



Disability Action Plan 2014–23

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Mayor's message

It is with great pleasure that I introduce the Moonee Valley Disability Action Plan 2014-23.

Moonee Valley's vision is for a friendly, safe, vibrant and diverse city. Moonee Valley recognises that all people are born equal with human rights and embraces the inclusion of people with a disability in all aspects of community life.

The Disability Action Plan 2014-23 supports Council's ongoing work in building an inclusive community by promoting measures that focus on improving conditions for people with a disability who live, work and participate in recreation activities in Moonee Valley. Council's Diversity, Access and Equity Policy 2014 gives high level direction to the implementation of obligations under the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*, the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)* and the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cwlth)*.

This Disability Action Plan establishes a systems-based approach to embedding measures as encouraged under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cwlth)* and the *Disability Act 2006 (Vic)* as well as for reporting on the practical implementation of these measures.

The Disability Action Plan applies to all areas of Council's business: infrastructure, services and activities, from festivals to classes at leisure centres.

The Disability Action Plan intentionally sets out to influence activities and events throughout Moonee Valley. The Disability Action Plan is designed to promote collaboration between Council and community groups, traders and other service providers.

By working together we can embrace the very real challenge of inclusion of people with a disability in everyday community life.

I encourage you to embrace the Disability Action Plan.

Cr Jan Chantry
Moonee Valley Mayor



Introduction

This plan is the product of extensive consultation, research analysis and policy review.

Council listened to people with a disability on their experiences while living, working or participating in recreation in Moonee Valley. We talked to councillors, Disability Reference Group members and managers.

27 different local and state wide organisations attended workshops on issues for people with a disability.

We heard about the experience of persons with a disability in our community and their experience of our performance. More than 100 residents completed surveys.

Residents also gave their time in workshops, one-on-one interviews and group meetings.

This Disability Action Plan (the plan) responds to these views and emphasises themes of most importance to people with a disability living and working in the City of Moonee Valley.

This plan builds on Council's previous work and provides a whole of Council vehicle to continue to achieve an inclusive community within the City of Moonee Valley. It will add to the achievements of the Diversity, Access and Social Inclusion Strategy 2008 which include:

- the delivery of high quality social and direct support to many residents
- the introduction of hearing loops to assist in making meetings at the Moonee Valley Civic Centre more accessible
- the introduction of the companion card into Clocktower Centre programs
- the installation of electric scooter recharge points across the city
- building partnerships with key providers within and outside the organisation
- the development of International Day of People with Disability as a major focus for awareness raising and celebration

The plan has been organised into the four themes highlighted in Moonee Valley's Diversity, Access and Equity Policy:

THEME 1 **Fostering respect and celebrating diversity**

- 1.1 Attitudes towards disability
- 1.2 Information and communication

THEME 2 **Promoting participation**

- 2.1 Financial barriers
- 2.2 Inclusive activities and events

THEME 3 **Creating accessible places and spaces**

- 3.1 Housing
- 3.2 Transport
- 3.3 Physical access
- 3.4 Services

THEME 4 **Leadership and representation**

- 4.1 Employment
- 4.2 Volunteering



The plan provides a Moonee Valley focused response to meeting obligations for and in compliance with:

- *Charter for Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)*
- *Victorian Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Cwlth)*
- *Disability Act 2006 (Vic)*
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cwlth)*
- Disability, Access to Premises – Buildings Standards 2010 (Cwlth)
- Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport Standards 2002 (Cwlth)
- AS 1428. 1-5 Series – Standards Australia, Design for Access and Mobility 1992, 2009, 2010 (Cwlth)
- AS 2890. 5-6 Series – Standards Australia, On Street and Off Street Parking (Cwlth)
- World Wide Web Access: Disability Discrimination Act Advisory Notes Version 4.0 including WCAG 2.0

In addition this plan assists Council to comply with its obligations under the:

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948
- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2006

This plan builds on and relates to a number of key Council policies and plans in particular to:

- Diversity, Access and Equity Policy 2014
- Disability Action Plan, Consultation Report, March 2014
- Disability Action Plan, Survey Report, March 2014
- Council Plan 2013-17
- Community Vision, Moonee Valley Next Generation 2035
- Moonee Valley Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2013-17
- Disability Action Plan Implementation Plan 2014/15

In particular the plan:

- responds to key directions identified in strategic documents and in particular the Diversity, Access and Equity Policy 2014
- identifies strategies and priorities in other plans which have the potential to address issues raised and deliver improvements to the lives of people living with a disability in Moonee Valley
- develops additional strategies to address specific concerns
- introduces performance standards into all council service plans to ensure access and inclusion of persons living with a disability
- embeds a systems approach to regular monitoring and reporting against progress of the plan and implements a rolling audit process to track progress
- introduces a process for the regular review and upgrade of performance standards to meet progressively higher standards over time



Implementation

During the early stages of the Disability Action Plan, Council will establish performance standards across all areas of its business, in consultation with the Disability Reference Group.

Performance standards are a clear statement describing an outcome required and may be written as:

- an observable behaviour (number of clients or people attending a group or crossing a road)
- an action (plan, review, audit)
- a built environment measure (connectivity, permeability, legibility and road crossing capacity expected of walking environments)
- a statement about compliance with an external standard

By embedding performance standards we hope to communicate clear expectations of performance over time and embed these in our planning and business processes.

Performance standards will detail expectations for each major area of activity from a community perspective, and the priority for undertaking these (eg. particular areas, for particular groups, in particular parks, for particular ages, in particular buildings etc).

Performance standards will initially be established by business units. Once agreed, a performance standard will be published.

An annual list of work responding to a performance standard will be embedded in annual business planning processes and published. These actions will make up the annual updated Disability Action Plan.



Process for establishing performance standards

The plan establishes the legislative context and external standards

Performance criteria is written into corporate service plans

Performance criteria is discussed with Council's Disability Reference Group for endorsement and is subsequently published

Service plans establish annual priorities for performance

Performance is reported quarterly

Fostering respect and celebrating diversity

Moonee Valley's Diversity, Access and Equity Policy describes the key attributes of an inclusive city as:

- respecting the human rights of all citizens
- acknowledging and celebrating diversity
- imagery in communication that reflects diversity





Our policy says ...

'An inclusive city is one in which all people feel valued and celebrated for who they are, confident that their human rights are respected.

Respect is about acknowledging and celebrating diversity. It helps build a cohesive, equitable and harmonious society, affirming that we are all entitled to participate. It prompts commitment to identifying and addressing barriers to participation – physical, social, economic and civic.

Council plays an important role in building awareness and challenging assumptions through promoting, representing and celebrating diversity in our community. Using imagery that reflects the diversity of our community creates awareness that Moonee Valley is a diverse community and tells people that we see and appreciate them.'

For people with a disability, being included means that all foreseeable needs would be thought about in advance and seamlessly catered for. It means being able to attend events, functions, classes or buildings without having to ask.

Like everyone else, being valued means being occupied with meaningful activity most of the time. It means being able to work or volunteer to capacity in a whole range of interesting roles and places.

Being valued means your custom is welcome in shops, cafés and bars, and your passage into, through and use of them is easy and feels welcoming.

For people with a disability, being more equitable means being able to earn wages at a level that provide the capacity to lead full, interesting and engaged lives.

Being more equitable also means ensuring the costs of doing anything (housing + food + energy + transport + entrance fees + support) neither socially isolate nor impoverish, where inclusion in the everyday becomes a realistic option.

Promoting, representing and celebrating disability enables everyone to see people living with a disability at events, in festivals and in the media. People with a disability are an integral part of a whole community, of people with a variety of skills, capacities and interests.

Celebrating diversity means being proud of creativity and achievement. It means being part of creative and performing arts, performing and being exhibited within both the therapeutic and the mainstream.

In celebrating diversity, Council facilitates local physical activity from wheelchair basketball to swimming. Council takes a keen interest in local achievement from participants and premiers to paralympians.



Our community says ...

About respecting human rights of all citizens ...

'An inclusive community where people with a disability are included, not just tolerated.'

'People with a disability do not want pity but want to be treated with respect and offered freedom, encouragement and opportunities to be independent and equal.'

'Attitudes need to be addressed because they can prevent the recognition and appreciation of the potential and achievements of a person with a disability.'

About imagery in communication that reflects diversity ...

'We need to be careful language and images do not diminish opportunities or respect for any particular group.'



About acknowledging and celebrating diversity ...

'Organise events regularly throughout the year where people with disability can showcase their talents alongside people without disability.'

1.1 Attitudes towards disability

Having an impairment often makes life more complicated and sometimes difficult.

Having a disability is different. Disability occurs when others judge capacity before they know what is possible, turn away, do not think to include, or do not employ on the basis of physical, intellectual or psychological attributes and perceived skills.

Many people make assumptions based on what they think people with a disability can and cannot do, should or should not do, often based on how comfortable they feel.

The assumptions we make about the right to participate fully in community life can be read in our faces, in the built environment, in our attitudes, and in the services offered and the way we offer them.

It is easy for people with impairments and their carers to internalise our attitudes, to feel hurt, unwanted or excluded. This plan is about changing the balance.

Decisions we make everyday have a significant impact on people's capacity to join in, participate and be included. Our thoughtfulness in decision-making can make a great difference.

Council will:

- 1.1.1** Advocate for a more inclusive community
- 1.1.2** Take a leadership role in demonstrating inclusion in its festivals, events, activities, services and workforce
- 1.1.3** Provide practical training for staff on their obligations embedded in everyday decision making
- 1.1.4** Take a leadership role in promoting practical training for clubs, groups and traders about inclusion
- 1.1.5** Take a leadership role in the promotion of inclusion with the community



1.2 Information and communication

Moonee Valley aspires to be an inclusive community in which everyone can participate.

Timely, accessible and easily navigated information facilitates participation.

Website and other design that meets accessibility standards can assist in making a complex world more accessible (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2010).

Information can easily be produced in multiple formats, or available seamlessly.

Examples of suitable format information includes:

- producing text capable of text-to-speech conversion
- producing text capable of Braille software translation
- producing text capable of being reproduced on screen or in print in large format
- issuing a copy in Easy English
- issuing podcasts

Information provided needs to be produced in a timely manner. People with a disability need to be able to plan to participate.

Making arrangements for participation is more complex than for the general community and requires the cooperation of others including carers, or involves the provision of transport.

People with a disability want to be consulted. In addition to holding specialist sessions, all consultation activities undertaken should be inclusive and engaging regardless of skill or ability.

Moonee Valley's Diversity, Access and Equity Policy promotes accessible information and establishes a system of auditing to assess compliance with this requirement.

Council will:

- 1.2.1** Review current communications and information provision policies and mechanisms to ensure compliance with the current Standard (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2010)
- 1.2.2** Review the current consultation strategy to include a checklist on inclusive consultation to inform best practice
- 1.2.3** Update the Corporate Style Guide to incorporate accessibility standards (contrast, capitalisation, size, font), translation of information into other formats and Easy English
- 1.2.4** Undertake promotion of Disability Services including the Disability Services Newsletter
- 1.2.5** Develop a process to include stories of people with a disability in Council's various communication mediums





Access to information is an explicit right covered by Article 21 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2006.

The Convention requires all appropriate measures be taken to ... 'ensure that persons with a disability can exercise the right to freedom of expression and opinion, including the freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas on an equal basis with others and through all forms of communication of their choice'.

Information providers can do this by:

- providing information intended for the general public to persons with a disability in accessible formats and technologies appropriate to different kinds of disabilities in a timely manner and without additional cost
- accepting and facilitating the use of sign languages, Braille, augmentative and alternative communication, and all other accessible means, modes and formats of communication of their choice by persons with disability in official interactions
- urging private entities that provide services to the general public, including through the internet, to provide information and services in accessible and usable formats for persons with a disability
- encouraging the mass media, including providers of information through the internet, to make their services accessible to persons with a disability
- recognising and promoting the use of sign languages



Promoting participation

Moonee Valley's Diversity, Access and Equity Policy describes the key attributes of a city which promotes participation as:

- creating opportunities and connections
- accessible and inclusive services and information
- recreation, leisure and community life
- economic participation and lifelong learning





Our policy says ...

Participation is connecting with others in the community through opportunities to take part in recreation and leisure activities, learning and employment.

Council plays a vital role in ensuring accessible and inclusive planning, policy, services, activities and information, including place-based approaches. Participation is significantly enhanced where opportunities build on the strengths of, and are designed in collaboration with the community.

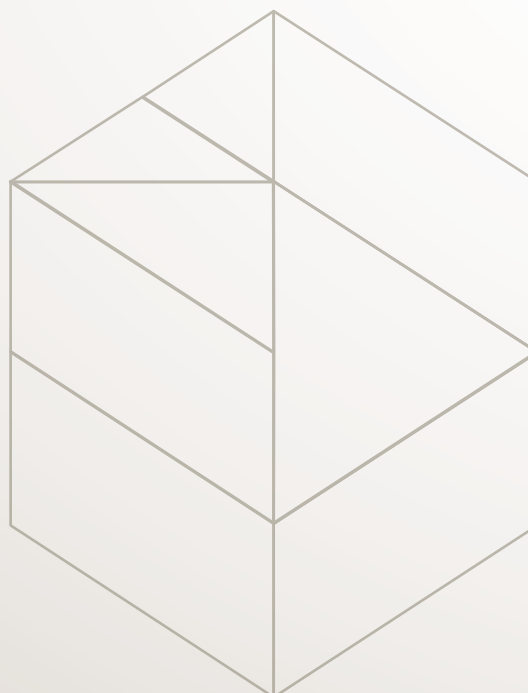
Opportunities to participate in community life can create pathways for individuals to connect with groups different to themselves, enhance understanding and learning across communities and deliver a friendlier, safer and more vibrant community.

Participation in employment and lifelong learning supports both active minds and connection with others. High employment levels and ongoing engagement in learning strengthens community cohesion and promotes the sustainability of the community and local businesses. Given the status of employment in our society, improving education, training and employment pathways are among the most significant interventions.

For people living with a disability, key challenges to participation include:

- feeling welcome
- ensuring opportunities are held in infrastructure which supports inclusion (jobs, groups, classes, events, festivals, clubs, parks, pools, shops, cafés, banks, etc)
- having accessible information easily available
- ensuring accessible transport is available
- having economic capacity to participate
- being consulted on policies, practices and services

Participants have spoken eloquently on these challenges.



Our community says ...

On creating opportunities and connections ...

'Disabled people are proud people, they don't want charity. They just want the basics but some require more assistance than others. Give them purpose in life to realise there is something worth living for, something worth doing and something to make their life much easier.'

On economic participation and lifelong learning ...

'Finding and maintaining paid employment is a significant challenge for many people with a disability.'

'Multiple barriers to meaningful employment included community attitudes, physical access, and lack of information about personal supports and financial subsidies available to support a person living with a disability.'

On accessible and inclusive services and information ...

'People need information to make choices and decisions ... our responsibility is to provide information comprehensible to the target group.'

'Improving access to information on services run by both Council and community organisations.'

'A website which specifically outlines goods, services, facilities and community support for those with disability in the community.'

On recreation, leisure and community life ...

'There are lot of people that may be lonely and don't have a lot of family and friends to share special occasions. A useful program might include opportunities to plan, coordinate, facilitate and/or participate in such an event.'

'The Lion King recently put on a show tailored specifically to the needs of autistic audience members (less flashing lights, clashing sounds etc). It would be wonderful if there were more shows altered to suit autistic children.'

2.1 Financial barriers

One of the biggest barriers to inclusion for people with a disability is having the capacity to afford aids, services, transport, medication, in addition to the everyday costs of living, ie. clothing, utilities, food and rent, with incomes most likely to be below the poverty line.

Most persons of working age with a core activity limitation are excluded from the paid workforce on both a full time and part time basis. Workforce participation rates for people with a core activity limitation are 90 per cent lower than for the general community.

Without access to employment, people of working age with core activity limitations, out of necessity rely on government pensions, benefits, family members and compensation awards to cover the costs of everyday living.

Over the last decade the difference between the Disability Support Pension (DSP) and Newstart benefits has been increasing in favour of the DSP. However those living on or below DSP level incomes live below the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development poverty line, set at 40 per cent of average weekly wages in Australia (OECD 2005).

One strategy adopted by government to manage the costs of disability provisions has been to tighten application of the eligibility criteria, moving those able to work from the DSP to the significantly lower level Newstart Benefit (Andrews 2013; Goldie 2013; Yeend 2013; Viellaris 2013).

In Moonee Valley 68.48 per cent or 3,844 persons with a core activity limitation live below the poverty line. This is compared to 28.07 per cent of the general community (28,533 persons of 101,636 total), including those on aged pensions, Newstart Benefit recipients, superannuants and those on low incomes.

Long-term dependency on the DSP leads to poverty and deprivation. Two interlinked strategies; education and employment, provide effective protection against long-term poverty. Although income support is not the business of Council, we can demonstrate leadership by encouraging better employment outcomes. Council can also reduce the financial burden on people with a disability.

Council will:

- 2.1.1** Enable participation for those living on DSP level income or below by ensuring high quality, responsive, integrated and low-cost Council services including:
 - childcare and kindergarten services
 - community transport services
 - library and learning services
 - leisure services
 - support services ie. home care, meals
 - youth services
- 2.1.2** Encourage low-cost activities and services by ensuring the pricing strategy reflects the financial burden of living in poverty and enables participation
- 2.1.3** Promote the use of the Companion Card at events run in Moonee Valley
- 2.1.4** Promote access to information on concessions, subsidies and discounts available for people with a disability to encourage inclusion and assist with financial hardship
- 2.1.5** Investigate opportunities to support educational and training scholarships for people with a disability

2.2 Inclusive activities and events

Moonee Valley's Diversity, Access and Equity Policy promotes opportunities and connections, as well as access to leisure, recreation and community life for people with a disability.

Council will:

- 2.2.1** Develop an 'Inclusive Practice Guide' including checklists and audit tools to actively promote participation of persons with a disability in all activities, events and festivals
- 2.2.2** Audit all activities, events and festivals run by Council for reasonable adjustment to policies, plans, procedures and practices
- 2.2.3** Promote compliance of the 'Inclusive Practice Guide' with all clubs and associations funded by Council or using Council buildings
- 2.2.4** Incorporate compliance with the 'Inclusive Practice Guide' into community and sports grants funding
- 2.2.5** Promote the 'Inclusive Practice Guide' to trader associations, service clubs and cultural groups who operate in Moonee Valley and use Council buildings
- 2.2.6** Design an easy access approach to support and mentor people with a disability to apply for Council grants across all possible categories



Creating accessible places and spaces

Moonee Valley's Diversity, Access and Equity Policy describes the key attributes of accessible places and spaces as:

- safe and welcoming environments
- active planning and design
- accessible infrastructure
- shared use of facilities





Our policy says ...

A welcoming and accessible built environment, streetscapes and other spaces designed to make us feel welcome and safe are fundamental to inclusion, encouraging participation in our community.

Council adopts a social model of disability. We recognise we can create or remove disabling barriers that are obstacles to inclusion and equity.

Active planning and design principles promote and motivate participation and social connection. They improve the availability of, and access to transport.

Shared use of facilities is also important, including integration and co-location of services in a way that respects social and cultural diversity. Fostering social cohesion includes taking into account the multitude of affiliations many groups within a community are likely to have.

For people living with a disability the provision of affordable and accessible housing, located within permeable and legible neighbourhood precincts, maximises the opportunity to live engaged economic and social lives and minimises barriers to participation.

The supportive qualities these environments offer are key to inclusion in all facets of daily life.

Supportive qualities of accessible places and spaces include:

- being in close proximity to accessible public transport
- being able to enter and navigate between and through accessible shops
- being able to access local inclusive, affordable and accessible recreation and leisure opportunities as well as community buildings, groups and activities
- being able to gain or easily travel to accessible employment opportunities

Participants were clear about measures that might improve access.



Our community says ...

On accessible infrastructure ...

'More public housing that is accessible to disability / more low-cost, accessible housing / finding suitable housing for disabled for the near future.'

'Council [should be] advocating and partnering with developers, businesses, disability providers, community housing and disability business enterprises to learn and explore possibilities.'

'Detailed accessibility map of places where people congregate to socialise, ie. restaurants, bars, cafés.'

'Even just footpaths and seats so that you can stop and rest might be what enables you to stay independent enough to do your own shopping.'

About the use of facilities ...

'Council to consider barriers to participation in its facilities and programs and work with disabled people to minimise or remove these barriers.'

On safe and welcoming environments ...

'Ensure, where possible, that access to buildings is via ramps and walkways with reduced steps.'

'Font sizes on sign posts, signs and unfriendly colours, make it difficult to navigate in shopping areas.'

On active planning and design ...

'Improving access to public transport within the region / public transport; trams with easy access.'

3.1 Housing

For many people with a disability, accessible or adaptable housing provides the most dignified and appropriate housing option.

Accessible or adaptable housing enables affordable independent living and allows for support where required. The qualities of accessible and adaptable housing are defined in Australian Standards, Adaptable Housing, AS 4299 1995.

Supported housing is generally configured as small group homes in suburban streets with a level of care provided on site and provided by the State Government or by registered disability service providers. Only five of 93 group homes in the western region of Melbourne are located in the relatively better appointed and more accessible City of Moonee Valley.

Supported housing is appropriate where the housing and care provided is affordable and consistent with the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

Rights in supported housing are to:

- high quality health outcomes and personal care
 - home-like environment
 - freedom from abuse, neglect and violence
 - safety
 - activities provided
- (Office of the Public Advocate 2013)

Although standards offering dignified and integrated housing for people with a disability have been agreed to for the past 30 years, only a limited range of public and private housing stock in Moonee Valley currently meet this standard. As a result, people with a disability are effectively excluded from making Moonee Valley a location of choice.

Council will:

- 3.1.1** Develop a strategic approach to the inclusion of the Adaptable Housing Standard (AS 4299) into the Moonee Valley Planning Scheme
- 3.1.2** Continue to advocate for funding for a respite care facility and service within Moonee Valley, to support people with a disability, their families and carers, to maintain ongoing and long-term care in a home like environment
- 3.1.3** Partner with the Department of Human Services, disability service providers and social and affordable housing providers to develop a strategy for the timely delivery of accommodation options
- 3.1.4** Partner with the Office of Housing and local social and affordable housing providers to develop an Accessible Housing Register
- 3.1.5** Explore opportunities to partner with developers and social housing providers to expand affordable and accessible housing within Moonee Valley

The right to an adequate standard of housing is a fundamental human right, established in Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), and reinforced in Article 28 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2006.

The Convention protects the right of persons with a disability to access to public housing programs (s.28(d)).

3.2 Transport

Local Government has considerable influence over local transport systems.

It has:

- planning and decision-making responsibility over local roads and footpaths and connecting paths in all recreation reserves owned or managed by Council
- decision-making responsibility in partnership with VicRoads as the responsible planning authority
- responsibility for delivery and maintenance of local roads and footpaths and connecting paths in all recreation reserves owned or managed by Council
- responsibility for the enforcement of local laws

Local Government also has a role in the implementation of the Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002.

Organisations are required to apply for exemptions where compliance is not possible and unjustifiable hardship can be proven.

Council will:

- 3.2.1** Advocate for early installation of accessible public transport stops along all tram and bus routes, particularly in activity centres identified as suitable for accessible and adaptable housing
- 3.2.2** Advocate for adjustment of platform height to promote ease of access and safety at existing train stations
- 3.2.3** Advocate for an increased frequency of accessible public transport services to facilitate community life, particularly at night and on weekends
- 3.2.4** Advocate for interconnecting transport services to facilitate easy multi-mode trips across Moonee Valley, particularly at Moonee Ponds and Essendon Junction Activity Centres
- 3.2.5** Embed transparent transport decision-making criteria to ensure disability is considered and disabled stakeholders are consulted, in processes compliant with the *Transport Integration Act 2010 (Vic)*
- 3.2.6** Ensure standard drawings are compliant with AS 1428 Series and Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002
- 3.2.7** Establish an annual schedule for implementation of the Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002 with advocacy to Public Transport Victoria where required
- 3.2.8** Review road speeds, crossing points and cycling and pedestrian infrastructure to facilitate access and ensure safe crossing of people with a disability to public transport, retail and other amenity
- 3.2.9** Review the community transport system with a view to increasing flexibility and use of the service
- 3.2.10** Review the design and allocation of accessible car parking at key buildings and in activity centres to ensure design offers safe access to footpath amenity and sufficient spaces are provided. Key buildings include the Civic Centre, leisure centres and neighbourhood centres

The right to mobility and to equal access to goods and services are human rights in Victoria. *The Charter for Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)* (the Charter) enshrines the right to freedom of movement within the State of Victoria.

The Charter for Human Rights Manual for Policy Makers 2008 notes that road reservations, rights of way, easements, roads and road closures, public reservation of land and sale of public land (land locking) are elements which are explicitly covered by the Charter.

The *Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)* confers equal rights of all people to access to and provision of good and services.

The *Transport Integration Act 2010 (Vic)* covers all transport infrastructure; roads rail and bus systems, cycling routes and footpaths.

The *Transport Integration Act 2010 (Vic)* identifies user equity and explicitly physical ability as a transport decision-making consideration. Further, s.3A states that transport decisions should be made from the transport users perspective ie. from the perspective of the person crossing the road or walking down the footpath, and in consultation with stakeholders.

Taken together this palette of legislation confers:

- rights for the provision of accessible, contiguous and permeable transport systems for people with a disability
- obligations on statutory and local governments for delivery of equitable and accessible transport systems



3.3 Physical access

Easy access to shopping centres, services, educational institutions, libraries and cultural centres, community and leisure centres underpin a person with a disability living a rich and engaged life.

The composition of places between buildings, in shopping centres or parklands, in leisure and community centres is equally important to people with a disability.

Supportive elements, particularly permeable and connected paths, lights, seats and accessible toilets, enable people to successfully move between buildings, and venture further into the urban environment. These elements combine to make people with a disability to feel welcomed and successfully use the facility or space.

Under the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)* it is unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly when accessing goods and services. We exclude people from the public realm, from venturing into parklands, from attending a festival in the park, if we do not provide supportive infrastructure. We impact health outcomes, happiness and effectively exclude people with a disability from public life.

Council will:

- 3.3.1** Establish performance standards on supportive amenity required for an inclusive built environment
- 3.3.2** Adopt design guidance on supportive amenity required for an inclusive built environment
- 3.3.3** Undertake access audits of footpaths, crossings, parklands, public buildings, community infrastructure, activity centres and other public places for compliance
- 3.3.4** Design a program for retrofitting footpaths, crossings, parklands, public buildings, community infrastructure, activity centres and other public places

Under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cwlth) (s.23) it is unlawful to deny a person access to a building on the basis of their disability.

Disability (Access to Premises – Buildings) Standards 2010 ensures all new buildings are designed to be accessible.

Older buildings, no matter where they are, if they provide goods, services, education or cultural events are likely to require adaptation to meet modern community expectations of inclusive participation.

Gaining physical access into a building or space is not the end of the obligation. Really including people a disability requires the implementation of practical measures to support use and enjoyment. These include: installation of ramps, accessible toilets, hearing loops etc. which are covered by the AS 1428 Series.



3.4 Services

Moonee Valley's Diversity, Access and Equity Policy promotes accessible and inclusive services and establishes a system of auditing to assess compliance with this requirement.

Council will:

- 3.4.1 Develop a Best Practice Guide at a service level to actively promote inclusive Council services
- 3.4.2 Establish performance standards for all services which recognise equal participation and benefit of people with a disability
- 3.4.3 Include results in the annual report on progress of this plan

The *Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)* (EOA) enshrines the rights of people with a disability to neither be directly (s.8) nor indirectly discriminated (s.9) against in the provision of goods and services.

The EOA supports Local Government and others in taking special measures to promote or realise effective equality of people with a disability (s.12).

The EOA requires those providing services and educational providers to make reasonable adjustment in the provision of services including education to enable a person with a disability to participate or benefit (ss.38-40).



The Universal Declaration of Human Rights enshrines the rights of everyone to 'a standard of living adequate for the health and wellbeing of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.' (1948, Article 25).

The right to gender sensitive services that support health are further defined in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006, Article 25). Services are required to:

- be of the same standard as services provided to others (Article 25(a))
- include services needed by persons with a disability specifically because of their disability, including early identification and intervention as appropriate, and services designed to minimise and prevent further disability, including among children and older persons (Article 25(b))

- be located as close as possible to people's own community (Article 25(c))

To ensure an adequate standard of living and social protection the Convention requires us to ensure:

- equal access by persons with a disability access to appropriate and affordable services, devices and other assistance for disability-related needs (Article 28(a))
- access by persons with a disability, in particular women and girls with a disability and older persons with a disability, to social protection programs and poverty reduction programs (Article 28(b))
- access by persons with a disability and their families living in situations of poverty to assistance from the State Government with disability related expenses, including adequate training, counselling, financial assistance and respite care (Article 28(c))



THEME 4

Leadership and representation

Moonee Valley's Diversity, Access and Equity Policy describes the key attributes of leadership and representation as:

- employment strategies
- organisational awareness
- partnerships and advocacy
- civic participation, representation and informed decision-making





Our policy says ...

Council understands the importance of embedding awareness of diversity across the organisation. This includes developing real and relevant responses to equity and access on an ongoing basis, sharing the lessons learned across Council, as well as enhancing confidence in engaging with all members of the community. Learning from and sharing lessons with community partners, business and other levels of government is a key part of this.

Council recognises its role as a major employer within Moonee Valley and the region, and the importance of leadership in inclusive employment at all levels of the workforce.

Partnerships and advocacy are also important for Council. Council cannot by itself create an inclusive society. Nor can it lead on every front. It can partner with community organisations, businesses, other councils in the region and other levels of government on strategies to nurture these directions. Partnerships can deliver greater and more sustainable results. Council can also advocate on behalf of residents to organisations, businesses and other levels of government for equity and access outcomes for all community members.

Council's commitment to meaningful consultation is particularly important to promote the participation of those who could most benefit, often those who may seem hardest to reach.

Strong relationships with organisations reflecting the diversity of the community also add depth and integrity to Council's ability to develop appropriate responses to their needs.

As we embed awareness of people living with a disability in our business, we should expect progressively better outcomes across all aspects of Council's business.

Results that can be expected include:

- performance standards developed for every area of our business including employment
- a systems approach to embedding the plan
- transparent regular reporting on outcomes
- auditing of our practice providing quality assurance and building trust
- performance standards that are regularly tested against best practice measures and improved over time

From the perspective of meaningful consultation Council will ensure:

- an inclusive Disability Reference Group
- a Disability Reference Group that takes a leadership role in consultation with the community it represents
- a Disability Reference Group which provides the opportunity for meaningful dialogue with Council on issues arising and performance standards

From a partnership and advocacy perspective Council will take a leadership role with:

- employers on employment outcomes
- local businesses on accessible shopping and entertainment environments
- transport providers on accessible public transport
- leisure providers, community groups and sporting organisations on supporting inclusive opportunities
- community grants on ensuring accessibility and inclusion are priority areas for funding

Our community says ...

On civic participation ...

Participants urged Council to build on initiatives, such as the Disability Reference Group, in thinking about how to give people with a disability a voice in Council decision-making.

On volunteering ...

'The promotion of volunteering opportunities both inside and outside of business hours.'

On employment ...

'Develop more relationships with the big corporate players, who can gainfully employ people with a disability.'

'Council to provide incentives for Moonee Valley businesses that employ people with a disability.'

Council has broad networks and facilitates many functions and events in Moonee Valley where promoting the positives and benefits of employing or assisting with improving the lives of people with disability could be included.



4.1 Employment

Employment provides people with economic capacity and financial security. Employment allows people to purchase or rent accommodation of their choice, pay bills, pay for care and purchase food.

Access to employment is central to being able to gain access to other opportunities; to take classes, join community organisations, attend events and participate in community life.

Employment promotes dignity, self-confidence and self-worth. Employment is the most powerful tool available to a society to promote social inclusion of all citizens.

And yet employment outcomes for those requiring core activity assistance when compared to others in Moonee Valley are significantly different.

Key facts ...

Almost 6,000 persons have a need for core activity assistance in Moonee Valley, including 1,400 of working age (between 15 and 64 years).

Data from the 2011 Census indicates that for those aged 15 to 64 years with core activity assistance requirements:

- 4.19 per cent are employed full-time
- 8.94 per cent are employed part-time
- 82.24 per cent are not in the labour force

This compares with those without core assistance needs aged 15 to 64 years of whom:

- 49.11 per cent are employed full-time
- 22.45 per cent are employed part-time
- 19.72 per cent are not in the labour force

Council will:

- 4.1.1** Take a leadership role in developing partnerships to increase awareness of the valuable contribution people with a disability can make as employees in Moonee Valley
- 4.1.2** As a major employer of choice, develop a strategic approach to enhancing employment opportunity and retention of persons with a disability at Council
- 4.1.3** Investigate social procurement opportunities which support the employment of persons with a disability in Moonee Valley
- 4.1.4** Investigate social enterprise opportunities which employ persons with a disability in Moonee Valley

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006, Article 29 and 30) protects the rights of people with a disability to participate in political and public life and cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport on an equal basis.

The *Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)* protects against direct and indirect discrimination in the provision of employment.

4.2 Volunteering

Volunteering is 'an activity [that] is freely chosen, does not involve remuneration and helps or benefits those beyond an individual's immediate family' (Cattan 2011).

Many local residents already participate as volunteers in not-for-profit organisations and with service and sporting clubs.

A growing body of research identifies many evidence-based benefits that volunteering delivers to participants and community.

People with a disability could benefit from the many rich and diverse benefits volunteering provides including:

- becoming an integral part of a community or group, being accepted and promoting acceptance of people living with a disability
- having fun, making friends, being fulfilled, reducing social isolation
- improving motivation and self confidence and social skills
- increasing levels of physical activity
- learning new skills and work-like behaviours, improving employment opportunities

- meeting mentors, accessing work experience and opportunities for demonstrating skills and capacity
- building social capital and resilience

As a marginalised group with poor health outcomes, people with a disability could also benefit from the wide-ranging, evidence-based health outcomes, delivered to volunteer participants including:

- improved physical health (Cattan 2007)
- improved levels of self reported wellbeing and happiness (Musick 2003; Borgonovi 2008)
- reduced rates of chronic pain and heart disease (Cattan 2007)
- improved mental health outcomes including reduced anxiety and depression (Cattan 2007)
- reduced rates of disability (Cattan 2007)
- lowered rates of hip fractures and other injuries, social support and health status in later life (Warburton 2008)
- longer lives (Cattan 2007)



Council will:

- 4.2.1 In partnership with local disability support services, develop and support volunteering and work-experience opportunities for people with a disability in Council and within the community
- 4.2.2 Take a leadership role in promoting volunteering to sports and social clubs as a key strategy promoting social inclusion, acceptance, self-esteem and health outcomes for people with a disability
- 4.2.3 In partnership with local business leaders, including traders groups and service clubs, develop a coordinated approach to developing volunteer and mentoring opportunities for people with a disability
- 4.2.4 Develop a strategic and partnership approach to encouraging social enterprises which employ people with a disability to locate in Moonee Valley

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006, Article 29 and 30) protects the rights of people with a disability to participate in political and public life and cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport on an equal basis.

The *Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)* protects against direct and indirect discrimination in the provision of goods and services, employment and clubs and memberships. The right to volunteer is arguably covered by these protections.



List of acronyms and abbreviations

AS 1428 Series –

Standards Australia Design for Access and Mobility; covering access to buildings (AS 1428.1, AS 1428.2)

Standards Australia Design for Access and Mobility; covering tactile orientation (AS 1428.3)

Standards Australia Design for Access and Mobility; covering access for children and adolescents (AS 1428.3)

Standards Australia Design for Access and Mobility; covering communication (AS 1428.5)

AS 4299 – Standards Australia Adaptable Housing Standard

AS 2890. 5-6 Series – Standards Australia, On Street and Off Street Parking

The plan – Disability Action Plan 2014-23

DSP – Commonwealth Disability Support Pension

Other Terminology

CRPD – United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2006

CHRR – *Charter for Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)*

DA – *Disability Act 2006 (Vic)*

DDA – *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cwlth)*

DSAPB – Commonwealth Disability Standards, Access to Premises – Buildings 2010

DSAPT – Commonwealth Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002

EOA – *Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)*

HACC – Home and Community Care Scheme

NDIA – Commonwealth National Disability Insurance Agency

NDIS – Commonwealth National Disability Insurance Scheme

OECD – Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

The Convention – United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2006

The Charter – *Charter for Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)*

The Declaration – United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948

UNDHR – United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948

WCAG – W3C Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0

Moonee Valley Language Line

عربي	Arabic	9280 0738	Ελληνικά	Greek	9280 0741	Español	Spanish	9280 0744
中文	Cantonese	9280 0739	Italiano	Italian	9280 0742	Türkçe	Turkish	9280 0745
Hrvatski	Croatian	9280 0740	Somali	Somali	9280 0743	Việt-ngữ	Vietnamese	9280 0746

All other languages 9280 0747

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