4. Accessible infrastructure, public spaces and facilities; and
  5. Sharing empowering stories of people with disability challenging stereotypes.

Members discussed the opportunity for these priorities to shape the agenda of remaining meetings.

Giselle reminded members that an end-of-term performance review will be required prior to June meeting.

### **A4. Places to Swim: Inclusive Swimming Project at Jack Evans Boat Harbour by Jodie Hewett**

Jodie presented the background and process involved in preparing the draft Concept Plan, which was recently on public exhibition. The group discussed the following design elements:

- ramp to the beach and water
- overall layout for movement
- handrails, safety guards and crash barriers along and at ramp ends
- shade structures and trees, including the use of native species
- possibility of beach wheelchairs for hire, their need for storage and management.

Jodie invited members to meet on-site to inspect and discuss these options further. Members expressed interest tabled a date for end November or early December, to be confirmed.

**Action Item:**

3. *Jodie and Giselle to coordinate site visit by members at Jack Evans Boat Harbour for early December.*

**A5. Acknowledging International Day of People with Disability (IDPWD) on 3 December 2023**

Giselle advised on the proposed options to acknowledge IDPWD, with a series of media promotions that highlight Council's Inclusion program and achievements.

1. The Disability Inclusive Emergency Planning (DIEP) workshop on 28 June 2023, announcement of launch of a video and the University of Sydney Workshop Outcomes Report.
2. The Tweed Disability Network and a spotlight on a member and their celebration of IDPWD, this is subject to member engagement and activities.
3. Tweed Business Chamber breakfast forum and the EAAC. This is tentative, noting timing of the event and Christmas, end of year.

Members praised the DIEP video and proposed options to recognise IDPWD.

**A6. Tweed Access and Inclusion Plan**

Giselle gave an update on the engagement activities and outcomes for the exhibition of the draft plan, including information sessions held and attended, and feedback received from community. Giselle is conducting analysis of the feedback and how it may relate to adjustments to the draft plan, with the view to submit a Council report recommending their adoption of the plan at their December meeting. Subject to their approval, Council staff will work toward launching the final plan in the new year.

**A6. 2024 meeting schedule**

The group tabled tentative dates for Tuesdays 13 February, 16 April and 11 June – to be confirmed.

**Action Item:**

4. *Giselle to confirm February meeting for 2024.*

**General Business:**

**B1. Update from Tiffany Stodart, Destination Communication & Customer Experience, in relation to the Northern Rivers Rail Trail**

- Heritage and engineering assessments for the access ramp/path and toilet at the Murwillumbah Railway Station are underway. The heritage requirements have impacted timeframes, but plans are expected in December and members will be invited to comment, either via email or at on-site inspection (to be confirmed). Members expressed interest to attend a site visit on Thursday 14 December 2023.

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- Inclusive services are expanding, including Everybody E-Bikes operating from Murwillumbah Railway station and Cycling Without Age proposing a service from Burringbar.
- Extra seating and rest stops between nodes are being explored with the aim to complete in the next 8 months.

**Action Item:**

5. *Giselle to confirm tentative site visit dates with members, subject to Murwillumbah access path and toilet designs being available.*

**Next Meeting:**

The next meeting date of the Equal Access Advisory Committee is to be confirmed, as per Action Item 4.

The meeting closed at 12:00pm.

**EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM'S COMMENTS:**

Nil.

**EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM'S RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Nil.