



## **Disability Policy 2015 – 2018**

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## **Acknowledgements**

We would like to thank all the community partners that contributed to the development of this plan:

- Disability Advisory Committee
- Disability Policy and Action Plan Cross Council Working Group
- Service Providers
- Community Consultation Participants
- Staff Consultation Participants
- Maribyrnong Young People's Consultative Committee

We acknowledge that we are on the traditional lands of the Kulin Nation. We offer our respects to the Elders of these traditional lands, and through them to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples past and present.

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## **Message from the Mayor**

It gives me great pleasure to present Maribyrnong City Council's fifth Disability Policy. The new policy builds on a proud tradition of inclusiveness and responsiveness to the needs of our diverse community.

Council's overarching role is the protection and promotion of the community's wellbeing. We recognise that "wellbeing is achieved when everyone has, and feel they have, the ongoing opportunities to reach their full potential." This is particularly important for people with disability, their families and carers.

This policy sets out how Council will work towards achieving this goal over the next three years by becoming a more responsive, accessible and inclusive organisation. As Chair of Council's Disability Advisory Committee (DAC), I would particularly like to thank the DAC for their contributions to the development of this policy and action plan, as well as the many community members who shared their views with us. I commend the Disability Policy 2015-2018 to you.

**Cr Nam Quach**

Mayor

## **Introduction**

The Disability Policy 2015-2018 highlights and strengthens Council's vision and commitment to outcomes that will be achieved to improve access and inclusion in our community.

People with disability are at the heart of this policy, focused around access, communication and participation. Most importantly, the development of this policy is informed and directed by people with disability, their family, and carers. This policy is about investing in our community and reinforcing the importance of an inclusive culture.

The Disability Policy 2015-2018 is a three year shared vision that will be implemented through annual action plans. The action plan will be delivered with community participation and an emphasis on partnerships and advocacy.

## **What is Disability?**

'Disability' is a broad term that can refer to a wide range of health conditions and impairments. The 'social model' of disability focuses on the barriers that exist in the physical and social environment, in contrast with the 'medical model' of disability, which focuses on treating or 'fixing' the individual.

The social model concentrates on removing barriers in the community to enable people with disability to live independent lives. It is this understanding of disability that forms the basis of the disability policy and action plan.

The Commonwealth *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (DDA) defines 'disability' as including:

- Physical
- Intellectual
- Psychiatric
- Sensory
- Neurological
- Learning disabilities

- Physical disfigurement and
- The presence in the body of disease-causing organisms.

Under the DDA, disability may:

- presently exist
- have previously existed but no longer exists
- exist in the future (e.g. because of a genetic predisposition) or
- be attributed to a person.<sup>1</sup>

In addition to the DDA, there is a wide range of international, national, state and local policies, legislation and initiatives that provide a framework in which the *Disability Policy 2015-2018* has been developed. The diagram below shows the relationship between the main policies, plans and legislation and this policy.

## **Framework for the Disability Policy 2015-2018**

### **International**

United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006)

### **National**

Disability Discrimination Act 1992

National Disability Agreement (2009)

National Disability Strategy 2010-2020

Disability (Access to Premises – Buildings) Standards 2010

### **State**

Disability Act 2006

Equal Opportunity Act 2010

Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006

State Disability Plan 2013-2016

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<sup>1</sup> *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*, s.3

## Local

Local Government Act 1989

Maribyrnong City Council Plan 2013-2017

Maribyrnong City Council Human Rights and Social Justice Framework

Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) *Creating a more inclusive community for people with disability*

## Our Community

The City of Maribyrnong is a highly diverse community with an estimated total population of 81,859 persons in 2014. Forty per cent of our population were born overseas and 43 per cent speak a language other than English.

The City of Maribyrnong also experiences a number of challenges, including:

- Rating 3<sup>rd</sup> on the SEIFA<sup>2</sup> index of disadvantage with a score of 974
- A relatively high unemployment rate of 7 per cent (compared to the Victorian average of 5.4 per cent and Melbourne average of 4.9 per cent) – March 2011
- Females in the municipality experience the poorest health in the Western Region sub-region
- Males in the municipality have the lowest life expectancy in Victoria (74.8 years)
- 24.4 per cent of persons experience transport limitations

The most recent survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) in 2012 estimated that 4.2 million Australians (18.5 per cent of the population) has disability.<sup>3</sup>

In 2014, 9 per cent of respondents to Maribyrnong City Council's annual community survey indicated that a member of their household has disability. This is down from 9.6 per cent the previous year.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> SEIFA (Socio Economic Index for Areas) is a product developed by the ABS that ranks areas in Australia according to relative socio-economic advantage and disadvantage. The indexes are based on information from the five yearly census [www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)

<sup>3</sup> ABS, *Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings* 4430.0, 2009

<sup>4</sup> Maribyrnong City Council – *2011 Annual Community Survey*, p.121

According to the 2011 Census, 4.6 per cent of people in the City of Maribyrnong had a need for assistance with a core activity (self care, mobility or communication)<sup>5</sup> and 9.4 per cent people provided unpaid assistance to a person with disability.

It is predicted the City of Maribyrnong will experience significant population growth over the next twenty years. By 2031, it is estimated the City of Maribyrnong's population will increase to 111,188, a rise of 25,876 (30 per cent) on the 2015 forecast population. The average annual population growth rate is predicted to be around 1.97 per cent. All areas of the municipality are expected to increase in population, particularly the suburbs of Footscray, Maribyrnong, Maidstone, Yarraville and Braybrook.

Council recognises that it will be particularly important in a period of rapid change that the municipality remain inclusive and welcoming of people of all abilities.

## **The Consultation Process**

The Disability Policy 2015-2018 survey asked participants to reflect on their current experiences within our community, as well as the barriers faced and opportunities for improvement. This policy was developed following an extensive consultation process across our community including more than 200 people with disability, family, carers and service providers.

The community consultation process involved an online survey, face to face survey and focus groups.

Online Surveys: In total 105 people completed the survey. Of this total:

- 35 per cent were aged 20-35 years, 21 per cent aged 56-75 years and 15 per cent aged 46-55 years

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<sup>5</sup> The variable 'Core Activity Need for Assistance' was first used for the 2006 Census and was developed to measure the number of people with a profound or severe disability. The census defines the profound or severe disability population as "those people needing help or assistance in one or more of the three core activity areas of self-care, mobility and communication, because of a long-term health condition (lasting six months or more) a disability (lasting six months or more), or old age."

- 64 per cent were female and 36 per cent were male
- 57 per cent identify as having disability, 31 per cent identify as someone who cares about access and inclusion for people with disability and 26 per cent identify as someone who provides a service or program for people with disability
- 9 per cent speak a language other than English at home
- 5 per cent identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

Face to Face Survey: Face to face surveys were conducted with a group of young people who identified as having a disability and their supporters. The group were presented with the survey questions and responded through participation in a group discussion.

Community Focus Groups: A community consultation focus group was held comprising of people with disability, family, carers, service providers and community networks. The consultation process consisted of discussion groups focused around the key themes developed from the online survey results - access, communication and participation.

Staff Focus Group: A staff consultation session was held following the online survey and community focus group. This consultation session involved staff being presented with the feedback from the community. Discussions focused around the key themes – access, communication and participation, and staff were asked to develop proposed actions for the action plan.

## **Implementation and Monitoring**

Council will put this policy into practice by implementing the Disability Action Plan, which is outlined in the attached document. The Disability Action Plan outlines the services, programs and initiatives that Council intends to implement under each of the key themes. For each action, the responsible Council department are identified. As with previous policies and action plans, a progress report will be prepared annually on the implementation of the Disability Policy 2015-2018 and made available to the public. In addition, regular reports will be provided to Council's Disability Advisory Committee (DAC).

## **Commitments**

Maribyrnong City Council aspires to create a community that is a diverse and vibrant city dedicated to community wellbeing through democracy, sustainable growth and opportunity for all. Council is committed to social justice and equity for all and will engage our most vulnerable community groups including people with disability.

This policy focuses on three key areas. Through community consultation, Council has committed to the following:

### **1. Access**

#### **Strategic Direction**

We will work with our community to improve physical, social and financial access for people with disability

What our community told us:

- We want improved physical, social and financial access to our community
- We want an accessible built environment
- We want clear signage around the municipality
- We want accessible transport options

- We want accessible public amenities and areas
- We want accessible festivals, events, programs and activities
- We want accessible information in various formats

## **2. Communication**

### **Strategic Direction**

We will work with our community to make it easier for people with disability to get the information they want.

What our community told us:

- We want communication with the community in a variety of formats to meet the diverse needs of the community e.g. hard copy, electronic and face to face
- We want to receive communication via networks and service providers
- We want communication through public spaces and community events
- We want communication to all areas of Council about disability

## **3. Participation**

### **Strategic Direction**

We will work with our community to support people with disability to have opportunities to participate as fully as they would like to.

What our community told us:

- We want opportunities for people with disability to participate
- We want to build disability equality and awareness
- We want support and empowerment for people with disability

## **The Legislative Context**

There is a wide range of international, national, state and local instruments and initiatives that aim to promote and enforce the rights and needs of people with disability.

These include: international conventions, pieces of legislation, policies, plans, strategies, and programs. These provide an important framework for the development of the Disability Policy 2015-2018. A summary of the most relevant items is outlined below.

### **MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA (MAV)**

#### **Creating a more inclusive community for people with disability**

The MAV developed this strategic framework for local government in 2011, based on: council roles and responsibilities, good governance and management practices, *Disability Act 2006* requirements, and the policy and outcome areas of the National Disability Strategy (NDS). The framework proposes councils will work to systematically improve inclusion for people with disability and their families in the following ways:

##### **1. A whole-of-council approach**

Councils will work to ensure a culture within their organisation that recognises that everyone within the organisation (Councillors, senior managers and staff) has a responsibility and an important role to play in addressing the discrimination experienced by people with disability and in systematically addressing the barriers created by attitudes, practices and structures that limit the opportunities for people with disability to fully participate in the life of the community.

## **2. Incorporate access and inclusion objectives in key strategic documents**

Councils will reflect their commitment to improving access and inclusion in their key strategic policy and planning documents such as the Council Plan, Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan and Municipal Strategic Statement.

## **3. Facilitate civic participation and inclusive consultation**

Councils will work to ensure that people with disability can exercise their rights as equal citizens in areas such as council elections, council meetings, council consultation processes, membership of council's committees involving community representatives and in making complaints.

## **4. Systematically improve the accessibility of council buildings and infrastructure**

All new council buildings will be designed to incorporate all legislated accessibility standards and wherever possible to incorporate enhanced accessibility features that facilitate access for all community members.

Councils will maximise the accessibility of all new council infrastructure (including parks, open space, signage, roads, kerbs, footpaths, playgrounds, bus stops, street furniture) taking account of regulatory requirements, constraint of local terrain and a council's financial capacity.

Councils have a program for progressive improvement to the accessibility of existing council owned buildings and infrastructure within a framework of inclusive policies, local priorities and the financial capacity of individual councils.

## **5. Inclusive communication and information approaches**

Councils' communication and information approaches and systems continue to be progressively improved to ensure that they appropriately address the needs of staff, volunteers, and community members with disability

## **6. Accessible and inclusive council services, programs and events**

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

## **7. Strategic use of statutory and regulatory roles**

Councils will use their statutory and regulatory roles to lead and influence improved inclusion, participation and accessibility for all members of the community.

## **8. Improve employment opportunities**

Councils will exercise their responsibilities as equal opportunity employers and exercise their community leadership role to work with others to enhance local employment opportunities for people with disability.

## **9. Influence community attitudes and perceptions**

Councils will exercise leadership in their community in promoting 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.

## **10. Exercise leadership in advocating to other organisations**

Councils will advocate to other spheres of government, business, other organisations and the community, in collaboration with people with disability and their families/carers, to promote the rights of people with disability and advance inclusion of people with disability.

## **11. Foster partnership and collaboration**

Councils will work in partnership with other spheres of government, business, other organisations and the community to improve access and inclusion for people with disability.

## **12. Effective accountability practices**

Councils will ensure that they have organisational accountability processes in place for implementing their access and inclusion initiatives and will publically report on progress on implementation of these initiatives at least annually.

## **13. Reviewing and evaluating progress**

Councils will review their progress on improving access and inclusion and work to evaluate impacts and outcomes to inform further actions.

Maribyrnong City Council's Disability Policy 2015-2018 strongly reflects the MAV access and inclusion framework.

## **International**

### **UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

The United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol was adopted in 2006 and came into force in May 2008.

The Convention spells out how categories of rights apply to people with disabilities; ascertains where rights have been infringed and where the protection of rights needs to be strengthened, and determines areas where changes need to be made in order for people with disabilities to be able to exercise their rights successfully. Australia ratified the Convention in 2008.

Article 1 sets out the purpose of the Convention. It states: "The purpose ... is to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and

fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity.”

Many of the Articles of the Convention are directly relevant to the development of Council’s Disability Policy, in particular:

- General obligations, including: promoting the development of universally designed goods, services, equipment and facilities; and training of staff working with people with disabilities to better provide assistance (Article 4);
- Raising and promoting awareness of the capabilities and contributions of people with disabilities (Article 8);
- Accessibility to the physical environment, transportation, information and communications (Article 9);
- Living independently and being included in the community (Article 19);
- Facilitating and encouraging the personal mobility of persons with disabilities (Article 20);
- Providing information in accessible formats and encouraging others to do so (Article 21);
- Employing people with disabilities in the public sector, and promoting employment opportunities and career advancement for people with disabilities in the labour market (Article 27); and
- Participating in cultural, recreational, leisure and sporting activities (Article 30).

## **National**

### **DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ACT 1992 (COMMONWEALTH)**

The *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (the DDA) provides protection for all Australians from discrimination on the basis of disability. The DDA specifically makes it against the law to discriminate against someone on the basis of disability in the following areas:

- Employment;
- Education;

- Access to premises used by the public;
- Provision of goods, service and facilities;
- Accommodation;
- Buying land;
- Activities of clubs and associations;
- Sport; and
- Administration of Commonwealth Government laws and programs.

The DDA also covers people who have a relationship with someone who has disability (like a family member, carer, co-worker or friend) if they are discriminated against because of that relationship.

Disability is defined by the DDA to include:

- Physical
- Intellectual
- Psychiatric
- Sensory
- Neurological
- Learning disabilities
- Physical disfigurement
- The presence in the body of disease-causing organisms

and covers someone who currently has disability, had disability in the past, may have one in the future, or is believed to have disability. The DDA is particularly relevant to the development of Council's Disability Policy and Action Plan in the areas of: access to public buildings; employment; and the provision of goods, services and facilities.

## **NATIONAL DISABILITY AGREEMENT**

The National Disability Agreement came into effect on 1 January 2009 (replacing the former Commonwealth State Territory Disability Agreement). The Agreement oversees the funding arrangements of the Commonwealth, State and Territory

governments for the specialist disability support system, with the aim of assisting people with disability to live as independently as possible.

### **NATIONAL DISABILITY STRATEGY (NDS)**

Australia's National Disability Strategy (NDS) 2010-2020 is the first integrated approach in Australia to improving the lives of people with disability and goes beyond the specialist disability support system delivered under the National Disability Agreement.

The NDS was released in 2011, having been endorsed by the Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments, as well as the Australian Local Government Association. The NDS sets out six long-term policy goals:

1. Inclusive and accessible communities
2. Rights protection, justice and legislation
3. Economic security
4. Personal and community support
5. Learning and skills
6. Health and wellbeing

Across these six policy areas, there are 53 items for future action by government. The NDS provides the framework to guide policies and program development by state and local governments, and the community, over the next ten years. Reports on the implementation of the NDS will be made every two years to the Council of Australian Governments (COAG). The six policy goals of the NDS are reflected throughout the Disability Policy 2015-2018.

### **NATIONAL DISABILITY INSURANCE SCHEME (NDIS)**

In July 2011, the Productivity Commission reported to the Australian Government on its inquiry into the creation of a long-term disability care and support system. The Commission recommended the establishment of a new national scheme – the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) – to provide insurance cover, funded by government (like Medicare) for all Australians in the event of significant disability.

The proposed scheme would enable people with disability to exercise much more choice in the provision of their supports and ensure funding certainty for people's care and support needs. Access to the NDIS would involve a common set of eligibility criteria and, in addition to providing funding for supports, the scheme would make information available to people, ensure quality assurance and best practice in disability support, and better link the community and people with disabilities. The scheme would be overseen by a single agency, the National Disability Insurance Agency.

The Commission also recommended the establishment of a no-fault National Injury Insurance Scheme (NIIS) to provide fully funded care and support for all cases of catastrophic injury (e.g. major brain or spinal cord injuries) by 2015.

Shortly after the Commission's report was released, the Australian Government accepted its recommendations and work commenced to implement the scheme.

### **DISABILITY (ACCESS TO PREMISES – BUILDINGS) STANDARDS 2010**

From May 2011, the Disability (Access to Premises – Buildings) Standards 2010 apply to new building projects (or upgrades to an existing building) for which an application for a building permit is lodged.

The Premises Standards are made under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*. They are national standards that aim to:

- Provide for equitable and dignified access to new buildings and those areas of existing buildings that undergo renovation or upgrade that requires a building approval, and
- Provide greater certainty to those involved in the design, construction, certification and management of buildings in relation to the level of access required in the buildings by the Premises Standards.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Australian Human Rights Commission, *Guideline on the Application of The Premises Standards*, 2011, p.5

At this stage, the Premises Standards only apply to public buildings of the kind covered by the Building Code of Australia (BCA). Access to private residences and the internal parts of flats or apartments are not covered by the Standards. The Australian Human Rights Commission has produced guidelines on the application of the Premises Standards to assist those responsible for buildings and those interested in access in buildings to understand the Standards.

## **STATE**

### **DISABILITY ACT 2006 (VICTORIA)**

Victoria's *Disability Act 2006* commenced on 1 July 2007, replacing the *Intellectually Disabled Person's Services Act 1986* and the *Disability Services Act 1991*. The Act "provides the framework for a whole-of-government and whole-of-community approach to enable people with disability to actively participate in the life of the community."<sup>7</sup>

The Act governs the planning, provision and funding of services and programs for people with disability, the rights and responsibilities of service providers, as well as the development of policies and the provision of information.

The requirement for public sector bodies to develop a Disability Action Plan is set out in the *Disability Act 2006* (s.38), which specifies those areas that a Disability Action Plan must include. These are:

- Reducing barriers to persons with disability accessing goods, services and facilities;
- Reducing barriers to persons with disability obtaining and maintaining employment;
- Promoting inclusion and participation in the community of persons with disability; and
- Achieving tangible changes in attitudes and practices which discriminate against persons with disability.

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<sup>7</sup> Department of Human Services, *Disability Act 2006 - Policy and Information Manual*, July 2009, February 2011, Victorian Government, p.2

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY ACT 2010 (VICTORIA)**

The *Equal Opportunity Act 2010* replaced the *Equal Opportunity Act 1995*. The objectives of the Act are to, “encourage the identification and elimination of discrimination, sexual harassment and victimisation and their causes, and to promote and facilitate the progressive realisation of equality.”

Under the Act, it is still against the law to discriminate against a person on the basis of certain personal characteristics, including disability. The new Act continues to cover discrimination in those areas covered under the previous Act: employment, education, accommodation, clubs, sport, goods and services, land sales and transfers, and local government, as well as sexual harassment.

The new Act also introduced a number of new features, including:

- **A duty to provide reasonable adjustments for people with disabilities** in employment, education and provision of goods and services, to help the person with disability to perform the job or access education and goods and services; and
- **An extended definition of disability** to specifically address genetic predisposition and behaviour that is a manifestation of disability.<sup>8</sup>

## **CHARTER OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES ACT 2006**

The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 aims to protect people’s civil and political rights within government and in society, and became law in July 2006. The Charter is based on the idea that all arms of government should contribute to the protection and promotion of human rights in Victoria.<sup>9</sup> As such, since January 2008, all public authorities (including councils) have been required to

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<sup>8</sup> Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission, *Quick Guide – Equal Opportunity Act 2010*, July 2011

<sup>9</sup> Department of Justice, *Department of Human Rights and Responsibilities – Guidelines for Legislation and Policy Officers in Victoria*, Victorian Government, July 2008, p.21

act in a manner that is compatible with human rights and to give human rights proper consideration in decision-making.

“In particular, section 38(1) makes it unlawful for a public authority to act in a way that is incompatible with a human right, or, in making a decision, to fail to give proper consideration to a relevant human right.”<sup>10</sup>

The Charter was reviewed by the Victorian Parliament’s Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee (SARC) in 2011. The Committee was to consider the effects of the Charter on the development of legislation, service provision, litigation and remedies for infringements, as well as the benefits and costs of the Charter and options for reform and improvement.

The Committee reported to Parliament on 14 September 2011 and the Victorian Government responded to the review on 14 March 2012. The Government stated that it would retain the Charter, and “would adopt recommendations to improve the parliamentary scrutiny process, improve internal complaints processes, clarify the legal status of certain processes and documents and repeal the parliamentary override provision.” The Government further responded that it would seek specific legal advice on the SARC recommendation that courts and tribunals be removed from the Charter and that the obligation for public authorities to act compatibly with the Charter be repealed.<sup>11</sup>

It should be noted that Maribyrnong City Council has developed a Human Rights and Social Justice Framework (refer below).

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p.31

<sup>11</sup> Parliament of Victoria, Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee, *Review of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006, Victorian Government Response*, 14 March 2012, pp. 2-3, [http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/images/stories/committees/sarc/charter\\_review/report\\_response/20120314\\_sarc.govtresp.charterreview.pdf](http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/images/stories/committees/sarc/charter_review/report_response/20120314_sarc.govtresp.charterreview.pdf)

## **STATE DISABILITY PLAN 2013 - 2016**

The current State Disability Plan 2013-2016 will be replaced by a new plan in 2017. The State Disability Plan will provide a whole of government approach to improving economic and social outcomes for Victorians with disability, their families and carers.

The State Disability Plan 2013-2016 outlines four policy directions, under which a number of priority actions will be implemented by the government to address the disadvantages experienced by people with disability, their families and carers. The policy directions outlined in the draft plan are:

1. A strong foundation in life;
2. Upholding rights and promoting participation;
3. Accessing information, transport, buildings and places;
4. A contemporary approach through disability system reform

### **Metro Access Program**

MetroAccess, along with RuralAccess and DeafAccess, is a community building program funded by the State Government through Disability Services (Department of Health and Human Services).

MetroAccess Officers are based in each of the 31 local Councils in metropolitan Melbourne and work to develop strategies in the areas of: education and training, transport, health, accommodation and housing, physical access planning, sport, recreation and the arts.<sup>12</sup>

The five objectives of the MetroAccess program are to:

- Mobilise and support people with disability to optimise participation in the life of their local community;
- Build and strengthen the community's capacity to provide support to people with disability and their families;

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<sup>12</sup> Department of Human Services, *Disability Services Community Building Program Planning and Reporting Framework*, July 2010

- Facilitate integrated local community planning and coordination which engages and involves people with disability and their families, disability service providers and community organisations;
- Work with existing disability support providers to enhance their capacity to provide relevant and appropriate supports in the community; and
- Improve access to information about relevant services and community activities available to people with disability in their communities.<sup>13</sup>

## **Local**

### **Local Government Act 1989 (Vic)**

The Local Government Act provides the basis for the creation and operation of local Councils in Victoria. Matters covered the Act include: the conduct of council elections, Council governance and decision-making, the levying and payment of rates and charges, the making of local laws, and the development of council plans and budgets.

This includes provision for the development of a Council Plan, which must contain:

- The strategic objectives of the Council;
- Strategies for achieving the objectives for at least the next four years
- Strategic indicators for monitoring the achievement of the objectives
- A strategic resource plan

For the City of Maribyrnong, these items are covered by the *Maribyrnong City Council Plan 2013-2017*.

### **MARIBYRNONG CITY COUNCIL PLAN 2013 - 2017**

The Council Plan 2013-2017 guides the planning, development, allocation of resources and provision of services to the community in the City of Maribyrnong.

The Plan has a strong focus on public health and wellbeing and reflects feedback from our community and stakeholders.

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

Six key areas outline the outcomes, strategies and indicators for achieving Council's wellbeing commitment.

The six areas are:

1. **Urban Growth:** We will create a well planned city that facilitates change while respecting our heritage and neighbourhood character.
2. **Liveability:** We will foster a connected and welcoming city for all by providing well designed places and quality services.
3. **Economic Prosperity:** In partnership with our community and stakeholders we will support local business, attract investment and employment opportunities and improve pathways for education and training.
4. **Transport:** We will plan and advocate for a functional, sustainable and safe bike and pedestrian friendly transport and traffic management system that meets the community needs.
5. **Environmental Sustainability:** In partnership with our community and stakeholders we will educate and promote environmental sustainability.
6. **Organisational Accountability:** We will implement a transparent, engaging and accountable governance structure to deliver this Council Plan.

The Disability Policy 2015-2018 strongly reflects Council's continued commitment to the wellbeing of the Maribyrnong community and the six key commitment areas.

## **MARIBYRNONG CITY COUNCIL HUMAN RIGHTS AND SOCIAL JUSTICE FRAMEWORK**

Council adopted a Human Rights and Social Justice Framework in 2012. The Framework outlines a range of human rights and social justice issues that Council supports, as well as the areas of action (Compliance, Culture, and Advocacy) that council will undertake in support of those rights.

In relation to disability, the framework states that: "Everyone has the right not to be discriminated against due to their real or perceived physical or intellectual disability

in areas including government laws and regulations, employment, accommodation, the provision of services and participation in society.”

Council's previous *Disability Policy and Action Plan 2012-2015* and the development of the new *Disability Policy 2015-2018* are identified as the main drivers of work across Council that aims to increase the accessibility of services and support people with disability, their families and carers. The role of the DAC and Council's support for the NDIS is also noted.

## **MUNICIPAL STRATEGIC STATEMENT**

The Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) is part of the Maribyrnong Planning Scheme and provides guidance on land use planning and development in the municipality. The MSS was reviewed during 2009-2010, adopted by Council and approved by the Minister for Planning in 2011.

Accessibility is a key characteristic throughout the MSS's seven themes. Of particular relevance and interest to people with disability are strategies relating to:

- safe and accessible urban design (including pathways, lighting; landscaping; street furniture; conveniences and meeting spaces);
- access to infrastructure (including public transport) and various facilities and services;
- accessible and DDA-compliant pedestrian and cyclist facilities and wayfinding sign information; and
- the implementation of a network of community hubs accessible for people of all life stages and capacities.

## **OTHER MARIBYRNONG CITY COUNCIL POLICIES AND PLANS**

The aims and objectives of the Disability Policy and Action Plan are consistent with the work undertaken across many areas of council, as reflected in various policies and plans. Some of these policies include:

- Maribyrnong City Council Multicultural Policy 2012-2017
- Maribyrnong City Council Indigenous Policy 2013-2018
- Maribyrnong City Strategy for Children 2015-2018
- Maribyrnong Integrated Transport Strategy 2012
- Open Space Strategy 2014
- Recreation Strategy 2009
- Maribyrnong City Council Strategic Arts Framework 2012-2016
- Asset Management Strategy 2011
- Road Management Plan 2013
- Festival City Policy 2014-2017

More information on these policies and plans can be found via the Maribyrnong City Council website: [www.maribyrnong.vic.gov.au](http://www.maribyrnong.vic.gov.au)

### **More information**

Australasian Legal Information Institute

[www.austlii.edu.au](http://www.austlii.edu.au)

Australian Human Rights Commission

[www.humanrights.gov.au](http://www.humanrights.gov.au)

Victorian Building Authority

[www.vba.vic.gov.au](http://www.vba.vic.gov.au)

Department of Social Services

[www.dss.gov.au](http://www.dss.gov.au)

Department of Human Services

[www.humanservices.gov.au](http://www.humanservices.gov.au)

Maribyrnong City Council

[www.maribyrnong.vic.gov.au](http://www.maribyrnong.vic.gov.au)

Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV)

[www.mav.asn.au](http://www.mav.asn.au)

Productivity Commission

[www.pc.gov.au](http://www.pc.gov.au)

UN Enable

[www.un.org/disabilities/](http://www.un.org/disabilities/)

Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission

[www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au](http://www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au)