



## Darebin Disability Advisory Committee Terms of Reference (October 2016)

### 1. Purpose

DDAC is a **Community Advisory Committee** of Darebin City Council. Its purpose is to provide advice to Council on issues relating to access and inclusion for people with disabilities and carers living, working, studying or visiting Darebin. To promote and advocate for, improved access and equity within Council and the wider community, irrespective of age, type of disability, gender, culture or linguistic background.

**Community Advisory Committee:** are formal committees of Council that provide specialist advice on a specific area of Council's functions or responsibilities. They differ from Special Committees in ***that they do not have formal delegated authority from Council to make decisions or exercise any power; they instead make recommendations to Council.*** The progress, advice and recommendations of a Community Advisory Committee is reported to Council through formal Officer reports.

### 2. Objectives:

- To represent the interests of people with disabilities in Darebin, including carers and family members.
- To advise Council on issues and barriers that affect people with disabilities and carers living, working, recreating or studying in Darebin.
- To advocate and lobby on behalf of local residents with a disability and carers regarding systemic issues at a local, State and National level.
- To participate in policy development through membership of steering groups, participation in community consultation processes and other activities of Council departments.
- To respond to relevant documents including policies, reports, research documents and plans provided by Council officers for comment.
- To monitor the implementation of the Darebin Access and Inclusion Plan on annual basis.

### 3. Membership

The Darebin Disability Advisory Committee will seek representation from a diverse range of people in relation to sexuality and gender diversity, age, experience of disability and cultural and linguistic background.

DDAC operates on a closed membership. Vacancies will only be advertised when they arise. DDAC membership is not limited to a minimum or maximum term for any of its members.

**Membership comprises of:**

- A nominated Councillor as Chair of the Committee and a Proxy.
- A maximum of 4 representatives from local disability service providers.
- A minimum of 8 community representatives who are people with lived experience of disability.
- A minimum of 3 community representatives who are (unpaid) carers of people with a disability. Where possible a carer of a child with a disability and a carer of an adult with a disability.
- **Membership should always way in favour of the number of community representatives and unpaid carers versus external service and Council representation.**

In recognition that it is not always possible to attend all meetings, there is a greater number of members on the committee than the number who may be able to attend each meeting. **If a decision needs to be made by the committee at a meeting, a minimum of five community representatives and carers combined need to be present.**

**4. Membership Term and Method of Selection**

- Committees are re-confirmed every 12 months at the annual statutory meeting (December) at which time Councillor representatives are also appointed.
- When there are vacancies, expressions of interest will be advertised through various mediums, such as a Newspaper advert, Council website, social media and email, with accessibility considered in advertisement.
  - Given the resources required to advertise vacancies to ensure maximum reach, a minimum of 3 vacancies is required for a formal recruitment drive.
- Selection of new members follows an expression of interest and interview process.
- Interviews are conducted by a panel of representatives from the committee – including community representative/s and a Council officer.
- The selection panel will recommend successful applicants to the Committee Chair for formal appointment.
- A position will be deemed to be vacant if a community representative fails to attend continuous meetings without communication with the supporting officer. The supporting officer will make contact with the representative prior to advertisement of the role.

## **5. Supports to assist participation in meetings**

- Any disability-related support required to enable participation on DDAC will be provided by Council. This includes providing information in alternative formats (including large print, Braille, easy English, plain English, electronic), covering costs for travel, attendant care, respite care, language interpreters (including Auslan) and other reasonable costs.
- Where possible, Council encourages and aims to support its Committee members to enhance their skills and capacity both personally and professionally. This could be in the form of guest speakers, events, training, and participation in other Council or external opportunities.
  - If members wish to attend, participate or represent DDAC in other Council or external opportunities they need to inform the supporting officer of their intentions beforehand if additional support or remuneration is required.

## **6. Meetings and procedures**

- Meetings are held bi-monthly, with a minimum of 6 meetings held a year. With additional out of session and sub-group meetings held as agreed by members.
- A nominated Councillor will act as Chair of the Committee. In the absence of a Councillor the next most senior Officer present will be asked to Chair the meeting.
- Darebin Council's MetroAccess Officer has the responsibility, as the supporting officer, to provide administrative support to the committee and Chair including the provision of meeting agendas, minutes and running notes.
- Minutes will be provided to Committee members no later than ten working days after a scheduled meeting including details of proceedings and resolutions and any relevant documentation as attachments.
- Agendas and any additional relevant documentation will be sent out to Committee members no less than ten working days before a scheduled meeting.
- Records of agendas and minutes will be maintained by Council in accordance with Public Records Act requirements.

## **7. Meeting format/agreements**

- 'Check in' at the start of each meeting
- Ensure meetings are not too formal
- Prioritise agenda items
- Allow time for members to talk/discuss after each item on the agenda
- General invitation to speak
- Evaluate each meeting

## **8. Conduct of Committee members**

In performing the role of a DDAC member, persons are required to:

- Act honestly
- Not make improper use of their position or make improper use of information acquired during their time as a Committee member.
- No member of DDAC is authorised to speak on behalf of the Committee or Council around issues that may be raised without bringing the matter back to the Committee for consideration and a response.
- Where a member of DDAC has an interest or conflict of interest in relation to a matter in which the Committee is concerned, or is likely to be considered or discussed, the member must disclose their interest to the Officer providing executive support to DDAC prior to the next meeting. Disclosure must include the nature of the relevant interest and be recorded.
- Committee minutes and records of meetings are on the public record and posted on the Darebin website ([www.darebin.vic.gov.au/ddac](http://www.darebin.vic.gov.au/ddac)). Where there is a requirement for confidentiality this is noted in the minutes and shall be addressed accordingly.

## **9. Monitoring and Evaluation**

- An annual progress report is submitted to Council detailing the activities and achievements of the Committee against its stated objectives.
- The Terms of Reference for the Committee will be reviewed every two years. The Committee may review the Terms of Reference earlier if required. Any proposed changes to the Committee's Terms of Reference resulting from a review must be agreed to by the Committee.
- Committee members are encouraged to provide feedback about the committee and their experience throughout the year during meetings, via agenda items or by contacting the Chair or supporting officer outside of meetings.
- The last meeting (December) of each year will involve evaluating the past 12 months agendas items and committee functioning, as well as planning for the following year.