

Darebin Disability Advisory Committee

Monday 5 October 2017
Meeting Minutes



Present

Councillors and Co-Chairs:

Cr Julie Williams
Cr Suzanne Newton

Community Representatives:

Vince Pirrottina, Helen Caligiuri, Edward Manuel

Carers:

George Jiang

Service Providers:

Kathy Kondekas , Melbourne Polytechnic Work Education
Gail Abbott, Encompass House

Council staff:

Robyn Mitchell, A/ Manager Aged and Disability
Gillian Damonze, Coordinator Community Participation and Development
Christine Mulholland, Metro Access
Karla Coombes, Coordinator Children & Community Development

Guest speaker:

Kathy Kondekas, Melbourne Polytechnic
Jessica Ziersch, Jobs Victoria

1 Present and Apologies

Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, acknowledged the traditional owners and apologies were noted.

Apologies: Shadi Hanna (Manager Aged and Disability), Katrina Knox (Director Community Development), Katie Kiley (Senior Team Leader), Matthew Zammit (community representative), Ray Jordan (community representative), Judith McLean (carer), Jo Banks (carer).

2 Matters arising from the previous minutes

Actions pending:

- Invite Building Services to future meeting to discuss their role in disability access after a planning permit is granted.
- Number of compliant & non-complaint accessible parking bays in Darebin
- Changes to the Disabled Parking Scheme permit form – still waiting on update from VicRoads.

Actions completed:

- Process to obtain an MLAK key – see information sheet attached. .

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*).

- **Accessible parking** - Gail submitted a request for a disabled parking bay to be installed on Darebin Road near Station St Fairfield. Upon its installation the parking sign indicated that valid permit holders could only park for 15 minutes while the bays next to it permitted people to park for 1 hour. Gail contacted Transport Management and explained this was unfair. It was later changed; however the staff member did question why it was unfair and stated it was standard practice.

ACTION: Christine will follow up with Transport and Public Places.

- Grange Road Crossing update – Vince (Community Reference Group – Grange Road Level Crossing Removal Project) provided feedback that with the work happening to remove the Grange Road level crossing, traffic will be blocked by 15 October. 80% of replacement buses will be accessible. There will also be accessible taxis for those unable to use the buses. There is concern that people with a visual impairment may miss out on accessing alternate modes of transport particularly if the person does not use a stick or a guide dog – their disability will not be obvious. The walking distance between the station and the bus is about 250m which may be a concern to some with limited mobility.

4 **Employment and Education pathways for people with a disability (Context)**

Chris provided a brief presentation regarding Council's work with regard to work experience and employment for people with a disability at Darebin City Council. The Disability Act 2006 states that **a public sector body must ensure a Disability Action Plan is prepared for the purpose of reducing barriers to persons with a disability obtaining and maintaining employment.**

The Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2015 – 2019 contains actions and outcomes supporting employment of people with a disability which include:

Outcome 1 – increased number of students with a disability undertaking work experience across council through partnerships with local disability and/or education institutions.

Outcome 2 – work place practices are more inclusive and improved employment outcomes for Darebin residents with a disability.

The Pathways to Employment Committee considers what is needed to support people with a disability employed at Darebin. A number of students from Croxton Specialist School have completed placements at Darebin Council across Aged and Disability; Civic Services; Bushland Management and Bundoora Farm.

We are planning to develop some resources that will assist staff to better support students with disabilities undertaking placements at Council as well as expand on the number of placements and areas within Council taking on a student placement.

5 **Melbourne Polytechnic**

Kathy Kondekas provided an overview of the Vocational Education and Training Courses offered to people with a disability through Melbourne Polytechnic. Refer to attachment.

6 Jobs Victoria

Jobs Victoria is consolidating all Victorian Government employment services into one service. They provide tailored services to support and connect employers and jobseekers. The program offers both accredited and non-accredited training, support with resume writing. The program can also purchase support coordination for job seekers who may have mental health issues for example; a bike for a job seeker needing to get to and from work or clothing.

7 General Business

Council updates:

- **Changing Places survey results** – Survey has now closed. Identified site based on community feedback will be the existing public toilet close to the corner of Kelvin Grove and Gower Street. Refer to handouts for more detailed information about the survey results.
- **Social Housing reform submission – Feedback – Inquiry into Public Housing Renewal Program**
Nick Matteo has written a submission in response to the Inquiry into the Public Housing Renewal program with recommendations to the Standing Committee on Legal and Social Issues. A document has been drafted on behalf of DDAC and the AHAB in support of this submission. Gillian provided an overview of the document to DDAC. Feedback provided by DDAC included:
 1. **Key point: Public and private mix**
Barriers to the success of the Rathdowne Street project is better understood before replicating this model to future public housing redevelopment.
 2. **Key point: Stimulating a culture of innovation in housing**
Consider models that support the ability of the public housing tenant to purchase their property following a set period of years of rental.
 3. **An additional point raised – Review eligibility to access accommodation under the Special Housing Needs guidelines.**
The age to access public housing is lowered. The age limit is currently 55 years and over. However there is currently a gap for people who may not be young person in a nursing home but may have other circumstance including having a lifelong disability and who could benefit from the age limit lowered.

ACTION:

Feedback and recommendations will be added to the draft document and circulated to both committees.

- **Housing Roadshow**

Two workshops will be hosted across Tuesday 10 and Wednesday 11 October – for individuals with disability, their parents/carers and professionals. A resource kit was developed by the facilitator for the North East Region, copies of this resource will be available on the website as well as hard copies by request.

Review of Council Advisory Committees:

Council is working to improve and strengthen community consultation and advisory mechanisms. This work will be undertaken over the next 8-12 months giving time to explore mechanisms, monitor and evaluate new models and provide recommendations moving forward. This change process will involve all committees and may see change in committee status, Councillor representation and/or consultation mechanism. There will also be improvements to governance processes across identified areas including process for making recommendations, agenda setting and strategic alignment with Council goals. A key consideration is ensuring meaningful time is allocated to this process and committee members are well informed. This

work will align with and inform the broader review of the Darebin Community Engagement Framework and is about expanding, not diminishing, the effectiveness and capacity for communities to have a meaningful voice in council decision making. A project officer will be appointed to undertake this work and will be in contact with relevant officers with updates once they are on board.

- **Christine Mulholland** – taking 9 months leave to take a role with the Department of Health and Human Services as a Senior Policy Advisory with the Office for Disability. An EOI has been sent across Council to fill the role during this time.
- **New position** – The Disability Access and Business Development Lead role has been filled and Kevin Hall will be starting on Monday 9 October 2017. Kevin is coming from Whittlesea Council where he had been the Metro Access officer. Kevin has also worked as the National Disability Coordination Officer for this region and has extensive experience in social enterprise and Disability employment. We look forward to welcoming Kevin to our team, and introducing him at the next DDAC meeting in December.

8 Meeting feedback – everyone

No feedback was provided at this time.

Next meeting: Monday 4th December, 11:00am – 1:00pm

Function Room, Preston