



ACCESS AND INCLUSION ACTION PLAN 2017 -2021

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FOREWORD BY THE MAYOR

I am proud to present the revised Cairns Regional Council **Access and Inclusion Plan 2017-2021**, aimed at fostering an organisational and regional commitment to recognising the contributions and enhancing participation levels of people of all abilities in the Cairns community.

The Plan emphasises the important role of local government to create an enabling environment, which is inclusive of all members of our community and celebrates people of all abilities within the definition and valuing of 'human diversity' as a natural part of our community.

Ensuring equitable rights, access and inclusion has important benefits for the whole community – social, economic and legal. This includes creating stronger social networks, quality of life, and social cohesion through a sense of place and belonging. Community wellbeing is also enriched through improved access to community, sport and recreation facilities, open spaces and cultural activities as well as economic opportunities.

This Plan demonstrates Council's ongoing commitment to building inclusive communities, through built and social infrastructure development, where community participation and access enables people to engage in our region with dignity, pride and independence. This includes people with a lived experience, their families and carers and supporting their full participation in all aspects of community life, whether residents or visitors.

The Plan provides a systematic approach and sets measurable targets to support implementation. The work will inform investment in infrastructure improvements and service development to strengthen interaction with Council assets, facilities and services as well as Council's broader community building initiatives in partnership with the community sector and other agencies.

This includes aligning Council's direction with the National Disability Strategy 2010 – 2020. This strategy provides a national policy framework for government, industry and the community to work together toward a rights-based social inclusion agenda that ensures all Australians enjoy equal access to opportunities.

Over the past three years, I am pleased to report that Council has actively worked to improve access to many of our City's heritage buildings and streetscapes, public facilities such as pools and sporting precincts. Examples of key initiatives include social inclusions programs such as horse riding for people with a disability (\$18,000), Infrastructure upgrades including the CBD Tactile Ground Surface Indicator (TGSi) renewal program (\$105,000) and improvement works such as the Tobruk, Smithfield Pool lift, wet-chair and personal transport chair renewals (\$35,000) among others. Our programs have also funded many community-based initiatives to promote the diversity of our community and the contributions of people of all abilities to the success and vibrancy of our region as consumers, participants and leaders.

It is with great pleasure that I present this strategy for the next five years to continue this vision.



Cr B Manning
Mayor

MISSION STATEMENT

“To enable and empower people of all abilities toward full participation in our community through excellence in service and leadership”.

PURPOSE OF THIS PLAN

The purpose of this Plan is to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and broader social justice considerations for people of all abilities, to promote respect for their inherent dignity and to provide a framework to enable Cairns Regional Council to comply with the goals of the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (*DDA*) and the Queensland Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 and to align with the direction of the National Disability Strategy 2010-2020.

This current Plan is informed by the Australian Local Government Association's guidelines entitled *Disability Inclusion Planning - A Guide for Local Government 2016*, which recommends that Councils develop Action Plans for the following reason:

- To enhance and facilitate equitable access for all members of the community.
- As sound business practice in that the implementation of such plans improves Council's performance in fulfilling its community services responsibilities to people with a disability and their families, who constitute a significant proportion of ratepayers" (P.4),
- To reduce the likelihood of complaints lodged with the Federal Government's Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC), and
- To eliminate discrimination.

This revised plan follows on from the implementation of Council's *Access and Equity Plan 2009*, which has informed Council's initiatives to meet the needs of people of all abilities, primarily through engagement with the community and service providers and investment in key infrastructure improvements. These achievements are reported within Council's Annual Report.

This current plan seeks to implement an increased systematic approach to dealing with these decisions. It complies with State and Federal legislative requirements and provides for a review of the policies and practices of Council in this regard together with a framework for communicating both with staff and with the community. The document is framed around three key aspirational targets related to community enablement, organisational culture and governance, and continuous improvement and focusses on the three tiers of social inclusion related to all abilities – physical environment, attitudinal and community.

ASPIRATIONAL TARGET 1 - A socially inclusive community enabled to value and celebrate people of all abilities and their contribution to the wellbeing of the community.

Goal	Strategy	Actions	Lead Responsibility	Timeframes and KPIs
<p>1.1 Council takes a lead role to promote recognition of the positive and valuable contribution of people of all abilities across all aspects of Cairns community life.</p>	<p>1.1.1 Seek to create positive public narrative that ensures that people of all abilities are recognised, valued and respected members of the Cairns Community – as consumers, participants and leaders – across social, economic, legal, civic and political dimensions.</p> <p>1.1.2. Contribute to promoting the economic contributions of people of all abilities, including employment pathways – recognising the critical relationship between economic participation and social inclusion.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement capacity building programs that assist community groups/organisations to plan and run community events and programming. This includes participating in, coordinating and funding specific themed weeks including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disability Action Week events. • International Day of People with Disabilities. • Promote positive news stories via a diverse array of internal and external social media and Council communication platforms. 	<p>General Manager, Community, Sport and Cultural Services</p> <p>Manager Marketing and Communications</p> <p>General Manager, HR and Organisational Change</p> <p>Community Development Officer (Access and Inclusion).</p>	<p>Minimum of four organisations funded to deliver initiatives per annum (via the CD Grants Model) by June 2018.</p> <p>CRC communication platforms (newsletters and website) include at least four articles per year June 2018.</p> <p>Minimum of two Media Releases issued per year by June 2018.</p> <p>CRC Annual Report includes A & I Action Plan achievements by June 2018.</p> <p>Nominate for the State Disability Action Award and the International Day of People with Disabilities by June 2020.</p>
<p>1.2 Council understands and advocates for the needs of people of all abilities to fully participate in community life and to position Cairns as an inclusive and accessible City.</p>	<p>1.2.1 Services and programs are directly informed through annual engagement with people with a lived experience, their families and carers, and the community sector.</p> <p>1.2.2 Employ strategic advocacy to raise broad awareness of the collective support needs of people of all abilities in the region and seek to strengthen the service system that supports them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct targeted sector engagement to establish end-user needs to inform advocacy and Council investment. • Incorporate specific data gathering questions into the ‘Our Cairns’ Survey and/or other strategic consultation to inform advocacy strategies. • Implement awareness raising programs or campaigns to 	<p>General Manager, Community, Sport and Cultural Services</p> <p>Manager Marketing and Communications</p> <p>Community Development Officer (Access and Inclusion).</p>	<p>Our Cairns Survey includes two questions related to accessibility and inclusion priorities by June 2018.</p> <p>Annual consultation conducted with service sector and peak bodies by June 2018.</p> <p>Two awareness raising initiatives developed and implemented annually by June 2018.</p> <p>‘Access for All’ web directory</p>

		<p>address barriers to participation (e.g. Assistance Animals Awareness).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribute to regional and state advocacy bodies and the strategic planning of peak networks including: Disability Queensland; ACOSS; QCOSS; Cairns Alliance of Social Services (CASS). 		<p>updated by June 2018.</p> <p>Contribute to annual review of Cairns Alliance of Social Services Position Papers once per year by June 2018.</p>
<p>1.3 The Cairns community is aware of the accessible supports and infrastructure available to facilitate full participation in community life.</p>	<p>1.3.1 Raise awareness of community accessible supports and infrastructure - including rights and responsibilities of access. (Including Accommodation; Accessible public sanitary facilities; and Accessible car parking.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and upgrade "Access for All" Web Directory – as a comprehensive information point on the listing of accommodation, services and facilities. Implement projects or programs that raise awareness of the region's accessible supports and infrastructure. Promote through Council's media new and retrofitted facilities to the community. 	<p>General Manager, Community, Sport and Cultural Services</p> <p>Manager Marketing and Communications</p> <p>Community Development Officer (Access and Inclusion)</p>	<p>Design and implement one awareness raising initiative (project/program) per year by June 2018.</p> <p>Minimum of one media release per year by June 2018.</p> <p>'Access for All' Web Directory updated ongoing as information/services change by June 2018.</p> <p>No net increase in Customer Request Management system advices relating to A & I beyond current levels (6/yr as @ 2017) by 2020.</p>

ASPIRATIONAL TARGET 2 – A Council that is committed and enabled through its culture and governance to meet the needs of people of all abilities within the community and to facilitate their full participation in community life.

Goal	Strategy	Actions	Lead Responsibility	KPIs
<p>2.1 A Council that is aware and responsive to deliver assets, facilities and services that are accessible to people of all abilities.</p>	<p>2.1.1 All levels of Council have access to quality information to deliver accessible services and facilities.</p> <p>2.1.2 Organisational culture supports staff to recognise and respond to the needs of people of all abilities – both service consumers and staff.</p> <p>2.1.3 Services and programs are directly informed through engagement with people with a lived experience and their families and carers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise awareness across Council's workforce of A & I principles and technical data – including access to Standards Australia resources – to inform all areas of operations. • Corporate Inductions include information on Access and Inclusion and organisational policy. • Promote the range of support services available, including technical advice via internal and external communication platforms. • Incorporate specific data gathering questions into the 'Our Cairns' Survey and/or other strategic consultation to inform organisational standards. 	<p>General Manager, Community, Sport and Cultural Services</p> <p>Manager Marketing and Communications</p> <p>General Manager, HR and Organisational Change</p> <p>Community Development Officer (Access and Inclusion).</p>	<p>A & I Action Plan is cross-referenced within Council's core Strategic Plans (e.g. Community Facilities Strategic Plan; Branch Plan) by June 2018.</p> <p>Information related to A & I is incorporated into 95% of corporate inductions to new staff and refreshed to staff after five years by June 2018.</p> <p>No net increase in Customer Request Management system advices relating to A & I beyond current levels (6/yr as @ 2017) by 2020.</p> <p>Our Cairns Survey includes two questions related to accessibility by June 2018.</p> <p>Annual consultation conducted with service sector and peak bodies by June 2018.</p>
<p>2.2 Council assets, facilities and services comply with relevant Australian Standards and legislation.</p>	<p>2.2.1 Accessibility shall be awarded due and equal consideration in all phases of research, design and purchasing (either new, improved, or maintenance or services) and incorporate principles of 'Universal Design'.</p> <p>2.2.2 All aspects of new and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council procurement policy incorporates A & I standards – incorporating a desktop check list to ensure that accessibility is investigated for all new or replacement purchases and meets minimum standards (or an accessible solution is considered). 	<p>General Manager, Community, Sport and Cultural Services</p> <p>Manager Marketing and Communications</p> <p>General Manager, HR and Organisational Change</p>	<p>Procurement policy incorporating A & I standards developed by June 2019.</p> <p>Desk-top Checklist for Purchasing developed by June 2019.</p> <p>Procurement training incorporates A & I specific standards by June 2020.</p>

	<p>improved facilities, infrastructure and services shall comply with Australian Standards.</p> <p>2.2.3 All areas of Council's existing infrastructure maintenance works and services shall comply with the Australian Standards.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop guidelines related to Council services that are best practice and not addressed within the Australian Standards (such as the W3C compliance). • Conduct assessments and audits across all areas of operations from concept to completion that incorporate A & I to ensure compliance. • Monitor compliance by logging A & I audits and assessments decision/action/outcomes (both financial and in-kind) to monitor compliance. 	<p>Community Development Officer and (Access Inclusion).</p>	<p>Guidelines for Council Services not addressed with Australian Standards developed by June 2019.</p> <p>Information related to A & I is incorporated into 95% of corporate inductions to new staff and refreshed to staff after 5 years by June 2019.</p> <p>No net increase in Customer Request Management system advices relating to A & I beyond current levels (6/yr as @ 2017) by 2020.</p> <p>A & I Monitoring Compliance Log established by June 2019.</p>
<p>2.3 Council's public assets, facilities and services are accessible and able to meet the needs of people of all abilities.</p>	<p>2.3.1 Lease holders of Council's public assets are aware of and have the skills needed to provide a level of service to people of all abilities.</p> <p>2.3.2 Monitoring of compliance against management agreements and leases include A & I.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access and Inclusion Awareness packages include information on current legislation - for internal and external use – especially targeted at management committees and lease holders. • Access and Inclusion Departmental Implementation Plans be developed to action all targets relevant to specific branches. • Corporate Inductions and training include information on A & I and organisational standards. • Promote the range of support services available, including technical advice. • Conduct A & I assessments and 	<p>General Manager, Community, Sport and Cultural Services</p> <p>Manager Marketing and Communications</p> <p>General Manager, HR and Organisational Change</p> <p>Community Development Officer and (Access Inclusion).</p>	<p>Review and distribute existing Access and Inclusion Awareness package by December 2018.</p> <p>Information related to A & I is incorporated into 95% of corporate inductions to new staff and refreshed to staff after five years by June 2018.</p> <p>Develop and implement one Safety Circle conversation by June 2018.</p> <p>No net increase in Customer Request Management system advices relating to A & I beyond current levels (6/yr as @ 2017) by 2020.</p> <p>A & I Action Plan is cross-referenced within Council's core</p>

		<p>audits on Council assets managed by lease holders at the time of lease establishment or renewal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor compliance by logging A & I audits and assessments decision/action/outcome (both financial and in-kind). 		<p>Strategic Plans (e.g. Community Facilities Strategic Plan; Branch Plan) by June 2018.</p> <p>A & I assessments and audits on Council assets managed by lease holders at the time of lease establishment or renewal commenced by June 2019.</p> <p>A & I Departmental Implementation Plans established by December 2017.</p> <p>A & I Monitoring Compliance Log established by June 2019.</p>
<p>2.4 Council is positioned as an employer of choice for people of all abilities.</p>	<p>2.4.1 Organisational culture supports staff to recognise and respond to the needs of people of all abilities within the workforce.</p> <p>2.4.2 Regional community is aware of employment pathways within Council for people of all abilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the Equal Employment Opportunity Policy to reflect current standards. • Human Resources and Recruitment Materials include specific information related to A & I. • Actively and broadly promote Council as an Equal Opportunity Employer – targeted and mainstream media (digital and print). • A & I Officer to provide technical advice and support across Council to ensure accessibility standards – Including information regarding financial contributions to workplace modifications (e.g. Job Access grants) and conduct routine audits of Council workplaces. 	<p>General Manager, Community, Sport and Cultural Services</p> <p>Manager Marketing and Communications</p> <p>General Manager, HR and Organisational Change</p> <p>Community Development Officer (Access and Inclusion).</p>	<p>Equal Employment Opportunity policy reviewed and implemented by June 2018.</p> <p>At least 50% of relevant targets within Council's EEO Management Plan and Workforce Development plans implemented by June 2020.</p> <p>Human Resources Recruitment Materials reviewed to include A & I by June 2019.</p> <p>A minimum of one media article per year by June 2018.</p> <p>CRC Annual Report includes A & I Action Plan achievements by June 2018.</p> <p>A & I Action Plan is cross-referenced within Council's core Strategic Plans by June 2018.</p> <p>A & I Monitoring Compliance Log established by June 2019.</p>

ASPIRATIONAL TARGET 3 - An organisation that is informed through continuous learning to improve Access and Inclusion outcomes for people of all abilities.

Goal	Strategy	Actions	Lead Responsibility	KPIs
<p>3.1 Council's Access and Inclusion Action Plan is a benchmark for best practice, reflecting current standards and legislation as well as the changing needs of society.</p>	<p>3.1.1 Strategies are informed by current legislation and Australian Standards.</p> <p>3.1.2 Services and programs are directly informed through annual engagement with people with a lived experience and their families and carers.</p> <p>3.1.3 Organisational monitoring and evaluation processes are established and inform strategies and investment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Register the A & I Action Plan with relevant representative bodies – including the Australian Human Rights Commission (pursuant to section 67 of the <i>Disability Discrimination Act 1992</i>). • Conduct annual engagement and consultation with consumers and the service sector to inform A & I Plan reviews. • Develop an Annual Work Plan to implement the A & I Action Plan – that identifies areas of shared responsibility and accountability across Council departments. • Establish a regular process to review and evaluate the Access and Inclusion Action Plan and its implementation – including a Council-wide monitoring and evaluation plan – that considers changes in legislation and standards. 	<p>General Manager, Community, Sport and Cultural Services</p> <p>Manager Marketing and Communications</p> <p>General Manager, HR and Organisational Change</p> <p>Community Development Officer (Access and Inclusion).</p>	<p>A & I Action Plan is registered by June 2018.</p> <p>Annual work plan established by 1st September 2017.</p> <p>Monitoring and Evaluation Plan established and implemented by June 2018.</p> <p>Our Cairns Survey includes two questions related to accessibility by June 2018.</p> <p>Annual consultation conducted with service sector and peak bodies by June 2018.</p> <p>A & I Action Plan is cross-referenced within Council's core Strategic Plans (e.g. Community Facilities Strategic Plan; Branch Plan) by June 2018.</p>

REFERENCES

AusAID, Accessibility Design Guide: Universal design principles for Australia's aid program, January 2013, Registration Number 13.

Australian Human Rights Commission Disability Discrimination Act Action Plans: A Guide for Business. 2017.

Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland: Anti-Discrimination Act 1992

Australian Local Government Association. Disability Inclusion Planning – A Guide for Local Government. October 2016.

Department of Social Services. National Disability Strategy 2010-2020. Australian Government.

United Nations, Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Optional Protocol 2006.

World Health Organisation. CBR: A Strategy for Rehabilitation, Equalisation of Opportunities, Poverty Reduction and Social Inclusion of People with Disabilities. Joint Position Paper 2004.

APPENDIX 1 – KEY DEFINITIONS

The World Health Organisation (2004) defines Disabilities an umbrella term, covering impairments, activity limitations and participation restrictions. It reflects the interaction between features of a person’s body and features of the society in which they live.

The concept of an inclusive community is informed by the World Health Organisation’s (2004) definition that communities adapt their structures (physical barriers) and procedures (policies, laws, common practices) to facilitate the inclusion of people with disabilities and focuses on all citizens and their entitlement to equal treatment and access to opportunities. This includes the removal of environmental and social barriers through a rights-based approach to increase accessibility.

For the purposes of this Action Plan, “disability” is defined in accordance with the definition provided by the Commonwealth *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*. The Act (1992) makes disability discrimination unlawful and promotes equal rights, equal opportunity and equal access for people with disabilities (AHRC, 2017) and describes disability as:

- a) Total or partial loss of the person’s bodily or mental function
- b) Total or partial loss of a part of the body
- c) The presence in the body of organisms causing disease or illness
- d) The presence in the body of organisms capable of causing disease or illness
- e) The malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of the person’s body
- f) A disorder or malfunction which results in the person learning differently from a person without the disorder or malfunction
- g) A disorder, illness or disease which affects a person’s thought processes, perception of reality, emotions or judgements in which results in disturbed behaviour
- h) The disability presently exists
- i) The disability previously existed but no longer exists
- j) The disability may exist in the future
- k) The disability is imputed to a person

This Plan understands “accessible” to mean assets, facilities, services, functions that are open and available to people all abilities which afford them the same opportunities, rights and responsibilities enjoyed by all other people in the community.

Access and Inclusion Relevant Standards and Legislation:

All areas of Council’s infrastructure maintenance works are compliant with Access to Premises (Building Standards) 2010, AS1428.1 2009; the Disability Discrimination Act 1992; and the Accessible Public Transport Standards 2002.

With compliance including as a minimum:

- Accessible parking

- Accessible signage
- Access to information in alternative formats
- Accessible toilets
- Circulation zones inside buildings
- Access to premises from street frontages
- Access to premises from footpaths
- Prioritise works for upgrading Council's infrastructure.