

DISABILITY ACTION PLAN 2017 - 2021



**City of
Whittlesea**

On behalf of the City of Whittlesea we recognise the rich Aboriginal heritage of this country and acknowledge the Wurundjeri Willum Clan as the traditional owners of this place.

Disability Action Plan 2017 - 2021
City of Whittlesea
Melbourne, Victoria
www.whittlesea.vic.gov.au

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Introduction from the Mayor



Welcome to the *City of Whittlesea Disability Action Plan 2017 - 2021*. This is Council's fourth *Disability Action Plan*, continuing our commitment to an inclusive municipality where people of all abilities are encouraged and enabled to lead fulfilling and contributory lives.

The Disability Action Plan is a key part of the *City of Whittlesea Disability Strategy* that aims to remove barriers and build opportunities for people with disabilities to participate fully in their local communities. We are proud that the Plan reflects the intent and vision laid out in the *International Charter for Human Rights and Responsibilities Act* and the National Disability Strategy, and aligns with the State Disability Plan which outlines strategies to promote the social and economic inclusion of Victorians with a disability.

The plan has been informed by widespread consultation and identifies many of the priorities and challenges faced by the individuals, carers and families who live with disability across our community.

We would like to thank the numerous individuals and groups that have contributed to the development of this plan. Through the hard work and commitment of our community members and service providers, our Councillors and Council staff, the plan enables Council to continue realising its responsibility to advocate for, promote and protect the human rights of all our citizens.

This Disability Action Plan aims to build on the work of previous plans, moving on from successful actions that have now been integrated into the core business of Council, to prioritise the issues of current importance to people with disabilities. The plan supports the seven future directions and themes outlined in *Shaping our Future: Whittlesea 2030 Strategic Community Plan* and makes four explicit commitments to:

- **inclusive communities**
- **good health, housing and wellbeing for people with disabilities**
- **respect, equity and safety for all**
- **contributory community living as a right for all regardless of ability.**

I commend to you the *City of Whittlesea Disability Action Plan 2017 - 2021* and look forward to the ongoing collaboration between Council and the community building an inclusive, accessible society for all.

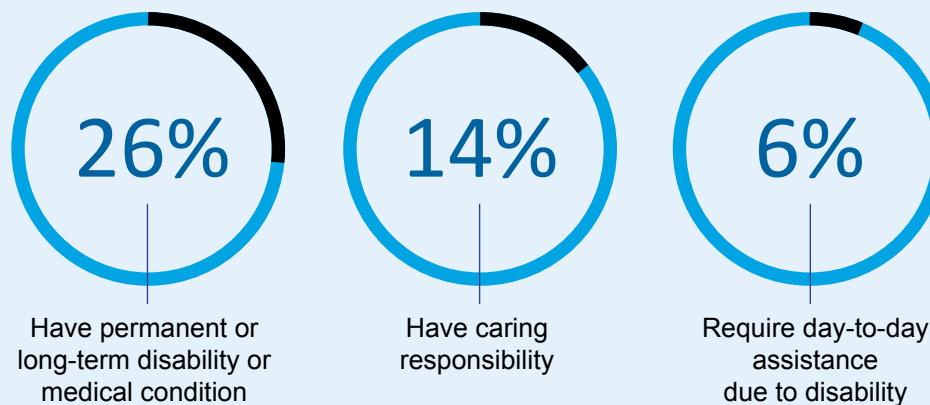
Cr Kris Pavlidis
Mayor

Disability in Whittlesea

A significant proportion of the Whittlesea community are impacted by disability. In 2016, 26 per cent of respondents to Council's Annual Household Survey reported having a permanent or long-term disability or medical condition, and nearly 14 per cent have a caring responsibility. 2016 Census data reveals an average of 6 per cent of residents need assistance with day-to-day activities due to disability.

The City of Whittlesea was one of the first councils in Victoria to register a Disability Action Plan with the Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission. Over the course of four plans, Council has made significant progress in creating more accessible and equitable community environments and many actions from previous plans now form part of Council's core business including:

- all new Council buildings, renovations and facilities meet minimum standards and achieve best practice for accessibility
- all new public buildings requiring a planning permit aim to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act at the earliest possible stages of planning
- implementation of the design guidelines developed by the Whittlesea Accessible Futures project to ensure accessibility
- provision of continuous, accessible paths of travel for pedestrians
- enhanced operation of the Disabled Persons' Parking Scheme in the municipality
- implementation of Council's Footpath Trading Policy
- ensuring all Council events, programs and celebration activities are as inclusive and accessible as practically achievable
- whittlesea Community Futures Disability Cluster convened and meeting regularly.



Priority areas for the 2017 - 2021 Action Plan reflect the current concerns of people across the community living with a disability. They include:


- reducing inequitable access to the built environment
- addressing attitudes including discrimination that create barriers to full economic and social participation of people with disabilities
- accessible public transport for people with disabilities
- affordable, accessible, high quality housing for people with disabilities
- universal design of products, services and environments to be useable by everyone without adaptation or special design
- recognition and support for people with Autism
- recognition and support for women and girls with a disability (and need for assistance with a core activity)
- supporting the implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)
- employment opportunities for people with a disability
- increasing community participation by people with a disability.

Our commitments

Commitment 1: *Inclusive communities*

Inclusive communities will not merely remove physical, social and procedural barriers to equity of access but will also create and promote the concept that non-inclusive communities are incomplete.



Outcome	Action	Measure
<p>1.1 The public built environment is barrier free and accessible to all.</p> 	<p>1.1.1 Develop a priorities process for the <i>Disability Discrimination Act</i> (DDA) compliant upgrade of existing Council public buildings.</p> <p>1.1.2 Develop staff training for Tactile Ground Surface Indicators (TGSIs) in reference to new footpaths and refurbishment of footpaths.</p> <p>1.1.3 Establish a standardised whole of Council approach and process for use of TGSIs.</p> <p>1.1.4 Develop a Public Toilets Provision Guide that will inform the work on public toilets across the municipality including inclusion of Changing Places toilets at all new Council major facilities.</p> <p>1.1.5 Develop a policy statement on the level of enhanced accessibility to be incorporated into the design and construction of new and redeveloped Council facilities.</p>	<p>Prioritisation process for Council public buildings DDA compliance is developed by June 2018.</p> <p>Develop a budget submission to increase budget allocation for DDA compliant upgrade of existing Council public buildings for the 2018/2019 budget process.</p> <p>100 per cent of target staff are trained in TGSIs indicators by June 2018 (target staff are determined by lead and supporting project group).</p> <p>TGSIs standards are developed by June 2018.</p> <p>Develop the Public Toilets Provision Guide by June 2019.</p> <p>Enhanced Accessible Design Principles Policy Statement is developed by June 2018.</p>

Outcome	Action	Measure
<p>1.2 People with disability are able to access and join their communities as freely as do people without disabilities.</p>	<p>1.2.1 Develop a business support program that works with local business owners to encourage the economic participation of customers with disabilities.</p> <p>1.2.2 Advocate to large local shopping centre developments to include quiet rooms to support families with sensory issues.</p> <p>1.2.3 Investigate and upgrade portable assistive listening device to support people that are hearing impaired to access Council meetings and community events.</p> <p>1.2.4 Assess and register current accessible change rooms across the municipality to be included in the Changing Places¹ Statewide Register.</p> <p>1.2.5 Encourage developers of new major commercial facilities (such as major shopping centres) to include a Changing Places toilet in the designs of the development.</p> <p>1.2.6 Develop internal and external funding proposal (including investigation of other funding sources) for the development of a regional accessible playground in the municipality.</p>	<p>Business support program is developed by June 2018.</p> <p>Business support program implementation starts by June 2019.</p> <p>Quiet Room Information Kit developed by June 2018.</p> <p>Council portable assistive listening device is upgraded by June 2018.</p> <p>Audit of accessible change rooms across the municipality complete by December 2017.</p> <p>Changing Places Statewide Register is updated with accessible change rooms audit results by June 2018.</p> <p>Changing Places factsheet is developed by December 2017.</p> <p>Changing Places factsheet is distributed to 100 per cent of all developers by June 2018.</p> <p>Funding proposal developed and submitted to relevant external agency in 2017/2018 and 2018/2019 if required.</p>



¹Changing Places is a public toilet that provides extra support needed beyond what a standard accessible toilet provides. Each Changing places toilet provides a height adjustable adult-sized changing bench, a tracking hoist system, enough space and a safe and clean environment.

Outcome	Action	Measure
<p>1.3 People with disability will experience no procedural, performance, cultural or economic barriers to contributing equitably as valued members of their communities.</p>	<p>1.3.1 Provide mandatory staff induction disability awareness training sessions for all new staff with positions that require a level of disability awareness.</p> <p>1.3.2 Develop a disability awareness training program for all emergency management relief centre staff.</p> <p>1.3.3 Review customer service staff training to ensure awareness of accessibility and responsiveness to people with disabilities.</p>	<p>Four training sessions held per annum for Council positions that require disability awareness each year of the Disability Action Plan.</p> <p>Deliver disability awareness training for emergency management relief staff by June 2018.</p> <p>Review of service staff training is conducted by December 2017.</p> <p>New training is implemented by June 2018.</p>
<p>1.4 People with a disability will have access to a range of transport options.</p>	<p>1.4.1 Work with the State Government on the reform of the Disabled Persons' Parking Scheme (DPPS).</p> <p>1.4.2 Continue community awareness campaign around misuse of disabled person parking spots with local school students.</p> <p>1.4.3 Advocate to governments and transport providers to enhance accessibility of public transport services and facilities in the municipality.</p> <p>1.4.4 Develop a Community Transport Policy, ensuring that the needs of people with disabilities are included in the policy development.</p>	<p>Contribute to the VicRoads consultation process into the reform of the Australian Disability Parking Scheme.</p> <p>Campaign is to be implemented by June 2018.</p> <p>Impact assessment to be conducted as a part of campaign.</p> <p>When appropriate, advocate in partnership with Whittlesea Disability Network (WDN) in consultation with Accessible Parking and Transport Working Group and Public Transport Advisory Committee.</p> <p>Key disability stakeholders are included in the consultation and development of the Community Transport Policy by 2017/2018.</p>

Outcome

Action

Measure

1.4.5 Continue to upgrade and monitor the changes that will impact public transport stops to meet DDA requirements in line with the changes in bus fleet.

1.4.6 Proactively monitor and respond to incidents of misuse of disabled person parking spots, including facilitation of the removal of abandoned cars.

Annual bus stop upgrades are undertaken in 2017/18 and 2018/19.


Continue the implementation of the DPPS and the monitoring of misuse of parking spots.



Commitment 2: Good health, housing and wellbeing for people with disabilities

People with disabilities and their carers are among the most socially and economically disadvantaged groups in Australia. The social and economic disadvantage in which they live is a major contributor to their poor health.²



Outcome	Action	Measure
<p>2.1 People with a disability have a range of affordable, accessible housing choices in their chosen community.</p> 	<p>2.1.1 Advocate for increased accessible housing in the municipality.</p> <p>2.1.2 Build the evidence for the need for accessible and adaptive housing in the municipality.</p> <p>2.1.3 Investigate opportunities to use the evidence collected in Action 2.1.2 to strengthen support for accessible and adaptable housing in the Whittlesea Planning Scheme.</p>	<p>Develop an accessible and adaptive housing advocacy factsheet by June 2018.</p> <p>Seek opportunities to encourage the private sector and other organisations to deliver quality accessible and adaptive housing.</p> <p>Distribution of the accessible and adaptive housing advocacy factsheet to key stakeholders by June 2019.</p> <p>Develop evidence base that supports the need in the local community for accessible housing as well as relevant support services by June 2018.</p> <p>Analysis of data and locally specific evidence for planning opportunities to make recommendations for next steps by June 2019.</p>

Outcome

2.2 People with a disability experience the optimum level of health and wellbeing.

2.3 Support for children and young people with a disability (such as Autism) and their families / carers.



Action

2.2.1 Disability service providers are promoted to local NDIS participants and non-participants in the municipality.

2.2.2. Support the service delivery market development in the local area under the NDIS.

2.3.1 Monitor the impacts of the NDIS rollout, and identify emerging gaps, service access and/or support needs of families/carers, children and young people with disabilities (such as Autism) that are not eligible for ongoing NDIS funding.

2.3.2 Work with local schools to increase the support for students with disabilities in the local area.

2.3.3 Work with the Local Area Coordination provider of the NDIS to support the implementation of community capacity building components of the NDIS.

Measure

Local service providers expo held by December each year.

Develop a Market Gap Statement and distribute to local service providers via Whittlesea Community Futures by June each year.

Develop budget submission and/or business case for any required resource to respond to the emerging gaps, service access and/or support needs, identified by June 2018.

Develop partnerships with local schools by June 2018.

Partners are engaged in joint projects together to support the community capacity building component of the NDIS each year.

Commitment 3: *Respect, equity and safety*

The universal rights of all people are to be treated with respect, equality and dignity. The rights incorporated in the convention underpin policy and strategy development and the provision of services.



Outcome	Action	Measure
<p>3.1 People with a disability are respected within their community and the wider municipality.</p>	<p>3.1.1 Advocate for all departments producing major Council strategies to include WDN as a stakeholder for community participation and engagement.</p> <p>3.1.2 Develop a community disability survey to get baseline data on community attitudes around inclusion in our community.</p> <p>3.1.3 Review the current Terms of Reference of the WDN and continue to support the network.</p>	<p>WDN consulted as a stakeholder for key Council strategies.</p> <p>Community disability survey is developed and conducted by June 2018.</p> <p>WDN Terms of Reference is reviewed and results are tabled at a WDN meeting by December 2017.</p>
<p>3.2 People with a disability and carers are safe and free from family violence.</p>	<p>3.2.1 Advocate for accessible crisis/emergency accommodation and/or family violence refuges to be provided in the City of Whittlesea.</p> <p>3.2.2 Research and evidence on experiences of family violence of people with a disability and carers to be used to inform Council's Family Violence Strategy review.</p>	<p>Update Council's advocacy brief on family violence refuges to state that all refuges become inclusive for people with disabilities by June 2018.</p> <p>Key disability and family violence sector stakeholders are included in the consultation for the Family Violence Strategy review by June 2018.</p>



FREE COFFEE

NICEZ CAFE

You Can't Buy HAPPINESS
You Can Buy COFFEE
That's Pretty CLOSE

Tea & Coffee
Served Here

MIKE

LEIGH

SAM

Commitment 4: *Contributory lives*

There is equity of access to education and training to enable appropriate and valued employment opportunities, and access to inclusive communities through cultural, sporting, and leisure activities.



Outcome	Action	Measure
<p>4.1 Engagement of the business community in developing existing models and pathways through skill acquisition for equity of employment for people with a disability.</p>	<p>4.1.1 Connect and network with a variety of disability employment providers to research and identify gaps and barriers to create local employment opportunities.</p> <p>4.1.2 Using various platforms, raise the awareness of local businesses that are leaders in employing people with disabilities (such as Jobs in the North, eNews).</p> <p>4.1.3 Highlight support available to local businesses and encourage disability employment within the business events program.</p>	<p>Local Disability Employment Network is established by end December 2017.</p> <p>Local Disability Employment Network will meet four times per year.</p> <p>Minimum of two articles in various formats are included in Council publications in each year of the Disability Action Plan.</p> <p>Information provided on disability employment at a minimum of two business events per year.</p>

Outcome	Action	Measure
<p>4.2 Council demonstrates leadership as a major employer of people with a disability.</p>	<p>4.2.1 Conduct research to gain baseline data on the number of employees with a disability across Council to explore the setting of disability employment targets.</p> <p>4.2.2 Work with Australian Network on Disabilities (AND) to investigate actions that Council can take to increase opportunities for employment of people with a disability.</p> <p>4.2.3 Establish disability work experience/ employment pilot program with council departments for people with disabilities (including people with disabilities from Aboriginal, cultural and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and women with disabilities).</p>	<p>Research and desktop analysis on the percentage of Council employees with disabilities is conducted by June 2018.</p> <p>Set targets to increase the percentage of Council employees with disabilities by June 2019.</p> <p>Council becomes a member of AND by December 2017.</p> <p>Develop Employment Workplace Adjustment Policy by June 2019.</p> <p>External funding proposal is developed for Disability Work Experience/ Employment Pilot in June 2018.</p>
<p>4.3 Community events, activities, sporting, recreational and cultural opportunities are inclusive of people with disabilities as participants, leaders/ organisers and/or volunteers.</p>	<p>4.3.1 Ensure applicants are aware of accessibility requirements as part of Council's Community Grants process.</p> <p>4.3.2 Investigate the development of playground communication signage at parks and gardens across the municipality for use by people with Autism.</p>	<p>Accessibility information is provided as part of Council's Community Grants application and funding approval for the 2017/2018 funding round.</p> <p>Investigation completed, designs drafted and proposal referred to the 2018/2019 budget process.</p>

Outcome	Action	Measure
<p>4.4 People with disability are actively involved in communities as leaders and /or volunteers.</p>	<p>4.3.3 Increase leisure opportunities for people with disabilities in the community by investigating how inclusion and equity principles could be integrated into sport/recreation clubs/venues.</p> <p>4.3.4 Work with other North East Melbourne councils to develop a pilot program and funding submission to transition the current Building Inclusive Communities Program into Information Linkage and Capacity Building Grants Program.</p>	<p>Investigate opportunities to promote inclusive practices in aquatic centre contracts, ground allocations processes and venue hire allocations by June 2019.</p> <p>Funding submission for pilot is developed and submitted as a part of the 2018 funding round.</p>
	<p>4.4.1 Work with volunteer networks to promote social inclusion into purposeful volunteering opportunities which may lead to part-time employment.</p> <p>4.4.2 Provide disability awareness training for Councillors.</p>	<p>People with disabilities are consulted and recognised in the development of the Council Volunteer Strategy by June 2018.</p> <p>Disability awareness training is provided for Councillors by June 2018.</p>

Glossary of Terms

AND	Australian Network on Disabilities
DDA	Disability Discrimination Act
DPPS	Disabled Persons' Parking Scheme
NDIS	National Disability Insurance Scheme
TGSI	Tactile Ground Surface Indicators
WDN	Whittlesea Disability Network

Acknowledgements and thanks

Council would like to acknowledge and thank our internal and external stakeholders for their extensive input and knowledge which has informed development of the *Disability Action Plan 2017 - 2021*. Particular thanks go to the individuals and organisations who participated in the community and service provider consultations.



For any further information about the *Disability Action Plan 2017 - 2021* please contact the City of Whittlesea using the details below:

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