



Minutes Banyule Disability & Inclusion Committee

26 June 2024

Meeting details

Date of meeting	Wednesday, 26 June 2024
Time	5:30pm – 7:00pm
Venue	Room 4.06 Griffin, 1 Flintoff Street Greensborough Banyule City Council
Chair/Facilitator	Cr Tom Melican
Minutes	Sherryn Prinzi

Acknowledgement of the Traditional Custodians

“Banyule City Council is proud to acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people as Traditional Custodians of the land and we pay respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, past, present and emerging, who have resided in the area and have been an integral part of the region’s history.”

Diversity Statement

“Our community is made up of diverse cultures, beliefs, abilities, bodies, sexualities, ages and genders. We are committed to access, equity, participation and rights for everyone: principles which empower, foster harmony and increase the wellbeing of an inclusive community.”

Attendee

Attendee name	Affiliation/Organisation
Cr Melican	Chair
Shannon Joyce	Disability & Inclusion Committee Member
Allan Leenaerts	Disability & Inclusion Committee Member
Emma Lowe	Belgravia Leisure representative
Merryn Lawson	BANSIC representative
Kathryn Drake	IDV
Laila Fernandez	Disability & Inclusion Committee Member
Gurvinder Singh Cheema	Disability & Inclusion Committee Member
Rocio Silva	Disability & Inclusion Committee Member
Ros Melling	Disability & Inclusion Committee Member
Aaron Williams	Brotherhood of St Laurence (Local Area Coordinator)
Angela Bergman	Disability & Inclusion Committee Member

Apologies

Name	Affiliation/Organisation
Cr Alison Champion	Councillor substitute

Council staff

Attendee name	Affiliation/Organisation
Sherryn Prinzi	Coordinator Community Impact
Jo Wilson	Manager Resilient and Connected Communities
Joseph Tabacco	Director Community Wellbeing

Items

1. Introduction

Cr Melican welcomed members and read Acknowledgement of Traditional Custodians and Diversity Statement.

2. Minutes from previous meeting

The progress towards completing actions from the previous meeting were noted.

Agenda item	Progress
Emma to work with WaterMarc to plan a Disability Pride Month activity	In progress Emma to provide an update at <i>Item 3.3</i>
Library of Things project	Complete Jo to provide a brief update on this project.
Committee recommendation Council to consider investigating the adoption of the Cerge platform for Council's buildings like Ivanhoe Library and Cultural Hub	Complete Council has engaged Cerge to create a site for Ivanhoe Library and Cultural Hub for a trial period, that will be reviewed after one year.

3. Committee priorities

3.1 Banyule Disability Website Project Update

The aim of the Banyule Disability Website project: Create a digital solution that enhances the opportunity for people with disability in Banyule, their families and carers to access information about local services, support, programs and activities. The project objectives were:

1. Create an information hub for the Banyule disability community.
2. Guide people to take the first steps to link in with the support network.
3. Enhance information for events, activities and facilities to help make good decisions.
4. Increase the visibility of Banyule-run and funded support activities and events.
5. Make it easier to access and find information on Council's website.

The Committee were provided with an overview of the website features and how they respond to each objective, then informed of the next steps, including:

- AA compliance audit to be undertaken
- Update of images to represent Banyule residents
- Where to start animation on landing page
- Introduce Cerge platform for Ivanhoe Library and Cultural Hub
- Improve playground descriptions and adopt benchmark standards
- Complete community halls descriptions and upload improved images
- Ongoing updates to keep pages current.

Discussion

Committee members who participated in the photoshoot were acknowledged and thanked.

The Committee noted the work undertaken. Reinforced the perspective that Council should be aiming for best practice rather than baseline standards for inclusion of people with disability, but acknowledged that inclusion is an ongoing process.

Cr Melican introduced Joseph Tabacco, Director Community Wellbeing and all members self-introduced to Joseph.

3.2 Events and celebrations

Inclusive Banyule Action 3.13 We will continue to elevate visibility and awareness of people with disability through events, advocacy and days of celebration.

Belgravia Leisure provided an update on their Disability Pride month calendar of events. Emma noted that WaterMarc offer a great range of disability-inclusive programs all year round and the aim is to better promote these options during Disability Pride Month. Through consultation with WaterMarc workplace training students, Belgravia Leisure gathered an understanding of additional programs of interest to the community, and plans to offer additional activities. During this month, if booked through the Cerge Platform, people with disability can enjoy free access to these programs.

Discussion

Members noted and thanked Belgravia Leisure for their efforts and proposed that not all people access information digitally. Hence suggested that printed calendars and flyers should be distributed through community organisations such as Diamond Valley Community Support.

Council noted that Yarra Pentry Regional Library will also publish a calendar of events, including Auslan story times, where interpreters will also share basic sign language with children.

Council noted that the Disability Pride flag will be flown at Ivanhoe Town Hall and Greensborough throughout this month, and the Banyule Banner will feature an article.

Council noted that after conversations with other community organisations, like Neighbourhood Houses, it became evident that there was a reluctance to promote activities because some participants with disability are not well supported by their carers, creating issues for program facilitators.

Committee members, including a BSL representative, noted that this is a common issue and also reported by other organisations such as Men's Sheds.

Council noted that VALID had worked with people with disability to produce a tip sheet for carers of people with Disability, and this is available for distribution.

Action

Action 1: Sherryn to distribute the VALID tip sheet for Carers of People with Disability.

Action 2: Sherryn to support the distribution of the WaterMarc and YPRL calendar of events for Disability Pride Month.

3.3 Inclusive Business Guides

Inclusive Banyule Action 3.1 We will review the Inclusive Business Guides to support businesses to uplift inclusive practice for people with disability.

Council reported on the BSL project where people with disability were invited to join a co-design team to discuss and support businesses to improve accessibility. BSL had three community members register. Instead of proceeding with the co-design project, BSL has decided to work individually with these three people.

Council approached a local traders association to participate in a review of accessibility. The traders association noted the request but did not take up the offer to participate.

Council discussed the current needs of businesses and noted that due to the cost-of-living crisis, there was not a great deal of interest in this project at this time. Businesses are requesting simple one page tip sheets and Council has decided to produce a tip sheet, with links to the Australian Human Rights Commission website- Access for all: Improving accessibility for consumers with disability, which contains updated information on common complaints and fact sheets <https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/employers/access-all-improving-accessibility-consumers-disability>.

Discussion

The Committee noted that small businesses are facing significant cost of living pressures. Members discussed that the most influential driver of change for businesses was public feedback. BSL noted that a restaurant in Eltham that refused entry to a person in a wheelchair experienced significant public backlash, with serious implications for their business.

Sherryn noted a website where the public can report experiences at businesses and suggested this might be a good one to promote to encourage feedback.

Action

Action3: Sherryn to provide a link to reporting app for people with a disability to EnAccess Maps.

<https://www.enaccessmaps.com>

3.4 Report It

Inclusive Banyule Action 3.10 We will make it easier for community to report access issues in Council's major activity centres.

Council to provide an update on adding a Report It tab on Council's website. Council showed members the Report It page on Council's website banyule.vic.gov.au/Contact-us/Report-it-to-us

Discussion

Any community member can report issues using this link Banyule.vic.gov.au/Contact-us/Report-it-to-us and use the 'Other' category to report access issues.

Banyule's Communications Team has received a request, with all the required information, to add an additional category called Accessibility.

Council reported on sharing a letter with Savers in Greensborough to ask for support to address the access issue at the stairs on the laneway between Main Street Greensborough and the rear of the Savers building. The land with the steps is in private ownership. The laneway leading up to the stairs is owned by Council.

Member noted that ownership of the land should not be a barrier, and suggested Council could take positive steps to address the issue.

Member noted that change in accessible car parking at the rear of East Ivanhoe Shops, on Burton Crescent. The issue noted was the change in position of the car park, now positioned on an incline and in a smaller space. The impact reported is that when using a rear access vehicle, a carer is unable to achieve safe use of the ramp as the ramp does not sit flat on the ground, and the incline means that the wheelchair gains speed as it progresses down the ramp. In addition, because of the smaller space, unloading crosses over into the car park, where cars may be transiting through. The proposal is that Council reviews this car parking space and ensures that it is compliant and safe to use for the community.

Action

Action 4: Council to revisit discussions with internal colleagues to discuss what can be done to address the Savers laneway access issue.

Action 5: Council to review the East Ivanhoe Shopping precinct accessible car park and find ways to make the space safer to use.

6. End of Committee term

Cr Melican provided an overview of the process and activities being undertaken to prepare for the end of the committee term, leading up to the General Council Elections in October 2024. Committee members received a memo with additional details. Cr Melican reminded the Committee:

- The Disability and Inclusion Committee will be dissolved in September 2024.
- Council will decide whether this committee and any other committees will be re-established in December 2024.
- The Committee was reminded of eligibility to receive an honorarium (thank you) for being on the Committee - attendance at 60% or more of the meetings between September 2023 and September 2024.

Committee achievements and recommendations

A summary of the Committee's achievements and recommendations was provided in the Committee Briefing Paper. The key themes discussed were:

- Communication
- Accessibility and universal design
- Employment and other topics

Discussion

Committee members noted the breadth of conversations and achievements over the committee term.

The accessibility and universal design theme were noted as important. Discussed accessibility of the Great Hall in Ivanhoe. Member reflected on the experience of her father at the recent Citizenship Ceremony, noting that her father felt anxious about being able to use the stairs to get up to the stage. Council noted the ongoing discussions regarding addressing the issue of stage access in the heritage listed building. Member noted that whilst it is not always possible to make physical adaptations, people's understanding of access needs and their offers of support, such as the example provided by Cr Melican at the Citizenship Ceremony, can make the experience easier for people and can make all the difference.

Committee were informed on the development of a draft *Committee Policy and Code of Conduct*, which members received via email with the meeting agenda on 24th June. Current Committee *Terms of Reference* can be viewed here: <https://www.banyule.vic.gov.au/About-us/Community-advisory-committees>

Discussion

Committee members were introduced to key proposed changes which include:

- Removal of restrictions on the number of terms
- Removal of the need for Councillor to be present to achieve quorum
- Quorum for all committees half plus one
- Added leave of absence
- Defines how to make a recommendation
- Defines roles and responsibilities

Member noted that it is important to ensure a Councillor is present at meetings and felt removing the need to have a Councillor to form a quorum will erode the ability of Councillor to communicate recommendations and represent discussions to Council.

It was noted that the draft Policy defines the role of the Councillor to act as the chair, and circumstances where a Councillor is unavailable to chair a meeting are rare. The draft Policy provides a provision to enable the Manager to assume the role of the chair. Joseph noted that this represents a measure of respect and value for the member's time, as cancelling a meeting at the last minute is not ideal.

The Committee were advised that at the next meeting, there will be a review of the committee's purpose and objectives, and members will be asked to propose some focus areas for the next committee to consider.

7. Update on previous Committee consultations

Feedback from officers who consulted the Committee on the Public Realm Framework and Banyule's Housing Discussion Paper were included in the Committee Briefing Paper.

Discussion

Members noted the feedback. No further questions or discussion.

8. Committee member updates

Discussion

BSL- rollout of the new computer system did not deliver the expected benefits, creating delays for participants. Aaron noted that it is a challenging time for people in need of support. BSL awarded a new contract to act as the local partner, albeit with decreased funding.

Belgravia Leisure - Cerge platform for WaterMarc now includes a 360-degree tour of the facility with a measuring tape to support people to gauge the distance and width of key areas, including doorways, between the pool and changing room etc.

WaterMarc noise complaint - A member raised the issue of noise in the pool area of WaterMarc, stating that it was an accessibility issue for people with hearing impairments and who are neurodiverse. Emma noted the engagement with Council on the matter, stating the consensus is that removal of the panels will increase the noise issue and replacement will come at a significant cost. Member (Allan) noted efforts to investigate but suggests the acoustic panels are ill-suited to the area and may have been incorrectly installed. Emma discussed trials at other venues to create silent or quiet hours to create conditions that support people with sensory needs. Member (Ros) commented her family had attended a session in Knox and noted the difference was profound.

Action

Action 6: Belgravia Leisure to follow up again with Council. Consideration to be given to creating quiet times at WaterMarc.

Joseph and Cr Melican informed the Committee that the funding model for the Regional Assessment Program for older adults has been changed and that Council will cease delivering this service. Instead, Council will establish a Service Navigation program to support a broad range of residents, irrespective of age, to find the right pathway to accessing support services and community programs and groups. The Service Navigation program will allow Council to remain connected with the services landscape and will enable Council to advocate on behalf of the community, where needed.

BANSIC- Member reported the increased presentation of difficult interactions with clients due to client behaviours. Raised concern that Haven Homesafe is struggling to provide services to those with housing issues, and the lack of access to bulk-billing GP's is creating delays in clients securing documentation/ referrals they need to access services.

Sherryn reported on the failure of auditory signals at the bottom of Flintoff Street in Greensborough at the crossing to the train station, noting this was reported 4 weeks ago and remains unfixed. Cautioned that this is a significant safety issue, especially for people with vision impairments. A member who is training a guide dog puppy concurs that auditory signals are vital at pedestrian crossings.

9. Close and date of next meeting

Meeting closed 7.04pm.

Next meeting Wednesday 28 August, 1 Flintoff Street Greensborough.

Council to provide a meal for members to celebrate the end of the committee term.