



# Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2017 – 2021

## Annual Progress Report 2019/20

COFFS HARBOUR

CITY  
COUNCIL

### Background

The provision of accessible and inclusive communities is a vital part of enabling people with a disability to participate in community life. The NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014 required all NSW Government Departments and Councils to adopt a Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) by July 2017. The purpose of the DIAP is to help ensure people with disability have equal access to information, services and facilities provided by Council, and can participate in the public spaces and public life of the community.

Supporting the development of an accessible and inclusive area benefits all people living in and visiting the Coffs Harbour Local Government Area. In particular, those with disability, older people, people with a chronic illness, people experiencing temporary illness or injury and parents of young children and their friends and families.

### Purpose

The Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2017 – 2021 sets out what Council will do over four years to enable people with a disability to have greater access to Council information, services and facilities.

The plan has four focus areas:

- ❖ Creating liveable communities
- ❖ Improving access to services through better systems and processes
- ❖ Promote positive community attitudes and behaviours
- ❖ Supporting access to meaningful employment

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## Creating Liveable Communities

**Council has undertaken the following projects to increase access to the built environment for people with a disability:**

- Accessibility upgrades to public toilets at McLean Street and Park Beach, Coffs Harbour, and Toormina Oval, Toormina
- Adult Change Place planned for Woolgoolga Beach Reserve upgrade.
- Significant footpath upgrades at King, York, and McLean Streets, Coffs Harbour; and Eighth, Boronia and May Streets, Sawtell.
- Footpath / Cycleway installations from Gundagai Street to Robyn Street, Coffs Harbour and Tasman Street, Corindi Beach.
- Refurbishment of the access ramp to improve accessibility at the Cavanbah Centre, Coffs Harbour
- Upgrade of 20 accessible bus shelters and pathways to the bus shelters constructed.
- Consultation with the Disability Inclusion and Access Committee for the design of the Cultural and Civic Space Project and the West Woolgoolga Sports Complex
- Installation of a mobi-mat and lifeguard trial at Jetty Beach.

### Highlight Project

In recent years, Council has undertaken an extensive works program to upgrade 12 public toilets within the LGA. The new public toilets improve accessibility and inclusion for all community members, and are complemented by the Changing Places in the City Centre, Coffs Harbour Pool and the Coffs Harbour Jetty. A further Changing Place is planned in the Woolgoolga Beach Reserve Upgrade.



**Council is working toward greater access across the LGA and has allocated funding in the 2020/21 budget for:**

- A \$600,000 footpath construction program.
- Upgrade of a further 10 accessible bus shelters.
- Development of an Integrated Transport Strategy which will consider accessible parking across the Coffs Harbour City and connection to accessible pathways.
- Council has engaged a consultant to develop an accessible parking plan and procedure as part of an overall car parking plan for the city centre. The plan will determine an appropriate target of accessible parking spaces for our City Centre.

## **Improving access to services through better systems and processes**

**Council has worked to increase access to information including:**

- Social media and web pages promoting access to beach wheelchairs and installation of the mobi-mat at Jetty Beach.
- Inclusion of junior fiction titles in a print format for young people with dyslexia.
- The following numbers of accessible items were added to the Library's collections during the period: 537 talking books (books on CD); 2,317 eAudiobooks (for download); and 950 new large print books.

**Council is investing in training to build skills and knowledge to support access including:**

- Mental health first aid and awareness
- Disability Awareness training has been developed and is available through Council's online learning management system. This module covers the Disability Discrimination Act and guides for communication.

**Council continues to be committed to consulting with people with a disability:**

- Council's Disability Inclusion and Access Advisory Committee continues to meet monthly and regularly engages with Council staff, excepting during periods of COVID restrictions.
- The Disability Inclusion and Access Advisory Committee provided extensive input into the design of the Cultural and Civic Space Project and the West Woolgoolga Sports Complex

## Promote positive community attitudes and behaviours

### **Council has worked towards promoting positive community attitudes and behaviours toward people with disability through:**

- Celebration of International Day of People with a Disability, with a showcase of accessible features available at the Cex Coffs Harbour International Stadium.
- The booklet "Good Customer Service: It's Everyone's Business" was launched to business community. The booklet is a guide for businesses to make them more Accessible and to assist staff in customer service training for persons with a disability.
- Promotion of library services to community members with a disability as a key audience.
- Submission of an entry in the 2020 National Awards for Local Government (Disability Category) – MyCoffs: An Inclusive Future.
- The inclusion of community members with a disability and the sharing of information about disability services on the MyCoffs Connect Facebook page.
- Two films were created with local community members with a disability using Jetty Beach Inclusive Access trial service achieving extensive reach and positive comment on Council and Lifeguards Facebook pages.

### **Council has worked to increase opportunities for people with disability to participate in community activities. This included:**

- Adoption of an Inclusive Beach Access Issues and Options Paper, which endorses Jetty Beach as a priority location for the development of inclusive beach facilities such as a Mobi-matt and the provision of two additional Hippocampe beach wheelchairs. The success of the project was evident, with users varying from young families to persons with disabilities and/or mobility issues.
- Use of the accessibility checklist in development of community programs such as the Eco Surf Fest and the Sustainable Living Programs (Coffs by Nature Programs). Festival and community event planning continues to seek to partner with local community organisations that are committed to diversity and inclusion of people with disability and consider the needs and broader community inclusion outcomes in planning and programming
- Consultation with Vision Australia to develop plans for the Jetty Theatre Expansion Project to accommodate a quiet room for audio description.
- Preparation of a report on the cost and availability of assistive software for people with a disability for the library computers and purchase of adaptive technology.

## Highlight Project

The Coffs Harbour Jetty Beach was patrolled from 27 December 2019 until 27 January 2020 and Lifeguards oversaw the use of a beach mat (Mobi-mat) – for people using wheelchairs, prams and walking frames to reach the water easily over the sand – and the hiring of two Hippocampe beach wheelchairs. The Mobi mat has been remained for public use after the trial period.

The trial found that Jetty Beach was the third most visited beach within the LGA .

“The Jetty Foreshores upgrade provides new inclusive facilities like an accessible toilet block and shower, as well as pathways suitable for people using wheelchairs, so having accessible equipment for the beach was a natural next step.” said Enzo Accadia, Section Leader Community Programs.



## Supporting Access to Meaningful Employment

**Council has worked to increase employment opportunities for people with a disability including:**

- The implementation of flexible work arrangements that support employment of people with a disability and carers of people with a disability.
- Alterations to the kitchen and bathroom areas of the Council Administration Building to facilitate improved access for employees with a disability.
- Endorsement of the Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan as a workplace planning framework.
- Support for management and staff with Disability Awareness training available through Council's online learning management system including requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act, social models, reasonable adjustment and guides for communication.
- Council has continued to support leaders in working effectively with employees with a disability through both capability development, as well as one on one support with specific issues. This has included advice in terms of workplace modifications, as well as considerations around tasks and individual capacity.