

Access Inclusion Advisory Committee (AIAC) Annual Report 2022



Foreword from the Co-Chair Cr Margaret Wood

The current Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee was established by the elected Council in February 2022 and three Councillors were appointed to the Committee. A public Expression of Interest process (EOI) for new community and organisational members was then undertaken with the aim that the Committee membership included people with a disability, carers of people with a disability and organisations involved in advocacy or service provision. The Access Inclusion Advisory Committee (AIAC) also has a unique Co-Chair model, with a Councillor and community/organisational member fulfilling those roles. The membership of the AIAC and the co-chair model reflects City of Newcastle's commitment to a genuine community voice on issues of access and inclusion.

The work of the AIAC over the last 12 months has been informed by the lived experience of many of our members as well as the depth of skills and commitment of the entire Committee.

AIAC meetings for the calendar year of 2022 were 19 May, 7 July, 15 September and 17 November. Many key projects and strategies have benefited from the advice of the Committee and the agenda summary below demonstrates the diversity and breadth of projects and programs that have come to the AIAC for consultation. This has been a critical part of our work in 2022 and I look forward to a continuing collaboration over the next 12 months. Our agendas also include proposals initiated by members of this Committee or the previous Committee. I am particularly proud of the Count Us In Festival, now in its fourth year. This was a proposal initiated by the previous AIAC which is now evolving and maturing with the input of the current Committee.

Members of the AIAC are committed to making the City of Newcastle an inclusive and accessible community by providing advice on diverse projects, programs and strategies as well as putting forward proposals that will support change. I wish to thank all our committee members for volunteering their time and expertise in the first year and look forward to seeing us progress as a committee into the future.

Foreword from the Co-Chair Andrew Vodic

In being elected in 2022 by the AIAC members to fulfil the role of the Co-Chair position I have found it to be a highly positive experience working with members of the AIAC, City of Newcastle staff and Councillors. I especially thank Co-Chair Councillor Wood for effectively managing the meetings processes and the other AIAC members for their contributions.

I am committed in my paid employment role as CEO at Community Disability Alliance Hunter (CDAH) to ensure that members of our community have the opportunity to participate fully in citizenship of their community and the AIAC provides a voice at the Local Government level than can encourage and influence decisions towards a more inclusive community.

I would also like to take this opportunity to commend City of Newcastle (CN) and the AIAC for the development of the Count Us In program, by the committee voting to support the continuation of this inclusion program for 2023, it provides further opportunity to engage the broader community to highlight the contribution of people with disabilities, to understand the prevalence and diversity of disabilities, promote human rights, and create and enhance local partnerships/relationships.

I have no doubt that my fellow AIAC members hold considerable passion towards making a difference for our community, and I thank them for volunteering their precious time. I am sure our work will enhance the implementation of CN's Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026.

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I am impressed that we have been able to contribute to a range of CN plans and strategies. I appreciate the CN project leaders who have presented to the AIAC, and also the opportunity for external presentations such the planned upgrade of Newcastle Airport. Making sure that inclusion is front of mind in the operations at City of Newcastle can only be of great benefit for all our community. I look forward to contributing further within the remaining time of this term on the AIAC.

Membership

The 2022-24 AIAC consists of 11 members, 4 Councillor Members, 4 Community Members, 3 Stakeholder Members, the Lord Mayor Nuatali Nelmes holds a standing position on all Advisory committees. The Councillor members are listed below along with the other 7 members.

All external members of the committee have signed and provided the appropriate forms, acknowledging they will comply with the Code of Conduct, Volunteer Framework and Media Policy.



Councillor Margaret Wood
Co-Chair of AIAC and Councillor Member



Councillor Katrina Wark
Councillor Member



Councillor Dr Elizabeth Adamczyk
Councillor Member

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Community Members:

Ben Moxey

Lindsay Gardner

Sandra Irons

Stewart MacLennan

Organisational/Stakeholder Members:

Andrew Vodic (Also Co-Chair)

Chad Ramage

Patrick Bellamy

The AIAC Community and Stakeholder Members were selected via a public EOI process held in March/April 2022 with the subsequent meetings being held on 19 May, 7 July, 15 September and 17 November within the calendar year of 2022.

All external members of the committee have signed and provided the appropriate forms, acknowledging they will comply with the Code of Conduct, Volunteer Framework and Media Policy.

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Objectives of the committee

1. To provide advice and guidance to ensure that all residents are able to participate actively in all aspects of community and civic life and ensure that Council recognises and values the diversity of its community.
2. To provide advice and guidance on identifying and addressing barriers preventing people from participating in programs, services and facilities across the City. This includes barriers relating to disability, health, age, and cultural and linguistic diversity.
3. To promote adherence to the principles of the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014 which will benefit the community as a whole.
4. To promote social inclusion in our community through recommendations to improve the built environment, changes in community attitudes and behaviours, and creating better systems and processes for meaningful social and economic participation of people of all abilities and backgrounds.

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Summary of key items of business considered

Date of Meeting	Business Item
19 May 2022	Director overview of CN Structure and Advisory Committee Introduction of new members Overview of previous AIAC achievements Distribution of DIAP 2022-2026 documents Expression of Interest Process for Co-Chair of AIAC announced Meeting schedule agreed Working groups discussed
7 July 2022	Voting for Co-Chair Overview of CN's Transport and Compliance (T&C) service unit Presentation on Draft Principal Pedestrian Network Destination Management Plan and Events New Annual Presentation Overview of Integrated Planning and Reporting framework and alignment of DIAP DIAP Themes overview
15 September 2022	Co-design principles discussion Presentation on Draft Inclusion, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy Preview of Draft Harbour Foreshore Plan including Inclusive Play Space Civic Theatre report re information, bookings and seating.
17 November 2022	Presentations on: Newcastle Ocean Baths Stage 2 Upgrade Bathers Way-King Edward Park CN's Community Engagement Strategy Local Social Strategy Social Infrastructure Strategy Count Us In Options 2023 Access to business premises discussed Accessible parking in Civic precinct discussed

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Summary of key achievements

City of Newcastle via the AIAC has engaged people with lived experience of disabilities, carers, significant others and representatives of disability related services to work on achieving a more inclusive community via informing the work and services of CN and providing advice and input to multiple areas of strategy development and planning.

In the short time of May to December 2022 AIAC meetings have impacted the following:

- Successful EOI and election of Co- Chair, establishing a committee of community and agency representatives who bring diversity and experience to the group.
- Forming and functioning as a newly elected committee with all new volunteer members
- Initiated a Co-Chair model to enhance the voice of people with disabilities at the Advisory Committee level.
- Supported the Disability Inclusive Emergency Preparedness Forum.
- Provided advice on the design and delivery outcomes for a variety of CN projects and programs.

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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
19 May 2022	Quorate	Cr Margaret Wood (Co-Chair) Cr Dr Elizabeth Adamczyk Andrew Vodice (Co-Chair) Chad Ramage Patrick Bellamy Ben Moxey Stewart MacLennan Lindsay Gardner (Note: Sandra Irons was not officially added to the committee correspondence at this stage due to an administrative error, so is noted as an apology)	Yes circulated to members, website publishing to be corrected to comply	Yes	Yes
7 July 2022	Quorate	Cr Margaret Wood (Co-Chair) Cr Katrina Wark Cr Dr Elizabeth Adamczyk Chad Ramage Patrick Bellamy Ben Moxey Stewart MacLennan Lindsay Gardner Sandra Irons	Yes circulated to members, website publishing to be corrected to comply	Yes	Yes
15 Sept 2022	Quorate	Cr Margaret Wood (Co-Chair) Cr Katrina Wark Cr Dr Elizabeth Adamczyk Andrew Vodice (Co-Chair) Chad Ramage Patrick Bellamy Ben Moxey Stewart MacLennan Lindsay Gardner Sandra Irons	Yes circulated to members, website publishing to be corrected to comply	Yes	Yes
17 Nov 2022	Quorate	Cr Margaret Wood (Co-Chair) Cr Dr Elizabeth Adamczyk Andrew Vodice (Co-Chair) Chad Ramage Patrick Bellamy Stewart MacLennan Lindsay Gardner Sandra Irons	Yes circulated to members, website publishing to be corrected to comply	Yes	Yes (Minutes to be published)