

Inclusion and Access Advisory Group – Terms of Reference

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1. PURPOSE

To inform, educate and advise Shoalhaven City Council, its staff and residents on accessibility and inclusion with the purpose of creating accessible and inclusive community infrastructure by:

- Actively engaging with Council on policies,
- Inputting on submissions and relevant legislation affecting accessibility and inclusion
- Being a conduit for information and communication between community and Council,
- Raising awareness in the Council, with its staff and in the community around inclusion and accessibility issues

2. STATEMENT

Shoalhaven City Council recognises the experience, knowledge, expertise and insight of the Inclusion and Access Advisory Group. Council acknowledges the Group's role as a conduit for strategic input into Council's decision-making processes.

3. TERMS OF REFERENCE

3.1. Relationship to Council

The Group is a Section 355 Committee of Council (Local Government Act 1993). It is a strategic advisory committee to advocate for and inform Council's decision-making process related to people with disability in the Shoalhaven.

3.2. Chairperson

The Chairperson position is open to Councillors who are members of the Group

The Group will appoint the Chairperson with the position limited to one (1) Council term. (4 years)

3.3. Membership

Members must live, work or volunteer within the Shoalhaven City Council Local Government Area.

Membership is by application and is open to:

- People who have lived experience of physical, sensory, intellectual and mental health issues.
- Parents/carers of people with disability.
- Representatives from disability organisations (non-voting).
- 1 x Health Representative (from an organisation providing health services in the Local Government Area)
- 1 x Education Representative (from an organisation providing Educational services in the area)
- State & Federal Parliament Representation
- 3 Councillors and (2 Councillors as alternates)
- People who are passionate about advocating for access & inclusion.
- Young person

Council will manage the application process. All applications will be considered by the Group and appointment decided at the next scheduled meeting.

3.4. Quorum

The quorum to be 5 (five) members in attendance at the meeting (including those who have joined by video or tele-conference)

3.5. Meetings

- Frequency - Quarterly
- Duration - 2½ hours to be reviewed after 6 months
- Agendas - Will be distributed to members one week prior to the meeting. Priorities identified by participants at the beginning of each meeting will be used to order the business of the meeting.
- Minutes - Council will perform administrative support for the meetings of the Group

3.6. Voting

- Members do not need to be present to have an input. Should they wish to make comment on items when they cannot be in attendance, they can be submitted via email on one working day before the meeting. People can also video or tele-conference (where available).
- Where possible, all decisions will be reached by consensus
- All decisions must be stated precisely for the inclusion of the minutes
- Alternative views are to be minuted.
- Every possible avenue will be explored to reach consensus. If consensus cannot be reached, and there is no urgency to the business, it will go to vote at the third meeting.
- Where an item cannot be determined by consensus after 3 meetings or an urgent decision is required before the next meeting, a vote will be taken from those members in attendance (including those who have joined by video or tele-conference). The chairperson will have a casting vote.

3.7. Code of Conduct

- All members of the Group are to abide by Council's Code of Conduct. A copy of the Code of Conduct is distributed to prospective members upon application to the Group.
- Members must declare in writing any interest in any report tabled at the meeting covered by the Code of Conduct and Pecuniary Interest

- Group members should act in a professional and responsible manner with the information they obtain as a member, as the Group requires openness and honesty to function well,
- Group members should feel free to express their opinions and views without fear of recrimination.

3.8. Confidentiality and Privacy

- Members may have contact with private and confidential or personal information retained by Council. If so members are required to maintain security of any confidential or personal information and not access, use or remove any information, unless the member is authorised to do so.

3.9. Communication

- All issues must be clearly communicated including priorities, limitation and benefits to the community
- Members of the Advisory Group are not permitted to speak to the media as a Group of Council representatives of the Advisory Group unless approved by the Chairperson
- Where endorsement is required from Shoalhaven City Council, approval must be sought through the formal processes
- The Chair of the Advisory Group is the point of contact for communication between Board members and Council staff.
- Communication methods must be accessible in all instances and may take place via email, direct mail and phone calls where necessary.

3.10. Working Sub Groups

- The Group may establish working sub groups as deemed appropriate to assist in fulfilling their role and purpose.
- Working sub groups will be formed around specific tasks and a convenor from the group will be appointed.

3.11. Responsibility of Council

- Council will provide secretarial support to arrange meetings and take minutes and provide professional officer support where required.
- Council at its discretion may review and change the Terms of Reference, Role and Structure of the Advisory Group.

4. IMPLEMENTATION

The Finance, Corporate and Community Services Group of Council is allocated responsibility for the administration of the policy.

5. REVIEW

To be reviewed within one (1) year of the election of a new Council, or earlier at the direction of Council.