

Minutes of the Equal Access Advisory Committee Meeting held Wednesday 14 July 2021

Venue:

Harvard Room, Tweed Heads Administration Office and Virtual Conference

Time:

10am

Present:

Karen Sculley (Chairperson), Suzanne Hudson (Virtual) (Deputy Chairperson), Kyle Sculley, Wendy Buckingham, Colin Usher, Vanessa Riggs (Community Representatives), Helen Carter, Giselle Benitez; Robert Noakes (Virtual), Alana Brooks (Virtual), Gabby Arthur (Virtual) (Minutes) (Tweed Shire Council)

Apologies:

Tarhnee Wilson (Community Representative), Cr Warren Polglase, Tracey Stinson (Tweed Shire Council)

Minutes of Previous Meeting:

Moved: Suzanne Hudson

Seconded: Colin Usher

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Equal Access Advisory Committee meeting held Wednesday 14 July 2021 be accepted as a true and accurate record of the proceedings of that meeting.

Business Arising:

Agenda Items:

A1. Welcome, Introduction and Acknowledgement of Country

Karen welcomed the members and opened the meeting with the Acknowledgement of Country.

A2. Administration

(a) Members invited to submit additional items for discussion

Transport for NSW

Giselle advised that the Transport for NSW representatives were unable to attend today's meeting about the Tweed Transport Plan. This item will be added to the next Agenda.

Rail Trail

Suzi asked if a Council officer was attending the meeting about the Rail Trail. Giselle advised that due to the EAAC's large Agenda the officer's attendance was rescheduled to the following meeting. Suzi suggested that the train line could run beside the rail trail as solar or light rail. This would be beneficial for people with disability as they will not be able to use the rail trail due to the length of the trail as there are no accessible sections. Suzi advised that if the railway line ran beside the trail, there would be the opportunity for users to hop between the trail and train at different stops. Giselle advised she understood this opportunity is no longer possible. Suzi asked if any of the EAAC members have used the solar train in Byron Bay and one member said they had. The EAAC discussed a recent

Tweed Light Rail study which plans for the light rail to connect Coolangatta to Tweed Heads. Giselle advised that Transport for NSW may provide further information on this study when its representatives attend the next EAAC meeting to consult on the Tweed Transport Plan.

(b) Committee term Extension

The caretaker period affecting committees will not occur this election. Council has extended the Committee term until February 2022. Council's Governance Section is reviewing all of the Committees of Council and each of the Terms of Reference. Once the process has been completed, the Expressions of Interest for the Committees will be opened. The EAAC won't meet in September as there won't be a councillor representative decided. The EAAC will next meet in October by which time there should be a councillor representative and then again in December. Council will keep EAAC informed about the review.

(c) Review of Previous Actions

- *CDO-Ageing and Disability to facilitate a meeting with EAAC members and Roads Safety Officer at Fingal Beach to discuss accessible car parking options and costs.*
The preferred space for the Fingal Beach accessible car park was the parallel space next to the Surf Club and this has been adopted by the Local Transport Committee and Council. Giselle thanked the EAAC for its feedback.
- *CDO - Ageing and Disability and Roads Safety Officer to liaise with EAAC members to identify locations in Murwillumbah where footpaths need repair to include as Customer Service Requests.*
Council's preferred option is for all requests to go through Council's Customer Service section so that a Customer Service Request can be raised.
- *CDO - Ageing and Disability to circulate Tweed Pedestrian and Bike Plan engagement summary and powerpoint slides to EAAC members.*
Alana advised that a drop in session and workshop has been scheduled for the first week of August however due to the current Covid-19 regulations, phone interviews may be the best option.
- *CDO-Ageing and Disability and Recreation Planner to circulate Goorimahbah – Place of Stories Inclusive Park and Play Space Your Say Tweed link and Easy English information to members and other networks.*
This information has been circulated.
- *Members to provide any further feedback on the Goorimahbah – Place of Stories Concept Design engagement to CDO - Ageing and Disability and Recreation Planner.*
Jodie Hewett is completing her reporting to Council this week. Please raise any questions or provide feedback as soon as possible.
- *EAAC members to review the mock example or live Byron Shire Council example of the Open Cities platform, and provide feedback on access features.*
Peter Mitchell has asked Giselle to thank the EAAC for its involvement and great feedback.
- *DO-Ageing and Disability and Program Leader - Digital Design to confirm details for User Acceptance Testing (UAT) with the EAAC on the morning of 9 June 2021.*
The UAT has been completed.

- *EAAC members to confirm their device and assistive technology software needs, and transport needs.*
The website UAT has been completed.
- *CDO-Ageing and Disability and Program Leader, Digital Design to circulate UAT scenarios for EAAC members to test at home.*
The website UAT testing has been completed.
- *EAAC members to review the Tweed Access and Inclusion Plan 2018 -2021 to prepare comments for discussion at the next meeting on scope, priorities and engagement for the new Plan.*
Paperwork provided to EAAC prior to meeting.
- *CDO-Ageing and Disability to table letter from Ronald Douglas dated 18 March 2021 for next EAAC meeting. Council is looking at this item through the Pedestrian Mobility Access Plan.*
Council has replied to Mr Douglas.

A3. New Access and Inclusion Plan 2022 - 2026

(a) Project Plan

The new plan needs to be developed, consulted and adopted by July 2022. The plan will be used by Council to develop its programs, facilities and services but it is also a plan for the community and will include the community's needs and priorities.

(b) Scope and Priorities

What are the focus areas that the EAAC would like to see included?

Focus areas:

- Inclusion, opinion matters. Need to ensure people with disability are valued when they go to places including retail and businesses.
- Demonstrate how people with disability can be brought into the public space eg new Fanta advertisement, Toyota advertisement, Target and Kmart brochures featuring children and adults with disability. Visual imagery of local people with disability be included in Council's promotions. Create a library stock of images.
- Education and engagement with the community. Getting it out to the community as the majority of our community are not aware that there is an Access & Inclusion Plan. Speak to businesses and community groups in general encouraging them to be inclusive. Engage with mainstream outlets rather than the advocates who are already doing it.
- Sporting Groups - demonstration games and activities.
- Business Chambers - Colin will arrange for Kyle and Suzi to attend a breakfast. Discuss value of Companion cards and need for physical access.
- People with complex psychological disability. It is very difficult for people who are non-verbal.
- Companion Cards for local businesses. Twin Towns Services Club doesn't recognise Companion Cards. All business should honour Companion Cards. Promotion required to businesses and people in the community about accessing the Companion Card.
- Awareness raising through linkages such as Be Kind / Stay Kind which is a worldwide campaign.

- Awareness that you don't need to be born with a disability to have a disability, it can come on at any time eg Covid-19 has brought out mental health or stroke.
- Awareness: accessible parking bays, guide dogs and assistance animals.

Are there any new emerging issues that are relevant now and over the next few years that we should think about?

Emerging issues:

- Mental Health emerging as a result of Covid-19 and social isolation, service disruption.
- Poverty level - pension has only be increased once in the past 18 months.
- Community and affordable housing for people with disability.
- Public transport.

Who do we need to speak with and make time?

- Invite the Local and Federal Members of Parliament to the next EAAC meeting with Transport for NSW.
- Business Chambers - What are the key messages? What are we going to ask of them around access and inclusion?

How will we have the conversations?

- Surveys - Easy English or Easy Read - people living with disability, families, seniors and families, carers, disability sector workers, aged care sector workers, education staff, local health and allied services.
- Focus Groups - community associations - community centres, Blind and Vision Support Group, Dementia Australia, Blind Citizens Australia, Centre for Intellectual Disability, Face to Face.
- Your Say Tweed – broader community

Action: *EAAC to provide feedback to Giselle of other focus groups that should be added to the list and how they should be engaged within next two weeks.*

Timeline:

August 2021 - Your Say Tweed webpage, Disability and aged workers training, Council staff
September 2021 - Survey and focus meetings
October 2021 - Draft Plan for Council to review
November 2021 - Councillor workshop, request to approve exhibition of draft Plan
December 2021 - Public exhibition of draft Plan, launch of International Day of People with Disability
March 2022 - Review feedback, revise Plan
June 2022 - Council considers Plan for adoption
July 2022 - New Plan starts

(c) Engagement and celebration of International Day of People with Disability

The Gala Awards are about raising awareness and promoting action by businesses and broader community to recognise people with disability. The impacts of Covid-19 has hit businesses hard and the capacity of businesses in doing more than what they can do is difficult at this time. There is work to be done on education and promotion with businesses and the community before we hold the awards again. Suzi advised that Covid-19 has been very difficult for people living with disability. Businesses have been working above and

beyond to provide employment and acceptance of people with disability and should be acknowledged in some way.

Helen and Giselle have discussed including an acknowledgement of businesses in the celebration of International Day of People with Disability. Suzi suggested an outdoor event in one of Council's parks would be the best option. Karen supported planning for an event but acknowledged it may not go ahead.

Giselle will research the United Nations' theme for International Day for People with Disability and advise the EAAC. This could also be an opportunity to launch the new draft Access and Inclusion Plan and celebrate what has been achieved to date. It is important to encourage people to have a say and engage in the Plan. It is also important to acknowledge the good work being done in the community.

Moved: Kyle Sculley

Seconded: Karen Sculley

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Equal Access Advisory Committee recommends that the International Day of People With Disability Gala Awards Event not proceed in 2021 but that the day be celebrated in another format.

(d) Foreshores and waterways access study

There are 50 potential beach and river locations that could be improved. The EAAC needs to prioritise and reduce that number to 12 or so sites for technical auditing. Once the sites have been shortlisted, a concept plan will be developed.

Timeline:

September 2021 - Community survey, stakeholder meetings

October 2021 - November - Priority sites based on criteria and feedback

December 2021 - Launch Access Mapping - A&I draft Plan exhibition

January 2022 - Engage consultant for concept design and technical report

February – March 2022 - Site visits

April 2022 - Consultant report / concept plan delivered

June 2022 - Council to consider plan for exhibition

July 2022 - Public exhibition and review

October 2022 - Final Concept Plan approved and adopted

November 2022 - Access mapping updated. Shire wide assets access mapping to start

Draft ranking criteria:

Safety and feasibility - Environmental hazards (eg. storm surge area), other risks to personal safety (eg. patrolled beach), access to services (eg. public transport (crucial), shops (crucial), surf lifesaving club).

Experiences - Beach, headland, river and creeks - viewing, swimming, fishing, boating.

Access features - Accessible parking, accessible toilets and change rooms, continuous footpath, ramps, railings, viewing decks, seats (crucial) and shelter, wayfinding, beach accessible wheelchair (require ongoing maintenance), accessible walkers, beach mats for wheelchairs.

There is currently beach matting at Cudgen Headland and Kingscliff which is managed by the surf lifesaving clubs. Council receives feedback on ongoing maintenance and upkeep of

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the beach wheelchairs, walkers and beach matting. The beach matting is meant to be rolled out every day the beach is patrolled. Giselle advised that she will arrange to meet with the clubs to discuss options.

There are inventive ways that the surf clubs could engage with the disability community about volunteers eg. person in a wheelchair could fly drone over the beach.

Giselle asked Alana whether there would be an opportunity for consultation with transport groups eg. Surfside or CDO-Ageing and Disability could attend the Transport Working Group meeting.

Action: EAAC to provide feedback to Giselle of on criteria, survey and stakeholders. This will be the priority over the next 2-3 weeks.

General Business:

Nil.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting of the Equal Access Advisory Committee will be held 13 October 2021.

The meeting closed at 11.55am.

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM'S COMMENTS:

A3 - (c) Engagement and celebration of International Day of People with Disability

Nil

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM'S RECOMMENDATIONS:

A3 - (c) Engagement and celebration of International Day of People with Disability

That the International Day of People With Disability Gala Awards Event not proceed in 2021.