

# Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2017–2021

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## Appendix 2

### Annual Progress Report 2020/21



Agency Name	Coffs Harbour City Council
Principal Department	Minister for Local Government Office of Local Government
Reporting Period	1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021

# Background

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**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 that people with a 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 a 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

Coffs Harbour City Council strives to be inclusive and accessible for people with a disability.

Council seeks to achieve this by:

- ▶ Developing and implementing a Disability Inclusion Action Plan which meets the legislative requirements under the *Disability Inclusion Act 2014*.
- ▶ Advocating for equal rights for all people and improving our city as an accessible and inclusive place.
- ▶ Striving for an inclusive society through collaborations with community, business and government organisations.
- ▶ Improving awareness of and access to Council services, facilities and information.
- ▶ Supporting workforce diversity and improving employment practices that increase meaningful participation by people with a disability.

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.

This Plan establishes the framework and priorities to implement significant improvements for access and inclusion for people with a range of abilities. Diverse participation and contributions made by whole of community strengthen our organisational values of a connected, sustainable and thriving community.

The plan has four focus areas:

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

Council is presently reviewing the current Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2017–2021 to inform the preparation of the DIAP for the subsequent four-year period.

Council has undertaken engagement with a broad range of community and organisational stakeholders to seek guidance as to how Council can provide infrastructure and services that ensure equitable access for people with a disability.

## Creating Liveable Communities

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

- Inclusion of accessible picnic facilities and seating at the North Wall Upgrade at the Coffs Harbour Jetty Foreshores.
- An Adult Change Place constructed at Woolgoolga Beach Reserve upgrade.
- Significant footpath upgrades at King Street, Coffs Harbour; Elizabeth Street, Sawtell; and Bruce King Drive, Boambee East to increase pedestrian accessibility.
- Continued program of upgrade of accessible bus shelters and pathways.
- Continued consultation with the Disability Inclusion and Access Advisory Committee for the design of the Cultural and Civic Space Project (Yarrilla Place) and the West Woolgoolga Sports Complex (Wiigula Sports Complex).

**Council is working toward greater access across the LGA and has allocated funding in the 2021/22 budget for:**

- A footpath construction program to improve accessibility in our community.
- Development of an Integrated Transport Strategy which will consider accessible parking across the Coffs Harbour city center and connection to accessible pathways.
- Continued engagement with 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.
- Significant upgrades of the Sawtell and Woolgoolga Public Pools to increase accessibility and amenity of these facilities.

## Improving Access to Services through Better Systems and Processes

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

- Social media and web pages with the sharing of video about local band the Red Hots from Coffs Harbour Support Services and a post about using MyCommunity Directory to find hearing services on the MyCoffs Connect Facebook page.
- Social media videos featuring people with disabilities to help promote community participation in the review of the Disability and Inclusion Action Plan.
- Road & Community Safety activations and information about the use of bikes, wheelchairs, and mobility scooters.
- Expansion of the online delivery of programs including Coffs by Nature Tours, Living Lightly workshops to increase the accessibility of community members who may previously have been unable to attend. Inclusion of captioning on Facebook film content for these programs.
- Council received funding of \$8,000 from the Library Local Priority funding for the purchase of assistive software for people with a disability for the library computers and purchase of adaptive technology. This technology includes PEARL text to speech camera with OpenBook software package, Zoomtext keyboard, and ZoomText Fusion Professional software — designed for users with advanced or progressive vision loss, ZoomText Fusion provides the features and benefits of ZoomText Magnifier/Reader, plus a complete screen reader.
- 2010 accessible items were added to the Library's collections during the period: 592 talking books (books on CD); 526 eAudiobooks (for download); 257 e-books and 635 new large print books.

## Highlight Project

### Woolgoolga Changing Place

Coffs Harbour City Council invited the Mid North Coast Disabled Surfers Association to inspect the new disabled change facility at the revamped Woolgoolga Beach Reserve.

Long-time participant, Luke Graham, ventured along with committee member Brett Pilon. Both were extremely impressed with the room and the equipment provided. "This will make life much easier for everyone. Even people with profound disability and their carers will benefit from such a modern, well equipped change room," Brett said.



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

- ▶ Mental health first aid and awareness.
- ▶ 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.

### 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, except 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 (Yarrilla Place) and the West Woolgoolga Sports Complex (Wiigula Sports Complex).

## Promote Positive Community Attitudes and Behaviours

### Council has worked to promote positive community attitudes and behaviours toward people with disability through:

- ▶ Celebration of International Day of People with Disability on 3 December, 2020, with a free screening of Peanut Butter Falcon at the Jetty Memorial Theatre with 82 participants.
- ▶ Promotion of library services to community members with a disability as a key audience.
- ▶ The inclusion of community members with a disability and the sharing of information about disability services on the MyCoffs Connect Facebook page.

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

- ▶ Festival and community event planning continues to seek to partner with local community organisations that are committed to diversity and inclusion of people with a 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.
- ▶ Council's work on ECO Destination accreditation showcases the availability of nature-based and sustainable facilities, accommodation and experiences for people with a disability, their families and carers.

## 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.
- ▶ Implementation of the Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan.
- ▶ 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.

## Highlight Project

### Coffs Harbour City Council Disability Inclusion and Access Advisory Committee

Council invited applications for membership to the Disability Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee in February 2021, with the new committee approved by Council at the meeting of 22 April, 2021.

The Disability Inclusion and Access Advisory Committee's purpose is to provide advice and to work collaboratively with Coffs Harbour City Council in the development and implementation of strategies which aim to ensure that the City of Coffs Harbour is an inclusive and accessible city for people with a disability now and into the future.

