

Darebin Disability Advisory Committee

Monday 6 September 2021
Meeting Minutes



Present

Chair: Councillor Julie Williams

Community Representatives:

Ray Jordan, Vince Pirrottina, Helen Caligiuri (community members), Jo Banks and Judith McLean (carers)

Service provider:

Katherine Kondekas (Melbourne Polytechnic)

Council staff:

Jess Fraser, Manager Equity and Wellbeing Department

Shadi Hanna, Manager Aged and Disability

Gillian Damonze, Coordinator Community Participation and Development

Jade Myconos, Community Development Officer Economic Participation

Ania Sieracka, Community Development Officer Access and Inclusion (minutes)

Guest speakers:

No guest speakers attended this meeting.

1 Present and Apologies

Chair delivered Acknowledgement of Country and welcomed everyone to the meeting. The following apologies were noted:

Edward Manuel (community member) and George Jiang (carer).

Katherine Kiley, Senior Team Leader Access and Inclusion.

Chair welcomed to the meeting Jess Fraser, Manager Equity and Wellbeing Department. The Access and Inclusion Team and the responsibility for the committee is moving to this department from mid-September 2021.

2 Matters arising from the previous minutes

No matters were raised.

Actions pending:

There are no actions pending from the previous meeting.

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*).

Shadi added the restructure of the Aged and Disability Department to the General Business of the agenda. Ania added the updates on the Disability Royal Commission privacy

legislation and changes to next National Disability Strategy. Ray requested an update on the WeThe15 campaign.

4 Darebin Access and Inclusion Plan 2021 - 2026 update

Gillian provided the following update:

- The committee has been receiving progress updates and providing feedback throughout the development of the new Darebin Access and Inclusion Plan.
- The Access and Inclusion Team worked with the Executive to update the language and finalise the design of the plan.
- The plan was approved by the Council and feedback received from Councillors was very positive.
- Councillors commented on the accessible style of the document, including the design, diversity of images, inclusiveness of the content, limiting the text and using plain language.
- Councillors asked about the availability of accessible formats of the document and plans for addressing access and inclusion issues raised by the community (particularly the footpath maintenance and accessible communication).
- The designer is preparing different accessible formats, including versions that are digitally accessible to screen readers and include links to resources, and print-friendly versions of the plan.
- The plan, together with the Disability Data report completed last year, will be uploaded to the Darebin website and registered with the Australian Human Rights Commission.
- Throughout October, the plan will be shared via social media with the community in Darebin and different networks.
- This will align with a variety of awareness days celebrated during this month.
- Information about the plan will be included in the Darebin Disability Access Update e-newsletter.
- Teams from across Council have already been responding to the new plan by creating actions for the coming year, many of which align with the new [2021-20215 Council Plan](#).

DDAC congratulated the team on the final version of the plan. The committee commented on the accessibility of the plan and the inclusion of graphics in the document.

5 Standard Terms of Reference (ToR) project and the DDAC ToR updates

Shadi shared the following update:

- The Standard Terms of Reference (ToR) document was endorsed by Council in June 2021.

- The document was developed with feedback from all Council Advisory Committees, including DDAC.
- It will provide a consistent approach to the governance of all committees.
- The main changes included in the Standard ToR are – the two-year term of membership for members (other than Councillors), the possibility to re-apply for the membership and opportunities to create additional working groups.
- Appendix A in the Standard ToR document outlines information specific to each committee.
- The draft DDAC ToR is aligned to the Standard ToR document and supports the current DDAC recruitment process.
- The final DDAC ToR will be endorsed by Council in October 2021.

DDAC provided the following comments to be forwarded to the Governance Team:

- The Standard ToR and Appendix A that outline how engagement with community members participating on committees occurs should not be complicated.
- Information included in these two documents needs to be more accessible and clearer.
- The same numbered sections should be included in both parts of the document (Standard ToR and Appendix A) or information about why they are not included should be provided.
- The following information included in the section 4 of the Standard ToR needs to be clarified or changed:
 - The process to sunset the committee on 30 June, following Council General Elections.
 - The exact duration of the term on the committee for a committee member (other than a Councillor) and remove any reference to it from Appendix A.
 - The exact start and finish point of the term for a committee member (other than a Councillor).
 - The exact process for the appointment and the length of duration of the vacancies that occur ‘mid-term’
 - Who will provide the oversight and management of various terms on committees, including the staggered terms, for each committee?
- In addition to the points above, DDAC would like further opportunity to provide more feedback to the Standard ToR and Appendix A documents.

Action: Ania to organise a meeting with the Governance Team to provide feedback from DDAC to the Standard ToR and seek clarification on further opportunities to make changes.

Action: Ania to pass information from the Governance Team to the committee about opportunities to provide further feedback to the Standard ToR.

6 DDAC Recruitment update

Ania provided the following update:

- DDAC received 21 applications for the committee membership in total during March and August recruitment.
- Applications were from people with lived experience of disability, carers and service providers (five applicants represent more than one portfolio).
- 17 applications progressed to interviews.
- Six applicants withdrew at different points throughout this recruitment.
- Eight of the current nine DDAC members applied to continue their membership.
- Report with the membership recommendations will be presented to Council for endorsement in October 2021.
- The new committee members will be invited to two orientation sessions – the induction to the organisation and committees, and a DDAC-specific session.
- A possible start date for the new DDAC members might be 6 December 2021.

DDAC discussed the following points:

- Consider increasing the number of community committee members on all committees to more than 12.
- Provide opportunity for the new community members to participate in the Voice at the Table self-advocacy training delivered by Self-Advocacy Resource Unit (SARU).
- Highlight information about opportunities to participate in different sessions, including workshops, training and conferences, for all committee members in the committee induction session.

Action: Ania to explore the Voice at the Table training opportunity for the committee members.

7 Work Experience Project

Jade and Ania provided the following update:

- The 2021 You Am I work experience project provides event management work experience opportunity at Darebin City Council.
- It is a short-term, non-vocational program designed for women with disabilities, including psychosocial issues and/or chronic illness, aged 18 and above.
- In 2021, five participants will work on the development of an event to celebrate the International Day of People with Disability on 3 December.
- They will undertake a total of around 36 hours of work experience over a 11-week period (from September to December 2021).
- All sessions will be delivered online by the Access and Inclusion Team Community Development Officers.

- You Am I work experience opportunities are unpaid, but the program offers other incentives and supports, including a written character reference at the completion of the placement, certificate of completion signed by the Darebin CEO and the staff category Working with Children Check for use beyond the project.
- In 2020 seven women participated in the program across a range of areas at Council.
- The outcomes included increased understanding of employment rights.
- In addition, post program one graduate engaged in a volunteer role and one in employment as a school crossing supervisor.

8 General Business updates

Shadi provided the following update on **the Restructure of the Aged and Disability**

Department:

- The Aged and Disability Department was restructured and renamed Supported and Connected Living.
- This enables the Department to shift the focus to more person-centred services and better response to ongoing reforms and changes.
- As the result of the restructure, the Access and Inclusion Team is relocating to the Equity and Wellbeing Department.
- This provides the team with a better alignment to the tasks outlined in the new Council Plan and advocacy work that occurs in the Equity and Wellbeing Department.
- The Supported and Connected Living Department will continue to deliver services to people with disabilities through the Home and Community Care Program for Younger People (HACC PYP).
- Gillian and Shadi will no longer attend the committee meetings.
- Gillian and Shadi both expressed their enjoyment and gratitude for working with the committee over the years and thanked the members for their passionate participation and advocacy for the access and inclusion issues.

DDAC thanked Shadi and Gillian for their contribution to the committee and wished them all the best in their future work.

Jess shared the following information with the committee:

- The Equity and Wellbeing Department focuses on the improvement of community wellbeing, facilitation of access to services and enhancing respect in the community.
- This Department already supports a range of Advisory Committees.
- Different staff across the Department have been working with the Access and Inclusion Team.
- Jess and the Department is looking forward to working with the committee.

Ania provided the following updates:

Darebin City Council new website

- The [new website](#) is available now for use by the community.
- Please visit the website, search for information and let the Access and Inclusion Officer know of any access issues.
- Currently individual authors are working with a consultant to simplify the content and make it more accessible.

- Information on the website will be updated on ongoing basis.

COVID-19 vaccine information

- In mid-August, a coalition of more than 70 community-based disability representative organisations put together a [11-point plan for the immediate vaccination of people with disability](#).
- The slow national vaccine rollout has been criticised by Commissioner Ronald Sackville, Chair of the Disability Royal Commission.
- During August, roughly 60,000 disability workers have voluntarily come forward to receive their COVID-19 vaccine.
- All NDIS participants aged 12 and over are now eligible to receive COVID-19 vaccine.
- [The Australian Government Department of Health website](#) provides up-to-date information to people with disability about COVID-19 vaccines.
- [Disability Gateway](#) also provides vaccine information (ph: 1800 643 787).
- In Victoria, people with specific disability support needs in accessing the vaccine can contact the Disability Liaison Officer via email: DLCoordinator@dhhs.vic.gov.au.

Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability (Disability Royal Commission)

- The privacy legislation for the Disability Royal Commission has been approved by the Senate and the House of Representatives.
- The Royal Commissions Amendment (Protection of Information) Bill 2021 is now a law.
- [The Royal Commission is now able to guarantee the confidentiality of submissions](#) and other sensitive information both during and beyond the term of the enquiry.
- The Commission released [the Fourth Progress Report](#) of the Commission.

National Disability Strategy

- Australia's next National Disability Strategy will be titled Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-2031.
- The change in name was introduced as a result of community feedback.
- It was put forward by the Hon Anne Ruston, Minister for Families and Social Services and agreed by disability ministers.
- The new Strategy, once formally endorsed by all governments, will be released later in 2021.

National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) update

- The Federal Government has been unsuccessful with the proposed reforms and introduction of the Independent Assessments.
- The Hon Linda Reynolds, Minister for NDIS, committed to focus on Tier 2 and co-design to work on further improvement of the scheme.
- Tier 2 addresses the needs of the 4.5 million people with disability not eligible for NDIS.

Economic Participation activities update

Jade provided the following update:

- [IncludeAbility.gov.au](https://includeability.gov.au) – a new website designed to promote meaningful employment opportunities for Australians with disability was launched by Disability Discrimination Commissioner Dr Ben Gauntlett.
- Jobs Forums in October 2021 will focus on employment of people with disability, will include panel of people with lived experience of disability to increase opportunities.

WeThe15 campaign

Ania provided the following update about the campaign:

- The [WeThe15 campaign](#) was launched before the Tokyo 2020 Paralympics.
- The '15' refers to the estimated 15% or 1.2 billion persons with disabilities across the globe who have a disability.
- This biggest ever human rights movement was led by the [International Paralympic Committee](#), along with dozens of other major organisations.
- The campaign launched with the [WeThe15 video](#).

All Aboard Network update

Ray provided the following update from the [All Aboard Network](#):

- The network has been busy writing a response to the Australian Human Rights Commission regarding proposed solutions to a suite of [Exemptions to the Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport that were granted to the Australasian Railway Association](#).
- Bus safety work: there are two areas of focus – one focuses on the experience of people with disability whilst using buses and the other on the creation of an education program for bus drivers.
- The [Bus Passenger Experience Survey](#) is open till 12 September 2021. For any survey access support contact Bonnie Watt, PhD Student, Federation University, e-mail: bwatt@students.federation.edu.au.
- Network attended a meeting regarding accessibility of regional public transport in regional Victoria.

9 Meeting feedback – everyone

Thank you to everyone who participated in the meeting.

Next meeting: Monday 6 December 2021

11:00am – 1:00pm

Onsite or online MS Teams – to be confirmed.