



TWEED SHIRE COUNCIL - MEETING TASK SHEET

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ACTION ITEM - Council Meeting - 17 September 2020

TITLE: Minutes of the Equal Access Advisory Committee Meeting held 24 July 2020

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

That the minutes of the Equal Access Advisory Committee Meeting held 24 July 2020 are received and noted.

MEETING RESOLUTION

Cr James Owen
Cr Katie Milne

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Equal Access Advisory Committee Meeting held 24 July 2020 are received and noted.

The Motion was **Carried**

VOTE FOR - Cr Katie Milne, Cr Chris Cherry (Mayor), Cr Pryce Allsop, Cr Reece Byrnes (Deputy Mayor), Cr Ron Cooper, Cr James Owen, Cr Warren Polglase

VOTE AGAINST - None

ABSENT. DID NOT VOTE - Nil

Minutes



Minutes of the Equal Access Advisory Committee Meeting held Friday 24 July 2020

Venue:

Harvard Room, Tweed Heads Administration Office and Rous Room, Murwillumbah Civic Centre, and virtual and telephone conference.

Time:

10.00am

Present:

Prospero Aplet; Suzanne Hudson; Kyle Sculley; Karen Sculley; Bev Larsson (Community Representatives); **Cr Warren Polglase; Tracey Stinson; Robyn Grigg; Chantelle Howse; Robert Noakes; Alana Brookes; Giselle Benitez** (Chair); **Gabby Arthur** (Tweed Shire Council Representatives) (Minutes)

Apologies:

Milena Morrow (Community Representative)

Guests:

Jodie Hewett (Recreation Planner, Tweed Shire Council); Lisa Whinnen (Inclusive Play Project Manager, Variety - the Children's Charity NSW/ACT)

Minutes of Previous Meeting:

The Committee discussed the last formal meeting was held in October 2019.

Prospero Aplet, Suzanne Hudson and Cr Warren Polglase confirmed they had attended the meeting held 10 October 2019 and received copies of the minutes at that time.

Business Arising:

Agenda Items:

Open and Welcome to Country

1. Introductions and apologies

A special welcome was extended to the new Community Representatives and existing members were welcomed back after the extended break.

2. Committee Review

The Committee discussed recent membership and staff changes. The contribution and achievements of the previous members who have resigned, Una Cowdroy, Bev Kelso, Wendy Gilbert, Nathan Quinell were acknowledged.

Ongoing members were invited to share thoughts and interests about how the committee has previously worked. It was noted that the accessible toilets projects was very rewarding and the upcoming parks audit project is exciting. The committee has been dedicated to making

the community as accessible as possible. The committee noted the passion demonstrated by the previous Aged and Disability Officer – Karen Collins and looks forward to working with the new Community Development Officer - Giselle Benitez.

Robert Noakes updated members about his role as Team Leader – Building Surveying, Building and Environmental Health, in ensuring universal design principles are incorporated in the retrofit or upgrade of existing buildings or early in the design process of new buildings. An example given was the work being undertaken by new owners of the Regent Cinema in Murwillumbah to improve accessibility.

It was requested that the Access and Inclusion Plan 2018-2021 be revisited at the next meeting to assess progress. It was agreed the next meeting will be dedicated to reviewing the Access and Inclusion Plan 2018-2021.

Action: *Review of the Tweed Access and Inclusion Plan 2018-2021 to be tabled at next meeting.*

The committee were informed that Council’s Corporate Governance team is commencing a review of all Committee Terms Of Reference (TOR) and more information will be shared when available. Members are encouraged to review and consider any important changes to the TORs that can be considered as part of the review.

Action: *Committee Members to review Terms of Reference*

Members were requested to return any outstanding acknowledgments of the new Code of Conduct Policy were asked to do so as soon as possible (Action).

Action: *Committee Members to return any outstanding acknowledgements of the new Code of Conduct Policy*

It was acknowledged that Prospero Aplet would be acting as Chair with no Deputy Chair currently appointed. The Committee agreed this can be tabled for election at next meeting.

Action: *Election of Chair and Deputy Chair to be held at next meeting*

3. COVID-19 Response and Recovery

The experiences, impacts and new priorities for people with disabilities emerging from the Coronavirus pandemic were discussed.

It was noted the current social distancing measures have created a contradiction in terms of Access and Inclusion for people living with disability. It would also be helpful to communicate the innovative ways that people have adapted to deliver services to community during this time, and for community to feel more connected e.g. libraries – click & collect, online singing and dancing activities, and the Online Bookable service for meeting spaces.

Information about what accessible features and services exist needs to be published on the website in a more accessible way to make it easier for users to navigate.

The committee were presented feedback received from the Tweed Disability Services Interagency Network from the survey on COVID-19 impacts and experiences. The survey sought to identify the challenges and barriers to recovery, with the following responses received:

- a. Adjusting to the high volume and pace of changing information, delivering services with social distancing measures and shifting to online/virtual support; and
- b. Changing information and finding available meeting spaces that allow social distancing requirements to continue to deliver face-to-face services.

Members agreed on the importance of advocating to Dept of Health, State Government through NDIS on these issues.

Action: *Community Development Officer to share the survey results with members by email.*

4. 2020 Program priorities

The Committee heard how the Community Development Strategy was adopted by Council in March 2020. An Implementation Plan is being prepared that will incorporate the Access & Inclusion Plan 2018 – 2020 commitments. Priorities discussed include:

a. Reviewing and upgrading accessibility features at public facilities, parks, foreshores, as well as private spaces such as events and festivals, tourism outlets and operators. This could involve expanding on the 2015 audits conducted, and adopting a universal design or accessibility guide, if not standards, to recognise what exists currently and encourage stakeholders to make improvements. A campaign to promote such action and raise awareness can be then conducted - see below alternative for A&I awards.

For events and festivals – Members discussed the lessons from the Murwillumbah Show (late 2019) as a worthy project. There is potential for a project involving the review of Council's existing event and markets guidelines, to incorporate accessibility features and working with organisers to champion and educate on changes.

b. Improving access to information – the following ideas were discussed:

- i. Mapping of accessible places and exploring interactive ways to public information.
- ii. The committee expressed interest in a project to improve accessibility of online information, including exploring technology that can interact with media e.g. voice activation and other software apps. Council's Communications and Customer Service Unit are embarking on a redesign of Council's website, with the Community Development Officer collaborating in this project, and an option tabled for the committee to participate in User Acceptance Testing.
- iii. The Tweed Access & Inclusion Plan has a commitment to develop a wayfinding plan for Tweed Shire, including a style guide for signage in public open spaces.

c. Transport, roads and pathway infrastructure

Members were updated about some projects where members can be involved if interested. These include developing design standards for bus shelters and bus stops, installing tactile indicators on bus platforms, and updating the local bus timetables to be more visually accessible to low-vision patrons.

Members gave feedback on the need for buses to announce their number and destination on arrival at bus stops, for the benefit of blind and low-vision patrons.

Action: *The Road Safety Officer to table potential projects for further discussion on ideas at the next meeting.*

5. Access & Inclusion Awards and other options for 2020.

COVID-19 health and safety measures are likely to prevent Council from hosting a gala-style event this year. Members agreed that there isn't an appetite for the gala-style event at present, and support services are more interested in delivering basic services. It was noted there is some appetite within local tourism for the awards.

It was noted there are a lot of constraints at present, there will not be time to plan for the event, due to organisations not having capacity or time to nominate, suggesting the event be held next year. It was suggested other ideas be explored for example using the resources to celebrate International Day of People with Disability, by showcasing successes in the community and raising awareness that Access & Inclusion is everyone's responsibility.

A media campaign could be developed to encourage, promote and celebrate accessibility features adopted by Council, local businesses, events and festivals or tourism operators. For example, exploring ways that the community can access services e.g. library services, community services and places where there is support to assist people with technology.

Members were advised Community Directory of Services will be revamped as part of a redesign on Council's website, and would appreciate the committee's involvement. It was suggested that services need to be more connected with Council's website so that people with disabilities can see what is available in the area such as places to eat and shop at the Information Centres, and include wheelchair access and vision impaired voice activation for touch screen with a simple voice command. Members discussed the needs to engage with people from different demographics and make the information interesting for all age groups. Council's Digital team is working with Community Development on some of the needs.

Action: *Community Development Officer to discuss opportunities for EAAC members to provide feedback and ideas with Council's Digital team.*

Tracey left the meeting at 10.40am

Members discussed grants for accessible tourism including events or festivals. Members were asked for feedback in relation to attending the Murwillumbah Show in 2019. Members gave feedback that Social Futures was engaging and the Show Society were receptive to improving accessibility including wayfinding and signage and this is something that can continue to improve over time. The "Access at a Glance" program, run by Social Futures, was raised as an example that may be followed.

Members were advised that the event guidelines for traffic management is encouraging temporary accessible parking for events and this is now in the Traffic Management Plan.

Action: *Community Development Officer will explore and report on grant opportunities and will distribute information about Access at a Glance program with members.*

6. Goorimahbah Place of Stories – Inclusive playspace concept design

Jodie Hewett -Recreation Planner and Lisa Whinnen - Inclusive Play Project Manager, Variety - the Children's Charity NSW/ACT provided an update on the project.

Members were given background information. Council is developing a concept design for a new inclusive park and playspace at Goorimahbah, situated in Jack Evans Boat Harbour (JEBH) and which is part of the JEBH Plan of Management and Open Space Strategy. Goorimahbah will have accessible toilets, connecting pathways, public transport and existing facilities and uses which will be built upon. Council will receive \$300k Cat 3 ClubsGrants funding and this will be matched by Council. The "Everyone Can Play" NSW guidelines will be imbedded into the design and Council will apply for funds through this program to develop the space.

A large volume of community feedback was received for JEBH, relating to inclusive design, universal design, culturally inclusion, and accessibility. This feedback has informed a conversation piece which provides a vision and proposes guiding principles for the Goorimahbah Inclusive playspace.

Council has entered into an agreement with Variety to assist with community engagement, particularly of children and families of Aboriginal and Torres Straight Island people and people with disabilities, to inform the design of this playspace, and would like to invite members to participate.

A survey has been developed and piloted with a target group, and has been launched and distributed in hard copy, enlarged and/or electronically, with feedback open until the end of August. This will be made available to the members as well as to the Aboriginal Advisory Committee and all local Aboriginal and Torres Straight Island services, disability services, businesses and schools that liaise with families and caregivers. Feedback received will inform the Concept Plan design, anticipated for January 2021, which will then go on exhibition for public comment.

Action: *Recreation planner and Community Development Officer to share Goorimahbah Place of Stories Inclusive playspace concept design, engagement tool and survey with members, for responses to be returned individually, and also tabled for discussion at next meeting.*

Other General Business:

Minutes

Committee meetings are usually held on Wednesday mornings bi-monthly. Members were asked if there were conflicts with hosting meetings at these times. Suzanne Hudson indicated she was only available on Wednesdays and Kyle and Karen Sculley also indicated they are only available on Wednesdays.

Action: *Community Development Officer to send out invites for meeting for remainder of year.*

Next Meeting: The next meeting of the Equal Access Advisory Committee will be held 19 August 2020.

Meeting closed: 11.30am.

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM'S COMMENTS:

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM'S RECOMMENDATIONS: