

**Disability Advisory Committee**

**Terms of Reference**

Purpose

The Disability Advisory Committee has been established to provide advice to the City of Greater Dandenong Council in relation to access, inclusion and services in the community and on implementation of the Disability Action Plan 2017-23.

The establishment of a Disability Advisory Committee provides an important forum for identifying current and future issues and advising Council about effective policy and strategic direction regarding people with disabilities in the City of Greater Dandenong.

It is understood that this Advisory Committee does not replace other forms of community engagement used by Council to consult with and engage the community. The Disability Advisory Committee will complement and enhance community engagement. A core purpose is to add value to the provision of disability services at a policy and strategic level.

The Disability Advisory Committee is a non-constituted committee of Council with a Councillor being nominated through the annual statutory appointment process to be a member of this Committee.

Objectives

The Disability Advisory Committee will provide advice and offer input to Council about:

* Effective ways to engage with the City of Greater Dandenong community regarding the health and wellbeing of people with disability.
* Current and emerging access and inclusion policy issues.
* Strategic issues regarding disability about which Council can advocate to State and Federal Government and other relevant authorities and stakeholders.
* The implementation of the Disability Action Plan including relevant reviews.
* Ways that community benefits can be maximised and the success of the Disability Action Plan can be enhanced.

Reporting Requirement

A report will be submitted to the Committee annually on achievements against the objectives of the Disability Action Plan. This report will also form part of Council’s annual reporting process.

Term of Appointment

The Disability Advisory Committee will be appointed for a period of four years. Should there be a need for the Disability Advisory Committee to continue beyond this time, a re-appointment process will be undertaken for all members in accordance with the selection process outlined in these Terms of Reference.

Membership

The Disability Advisory Committee will consist of the representation as follows:

* Councillor representation, appointed as part of the annual statutory process.
* Manager Community Care.
* Up to 12 independent members consisting of local residents, representatives of service providers or advocacy groups. A balance of local residents with a disability and service providers will be sought to ensure that there is significant and relevant input from the community.

Membership of the Disability Advisory Committee is voluntary and all members must be over 18 years of age.

Role of the Councillor

The Councillor representation on the Disability Advisory Committee:

* Are appointed by Council in accordance with the annual statutory Council appointments.
* Participate as member/s of the Disability Advisory Committee.
* Act as a link between Council and the Disability Advisory Committee.

Selection Process

Membership of the Disability Advisory Committee will be achieved by calling for applications. An advertisement may be placed in the local media and on Council’s website or other relevant recruitment areas. Specific representatives may be invited to apply. An application form must be completed by interested representatives and all applications will be assessed against the Criteria for Membership.

Criteria for Membership of the Disability Advisory Committee

Applicants for membership of the Advisory Committee must be able to demonstrate:

* Current involvement in the community in the area of disability services, policy development or planning.
* Endorsement by the relevant organisation as necessary or appropriate
* Strong networks and linkages in the area of disability service development or planning.
* An ability to constructively participate in an advisory capacity.
* An ability to represent a broad range of views that reflect the diversity of the community.
* A strong understanding of the local community and its social, environmental and economic influences.
* Good knowledge and understanding of the local issues that are relevant to disability services.
* A willingness to contribute positively to meetings in a fair and unbiased manner.
* A willingness to participate in feedback opportunities e.g. surveys.
* An ability to look beyond personal interests for the benefit of the community and residents of the City of Greater Dandenong.
* A capacity to commit to the Advisory Committee for the required duration.

Selection Panel

When the appointment of members of the Disability Advisory Committee is required and nominations are received, the following selection panel shall include:

* Director Community Services
* Manager Community Care
* A Council senior staff member from the Community Care Department.

A recommendation about the membership of the Disability Advisory Committee will be made for the endorsement of Council.

It is noted that once the Disability Advisory Committee has been appointed, this selection panel will be disbanded.

A member of the Disability Advisory Committee is free to resign at any time.

Should vacancies arise, due to resignation or inability to attend the minimum number of meetings during the life of the Disability Advisory Committee, these shall be addressed through a selection committee (as previously outlined). A recommendation will be prepared for the endorsement of Council. The term for any member appointed part way through the life of the Disability Advisory Committee shall expire in line with the other members of the Advisory Committee.

From time to time, as vacancies arise or due to needs identified by the committee, new committee members may be seconded for a limited period of time. In this instance, a recommendation will be prepared for endorsement by Councillors.

Responsibilities of the Disability Advisory Committee

Specific responsibilities of the Disability Advisory Committee related to the health and well being of people with disabilities in Greater Dandenong are to:

* Advise Council on strategic direction in relation to disability (access and inclusion) planning and future direction.
* Consider future service developments and direction for Council in relation to disability.
* To provide advice about successes to date, challenges to be addressed and important issues to be considered in the implementation of the Disability Action Plan 2017-23.
* To consider and advise Council about the most effective ways to engage the community to implement the Disability Action Plan 2017-23.
* To discuss issues that may impact on the health and wellbeing of disabled people in the community.

Meetings of the Disability Advisory Committee

* **Meeting Frequency, Venue and Duration**

Meetings of the Disability Advisory Committee will be held at least quarterly.

* **A schedule of meetings will be developed and agreed to annually**

Under special circumstances a meeting may be cancelled or re-scheduled.

* **Attendance and Record of Meetings**

It is expected that each member of the Disability Advisory Committee will attend a minimum of three (3) meetings each year.

All meetings will have an agenda with minutes recording attendees, apologies, decisions and outcomes. The Chairperson will oversee the preparation of the agenda in consultation with Council staff. It is noted that any member can submit agenda items prior to the finalisation and distribution of the agenda.

A Council staff representative will provide the administrative support to the Disability Advisory Committee and will ensure the timely preparation and distribution of agendas and minutes. This staff member will not be a formal member of the Advisory Committee and will attend meetings only for the purpose of providing administrative support and guidance if requested.

* **Chairperson**

The Chairperson shall be one of the independent Advisory Committee members and determined through a vote or consensus among the independent members. The term of the chair is aligned with the term of the Committee.

The appointed Chairperson is responsible for the conduct of meetings, ensuring fair and equitable opportunities for views and opinions to be voiced and discussed by the Advisory Committee.

Quorum and Voting

Decisions require more than half of the membership of the Disability Advisory Committee to be present at meetings.

It is preferable that decisions of the Disability Advisory Committee are made by consensus however there may be circumstances where a matter is decided by a vote. Each member is entitled to one vote, except the Chairperson who may exercise a casting vote should this be necessary.

Conflict of Interest

The Local Government Act identifies direct and indirect conflicts of interest which require disclosure as and when they arise. Members of the Disability Advisory Committee must be fully aware of their responsibilities with regard to the management of interests in relation to the discharge of their duties as members of the Disability Advisory Committee.

Any matter deemed by a member to represent a Conflict of Interest shall be reported to the Chairperson either prior to a meeting or before the specific item is discussed.



**Code of Conduct for members of the**

**Disability Advisory Committee**

I agree to:

* Attend Advisory Committee meetings and provide apologies in advance where attendance is not possible.
* Act in an advisory capacity by disseminating authorised information within the community and provide insight and advice into community perspectives of disability services.
* Seek at all times to obtain and represent the views of the broader community.
* Respect the ideas and beliefs of all members and provide an atmosphere where all members feel comfortable to participate.
* Contribute in a positive way to finding solutions to issues or concerns.
* At all times act in good faith, with honesty and integrity and apply the skills and expertise I posses with diligence and care.
* Raise any concerns about the decisions made in this Committee to the Chair and then to the Manager Community Care if required.
* Represent the views of my organisation, interest group or community and not individual views at odds with my organisation or group (not applicable to the independent Chairperson).
* Notify Council of any potential conflict of interest that may arise with respect to my participation on the Disability Advisory Committee.
* Allow Council to promote my participation in the Disability Advisory Committee in order to facilitate community feedback and participation.
* Not disseminate confidential information that is discussed at the Disability Advisory Committee meetings as advised by the Disability Advisory Committee chair.
* Not make any media comment on behalf of the Disability Advisory Committee in relation to the project unless approved by the Disability Advisory Committee chair.

Signed:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_