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**NAME OF POLICY:** Access & Inclusion

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**POLICY MANUAL:** Governance

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## BACKGROUND

The Council developed and adopted a Disability Policy, to guide the Council in its future support of citizens living with disability and their Carers. The Disability Policy provided a framework for the 2007-2012 Disability Action Plan, which was prepared in response to the requirements of the Commonwealth *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*.

A review of the *Disability Policy* was completed in 2012, resulting in the development of the Council's Access & Inclusion Policy which broadened the scope of the Policy from accessible environments to inclusion.

The Access and Inclusion Policy was adopted by the Council in July 2012. A review of the Council's *Access & Inclusion Policy* was again undertaken in 2018, to align the policy with the direction set out in the Council's 2018-2021 *Access & Inclusion Strategy- A City for All*.

## DISCUSSION

The aim of the Council's *Access & Inclusion Policy* is to facilitate wellbeing outcomes for citizens of all ages, abilities and backgrounds through accessible and inclusive services, programs facilities and infrastructure.

The Council's Access & Inclusion Policy also addresses the Council's legislative responsibilities under the *Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act (1992)* The primary objective of the *Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (the Act), is to eliminate as far as possible, discrimination against citizens on the grounds of disability. The Act was designed to ensure that citizens with disabilities are not disadvantaged by being deprived of equal opportunity, through stereotyping, prejudice, and misconception or by unnecessary barriers or restrictions. The Act reinforces the Council's legal responsibility to facilitate access and to treat citizens with a disability as equally as able-bodied citizens.

## KEY PRINCIPLES

- All citizens have the right to contribute to the social, environmental, political, economic and cultural life of the community.
- The Council will provide leadership to the wider community by openly recognizing, valuing and supporting citizens living with a disability and their Carers.
- The Council will encourage the wider community to understand, respect and support citizens with a disability and their families and Carers.
- Council facilities and reserves will be designed and developed to support all citizens where practical, (subject to heritage, topography and funding constraints).
- The needs of citizens with disabilities will be recognized in the development, planning and delivery of services, programs, events and projects.
- The Council will assist in communicating information and opportunities on disability related matters, facilities and services in the area;
- Generic programs and events provided or supported by the Council, will be aimed at encouraging integration and inclusiveness.

## Definitions

### *Citizen*

A person, who lives, works or visits the City of Norwood Payneham & St Peters.

### *Disability*

A disability is any temporary or continuing condition that restricts a person's everyday activities. This includes long-term physical, psycho-social, intellectual, cognitive, neurological or sensory impairment, or a combination of any of these impairments, which in interaction with various barriers may hinder the person's full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others;

### *Inclusion*

Refers to social inclusion, where all citizens feel valued and have the opportunity to participate fully in the community<sup>1</sup>.

### *Principles of Universal Design*

The Universal Design Principles<sup>2</sup> are a set of principles which seek to achieve maximum benefits from designs for people of all ages and abilities. The seven (7) principles are listed below:

1. *Equitable Use* - seeks to maximise the usefulness of design for everyone, identical whenever possible and equivalent when not, so that it avoids segregating or stigmatising any users.
2. *Flexibility in Use* - values design that accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.
3. *Simple and Intuitive Use* - seeks to create ease of understanding for users, regardless of their experience, knowledge and language.
4. *Perceptible Information* - seeks to ensure that design allows information to be communicated effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the users sensory abilities.
5. *Tolerance for Error* - seeks to minimise hazards and the negative consequences of accidental or unintended actions.
6. *Low Physical Effort* - seeks to ensure that interaction with the environment can occur efficiently and comfortably and with minimal fatigue.
7. *Size and Space for Approach and Use* - seeks to maximise approach, reach and manipulation capabilities of users irrespective of their size, posture and mobility.

### *Principles of Adaptable Housing*

### Principles of Adaptable Housing

The Principles of Adaptable Housing were developed by Standards Australia (Australian Standard 4299)<sup>3</sup>. As there is no legal requirement for residential housing to comply with these standards, as the standards are provided as reference for developers and members of the general public to consider for their own needs. The intent of the Adaptable Housing Principles is to develop houses that are easily adaptable to suit the changing needs of the owners and occupiers.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.socialinclusion.gov.au/about/what-social-inclusion](http://www.socialinclusion.gov.au/about/what-social-inclusion) Accessed 10 April 2012

<sup>2</sup> Centre for Universal Design. [www.ncsu.edu/project/design-projects/udi/center-for-universal-design/the-principles-of-universal-design](http://www.ncsu.edu/project/design-projects/udi/center-for-universal-design/the-principles-of-universal-design) Accessed 9 January 2012

<sup>3</sup> Australian Standard - Adaptable Housing AS 4299 [www.SAIGlobal.com](http://www.SAIGlobal.com) Accessed on 10 January 2012

The principles are:

1. Adaptable Housing incorporates housing design features that are designed to benefit all owners and occupiers.
2. Later modifications required, will prove to be relatively easy to do at minimum inconvenience and cost and will offset the initial price thereby encouraging the occupant to remain in the home.
3. Adaptable housing will have features, materials and dimensions designed for safety and ease of use.
4. The design supports and enables the occupant to remain close to their existing community and family networks.
5. The adaptable house must in all of its features suit any future occupant with any level of disability.

## **POLICY**

The City of Norwood Payneham & St Peters recognises that its citizens are diverse in age, culture and abilities. All citizens are valued members of the community who contribute to the social, economic and cultural life within the City. The Council is committed to supporting and improving access, equity, inclusion and quality of life for citizens of all ages, abilities and cultures. The Council will seek to achieve this by:

- raising awareness and understanding of disability and related needs of the community;
- achieving accessible environments to ensure that all citizens can utilise Council's facilities and services;
- contributing to the provision of information and services that support people living with disability and their Carers;
- facilitating and supporting initiatives provided by community and service groups that provide opportunities for citizens with disabilities to participate; and
- advocating and lobbying for State and Federal Government funding and support through the Local Government.

The Council's role will be to:

- Facilitate
- Coordinate
- Support
- Inform
- Advocate
- Lobby

The commitment embodied in this Policy will be achieved within the Council's capabilities and available resources and does not commit the Council to funding all potential initiatives relating to disability. This Policy is also subject to the availability of resources provided by other levels of government and other organisations working in the disability field.

The *Access & Inclusion Policy* focuses on the following priorities:

- Culture
- Accessible Environments
- Information and Awareness
- Living and Lifestyle
- Partnerships

## Culture

The Council will seek to create a culture of respect and support for all citizens who live work or visit the City of Norwood Payneham & St Peters and the wider community. To achieve this, the Council will:

1. ensure all Elected Members, Staff and Volunteers are aware of and understand the needs of citizens with disabilities and their families and Carers and provide support and opportunities for professional development opportunity for staff to enhance on knowledge and skills in the areas of providing services and responding to disability issues;
2. support flexible employment and Volunteer involvement for people with a disability and their Carers, where the required skills and experience requirements are met and flexibility is feasible;
3. ensure communication and processes are designed to support citizens of all ages, abilities and cultures. Where required, additional customer service support will be provided to assist citizens living with disability; and
4. aim to raise the community's awareness of disability and encourage respect and support from the wider community:
  - through its service provision and practice;
  - by promoting inclusion and equity;
  - by supporting events and activities that raise the profile of disability; and
  - by involving community members in disability initiatives.

## Accessible Environments

The Council will seek to strategically identify and address issues relating to physical access, sight and hearing impairments. The Council will seek to achieve this by:

1. identifying priorities for improved physical access through an audit of footpaths and Council buildings. Priorities for improved physical access will be actioned through the Access & Inclusion -Strategy;
2. providing and maintaining facilities and assets, which will comply with the *Disability Discrimination Act 1993* and Australian Standards and Codes except where the cost of complying will cause unjustifiable financial hardship to the Council. Due to heritage and topography, some facilities may also have restricted access, should such circumstances arise, the following will be implemented:
  - some level of access for citizens with disabilities in most facilities and open space;
  - barriers to access will be minimized; and
  - a number of facilities and reserves will have a high level of disability access across the City of Norwood Payneham & St Peters.
3. considering the needs and opportunities for access for citizens with a disability when planning for open space and recreation. Initiatives that support citizens with sight and hearing impairments will be investigated and established where appropriate;
4. encouraging property developers to integrate 'good practice' design for citizens which incorporates elements that support inclusiveness for all citizens and includes the use of Universal Design and Adaptable Housing principles, in commercial and residential development; and
5. encouraging community members and Council staff to report issues and maintain environments to ensure that they are accessible for all citizens.

## Information and Awareness

The Council will contribute to providing current information to increase the awareness of support and lifestyle opportunities for all citizens. To achieve this, the Council will:

- provide information on Council services, programs and events through its websites and Customers Service Centres.
- provide information in alternative and accessible formats which meets the needs of a diverse audience (i.e. different languages and for all abilities).
- aim to provide and use systems to improve communication with people who have a hearing, vision, language or learning disability; and
- communicate information on services and programs that takes into consideration the needs of Aboriginal<sup>4</sup> and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) citizens.

## Living and Lifestyle

The Council will facilitate and support initiatives that enhance the lifestyle, health and safety of all citizens. In pursuit of this, the Council recognises the importance for all citizens to have the opportunity to participate in community life and decisions concerning their life. In supporting citizens to achieve this, the Council will seek to:

- support community and civic participation that provides valued roles, a sense of purpose and personal confidence;
- provide opportunities for all citizens to contribute or have a say on community issues or plans that may impact on them;
- monitor the unmet needs of citizens living with disability and their Carers in the community;
- address access and inclusion issues in planning for Council organised events, projects, services, facilities and programs;
- ensure all Services and programs and activities delivered by the Council are accessible for all citizens;
- ensure that the safety needs of vulnerable groups such as children, youth, citizens living with a disability and older people, are reflected in programs, services and the design and management of Councils facilities, infrastructure and reserves;
- continue to co-ordinate and provide support services and programs for frail older citizens and younger disabled citizens under the Home Support Program (provided funding is available);
- ensure services provided by the Council delivered to citizens from CALD or aboriginal backgrounds take into to consideration their cultural and linguistic needs; and
- encourage the development of accommodation for people with a disability in the City of Norwood Payneham & St Peters, provided appropriate lifestyle services and support are in place.

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<sup>4</sup> All references to Aboriginal citizens also includes citizens of Torres Strait Islanders descent

## **Partnerships**

The Council will seek to develop and strengthen connections and partnerships with other bodies, including State Government, other Local Government Authorities in the region and community groups.

In pursuit of the above strategy, the Council will where practicable and efficient seek to adopt a regional approach to supporting major disability services and initiatives, (e.g. transport, respite services or regional programs). The Council will maintain and develop connections with relevant State Government bodies, other Local Government Authorities, Disability Service Provider groups and advisory bodies in the provision of information and services.

## **REVIEW PROCESS**

This Policy will be reviewed in three (3) years.

## **INFORMATION**

The contact officer for further information at the City of Norwood Payneham & St Peters is the Council's Manager, Community Services on telephone 8366 4600 or via email [rbusolin@npsp.sa.gov.au](mailto:rbusolin@npsp.sa.gov.au)

## **ADOPTION OF THE POLICY**

This Policy was adopted by Council on 4 June 2012.

This Policy was reviewed and adopted by the Council on 5 November 2018.

This Policy was reviewed and adopted by the Council on 4 April 2022.

## **TO BE REVIEWED**

November 2025