

Social Inclusion Advisory Committee Meeting Record 14 October 2020



Location:	Zoom Meeting	
Date:	14 October 2020	
Time	Started at: 4.02pm	Closed at: 6.05pm
Chair	Councillor Kyle MacGregor	
File Ref	F2019/00090	

Present:

Councillor Jillian Hogan, Councillor Kyle MacGregor, Jackie Klarkowski, Glitta Supernova, Deb Tipper

Guests:

Juan Iocco – Central Coast Pride, Michael Schell (joined 4.23pm, left 5.30pm)

Council Staff present:

Glenn Cannard – Unit Manager Community Partnerships, Kerrie Forrest – Section Manager Community Planning and Services, Belinda McRobie – Team Leader Community and Cultural Programs, Celia Pennycook – Social Planner Community Planning and Funding, Zoie Magann – Advisory Group Support Officer

Item 1 Welcome, Acknowledgement of Country and Apologies

Apologies received: Councillor Chris Holstein, Colette Baron, Joshua Maxwell, Julie Vaughan – Director Connected Communities

Councillor Kyle MacGregor welcomed the Advisory Group and completed an Acknowledgement of Country.

It was noted Michael Schell would be joining the meeting as a guest, with a view for the Advisory Group to consider recommending him for membership given the vacancy provided by Bert Cotte's resignation.

Item 2 Disclosure of Interest

Glitta Supernova declared a less than significant non-pecuniary interest with regard to Item 6 as Creative Director of Naughty Noodle Fun Haus. There was no conflict perceived by the Advisory Group.

Item 3 Confirmation of Previous Meeting Record

The Advisory Group confirmed the Meeting Record from 11 August 2020.

The Advisory Group reviewed the Action Log.

Concerns raised regarding Action 22 (apprenticeships and youth employment) given recent announcements about Council's financial situation. Council is one of the largest employers on the Central Coast and members are worried about the impact the budget may have on youth. It was requested that an update be provided in light of current situation.

Item 4 Social Inclusion Policy

Kerrie Forrest (Section Manager Community Planning and Services) spoke to the draft Social Inclusion Charter, which was circulated to Advisory Group members before the meeting for review. The Charter complements various strategies and policies already in place and provides an overarching structure for inclusion.

Feedback was invited from Advisory Group members regarding the draft Charter. The following was noted:

- Important to understand how Charter will be used once established. Intention is that once endorsed, all Council policies/projects would need to align with Charter. Suggested that this assertion be included in the Charter, as well as specific criteria/targets to ensure compliance and measure success.
- Further suggestions made regarding wording/language. Discussion held about difference between equality and equity – the latter of which is used in the Charter. Noted language used is in accordance with national standards.
- Need to address that our society is inherently inequitable (perhaps include this in preamble) and outline exactly what social inclusion is and why it's needed.
- Noted that improving social inclusion has significant economic value leading to quality health and wellbeing, increased employment opportunities, and ultimately greater outcomes for the region.
- Charter shouldn't just add bureaucratic layers – it should fit well with existing documents to reduce overlapping.
- Keen to see more mention of advocacy in the Charter, with view that Council take on a more active role in advocating for social inclusion on behalf of the community.
- Regarding ABS figures referenced – low numbers seem to indicate community isn't as diverse as suggested. Noted this may mean more support is needed, as disadvantaged groups are underrepresented.
- Important to ensure Charter is known to all staff, but effects are also experienced externally.

Given that some members were apologies for the meeting, it was requested that further time be provided to review the draft Charter. Staff confirmed they are happy for additional comments to be sent through.

Action: Advisory Group members to review draft Social Inclusion Charter and forward any further comments on to Advisory Group Support Officer for collating and sharing with staff for consideration.

Item 5 Focus and Plan for Advisory Group

The Advisory Group discussed future direction and topics for focus.

The following key points were noted:

- Improvements still needed to Council's website as it is difficult to navigate and find info.
- Need to consider how to get info outside of Council in accessible manner (technology isn't always available for community so this shouldn't be only method). Staff confirmed various methods are

- employed (letter box drops, noticeboards in shops and community centres, establishing communication trees). Staff welcome suggestions about how to better target areas of community.
- Noted Council received a grant for bushfire resilience funding following events at start of 2020. This was used to explore how to connect with remote communities in emergency situations.
 - Communication (particularly with people who are unaware of services and historically haven't needed help) has been focus for Social Task Force.
 - Ideal to promote Council presence at different fairs/events across Central Coast as this is a positive way to reach audiences. COVID has unfortunately impacted on opportunities for this.
 - Members feel endorsing Social Inclusion Charter is important piece of work for the Advisory Group. Acknowledge a refined focus will be needed moving forward and would like to consider how to improve outcomes once the Charter has been established.

Item 6 Rainbow Community and Inclusivity

Juan Iocco spoke to the Advisory Group about the Rainbow Community and inclusivity, in terms of his role with Central Coast Pride.

The following key points were noted:

- Connecting and collaborating are pivotal to ensuring happiness of community. The Arts and Culture sector has a strong platform to encourage this.
- Central Coast Pride partner with various organisations across the Central Coast to support the Rainbow Community and broader population.
- LGBTQI+ is more than just a gap – there is a dark history of serious issues on the Central Coast and it's important to now be able to advocate in this area.
- One of the biggest targets for Central Coast Pride is youth and their parents. Also focused on intersectionality (how someone's various social contexts intersect and contribute to level of disadvantage experienced).
- Noted that high number of gender varied people access Gender Centres outside of region. This could suggest there are insufficient services on the Central Coast or people don't feel accessing services locally.
- Language is very important with regard to inclusivity – education is key in this area. Central Coast Pride have worked with local Police regarding this, and noted inclusivity training can be extremely beneficial for large organisations such as Council.
- Unfortunately there isn't extensive data available for the Central Coast, but this is being collated.
- Coastal Twist Festival was considered a huge success – entertainment was inclusive of all (e.g. use of AUSLAN interpreters for people with hearing impairments). Surveys following Festival show attendee representation was 50/50 (LGBTQI+ / non-LGBTQI+).
- Good news story that Central Coast had high support for YES vote with regard to marriage equality – this reflects positively for community.
- Concerns that versions of 'gay conversion therapy' are still occurring in Central Coast schools, despite this being illegal in Australia. Contrast to other schools which are great at encouraging support and safe spaces for LGBTQI+ youth.
- Challenging that there is serious lack of resources available (namely skilled resources) to undertake a large amount of work. Support would be very welcome.

The Advisory Group commended Juan and Central Coast Pride for their commitment to inclusivity and support provided to the community.

Action: Juan Iocco to provide list of resources for Advisory Group members to share with networks, with view to improve advocacy options and provide support.

Item 7 Update on Social Task Force

Belinda McRobie (Team Leader Community and Cultural Programs) provided a brief update on Council's Social Task Force, noting that further info will be shared at the next meeting.

The following key points were noted:

- Task Force established in response to COVID to provide a platform for regional leaders to work through the pandemic and address social trends being experienced.
- Membership includes external agencies (e.g. Central Coast Community Council, Uniting Care, local neighbourhood centres, homelessness services, local health districts etc) and internal members (staff and Councillors).
- Have met 7 times since May 2020.
- Some key challenges identified: communication and access to info for community, increasing social issues (e.g. unemployment, declining mental health, youth, isolation), and what will happen when Federal Government support (e.g. JobKeeper payments) reduces/ceases.
- Mapping project being undertaken to ensure people in need can access required services in area. This involves development of an accessible pinpoint platform.
- Other main project is marketing, which involves developing a plan about how to get key messages to the community, particularly in emergency situations.

Item 8 General Business and Close

The Advisory Group considered Michael Schell's application for membership and agreed to recommend Michael be appointed in accordance with the Terms of Reference.

Recommendation: That Council appoint Michael Schell as a voting community representative of the Social Inclusion Advisory Committee in light of Bert Cotte's resignation, and that the Terms of Reference be updated to reflect the change in membership.

The meeting closed at 6.05pm

Next Meeting: **December 2020**
 Time TBC
 Location TBC