

DISABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE RECRUITMENT

Report Author: Coordinator Health and Wellbeing
Responsible Officer: Director Communities
Ward(s) affected: (All Wards);

The author(s) of this report and the Responsible Officer consider that the report complies with the overarching governance principles and supporting principles set out in the Local Government Act 2020.

CONFIDENTIALITY

This item is to be considered at a Council meeting that is open to the public.

SUMMARY

The Yarra Ranges Disability Advisory Committee (DAC) is Council's advisory group representing people with disabilities, their carers and families.

There is an opportunity for new members to apply to be a part of the Disability Advisory Committee for the 2022-2026 term. The recruitment intention and process are presented to Council in accordance with the requirements of the Terms of Reference.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council

- 1. Support the recruitment of the Yarra Ranges Disability Advisory Committee for 2022-2026.***
- 2. Acknowledge all current members of the Disability Advisory Committee, and in particular June Smith and Cliff Wise who have completed two consecutive four-year terms and thank them formally for their service to the community over the past eight years.***

RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS

- Disability Advisory Committee Terms of Reference adopted by Council on 27 July 2021; and
- Access, Equity and Inclusion Strategy (2013-2023) endorsed.

DISCUSSION

Purpose and Background

The four year term for representatives of the Disability Advisory Committee has recently concluded and there is now an opportunity for new members to apply to be part of the 2022-2026 committee.

Council would like to acknowledge the valuable contribution of current Committee members and provide a special thank you to June Smith and Cliff West who have completed two consecutive four-year terms.

Yarra Ranges Council Disability Advisory Committee members (excluding Councillors and Council Officers):

- Hilary Mellis
- Cliff Wise
- Michelle McDonald
- Amanda Davern
- James Wood
- June Smith
- Shek Kho
- Marnie Ellis
- Charles Jeffrey
- Lesley Grimes

The Disability Advisory Committee has played a key role in several Council projects and initiatives. Some of these include:

- Ensuring inclusive engagement for the 2021-2025 Council Plan and input into the Health & Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025
- Input to Wesburn Park Draft Master Plan and Warburton Place Plan
- Providing input into events for International Day of People with Disabilities and Seniors Month
- Providing feedback on RidgeWalk pedestrian crossings, multiple playspaces within the municipality, and Warburton Mountain Bike Trail
- Sharing insights into the impact of the pandemic and 2021 storm event for people with disabilities and their carers
- Consulted with Parks Victoria on their new Disability Action Plan
- Undertaking a site visit at Upwey pop-up parklet with Vision Australia to provide feedback on access considerations for people who are blind or have low vision. This will inform future design and placement of parklets funded by Yarra Ranges Council and State Government.

The process for establishing the new Committee is outlined within the Terms of Reference (attached), this includes an expression of interest process. Eligible community members are encouraged to consider applying. Individuals or representatives of a service provider or community organisation may reapply on the expiry of their first four-year term, but no person can serve more than two consecutive terms.

Applications will be shortlisted and interviewed by a panel including a person with lived experience of disability and Councils Disability Inclusion Officer.

Committee recommendations will be presented to Council for determination.

Options considered

The agreed Terms of Reference for the DAC advisory committee outline the requirements of committee terms. Maintaining the current Committee membership is not in the best interests of the Committee and enabling diverse community voices. It was therefore not considered to be a viable option and not pursued.

Recommended option and justification

It is recommended that Council support the recruitment of members of the Disability Advisory Committee for the next four-year term 2022-2026, as per the Terms of Reference.

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

The expenditure associated with the operation of the Disability Advisory Committee is met through the approved operational budget.

This includes the costs of advertising the Advisory Committee recruitment and any ongoing operational expenditure, including catering for member during long sessions, room hire, and taxi vouchers for members who need support with transportation

APPLICABLE PLANS AND POLICIES

This report contributes to the following strategic objective in the Council Plan: *Connected and Healthy Communities* and the *Yarra Ranges Health and Wellbeing Plan*, which promote inclusive and equitable communities.

The Disability Advisory Committee directly relates to the Health and Wellbeing Plan and the Equity, Access and Inclusion Strategy. The Committee will also be a key advisor for the development of Yarra Ranges Council's upcoming Disability Action Plan (2023).

RELEVANT LAW

Council is required by legislation to develop a Disability Action Plan. The Disability Advisory Committee plays a key role in the development and implementation of this plan.

In recruiting members, Council strives to establish a committee that is diverse and representative of the community. This includes, but is not exclusive to, Aboriginality, gender, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, culture, nationality, refugee or asylum seeker background, migration or visa status, language, religion, ability, age, mental health, socioeconomic status, housing status, and geographic location.

In considering the requirements of the Gender Equality Act 2020, a second promotion round will be actioned if we do not achieve diversity amongst applicants.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

There are no environmental impacts arising from the recommendations in this report.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

This report directly relates to an ongoing mechanism for community engagement by Yarra Ranges Council.

COLLABORATION, INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

No collaboration with other Councils, Governments or statutory bodies was sought.

RISK ASSESSMENT

The process undertaken will ensure Council recruits a balanced representation of people with disability, unpaid carers and service providers to provide advice to Council across a diverse range of issues relevant to Council's role and responsibilities.

The Terms of Reference bring clarity to the role and responsibilities of the Committee, its members and those who support it.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No officers and/or delegates acting on behalf of the Council through the Instrument of Delegation and involved in the preparation and/or authorisation of this report have any general or material conflict of interest as defined within the *Local Government Act 2020*.

ATTACHMENTS TO THE REPORT

1. Disability Advisory Committee Terms of Reference.