



Disability Access and Inclusion Plan



2021 - 2024

Acknowledgement

Moorabool Shire Council acknowledges the Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of this nation. We acknowledge the traditional Wathaurung Tribe in the south and west and the Wurundjeri Tribe in the east custodians of the lands on which Council is located and where we conduct our business. We pay our respects to their ancestors and Elders, past, present and emerging. Council is committed to honouring Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique culture and their rich contribution to society.

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Please note: A Glossary of Disability Terms is available as **Appendix 1**.

Message from the Chief Executive Officer

This four year 'Disability Access and Inclusion Plan' (DAIP) is Council's strategy for creating a more inclusive community for people living with a disability. This strategy marks the next phase of Council's ongoing work and commitment in addressing and removing the range of barriers experienced by people living with a disability across Moorabool Shire.

The DAIP has been developed based on the roles and responsibilities of Council, good governance and management practices and the requirements of relevant legislation – especially the Victorian Disability act which makes it mandatory to implement a DAIP. This will ensure a culture within Council which recognises that everyone including Councillors, senior managers and staff have a responsibility and an important role to play in eliminating discrimination experienced by people with a disability. This is achieved by systematically addressing the barriers created by attitudes, practices and structures that limit the opportunities for people living with a disability to fully participate in the life of the community.

The DAIP reflects Council's continuing commitment to improving equitable and dignified access to all of Council's services, facilities, programs, communications, planning and employment processes. Several milestones have already been achieved by previous Plans with key successes that are not limited to and include:

- Purchase and installation of 'Marveloo' (*portable accessible adult changing space and toilet*) and 'Trail rider' (*rough terrain Sherpa style vehicle for a person with physical disability*);
- Implementation of social support programs for women with a disability;
- Hearing augmentation at customer service centres;
- 'Accessible events guide', dining guides and mobility maps; and,
- Disability awareness training for staff.

High on the list of future priorities is the creation of a disability specific, community based advisory committee that will work collaboratively with Council, operating as a two-way conduit of information for other members of the disabled community. Council also aims to increase the percentage of people with living with a disability within the organisation's workforce, whilst also improving access to its website for people with sensory or literacy issues.

The Actions of the Plan are based on the understanding that the main issues facing people living with a disability are varied and interconnected with the broader community, public and private operators and other services that are not managed by Council. In order for Council to show leadership, advocacy and help remove barriers to access and inclusion in the community, there needs to be a collaborative effort in implementing a range of simultaneous initiatives internally and externally to address them effectively.

Moorabool Shire Council respects the ongoing cooperation and engagement with its residents and businesses and will continue to improve access and inclusion in partnership with other organisations across the Shire to adopt an "Access for All" philosophy. I urge you, therefore, to join with the Moorabool Shire Council (MSC) in this effort.

Derek Madden

Chief Executive Officer

Introduction

Moorabool Shire Council's previous 'Age Well Live Well & Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2019 – 2022' was an integrated Plan that set out Council's goals to meet the needs of older residents and people living with a disability together. Council has made a conscious decision to remove the disability components from that Plan as it believes that disability issues need to be prioritised on their own. Therefore, this DAIP sets a new path to improvements that will contribute to a number of positive outcomes for the greater inclusion of people with a disability into the future.

This DAIP brings together the successes of work undertaken through previous plans and links with other related corporate plans, policies and strategies. Council is determined to use a 'whole of Council' and Human Rights approach to the development of this Plan by encouraging full engagement by all Councillors, management and staff.

There are many people with disabilities living within the Shire who access Council services and use Council facilities. Council recognises its key leadership roles as a **planner**, **provider** of services, **advocate** and **partner** within the community. These roles enable Council to make an enormous contribution in protecting the rights of people living with a disability.

Council recognises that the factors contributing to a person having a disability are wide and varied and that the term 'people with a disability' incorporates all types of impairments including cognitive, physical, mental health issues, sensory which can be acquired from birth or through illness accident or the ageing process.

Council also recognises that attitudes, practices and structures can be disabling and present barriers that prevent people with a disability from enjoying economic participation, social inclusion and equity - that is, they can be more disadvantaged by society's responses to their disability than the disability itself. Therefore, it is important to work to remove these barriers. It is also recognised that they have the same fundamental rights as other citizens and that a person with a disability is an individual first who is not defined by their disability.

In identifying and removing barriers that people with a disability face, Council will act within the strategic frameworks that exist to support access for people with disabilities at Global, National and State levels. This framework will be embedded within Council's legislative and policy commitments for a 'Whole of Council' approach.

Common access barriers to inclusion include inaccessible communication, employment, transport, community attitudes, service capacity, affordability and the built environment. Inclusion is a fundamental human right for everyone.

Removing barriers and improving access for people with a disability will have additional benefits for others within the community, as it ensures access for all, including:

- Parents with prams;
- Older people with mobility aids;
- People with injuries;
- People with temporary disabilities;
- People with mental health issues; and
- Children walking or riding to school.

Key Strategic Processes

Council is a key community **Planner**, **Provider** of services, **Advocate** and **Partner** for local businesses and services in the Moorabool Shire.

Council's Leadership Roles include:

Planner: Plans for future services and community needs through a range of policies, strategies and plans aimed at delivering greater community outcomes.

Provider: Takes responsibility for funding and delivering services to the community, delivering on its statutory responsibilities and monitoring of its progress.

Advocate: Promotes the interests and needs of the community to other decision-making organisations including the State and Federal Governments.

Partner: Funds and carries out services in formal partnership with other organisation and facilitates partnerships by bringing parties together to progress identified issues.

The table below demonstrates how the main Objectives and Actions of the DAIP integrate with Council's 'planner', 'provider', 'advocate' and 'partner' roles.

DAIP Objectives and Actions	Key Strategic Processes Council will:	Planner	Provider	Advocate	Partner
All	Plan a whole-of-council approach to the implementation process and make strategic use of statutory and regulatory roles	✓	✓	✓	✓
Obj.1	Deliver accessible and inclusive Council services, programs and events	✓	✓		
Obj.1	Systematically improve the planning and accessibility of Council buildings and infrastructure	✓	✓		
Obj.2	Improve employment opportunities for people living with a disability	✓	✓		
Obj.3	Facilitate civic participation and inclusive consultation		✓		
Obj.4	Provide inclusive communication and information services		✓		
Obj.4	Implement effective accountability practices to monitor, review and evaluate progress of the DAIP		✓		
Obj.4	Exercise leadership, foster partnerships and collaboration with other organisations, businesses or services to improve inclusion, positive community attitudes and perceptions towards people with a disability			✓	✓

What is the purpose of this DAIP?

The purpose of this DAIP is to continue to improve and monitor a range of community services and facilities in partnership with the community and other agencies to promote wellbeing, safety, social independence and inclusion in the community. Apart from the usual physical aspects of accessibility, great change can occur by thinking differently about how people living with a disability can be included in all aspects of community life. The DAIP aims to prompt and guide such thinking to create a more inclusive community.

Disability Facts

What is a Disability?

The term 'disability' typically includes an impairment of a physical, intellectual, neurological or sensory nature (i.e. vision and hearing), chronic medical condition (like cancers or other disabling diseases), psychiatric or neurological disability, learning disability, physical disfigurement and short-term or temporary disability. Disability can be lifelong, temporary (e.g. hip replacements, temporary disabling illnesses etc.), acquired by accident or emergent as part of the ageing process.

Statistics about disability

According to the ABS 'Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers' In 2018 there were 4.4 million Australians with disability, 17.7% of the population, down from 18.3% in 2015.

- The prevalence of disability increased with age - one in nine (11.6%) people aged 0-64 years and one in two (49.6%) people aged 65 years and over had disability
- Disability prevalence was similar for males (17.6%) and females (17.8%).
- 5.7% of all Australians had a profound or severe disability
- Almost one-quarter (23.2%) of all people with disability reported a mental or behavioural disorder as their main condition, up from 21.5% in 2015.

Demographics (from Australian Network on Disability)

- Over 4.4 million people in Australia have some form of disability. That's 1 in 5 people.
- 17.8% of females and 17.6% of males in Australia have disability
- The likelihood of living with disability increases with age. 2 in 5 people with disability are 65 years or older
- Of all people with disability, 1.9 million are aged 65 and over, representing almost half (44.5%) of all people with disability. This reflects both an ageing population and increasing life expectancy of Australians
- 2.1 million Australians of working age (15-64 years) have disability.
- 35.9% of Australia's 8.9 million households include a person with disability.

Types of Disability (from Australian Network on Disability)

- Only 4.4% of people with a disability in Australia use a wheelchair

- 1 in 6 Australians are affected by hearing loss. There are approximately 30,000 Deaf Auslan users with total hearing loss
- Vision Australia estimates there are currently 357,000 people in Australia who are blind or have low vision. They project that the number of Australians who are blind or have low vision will grow to 564,000 by 2030
- 45% of Australians aged 16–85 years, experience a mental health condition during their lifetime
- 3 million Australians live with depression or anxiety
- Research shows job or financial loss can increase a person's risk of health problems, such as depression and anxiety
- Over three-quarters (76.8%) of people with disability reported a physical disorder as their main condition. The most common physical disorder was musculoskeletal disorder (29.6%) including arthritis and related disorders (12.7%) and back problems (12.6%).

In 2019, the population of Moorabool was 35,049 residents (Profile ID). Using the assumption that 17% of Victorians have a disability, this means that approximately 6,000 residents in Moorabool have a disability. Added to these figures, 6% or 2,100 residents will have a temporary impairment at any one time.

In total, as an organisation Moorabool Shire Council, needs to consider the needs of approximately 8,100 residents with a disability in our strategic planning and service delivery every day.

Legislation

Council is committed to undertaking its roles and responsibilities and utilising its influence to continue to reduce the barriers for people with a disability and adhering to its legislative responsibilities.

Under the *Victorian Local Government Act 1989*, Councils have a responsibility to improve the overall quality of life of people in the local community and to ensure that services and facilities provided by Council are accessible and equitable. Addressing issues of discrimination and improving access and inclusion for all community members, including people with a disability, falls within these responsibilities.

The four main Objectives developed for this Plan are a combination of the mandatory Legislative requirements of the *Victorian Disability Act 2006*, International 'Human Rights Framework of Disability' and the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*.

At an International level

Human Rights Framework of Disability – the 'United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities' states:

"People with a disability include those who have long term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others."

This statement articulates that an adverse impact of impairment is typically felt when encountering barriers in society. Barriers could be of a social nature, for example, discriminatory attitudes and behaviours towards people with a disability. Barriers can also be environmental, such as lack of accessibility to premises, goods and services.

At a Federal level

Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA)

The DDA was enacted by the Federal Government to promote fairness and equity for people with a disability and to ensure that they have the same rights and level of access to opportunities and services as other members of the community. The DDA makes it unlawful to discriminate - in the provision of goods, services or facilities - against people on the basis that they have, or may have, a disability. It also makes it unlawful to discriminate against a person on the basis that one of their associates has, or may have, a disability.

The DDA overrides any State act or legislation. The Act covers everyone with a disability. It also protects relatives, friends, carers and co-workers of people with disabilities from discrimination.

DDA definition of disability:

- Physical;
- Intellectual or learning disabilities;
- Psychiatric (mental health);
- Sensory (vision or hearing);
- Neurological (e.g. autism spectrum, Multiple sclerosis etc);
- Physical disfigurement; or,
- The presence in the body of disease-causing organisms (e.g. HIV AIDS, cancer etc).

The NDIS

The NDIS is the National Disability Insurance Scheme and the NDIA – National Disability Insurance Agency is the Federal Agency that distributes funds to eligible people with a disability. The NDIS in Victoria began with a trial in the Barwon area in 2013. The Victorian and Commonwealth Governments signed a bilateral agreement for transition to the NDIS in 2015. From this agreement the NDIS started a staged rollout in Victoria in 2016. MSC is not a registered NDIS supplier although it does provide support for people with a disability who are not eligible for NDIS funding.

At a State level

Disability Act 2006

The *Victorian Disability Act* came into force July 2007 and replaced 2 outdated DHS related Acts. At its core, it is about direct service provision for people with a disability but includes some specific and unique aspects unseen prior to 2006 – specifically section 38 of the Act (s38):

S38 of the Act makes it mandatory for all Government funded organisations to have a Disability Action Plan (or similar name).

'A public sector body' must ensure that a Disability Action Plan is prepared for the purpose of:

- reducing barriers to persons with a disability accessing goods, services and facilities;
- reducing barriers to persons with a disability obtaining and maintaining employment;
- promoting inclusion and participation in the community of persons with a disability;
- achieving tangible changes in attitudes and practices which discriminate against persons with a disability.'

Council will work to implement the actions contained in this Plan over the next three years and to regularly monitor its progress with the assistance of a new Disability Advisory Group and an Internal Reference Group.

Methodology

Literature Review

A literature review was conducted, including key organisational plans, strategies and documents, plus important policies from a range of other sources. The review established overlays and synergies with other Plans and Policies and noted those that are due for review using a disability 'lens'.

Summary of Relevant Council Plans, Strategies and Policies

Future strategic documents will continue to be informed by and link to the DAIP. The significant Plans or strategies include (in alphabetical order):

- Council Plan 2017- 2021;
- Early Years Plan;
- Facilities Strategy Plan;
- Municipal Public Health Plan;
- Moorabool Play Strategy;
- Open Space Framework;
- Recreation Reserve Management strategy;
- Road Management Plan; and,
- Youth Strategy.

The links between the DAIP and these Plans or Strategies will ensure that there is a consistent framework to improve access and inclusion outcomes for people with a disability. All Council Plans or Policies will strive to include considerations and improvements to Access and Inclusion where relevant.

Consultation

Four consultation and review meetings were undertaken in March with Council staff prior to the Covid -19 pandemic to evaluate progress and implementation of the disability access and inclusion features of the 'Age Well Live Well & Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2019-2022'. Five public consultations and opportunities to have a say for service providers and residents about disability access and inclusion issues were scheduled to be rolled out across the Shire in April and

May 2020 but had to be cancelled as a result of the pandemic. Due to the lockdown restrictions, an online survey was circulated instead and was the only form of consultation available to use during that time.

Findings

Most people who responded were either people living with a disability, their families or friends. The feedback primarily related to physical barriers from the perspective of people with mobility impairments.

The prioritised issues included:

- footpaths and streetscapes
- 'accessible' parking
- inadequate or ageing Council buildings (in particular the Ballan library) and
- lack of compliant accessible toilets
- communications
- accessible events and
- employment processes.

Feedback regarding services identified barriers to

- accessible public transport
- navigation and content on Council's website, and
- recreation services.

The main feedback about communication related to the lack of alternate types of communication, the inaccessibility of the website for people with a vision impairment and phone contact for people who are hard of hearing. Several people placed an indoor heated saltwater pool in Bacchus Marsh as their top priority 'wish list' item (some survey respondents identified that they were allergic to chlorine).

Responses highlighted that a leadership and advocacy role would make a significant difference especially with improvements to inaccessible retail, dining and business outlets, health services (including doctors, dentists and allied health) and accessible public transport options.

Overall, respondents indicated that Council had made good progress in the previous five years.

The implementation of this new DAIP will attempt to remedy these community concerns.

Please note: A full script of verbatim responses is available in Appendix 2.

Accountability

Council is committed to demonstrating leadership in the area of Access and Inclusion in addition to meeting legislative requirements and will review and evaluate progress annually.

The MSC Executive Management team are responsible for the implementation of this DAIP and the related financial accountability. In cases where extra funds are required, there will be no

'special funds' set aside for disability specific reasons, rather - 'Responsible Officers' (ROs) will need to seek funding as part of 'business as usual' practices. An Internal Reference Group will report and monitor progress on an annual basis and this will be reported in Council's annual report.

Actions to follow may have more than one leading RO implementing the actions to ensure accountability and collaboration. They may delegate some actions to other staff members but still retain the overall responsibility for implementation. Budget considerations dictate that these actions need to be ongoing actions or implemented over several years and in some cases, past 2024.

Review Process

Council will ensure that organisational accountability processes are in place for implementing access and inclusion initiatives and will publicly report on the progress on an annual basis to Council.

Key Objectives and Actions

Objective 1: Services, Places and Spaces - We will aim to ensure all Council services, programs and infrastructure facilities are accessible to people with a disability.

Council will aim to ensure services and programs are accessible to people with a disability, promote participation and provide people with a disability with opportunities to participate equally alongside other members of the community.

Council will aim to maximise the accessibility of all new Council infrastructure including parks, open space, signage, roads, kerbs, footpaths, playgrounds, bus stops, street furniture.

Dianne's story:

"I have had many physical and health issues including surviving breast cancer over the years and really value Council's Home Help service which is a big help. I attend a 'Ladies Group' once a month for ladies with a disability which I enjoy very much and meet others of a similar age and situation. The staff are very kind, helpful and approachable. The group went to Barwon Heads last year and it was a great week away. I enjoyed it immensely and the activities were great, and the helpers were wonderful, thoughtful and could not do enough to help. Thank you".

Please note: 'Who will lead it?' refers to the main officer who will implement the action and, in some cases, will be 'in partnership' with other officers to ensure successful results. Timelines will indicate level of priority and a date - e.g. under 'When?', H = High priority needs to be completed by 2022, M = Medium (2023) and L = Low (2024). Some actions will be ongoing.

No.	What will we do?	Who will lead it?	When? H, M or L
'Planning' roles:			
1.1	All Council owned facilities – conduct a third-party assessment of Council's buildings to determine their accessibility according to standards and prioritise a list of upgrades.	Manager Asset Management	Priority: H Dec 2022
In partnership with: Municipal Building Surveyor.			
1.2	Property maintenance – develop a checklist to be used during maintenance inspections to ensure that accessibility components are considered and disability friendly.	Coordinator Building Maintenance	Priority: H Jun 2021 Ongoing
In partnership with: Asset Systems Officer.			

No.	What will we do?	Who will lead it?	When? H, M or L
1.3	<p>Open spaces – develop ‘access’ guidelines in Open Space Strategy to ensure open spaces are accessible to all.</p> <p>In partnership with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Community Engagement Officer • Access & Inclusion Officer • Coordinator Infrastructure & Development • OHS & Risk Advisor. 	<p>Manager Environmental Management</p>	<p>Priority: M Jun 2022</p>
1.4	<p>Accessible parking bays – audit existing accessible parking bays and make recommendations for new upgrades where relevant.</p> <p>In partnership with: GM Community Assets & Infrastructure.</p>	<p>Traffic & Transport Engineer Coordinator Asset Management</p>	<p>Priority: H Dec 2022</p>
1.5	<p>Council managed accessible public toilets – audit existing public toilets to determine their accessibility and make recommendations for replacement and upgrade where relevant.</p>	<p>Manager Asset Management</p>	<p>Priority: H Dec 2021</p>
1.6	<p>Building standards training – seek out expertise and provide relevant with specific technical training about Universal Access Standards and Design, AS 1428 and Premises Standards and updates.</p>	<p>Organisation Development Coordinator</p>	<p>Priority: H Jan 2022</p>
1.7	<p>Universal access standards - all new council buildings will be designed to incorporate universal access standards and relevant building codes and wherever possible, to incorporate enhanced accessibility features that facilitate access for all community members.</p> <p>In partnership with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipal Building Surveyor • Access & Inclusion Officer • DAIAC • Project owner 	<p>Relevant Project owner or and/or Project Manager</p>	<p>Priority: H Dec 2021</p>
1.8	<p>Footpaths – continue to plan, improve and maintain footpaths to include safe, compliant accessible paths of travel which have links and continuity to key sites and community facilities.</p> <p>In partnership with:</p>	<p>Coordinator Asset Management</p>	<p>Priority: H Nov 2021 Ongoing</p>

No.	What will we do?	Who will lead it?	When? H, M or L
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manager Operations • Senior Community Engagement Officer. 		
1.9	Local laws – annually promote and enforce compliance with a ‘footpath trading policy’ and monitor illegal parking in accessible parking bays.	Community Safety Officer	Priority: H Mar 2021 Ongoing
1.10	<p>Community safety Develop a resource for people with a disability that enables an individual safety plan to be implemented allowing people to plan for and remain safe during emergency events.</p> <p>In partnership with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Emergency Management Officer • Manager Active Ageing & Diversity • DAIAC 	Manager Environmental Management	Priority: H Aug 2021
1.11	<p>Emergency Plans - Review the following plans in collaboration of the members of the new DAIAC to ensure that considerations for disability access and inclusion are included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency Relief Centre Sub Plan • Emergency Recovery Centre Sub Plan • Emergency Heatwave Plan <p>In partnership with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Emergency Management Officer. • Manager AA & D • DAIAC 	Manager Environmental Management	Priority: H Dec 2021
‘Provider’ roles:			
1.12	Youth services - ensure current and future youth activities and services accommodate and are inclusive of young people living with a disability.	Youth Services Team Leader	Priority: H Dec 2021 Ongoing
1.13	Resources Continue to maintain and update a comprehensive, accessible library of service information related to aged and disability, online and in hard copy.	Access & Inclusion Officer	Priority: H Dec 2021 Ongoing
	In partnership with: Communications & Media Officer.		
1.14	Bi-annually review and update eating guides and mobility maps and make available electronic version on website.	Access & Inclusion Officer	Priority: H Dec 2021

No.	What will we do?	Who will lead it?	When? H, M or L
In partnership with: Communications & Media Officer. Economic Development			
1.15	Recreation – facilitate and promote disability awareness training for volunteers to provide more accessible and inclusive recreation opportunities. Provide tools and resources to support sport and recreation providers to be more disability aware.	Community & Recreation Liaison Officer	Priority: H Dec 2021
In partnership with: Access and Inclusion Officer.			
1.16	Marveloo – seek permanent sites that are powered and plumbed to ensure Marveloo may be transported and located in central Ballan, Darley and Maddingley Park for local events.	Access and Inclusion Officer	Priority: H Dec 2021
In partnership with:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinator Works • Senior Connected Communities & Engagement Officer. 			
1.17	Libraries Audit and ensure the library services provide a mix of accessible format material including dyslexia and dysgraphia materials, electronic and audio books and programs.	Coordinator Library Services	Priority: H Dec 2021
In partnership with: Library Officers.			
‘Planning’ and ‘Advocacy’ roles:			
1.18	‘Companion Card’ – Council to register with C/C and promote affiliation to local recreation services.	Senior Connected Communities & Engagement Officer	Priority: M Dec 2021
In partnership with: Communications & Media Officer.			

Objective 2: Employment - We will aim to improve employment opportunities for people with a disability within Council.

Council will take our responsibilities seriously as equal opportunity employers and exercise a community leadership role to work with others to enhance local employment opportunities for people with a disability.

Survey respondent's comments and questions:

"Where do you advertise? Where are the jobs located if we can't easily get public transport? If the public transport is accessible that is. Flexibility needed in the workplace and your willingness to make adjustments to assist workers." Anonymous

No.	What will we do?	Who will lead it?	When? H, M or L
'Provider' role:			
2.1	Recruitment process – review all recruitment processes and position descriptions (PDs) to eliminate any potential or unintentional discriminating language and reflect the appropriate level of literacy using 'plain English'.	Manager People and Culture	Priority: H Jun 2021
2.2	Develop and implement a 'Reasonable Adjustment Policy' to support Council's equitable participation values for employees and volunteers.	Manager People and Culture	Priority: H Jun 2021
2.3	Create a directory of all disability employment agencies to offer employment and volunteering opportunities and incentives.	Manager People and Culture	Priority: H Dec 2021
2.4	Undertake supported employment opportunities and flexible work practices for people with a disability providing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer work experience; • Traineeships or scholarships; or, • Other options to volunteer. 	Manager People and Culture	Priority: H Dec 2021
2.5	Provide annual mandatory disability awareness training for existing staff and Councillors.	Manager People and Culture	Priority: H Dec 2021

Objective 3: Community Inclusion - We will aim to provide opportunities for people with a disability to participate in events, meetings or celebrations, feel valued and included in the community.

Council will work to ensure that people with a disability can exercise their rights as equal citizens in areas such as Council elections, Council meetings, Council community engagement processes or events and value membership of Council’s committees involving community representatives and in making complaints.

Briana’s comments:

“It’s wonderful that the Moorabool Shire provides Auslan interpreters at some events, meetings, etc.so please do continue with this service for all the Deaf and hard of hearing community. It would be wonderful to have an interpreter for Christmas Carols. Also, please ensure all videos in the website, social media, TV etc. have Closed Captions.”

	What will we do?	Who will lead it?	When? H, M or L
‘Provider’ role:			
3.1	Create media release prior to every funding round to promote grant applications from the recreation, aged and disability sectors.	Senior Connected Communities & Engagement Officer	Priority: H Dec 2021
3.2	Circulate Council’s ‘Community Events Guide’ to external event facilitators as part of the application process to seek permission to undertake an event.	Coordinator Economic Development	Priority: H Dec 2021
3.3	Facilitate Annual Celebrations on International Day of People with a Disability on December 3 rd .	Manager Active Ageing & Diversity	Priority: H Dec 2021 Ongoing
	In partnership with: Revenue Officer.		
3.4	Ensure the provision of sign interpreters where required for large public events where a community need has been identified through the event planning stages. Ensure these changes are reflected within the Event Guidelines.	Coordinator Economic Development	Priority: H Ongoing
‘Provider’ and ‘Advocacy’ role:			
3.5	Create a new ‘Disability Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee’ (DAIAC) to monitor the implementation of the Plan and to provide advice for other relevant Council managed infrastructure or community projects.	Manager Active Ageing & Diversity	Priority: H Jun 2021
	In partnership with: Access & Inclusion Officer		

	What will we do?	Who will lead it?	When? H, M or L
	Governance Officer		
3.6	Grants - review and edit community grant application processes and forms using 'plain English' and Vision Australia formatting and guidelines. Include a criterion for ' disability access ' for all event funding submissions.	Senior Connected Communities & Engagement Officer	Priority: H Aug 2021
	In partnership with: Access & Inclusion Officer.		
3.7	Events - Develop an ' accessibility ' criterion for all event funding submissions with external event managers, that mandatory access and inclusion provisions be provided with requirements to provide evidence at acquittal stage.	Coordinator Economic Development	Priority: H Dec 2021
	In partnership with: Access & Inclusion Officer.		

Objective 4: Council Leadership and Advocacy - We will aim to ensure that all corporate, strategic planning and communications actively help achieve tangible changes in attitudes and practices which discriminate against people with a disability.

The biggest barrier to social inclusion is non-disabled attitudes, beliefs, values and sense of entitlement. They need to realise that people with a disability provide great value to the community, have a lot to contribute and have the same rights as anyone else. Only when attitudes change, will people with a disability be truly included into our community.

Council will attempt to change community attitudes by incorporating access and inclusion objectives into key strategic documents. We will reflect our commitment to improving access and inclusion in documents such as the Council Plan, Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan and Municipal Strategic Statement. Our communication and information approaches and systems will continue to be improved to ensure that they appropriately address the needs of staff, volunteers and community members with a disability.

We will influence community attitudes and perceptions by demonstrating leadership in our community by advocating the importance of inclusion for all, addressing discriminatory attitudes, promoting good models of inclusive practices and approaches and influencing others through information provision and education.

Denise's story:

"I have many mental health issues including depression, panic attacks, anxiety, narcolepsy and I live alone. I am 56 years old. Apart from a fortnightly shop and doctors' visits attending the ladies' group is basically the only time I go out. I don't have transport. I have realised as I am getting older and my health is not too good, there are so many things I can't do any more. I think a meeting place open 7 days a week with coffee and tea etc. It would be good to go there sit and chat, play games and learn something new. I do get lonely and I don't get many visitors. A car or bus to take people like me with no transport and unable to take the town bus would be good."

No.	What will we do?	Who will lead it?	When? H, M or L
'Whole of Council' role:			
4.1	All policies – ensure all relevant, customer focussed policies, plans and Council documents have an access and inclusion 'lens' and are endorsed by the Disability Access and Inclusion Committee to ensure access and inclusion have been considered.	CEO, GMs & MMT	Priority: H Ongoing

No.	What will we do?	Who will lead it?	When? H, M or L
'Provider' role:			
4.2	'Disability Champion Program' - identify a 'Disability Champion' within each team who has good knowledge of disability philosophy, to cast a disability 'lens' on all local projects to ensure universal design principles are followed.	MMT	Priority: H Mar 2021
4.3	Customer service – seek funding and engage with the disability communication organisation - "Scope" to deliver customer service training to qualify for a 'communication access' rating and 'badge'.	Manager Customer Service & Innovation	Priority: H Dec 2021
In partnership with:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer Service Officer • Learning & Development Officer. 			
4.4	Tourism – ensure all visitor information centres have a copy of the up to date dining guide and mobility maps.	Coordinator Economic Development	Priority: H Ongoing
In partnership with: Access & Inclusion Officer.			
4.5	Promote the availability of the 'trail rider' for people with a physical impairment at all Tourist Information Centres. Undertake a review of the current 'trail rider' booking system to assist in the development of a new system.	Communications & Media Officer	Priority: M Jun 2021
In partnership with: Customer Service Officer. Economic Development			
4.6	Communications: Website - review the website, social media content and templates and ensure website is compliant for people with a vision impairment and is WCAG2.2 (Vision friendly compliance code) friendly.	Communications & Media Officer	Priority: H Jun 2021
4.7	Investigate if there is a need to install a 'screen reader' function on the website using the 'Have your say" function.	Access & Inclusion Officer	Priority: H Dec 2021
In partnership with: Communications & Media Officer.			
4.8	Collate a library of meaningful, positive images of people with a disability to use when circulating positive stories about residents.	Access & Inclusion Officer	Priority: M Dec 2021
In partnership with: Communications & Media Officer.			

No.	What will we do?	Who will lead it?	When? H, M or L
4.9	Ensure there is statement on the main page of the website that all information can be made available in alternate formats for people with a print or vision impairment. In partnership with: Access & Inclusion Officer.	Communications & Media Officer	Priority: H Mar 2021
4.10	Provide links to local Disability Advocacy Services on Council's website. In partnership with: Communications & Media Officer.	Access & Inclusion Officer	Priority: H Mar 2021
4.11	Educate and alert all staff who write public documents or policies, that they are to be presented in 'plain English'. Also, to provide alternate formats as required and promote information through all traditional and new media channels. In partnership with: Whole of Council.	Communications & Media Officer	Priority: H Dec 2021
4.12	Style guide - review and update the corporate style guide to create vision friendly, accessible documents using Vision Australia Guidelines as a reference and upskill staff to produce accessible documents for the public.	Communications & Media Officer	Priority: H Dec 2021
4.13	Insert ' closed captions ' into all 'YouTube' or other visual materials where possible. In partnership with: Governance Officer.	Communications & Media Officer	Priority: H Dec 2021 Ongoing
4.14	Invest in individual hearing augmentation equipment for anyone who is hard of hearing attending community meetings and Council meetings and include live streaming (with automatic captions when possible) and promote its availability. In partnership with: Customer Care & Advocacy.	Access & Inclusion Officer	Priority: H Mar 2021
'Partner' and 'Advocacy' role:			
4.15	'Good Access is Good Business' – continue to distribute access resources, check lists, etc. and advocate for business owners to accommodate the needs of people of all abilities. In partnership with: Access & Inclusion Officer	Coordinator Economic Development	Priority: H Dec 2021

No.	What will we do?	Who will lead it?	When? H, M or L
4.16	Implement and promote an annual ' Disability Access and Inclusion Award ' for local businesses and present annually on 'International Day of People with a Disability'.	Coordinator Economic Development	Priority: M Jun 2021
In partnership with: Access & Inclusion Officer.			
4.17	Public transport – continue to advocate for increased services for accessible public transport and implement Bacchus Marsh Integrated Transport Strategy to improve safety and connectivity.	CEO	Priority: H Jun 2021 Ongoing
4.18	Adaptable Housing (AH) awareness – seek out resources that promote AH and hand out when applicants plan to build residential properties.	Senior Strategic Planner	Priority: M Jun 2023
In partnership with: Access & Inclusion Officer.			

Appendix 1 - Glossary of Terms

ABS – Australian Bureau of Statistics and Census data

‘Access for All’ – principles are based on all aspects of the DDA and ensure that no-one is discriminated against directly or indirectly through the actions or inactions of Council. It also includes equitable access and inclusion within the Council to facilities, services and employment. This approach recognises that planning, development and implementation for these areas needs to include the whole community regardless of levels of mobility or disability.

Access - The term ‘access’ or ‘accessible’ refers to the removal of barriers and is generally used to describe outcomes. For example, an accessible toilet is one which is modified in a way in which all members of the community can use the facility regardless of their level of ability or disability.

Adaptable Housing (AH) – a set of guidelines for housing designed to cater for people of all ages and abilities, for example a home that is wheelchair accessible. Adaptable housing provides greater housing choices and means it is easier for people to ‘age in place’ where they feel comfortable.

Alternate formats – This terminology is about providing information in other formats for people who may have very limited or no vision at all. Alternate formats that need to be considered when catering for all levels of vision impairment.

Australian Standards – Building Standards Legislation that includes ‘access to premises’ in the AS 1428.

Barrier – the term ‘barrier’ refers to an obstacle or negative attitude that may be encountered which restricts a person with a disability from fully participating in community life.

CEO - Chief Executive Officer.

‘Changing Places’ – is a project to advocate for public toilets with adult sized change tables and hoists in public toilets across Australia to meet the needs of people with profound disabilities: www.changingplaces.org.au.

Closed captions – is a text version of the spoken part of a television, movie, or computer presentation. Closed captioning was developed to aid hearing-impaired people, but it is useful for a variety of situations.

Companion Card – wallet-sized card issued to people with a disability who require the assistance of a companion to access community activities and venues. The card can be presented when booking or purchasing a ticket at events and venues and allows the companion to attend free of charge. See the website: www.companioncard.org.au.

DAIAC – ‘**Disability Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee**’ to monitor the implementation of the Plan and to provide advice for other relevant Council managed infrastructure or community projects.

DDA – *Disability Discrimination Act (1992)*. Commonwealth Legislation which protects the rights of people with a disability in the areas of employment, education, access to premises, provision of goods, services and facilities, accommodation, buying land, activities of clubs and associations, sport and administration of Commonwealth Government laws and programs.

Dysgraphia – Dysgraphia is a specific learning disability that affects written expression. Dysgraphia can appear as difficulties with spelling, poor handwriting and trouble putting thoughts on paper. Dysgraphia can be a language based, and/or non-language-based disorder.

‘Good access is good business’ - It means there are no physical or social barriers that prevent customers from finding your business, moving around easily and receiving good service.

Hearing augmentation – personal equipment supplied to help people with a hearing loss in public meetings. Usually used in areas where a hearing loop is unavailable.

Marveloo – a portable version of ‘changing places’ used primarily for events

NDIS (and NDIA) – National Disability Insurance Scheme (and Agency). Federal agency to distribute funds to eligible people with a disability

Plain (or Simple) English – documents written to a literacy level equivalent to Year 8.

‘Reasonable Adjustment Policy’ – ‘Reasonable Adjustment’ refers to the change or modification of workplace practices, procedures, policies, environment or equipment to enable an employee to carry out their duties effectively. The reasonable adjustment may be either permanent or temporary.

Stakeholders – people who directly have an interest in or are active on a particular project or topic.

Style Guide – a guide to writing, grammar and presentation and includes guidelines for considering people with a vision impairment.

‘Trail rider’ – a trademark name for a piece of equipment that is designed for people with a physical impairment who would like to travel over rough terrain. It has one central wheel and a matching pair of handles each end for ‘Sherpas’ or 2 or 4 helpers to hold and steer.

Universal Design Principles – a set of principles that remove any barriers to access and inclusion and based on more than just following access building standards

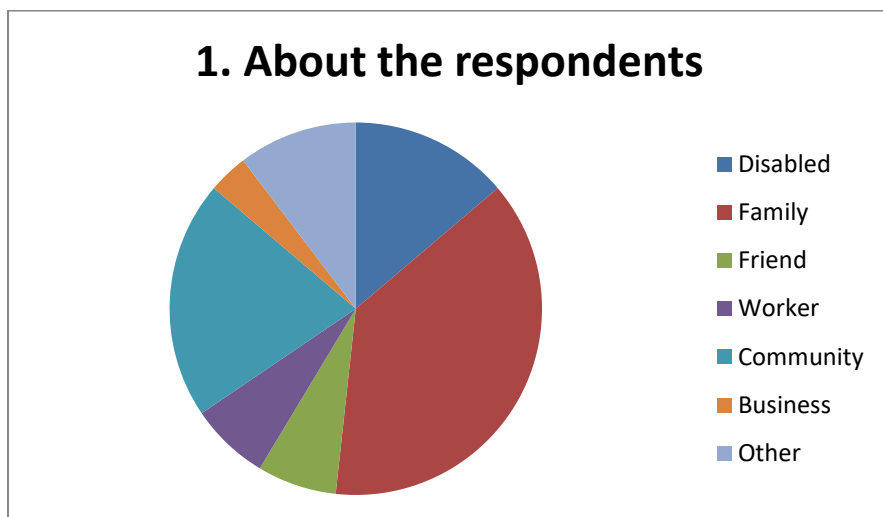
Vision Australian Guidelines – formatting and presentation of documents that caters for the needs of people with varying levels of vision impairment.

WCAG2.2 – standards for website accessibility for people with a vision impairment who may use computer technology to access web information.

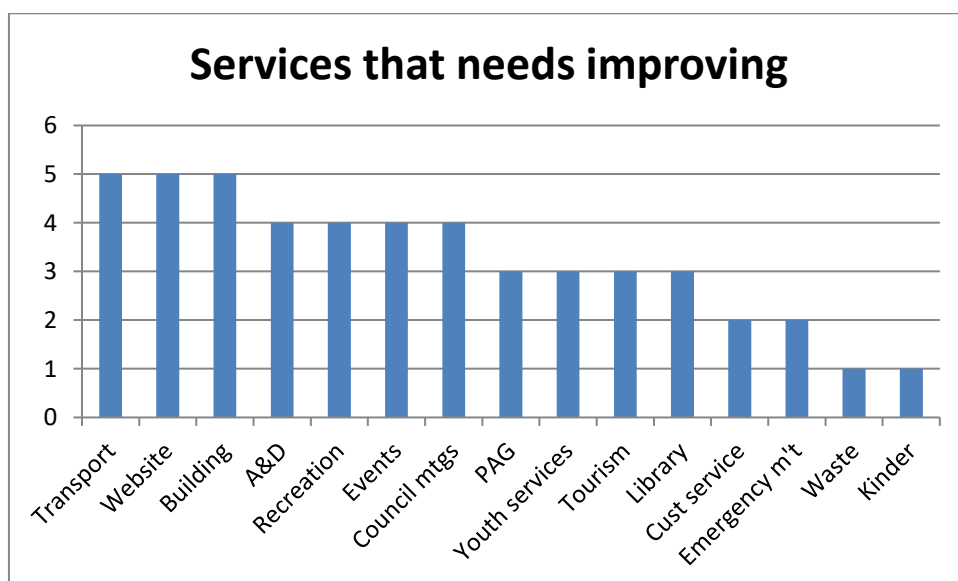
Appendix 2 - Consultation Report

This report is a collection of ‘raw’ data and is *all verbatim (except editing of typos or to clarify)*. There are no conclusions drawn or evaluations undertaken of these findings in this report – findings will be analysed and presented as part of the preamble and give context to actions developed as part of the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan.

Q1



Q2. Respondents were asked to identify ONLY those Council services that need improvement to access and inclusion (Graphs ranked in order of priority):



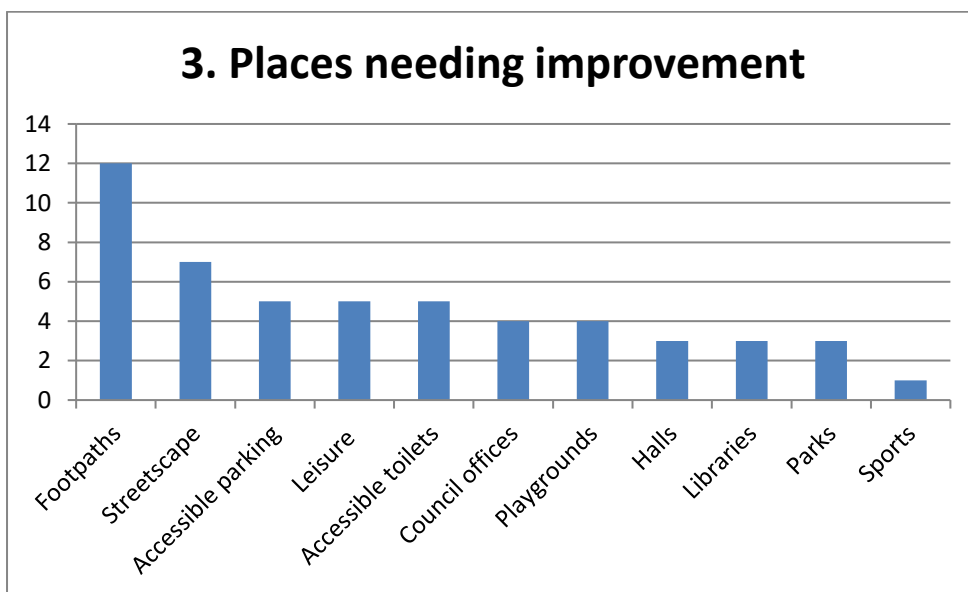
Respondents' comments:

- Could council kindly fund (or apply to fund) a ramp at the Ballan Anglican church hall. This hall is used by many community groups - and is also used as a backup centre for the Blackwood Special Schools Outdoor Ed Centre in case of a fire in that area. The Ballan library also has steps which halt people in wheelchairs from entering. I have heard the excuse that they can enter via the Community House at the back, but that facility is only open limited hours and not on weekends

- Community transport needs to be added into the new estates to keep the cars out of the main street and car parks. More children's disability services or family sessions for parents of children.
- Rec and leisure, an indoor a saltwater pool is needed. Not only do we have disabilities in our family, but we also have allergies to chlorine. The council needs to take this into consideration when building the new facilities
- I think we need to make our services a little clearer. Sometimes our society doesn't know where or how to access our resources. We need to make this clear and known
- Dementia clients need to be safe whilst attending PAGS. Not allowed to leave on their own
- Tourism info into one booklet, too many leaflets
- Council website is very badly organised. It has taken me a long time to locate the services I need. Building and planning meetings are held in a room that is not easily accessible and at times when the lift has been out of service there are so many stairs to climb and then to have to go outside the building it is prohibitive to members of the public
- The new playground recently opened in Bacchus Marsh has no facilities accessible to wheelchairs or walkers
- Having the option to register a missing/lost pet on the website will be helpful for our nonverbal community members
- Need more online access to services so those who can't travel alone can be more independent
- Accessibility to venues and options for community members to be able to attend events and services without so much planning due to lack of infrastructure
- My only concern is the way information is disseminated, not everyone has a computer or access to the internet
- No opportunities for youth activities inclusive or otherwise in our area (not Bacchus Marsh). Local events are accessible, but not frequent
- Footpath connections make accessing parks and reserves more difficult
- Community and other transport is very limited, particularly when my daughter is unable to drive
- Though there are planned activities in the Shire for over 65's there is not a lot for people with a disability under 65. When you call Customer Service to enquire, they are not aware and direct your call to a department (aged care line) that never answers. I believe you need to advertise much broader into the community what is available. Once again, your organisation tends to cater for seniors with the use of your only gym; however, there is nothing on offer surrounding disabled residents
- There seem to be no dedicated sporting groups for disabled leagues/ teams such as football, or basketball like what Warrnambool offer and there seems to be no advocacy from Council to try and implement anything like this
- I have been advised in the past that I am required to be present at the gallery of a Council meeting to ensure my question to the public is heard. However, all your meetings are held in Ballan of an evening and I am unable to drive. I don't feel this provides inclusion and access to all. If being in the gallery is a requirement, it would be nice to share the venue around to different parts of the Shire
- I am unaware that your waste department offer any assistance for elderly and disabled residents. A service to assist in getting bins in and out to those who struggle, due to injury, age or having a disability, even if that service would cost a little more on my rates. It could be a good initiative to offer

- Your Council website is very hard to navigate and lacks a lot of valuable information. I struggle to find any information on there. It is either very hard to find, or not on there
- A timetable of your planned programs would be great. Your disability access tourism areas around the Shire would also be great. I have had to go to the library in the past to see the information centre which is meant to be open 7 days a week, however a couple of times they are closed without any notice on the door and no explanation. So having a lot of this information available online would be ideal. It can be a large task at times trying to get out without transport and having your facility closed is very painful and frustrating.

Q3. Respondents were asked to identify ONLY those Council places and spaces that need improvement to access and inclusion:



Respondents' comments:

- Ballan library needs some sort of ramp at the front. Footpaths are needed on the north side of Steiglitz St, especially behind the post office. Also footpaths leading to Ballan Rec Reserve please
- I imagine playgrounds might need some attention? Tan bark, timber edging and other rough surfaces might make wheelchair access tricky?
- In general getting around to places and access to suitable toilets is an issue
- The "tactiles" used for visually impaired people are very slippery and dangerous when wet. Need to be treated with a non-slip coating
- Council could help keep footpaths clear from overgrown bushes and overhanging branches (Simpson St, Ballan). Both impede access
- Bacchus Marsh upgrade for mobility scooters
- Some of your footpaths in Main Street are very hazardous. Such as out the front of the border Inn pub and surrounding areas. Paving is severely uneven and a huge tripping hazard.
- Too many places to identify them all. Standard playgrounds are not accessible and we are not consulted on these. All toilets need to be accessible, and upgraded if they aren't
- No indoor pool in Bacchus Marsh - needs to be wheelchair and hoist accessible and SALT water
- More green areas and parks in the new estates please

- Labilliere Street is a disgrace. A very used street by foot and vehicle traffic for both disabled & abled body people. A road which is used for access to an Adult service day program, which has been there for over 25 yrs. and there is limited footpaths to walk on to McCrae St then your life is in your own hands. Is a speedway for traffic who cannot follow a 40 then 50 speed limit which clearly needs more signage? Many people who have disabilities and use aids to move around don't have time to move over off the road nor the ability to realize they share the road whilst walking on it
- A road that is used by residents as a short cut by Stonehill residents to avoid traffic at High School and train line. They speed down from the hill at Moore St. Speed humps to slow down cars if it's going to be a shared area by pedestrians, bike riders, cars and disabled walker, scooters etc
- Darley buildings not built for purpose and are not user friendly for people with disabilities. Ballan Library needs larger premises
- New paving in Inglis Street gets slippery when wet and can be dangerous. Also in autumn the paving needs sweeping more regularly because of acorns being a tripping hazard
- Residents of the Aged care community in Maddingley are now often using Maddingley medical Centre in O'Leary way. There is a large section of nature strip along Griffith Street that does not have suitable footpath for elderly and disabled to use their wheelchairs and scooters in order to safely travel to see their doctors
- Better wheelchair access for parks and nature reserves
- Need a better footpath on Griffith Street Maddingley to make the doctor clinic accessible by wheelchair
- Need a safe crossing on Griffith street near providence village
- Entry to the Darley campus needs to ensure that those with a disability can access both the front and back of the building suite
- We need access year-round to a heated pool for therapy
- Accessibility referring to pathways, transport options and toilet facilities appears to be lack of planning ahead and resources to cater
- Disabled parking & disabled toilets. Disabled carparks are often occupied by non-permit holders & no one monitors this
- Inglis Street paving not very friendly.

Q4. Attitudinal responses to statements about Council's communications:

	Agree	Not Sure	disagree	N/A
Council provides printed information which is appropriate for my needs	7	8	3	2
Council's website is accessible for people with a disability	6	7	5	2
Council considers people's literacy levels or vision issues when printing information, flyers or posters	6	7	5	2
Council rates, accounts etc. are easy to read and understand	6	7	5	2
Council provides useful information on social media	11	4	4	1
Total	36	33	22	9

Q5. Attitudinal responses to statements about Council’s events or festivals:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Not Sure	disagree	Strongly disagree
Events are accessible for people with a disability	1	8	6	5	0
There is a good variety of events for everyone	3	7	5	5	0
The information promoting events is timely, informative and appropriate for me	1	8	5	3	2
Total	5	23	16	13	2

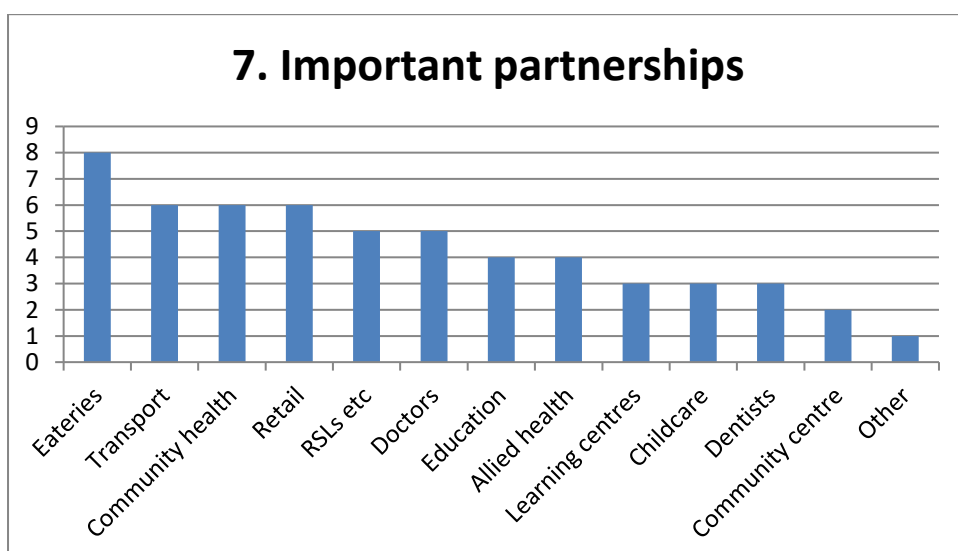
Respondent’s comments:

- Please bring back MooraFest and boost NAIDOC Week
- If we hear about them with enough notice, and the organisers are considerate of people with additional needs
- Not always accessible to people who are not on the Council’s client list, but who live in Moorabool.

Q6. Comments about our employment options and any issues that might prevent people with a disability applying:

- Do you currently have any paid employees with an intellectual disability on your books? There is a huge lack of advertised jobs that a person with an intellectual disability could apply for. It is just too hard with the selection criteria
- Does Council have employees who are hearing or sight impaired? Any in wheelchairs or mobility aids? Are there any with Autism or language disorders? If not, why not?
- Access to Darley buildings
- My age is the difficulty
- Where do you advertise? Where the jobs are located if we can't easily get public transport? If the public transport is accessible. Flexibility in the workplace. Your willingness to make adjustments to assist workers.

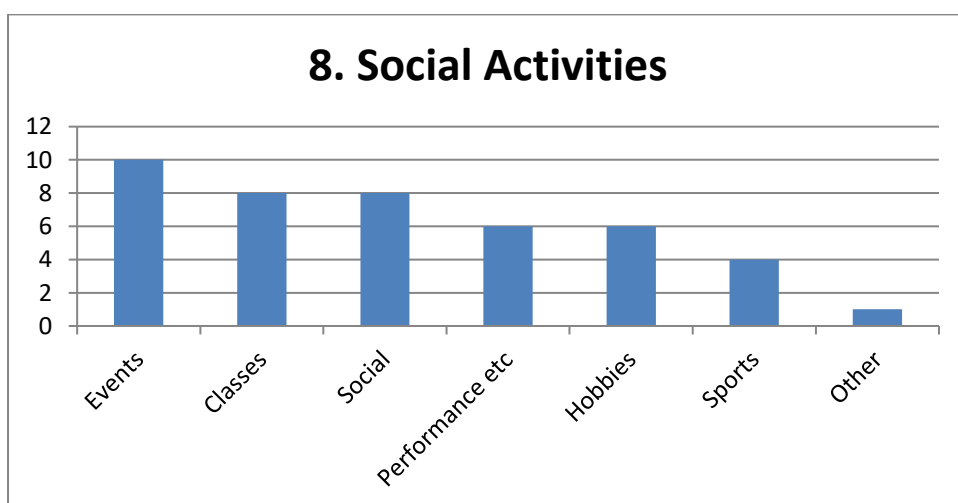
Q7. Respondents were asked to rank the importance of our strategic partnerships and advocacy role:



Respondents' comments:

- Ballan Anglican Church hall needs a ramp - this not only helps people in walkers and wheelchairs, but mothers attending playgroup with prams
- Ballan Rec Reserve also needs footpaths and paved roads. Nearby Cowie St rail crossing is also a concern, with no pedestrian crossing (walkers share with cars). The new carpark on the south side of Ballan station will only make this road busier
- I believe that some of the doorways are too narrow for accessibility
- Some childcare centres (and some schools) require visitors to have a photo taken at reception
- The iPad / photo station is sometimes fixed to the counter. So I wonder how someone in a wheelchair or of small stature, might follow the photo sign-in process?
- Need self-opening doors. Space inside for mobility aids
- Not enough disabled carparks & in peak times will be occupied by non-permit holders
Monitoring is required on council carparks at busy times such as Kindergartens Schools
- Many health care businesses in Bacchus Marsh are not wheelchair accessible. Personal experiences with Bacchus Marsh psychology, physio and optometrist along main street shopping district
- Most Main street shops and health services are not wheelchair friendly
- Bus access can be difficult. There is not enough public transport. Some of the pavements around the Village have many trip hazards, including in the Village car parks
- We need access to a heated therapy pool year round
- Getting to appointments when you can't drive. Public transport that doesn't run frequently enough or close to services
- Our local community centre is accessible, but there is no toilet access for wheelchairs, and little chance of there ever being a 'changing places' type of facility
- Shops that aren't accessible because of steps, heavy doors and displays that make it impossible.

Q8. Respondents were asked to rank the importance of their social participation, hobbies, social or recreational activities:



Respondents' comments:

- Moorabool needs an autism social group for adults and young people. We also need educational courses for people working with people with autism (eg teachers, managers etc)

- Not using, however more variety of short courses for disability friendly careers would be welcomed
- Exercise groups.

Q9. Attitudinal responses to statements about Council’s leadership and operations:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Not Sure	disagree	Strongly disagree
Council is doing everything within its control and budget to improve access and inclusion	1	4	9	6	
Council acknowledges my views and I feel heard	1	5	8	4	2
Council promotes positive images of people with a disability	0	8	6	5	1
Council payment options are easy and streamlined	1	8	6	2	2
Council deals with complaints effectively	0	2	14	2	2
Council advocates effectively with local businesses on my behalf	0	4	14	1	1
Council provides a good range of services or activities for all abilities	0	7	9	4	0
In the last five years, things have improved in general for people with a disability living in this area	2	4	8	3	3
Total	5	42	74	27	11

Q10. General Comments

- A local woman recently took her concerns about Ballan library's access to a Council meeting and was viciously defamed by the then-mayor in a local newspaper. Is this the sort of treatment we can expect if we speak up? Why does Council help keep this damaging publication afloat by awarding it the advertising tender year after year? Council needs to think about whether its money would be better spent on The Courier or another publication
- Greater advertisement and education to elderly and disabled community members for available services and assistance is needed. Many members are unaware of what council can provide and support them with
- I think Council offers (via their website) services for people with disabilities, however I wonder if these services should be more visible i.e., on the home page?
- Complaints need a bit of empathy not just that there is a form for this
- Important to consider access and inclusion and hear directly from people already attending groups and also those that choose not to but access a service that can be reached to fund out access and barriers as to why they do not attend. Set targets to improve certain areas and include in forward planning.