

Darebin Disability Advisory Committee

Monday 6th August, 2018
Meeting Minutes

Present

Councillors and Co-Chairs:

Cr Susanne Newton
Cr Julie Williams

Community Representatives:

Helen Caligiuri, Edward Manuel, Vince Pirrottina, Matthew Zammit

Carers:

Jo Banks, George Jiang, Judith McLean

Council staff:

Shadi Hanna, Manager Aged and Disability
Gillian Damonze, Coordinator Community Participation and Development
Zoe Howard, Metro Access Officer

Guest speakers:

Emma Pase, Co-ordinator Community Hubs
Fiona Myers, Children and Youth Support Officer, Libraries
Philip O'Brien, Business Engagement Skills and Employment, Economic Development

1 Present and Apologies

Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies were noted.

Apologies:

Katie Kiley (Senior Team Leader Access & Inclusion), Gail Abbott (Encompass House), Kathy Kondekas (Melbourne Polytechnic Work Education), Ray Jordan (Community Representative).

2 Matters arising from the previous minutes

Actions pending:

- Council was unable to endorse the Australian Federation of Disability Organisations (AFDO) public transport advocacy strategy letter by the deadline.
- Access and Inclusion team continue to seek information regarding whether the *Respite for Older Carers* (ROC) program or an equivalent is still available since the rollout of the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

3 Round table check-in (*This is an opportunity for members to add items to the agenda, prioritise agenda items, report back on events, updates or issues that may have come up since the last meeting and table any other issues*).

- Community representatives raised their difficulty locating parking for the length of DDAC meetings. Representatives reported leaving meetings to move vehicles, receiving parking fines and avoiding attending meetings due to limited 1 and 2 hour parking. Representatives are requesting parking permits to use while attending DDAC meetings.

Following items added to General Business:

ACTIONS:

Zoe Howard to investigate whether DDAC members can access a parking permit for extended parking during DDAC meeting times due to limited one and two hour parking options (DDAC 2018 Wish list Item).

4 Passenger Lift at Darebin North East Community Hub (Polaris, Bundoora)

Emma Pase, Co-ordinator Community Hubs

The Darebin North East Community Hub is a Council facility located in Polaris, Bundoora. Downstairs hosts early learning programs and maternal child health clinics, whilst upstairs there are rooms available for hire for meetings, trainings and corporate events. The lift that was installed during building renovations is not accessible and has resulted in individuals becoming 'stuck' in the lift. Current estimates propose the lift will be replaced in 12-18 months. Emma is developing a communication plan to understand the needs of community, develop strategies to reduce risks until the lift is replaced, and communicate these issues with community. Emma asked for feedback from DDAC to ascertain what strategies would provide a dignified customer service experience.

Emma outlined issues with the lift, including:

- In order to operate the lift, a user must reach out and apply continuous pressure to a button. If pressure is removed, the lift stops and people becoming 'stuck' in the lift. The provision of a button requiring continuous pressure in a lift is prohibited in the Disability (Access to Premises) standards 2010
- Contractors are regularly attending the site to service the lift, however complete mechanical specifications for the lift are not available to these contractors
- The phone in the lift is not pre-programmed with emergency numbers – a user must self-select a number and be able to communicate their needs to whomever they call
- The current signage in the lift has little efficacy

Community Hubs are proposing the following strategies to address these issues:

- Locking the lift and having staff assist individuals to use the lift. This would include event attendees, caterers, staff, general community

- Placing a sign at the entrance of the lift to inform individuals to contact staff for assistance
- If an individual was upstairs and needed to go down to the ground floor they would need to phone a member of staff to ask for assistance

Shadi Hanna, Manager Aged and Disability commented that:

- In the situation of an emergency evacuation the lift would not be used and the emergency warden would follow protocol by advising emergency services of the location of an individual needing assistance to reach the ground floor.

Cr Williams provided the following feedback:

- The lift presents an unacceptable risk and it should not be installed, nor operating on Council land if Council cannot ensure safety, standards, particularly if insufficient mechanical information is available.
- A lock and key arrangement is not appropriate, as it is not dignified to ask staff for assistance, and a key can get lost or broken
- Rostering staff to operate the lift for every event at the site is unrealistic and not an effective use of resources
- Emergency procedures are inadequate and unsafe. An individual would not know what to communicate to the person on the other end of the phone

DDAC provided the following feedback/recommendations:

- A lock and key arrangement is not dignified and committee disagrees with this option
- The lift poses an unacceptable risk to individuals
- The ability to communicate with emergency services in the event of a lift mechanical fault is vital and the current communication available in the lift is not to standard, posing an unacceptable risk to the public
- Individuals using oxygen for life support are reliant on batteries, which have a life time of one hour on average. There is a risk to life if unable to change ventilator batteries in the event of being trapped in the lift. Similarly, electric wheelchairs and mobility scooters have limited battery life.
- A process would need to be developed to communicate emergency procedures to any individual who became stuck in the lift

ACTIONS:

Cr Williams advised that this issue should be brought to Council ASAP for Councillors to discuss the provision of emergency funding to fast-track the project.

Emma Pase to provide an update to Zoe Howard, Katie Kiley.

5 Sensory Story Times at Darebin Libraries

Fiona Myers, Children and Youth Support Officer, Libraries

Darebin libraries are looking to implement tailored Sensory Storytimes for children with disability, including children on the Autism spectrum or with sensory needs. Story times are an opportunity for children to develop a love of reading, literacy and for social interaction, however regular story times can be overwhelming for some children with disability. Sensory story times are more interactive than regular story times and are sensitive to children's sensory needs. Peak Autism body, *Amaze* has released resources and training to assist libraries to develop the sensory story times, and Libraries are hoping to consult with local families and services to determine whether sensitive story times are needed and how they should be implemented.

DDAC provided the following feedback/recommendations:

- Each child is unique and will have individual needs – libraries could work with each family to know their child's needs to maximise learning opportunities, for example speaking with families to understand what each child likes and doesn't like
- Be open to adapting the story times and acknowledge if/when things go well or when they need improving
- Allow space for movement and provide calm areas for children to rest
- Sessions should be shorter than regular story times and fast passed to maintain interest
- Work with local families, crèches, services, schools, maternal health nurses etc. to develop the sessions

6 Employing Diversity Business Breakfast

Philip O'Brien, Economic Development

Council is supporting an *Employing Diversity Business Breakfast* on Monday 27th August. The breakfast will showcase four employment programs that build capacity and support employment for people with disability and people who are refugees or seeking asylum. The breakfast is organised by *The Bridge* neighbourhood house and will be held at the Moon Rabbit Café, which employs participants from their Tiered Transition & Training program. The program trains young people with intellectual disability and supports them to enter the workforce. Philip has invited local, mainstream businesses and has targeted people who have expressed an interest in diversifying their workforce. Philip welcomed any DDAC members who are interested to attend.

DDAC asked Philip the following questions:

- Does economic Development link with any Disability Employment (DES) providers?
- Does Economic Development have a list of individuals seeking employment, as DDAC has raised working with individuals rather than businesses

Philip provided the following feedback:

- Philip advised that his role is to work with and support specifically businesses and service providers would support individuals and is working with The Bridge, as their community organisation does not have a business development officer.
- Philip hosts a network for businesses each year, which includes DES providers.

Shadi Hanna, Manager Aged and Disability contributed the following:

- The Access and Inclusion team are currently recruiting for an NDIS Business Development Lead position. This role will look at the gaps in the market and how to strike the balance between working with individuals, businesses and service providers.

7 Community Engagement Strategy

Zoe Howard, Metro Access Officer, Community Participation and Development

The Access and Inclusion team are developing a community engagement strategy to consult with community. The last community consultation led by the team was in 2016 prior to the NDIS rollout and feedback relates to community concerns regarding the NDIS. The team would like to re-engage with community and to better understand the needs of people with disability, their family since the roll out of the NDIS two years ago. The consultation will also promote the Access and Inclusion Team and feedback will feed into the review of the Disability Action and Inclusion Plan in 2019. Feedback may also identify possible Information Linkages and Capacity building (ILC) projects. The consultation will consist of an online survey, which will include multiple themes for example, housing, transport, employment, NDIS etc.

DDAC provided the following feedback/recommendations:

- Consider telephoning participants, as parents in particular would prefer to speak over the phone than fill out an online survey
- The survey should include the opportunity to provide examples of what individuals require but are not receiving under NDIS
- Messaging around survey needs to be clearer, particularly around a) scope of survey, b) what influence participants will have, c) how feedback will be used and d) that survey is not to discuss solely experiences of NDIS
- Consider scaled questions (eg. 1-5) rather than multiple choice
- Ensure survey captures topics that DDAC has been advocating for

ACTIONS:

Zoe and Gillian to consider DDAC recommendations, finalise survey draft and circulate test survey link to DDAC to complete and provide feedback.

8 General Business

Items raised in Round table check-in:

- Zoe provided an update into the accessible housing advocacy. The Access & Inclusion team are advocating internally for Council to support the Australian Network for Universal Housing Design position statement calling for minimum standards according to the Liveable Housing Guidelines (Gold Level) to be set in the National Construction Code. The team are working internally with strategic planners who are reviewing the Local Planning Scheme in Darebin, to highlight that accessibility is a policy gap and the need to undertake further work to look at how we address this issue and be leaders in accessible and adaptable housing.

9 Meeting feedback – everyone

Next meeting: Monday 1st October 11:00am – 1:00pm

Function Room, Preston