

Terms of Reference for:

Central Coast Council’s

Access and Inclusion Reference Group

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# A Purpose

As part of Council’s commitment to increase the inclusion of people with disabilities in all aspects of community life, the Access and Inclusion Reference guides Council on the implementation of its Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2021-2025.

Members who make up the group include a broad range of people from the community with a lived experience of disability and those representing organisations and community groups as well as workers with expertise delivering services in the sector.

The Disability Inclusion Action Plan sets out actions that Council will deliver to enable people with disabilities to better access mainstream services, facilities, information and support to be fully included and be able to participate in the community. The current Disability Inclusion Plan actions are grouped under four Strategic Focus Areas which are

• Attitudes and Behaviours

• Liveable Communities

• Employment

• Systems and Processes

# B Responsibility

The Central Coast Council Access and Inclusion Reference Group is responsible for:

B1 Guiding Council on the implementation of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan.

B2 Advising and assisting Central Coast Council on effective methods of communication and engagement with local people with a disability, their carers and families and relevant service providers to ensure implementation of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan reflects community needs.

B4 Assisting Council in identifying the role of external organisations and the services they provide to people with a disability.

B5 Providing information and recommendations on potential partnerships and collaborative opportunities within the broader community to assist in the implementation of the actions.

B6 Ensuring representation of people with disabilities through ongoing community consultation and engagement.

B7 Providing informed recommendations and insights on best practice within and beyond the broader region on how to improve accessibility and inclusion for people with a disability on the Central Coast.

# C Membership

1. Representatives will be selected by Council, on a merit basis, as a result of an expression of interest process.
2. Relevant Central Coast Council staff will be members of the Reference Group.
3. A working group may be established to address specific issues/actions between sessions and working groups will report to the Access and Inclusion Reference Group.
4. The Reference Group membership will be renewed every 12-18 months to provide the opportunity for other interested members of the community the opportunity to represent on the Group.
5. New members will be recruited through an Expression of Interest process

# D Attendance

1. The Reference Group meetings are not open to the public. Addressing or attending meetings by interested persons is at the discretion of the Reference Group Meeting Convener.
2. Reference Group members are expected to attend all meetings where possible.
3. Where a Member fails to attend three successive meetings without submitting a satisfactory explanation, a replacement member can be sought.
4. Any support workers attending with a member of the Reference Group do so solely in the capacity of their job role to support their client to attend the meeting and NOT as an active participant of the meeting.

# E Reference Group Convenor

E1 A Reference Group Convenor shall be a staff member of Council and is responsible for co- ordinating the preparation of agendas, invitations and minutes of the Reference Group.

E2 The Convenor shall also be responsible for co-ordinating any presentations from guest speakers and for considering requests from members of the public to address the Reference Group.

E3 The Convenor has the right to refuse a request from a member of the public to address the Reference Group if it is deemed inappropriate.

E4 The Convenor must ensure the meeting venue or online platform is accessible and all information about the meeting and documentation can be easily acquired, translated and understood by all meeting participants.

E5 The administration of the Reference Group shall be undertaken by the Reference Group Convenor.

# F Chairperson

1. The Chairperson of the Reference Group will be a Council staff member.
2. The Chairperson is to have precedence at the meeting and shall determine the order of proceedings generally as set by the agenda.
3. In the absence of the Chairperson, the Reference Group Convenor shall Chair the meeting.

# G Voting

1. The Reference Group has an advisory role only. Its recommendations are made by consensus and no recommendation is deemed to be a decision of Council.

# H Quorum

1. The Reference Group does not require a quorum to hold a meeting.
2. The Chairperson shall use his/her discretion to determine if any item on the agenda should be deferred to a future meeting if it is considered there are insufficient members at the meeting.

# I Meeting Schedule

1. The Reference Group shall meet quarterly
2. The Reference Group shall meet at times and dates determined by consensus of the Group at the initial meeting.

I3 The Reference Group will meet at suitable accessible venues or use an online platform.

# J Agenda

1. The Agenda shall be set by the Reference Group Convenor and include enough detail to enable matters to be considered at the meeting.
2. The Agenda shall be distributed at least 5 days prior to the meeting.

# K Minutes and Reporting

1. Minutes will be taken for all meetings of the Reference Group.
2. Minutes of the meeting shall be forwarded to the Central Coast Council Section Manager Community Development for review and approval for distribution.
3. Minutes of the meeting shall be recorded in Central Coast Council information management database.

# M Code of Conduct

M1 All Reference Group Members are required to comply with Central Coast Council Policies including Code of Conduct and Code of Meeting Practice.

M2 Members must respect and appreciate each other’s perspectives and to seek beneficial outcomes aligned to the overall intent of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan.

M3        Members must in their representation on the Reference Group, and in keeping with the spirit and nature of its intent to be consultative and collaborative, interact with the other members as well as Council staff in an open, positive and co-operative way.

# N Cessation of Reference Group

N1 Council may at its discretion cease operation of the Reference Group.

N2 Council will provide adequate notice in writing of cessation of the Group