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## A message from the Co-Chairs of the Access Inclusion Advisory Committee



Cr Margaret Wood, Co-Chair



Andrew Vodic, Co-Chair,  
Community Disability Alliance Hunter

This year has been a challenging year for people with disability. The finalisation of the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability has brought re-lived trauma for many in our City. The Committee acknowledges the many voices from our community who contributed to this work. The community is also working through the implications of the National Disability Insurance Scheme review. The reports and recommendations of the Royal Commission and the NDIS Review will be significant social policy drivers over the next decade and will influence future strategic planning for our community. The message of co-design, empowerment and inclusion for people with a disability is important to each member of the Access Inclusion Advisory Committee (AIAC).

In 2023 the AIAC has:

- a. Provided advice, based on lived experience, to improve outcomes on Council specific programs and projects;
- b. Supported actions with strategic alignment to the City of Newcastle's Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) and other organisational strategies; and
- c. Provided strategic guidance and other work for the City's annual inclusion festival "Count Us In".

Key highlights of the Committee's work include the establishment of the Walking and Mobility working group, aligned with the DIAP's Liveable Communities priority, an employment focus for the main event at Count Us In, with an employment forum and business lunch, sessions on improving accessible tourism in the City (with input from an academic in the field) and consultations on major projects such as the Newcastle Harbour Foreshore Masterplan. This year's increase in both the range of City of Newcastle projects and their pre-development circulation to the Committee, shows AIAC is 'a go to' for Council access and inclusion strategic guidance, with advice grounded in the lived experience of members of the Committee.

Count Us In 2023 deserves special mention. The Committee is proud to have successfully steered the Count Us In Festival for its third year. A 21-day, 60+ event celebration of inclusion, highlighting what is available and the valued contributions of our community members with disability to our city. It was a co-delivery partnership between Council and Community Disability Alliance Hunter, in conjunction with many of Newcastle's community organisations who put on workshops, activities and events. This year's festival centred on inclusive employment and its' value to our City's liveability and productivity. A festival flagship event

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welcomed the 2022 Australian of the Year and Order of Australia recipient, Dylan Alcott who amplified "inclusion is everyone's business" message at the Count Us In Business and Industry Lunch.

On a final note, we thank the committee members for their input, work and expertise and for supporting voice and control for people with a disability across Newcastle.

## Membership

- Cr Nuatali Nelmes, Lord Mayor
- Cr Margaret Wood, Co-Chair
- Cr Dr Elizabeth Adamczyk
- Cr Katrina Wark
- Andrew Vodic, Co-Chair, Community Disability Alliance Hunter
- Chad Ramage, Accessibility in the City Newcastle
- Patrick Bellamy, Clear Sky Australia
- Ben Moxey, Community Member
- Sandra Irons, Community Member
- Lindsay Gardner, Community Member
- Stewart MacLennan, Community Member



## Objective of the committee

To provide advice and guidance in the application of planning instruments that prioritise access, social inclusion and overcoming discriminatory impediments to promote a highly accessible, inclusive and welcoming community that respects independence and human dignity.

## Summary of key items of business considered

Date of Meeting	Business Item
Thursday 16 February 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Newcastle Airport Terminal Expansion</li> <li>• CN Wickham Public Domain Plan</li> <li>• Count Us In Festival planning for 2023</li> <li>• Committee Planning Session</li> </ul>
Thursday 20 April 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CN Draft Inland Pool Strategy 2043</li> <li>• CN Pedestrian Plan</li> <li>• AIAC Annual Governance Report for 2022</li> </ul>
Thursday 15 June 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CN Broadmeadow Place Strategy consultation stages</li> <li>• Count Us In Festival 2023 draft program</li> <li>• AIAC Walking and Mobility working party</li> </ul>
Thursday 17 August 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CN Destination Management Plan (DMP) update</li> <li>• CN Customer Experience (CX) Strategy</li> <li>• Count Us In Festival 2023 Launch</li> </ul>

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Thursday 19 October 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessible Tourism</li> <li>• Australian Regional Tourism Conference, Newcastle</li> <li>• CN Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Strategy update</li> <li>• CN internal Accessibility Network Launch</li> </ul>
Thursday 7 December 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AIAC Walking and Mobility working party formally established</li> <li>• CN Georgetown Local Centre Public Domain Upgrade public exhibition</li> <li>• CN Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) 2022-23 progress report</li> <li>• CN DIAP integration into corporate reporting system (CAMMS)</li> <li>• Accessibility and Newcastle Business Improvement Associations</li> </ul>

## Summary of key achievements

- Establishment of AIAC Walking and Mobility working party with representative AIAC members and Terms of Reference which link to both the CN Social Strategy 2030 and the CN Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026
- Count Us In Festival (CN, community partner CDAH and community groups and businesses) and steering of the employment focussed events and activities within the festival
- Accessible Tourism (AIAC members) – varying discussions
- Input into Newcastle Airport redevelopment as community stakeholder
- Key outcomes for access improvements at Civic Theatre, Libraries and City Hall
- Member participation in Newcastle Ocean Baths and King Edward Park masterplanning



## Summary of performance and governance

Date of Meeting	Quorum achieved	Members in attendance	Agenda circulated to members and published on CN's website	Declaration of conflicts of interest listed as agenda item	Minutes circulated to members, adopted by the committee and published on CN's website
Thursday 16 February 2023	Quorate	Cr Margaret Wood, Co-Chair Cr Dr Elizabeth Adamczyk Cr Katrina Wark Andrew Vodice, Co-Chair, Community Disability Alliance Hunter Chad Ramage, Accessibility in the City Newcastle Patrick Bellamy, Clear Sky Australia Ben Moxey, Community Member Sandra Irons, Community Member	Yes	Yes	Yes

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		Lindsay Gardner, Community Member Stewart MacLennan, Community Member			
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