
City of Casey

Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee Minutes of Meeting 11 November 2019 Boon Wurrung and Wurundjeri Meeting Rooms, Bunjil Place, 2 Patrick Northeast Drive, Narre Warren, 6.00pm – 8.00pm

Meeting Started: 6.05pm

1. Statement of Acknowledgement

2. Attendance and Apologies; Conflicts of Interest; and Minutes from Meeting in August

Attendees: Cr Wayne Smith (Chair), Cr Rosalie Crestani, Carmen Powell, Robin Dzedins, Joshua Oostwoud, Genevieve Kolmus, Jessica Vidic, Dr Shahid Yamin, Trudy Ryall, John Hardie, Nick Grant-Collins (Council Officer), and Seb Cunningham (Council Officer).

Apologies: Cr Amanda Stapledon, Cr Milla Gilic, Leanne Petrides, Bassir Qadiri, and Stacey Johnston.

- No conflicts of interest were declared.
- Minutes of the August 12 meeting be accepted as written.

Moved – Robin Dzedins Seconded – Jessica Vidic

3. Terms of Reference Draft – Seb Cunningham, Access and Inclusion Officer

- A draft of the Committee's revised Terms of Reference was presented to the Committee for discussion. The recently endorsed City of Casey Advisory Committee Policy contained several changes to policy for advisory committees and these were incorporated into the draft. The Advisory Committee Policy and draft terms of reference were sent via email to members prior to the meeting for review.
- Draft changes to the Terms of Reference were highlighted:
 - Member tenure increased to three-year appointments (currently two years)
 - A limit of one reappointment for members resulting in a maximum possible tenure of six years (currently there is no limit on reappointments)
 - Expert member provision
 - Members permitted to attend meetings via video/audio conference technology
 - Casey Conversations platform to be used for member communication
 - Staggering of recruitment into three group intakes, to ensure continuity of the Committee's work.
- These proposed changes were then discussed. It was suggested that term reappointments should not be limited and the decision on whether the reapplying candidate ought to continue in the role be left to the assessment panel. Conversely, a member commented that a balance of old and new voices is of benefit to the Committee.

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- General comments made about the draft were that a minimum financial support commitment for the Committee's operations should be included in the Terms of Reference as per the Advisory Committee Policy. It was agreed that this would be investigated.

Action: Officers to gain feedback from other Advisory Committees and Governance on the draft terms of reference, particularly around reappointment limits.

Action: Officers to investigate the inclusion of a minimum financial support commitment for the Committee's operations in the Terms of Reference.

4. Future projects and advocacy – Seb Cunningham, Access and Inclusion Officer

- Areas of focus for 2020 were discussed. The Committee was encouraged to think about how the issues raised would be appropriately addressed, whether through the advisory, advocacy, or project capacities of members.
- Issues within the aged care system were raised as significant and it was asked how the Committee could advocate for better outcomes for older people in this space. Several concerns were raised over poor practices within the industry such as notifying aged care facilities before accreditation checks occur.
- It was suggested that elder abuse and ageism could be a focus for the Committee as these issues incorporate aged care concerns as well as wider social concerns for vulnerable older people. Members expressed an interest in having affected community members or staff present to the Committee on the impacts of elder abuse and ageism.
- Another focus was young people and how to attract more attendees to youth events. It was suggested that the Committee could provide support and promotion for events through member networks. More information about what is happening in the youth space was requested, and it was suggested that a representative from the Youth Committee attend the next meeting to present on their work.
- LGBTI issues within community were raised as being a critical focus for a Committee concerning itself with social inclusion. A couple of LGBTI events and projects were mentioned as being developed in Casey, particularly those occurring in Casey Cardinia Libraries.
- Projects that support community groups and leaders to address youth crime and gang violence were raised as an important focus. 'Handbrake Turn' in Dandenong was mentioned as an example of a program doing good work in this regard.
- Communication accessibility was raised as a potential focus. Young people could be trained as Auslan signers and interpret for community events and consultations. Another Committee member mentioned their partner is an Auslan interpreter who may be able to assist.
- Intergenerational programs and projects were mentioned as a great way of increasing inclusivity for isolated older people. It was pointed out that many of these programs are already running and could be built upon and expanded across Casey. The wisdom older people can share is invaluable and there are many creative avenues for these projects.

Action: Committee members to consider how to tackle the issues raised and discuss approaches with other members before next meeting.

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5. Defining and measuring 'vulnerability' in the City of Casey – Seb Cunningham, Access and Inclusion Officer

- Vulnerability within the Casey community is the subject of several pieces of work within the Connected Communities Department. The Committee was asked to briefly share their perspectives on who are Casey's most vulnerable groups in need of support, to help inform this work. The following insights were shared:
 - People living with a disability were identified as being vulnerable, particularly subgroups within this category who are 'underfunded'. Access to communication (translator and interpreter) services is also a significant contributor to vulnerability for this group. Additionally, those currently awaiting their NDIS packages are experiencing significant hardship.
 - Cultural differences within the Australian context for migrant women was raised as a significant factor, with differing local expectations and norms contributing to vulnerability for this group.
 - Those in the community experiencing homelessness are highly vulnerable and referrals are being made on a daily basis. However, it is often the case that there are no services for clients, as demand is far exceeding supply.
 - The distance required to travel to services for many within the Casey community is an enormous barrier. Many services are located in places such as Dandenong and transport options to access them from Casey are limited. It was commented that this is slowly changing with some services now operating out of locations in Casey (WAYSS now operating out of Berwick and Turning Point out of Cranbourne).
 - Groups such as young people, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, those with mental health issues were also mentioned as vulnerable.
 - Those who are vulnerable are the most affected when emergencies occur.
 - Identifying and putting in place protections for these vulnerable groups should be a focus of the Committee.

6. Bunjil Place Accessibility Project – Seb Cunningham, City of Casey, Access and Inclusion Officer

Committee members were updated on accessibility initiatives at Bunjil Place.

- The suggested buggy service that would operate from the accessible car park to the front door of Bunjil Place was unlikely to be supported, due to risk management concerns and the ongoing cost of such a project.
- *Wheelchairs at Front Of House:* Bunjil Place has purchased an extra wheelchair (now has a total of two) and will purchase more if there is a demand.
- As parking sensor data has indicated that accessible parking spaces are only at capacity during events targeting older people and/or people living with a disability (particularly during Daytime Music Theatre shows), initial accessibility improvements will focus on supporting visitors during these events. The Committee was briefed on the following projects being developed by Council:
 - *Access Usher:* The Bunjil Place team have identified the need for an 'Access Usher' to be stationed at the drop-off and accessible parking zones during events as described above. The team are currently working with a consultant with extensive expertise and background in visitor experience and customer service to help formalise the position. The Access Usher would welcome and support

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community members attending events and make for a more comfortable visitor experience for those with additional accessibility requirements.

- *Staff Parking - internal communications campaign*: Casey staff to be informed of the accessibility issues some of our community members experience whilst attending Bunjil Place. Staff will be notified a few days before selected events (as described above) and will be encouraged to park at Max Pawsey Reserve or elsewhere. The aim is to free up the parking area directly opposite Bunjil Place to reduce stress that comes with competition for spaces during these events.
 - *Shelter constructed at drop off zone with service/duress button*: Construction of a shelter would allow carers/partners/family members to drop people off who have accessibility requirements in a comfortable and safe place whilst they find a parking space. This would be supported by staff (Access Usher) during events who could wait with community members. Where no staff member is present (outside of event times) it is proposed that a service button be installed to allow staff to be alerted where a community member requires assistance (e.g. a wheelchair to be taken out to the drop off zone). The comment was made that posting a phone number at the shelter could be a more straightforward solution than an installed service button. The shelter is being discussed as part of the 2020-21 budget.
- The Committee discussed other accessibility issues and suggested solutions at Bunjil Place:
 - A concierge service which supports people with accessibility requirements was suggested, such as that found at Rod Laver Arena. It was commented that the proposed Access Usher would fulfil this function.
 - Toilet signs are not easy to read for people with a vision impairment.
 - Funding should be set aside for Auslan interpreters at Bunjil Place performances. Additionally, events ought to be held that integrate Auslan interpretation such as movie nights and performances. It was commented that such events are being planned and discussed by the Bunjil Place Team and several initiatives have already occurred.
 - It was raised that the Bunjil Place café should be a social enterprise employing people living with disabilities to make for a more socially inclusive place. Council should drive this change. It was commented that other areas of Casey would also benefit from this social enterprise café model to assist other populations such as culturally and linguistically diverse communities in Doveton.

Action: Council Officers to investigate past and future events at Bunjil Place that target the vision or hearing-impaired community and report back to the Committee.

7. General Business

7.1 Informal Get Together of Members

- It was proposed that the Committee should meet more frequently on an informal basis to increase understanding of one another and develop ideas and pieces of work. Committee members will organise this get together. The catch up is planned to occur before the end of the year.

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7.2 Training and Development Opportunities

- Members and Council Officers to identify and share training and development opportunities for Committee members. Where possible, Council will support Committee members in free and low-cost training and development opportunities to increase the capacity of members to fulfil their role.

7.3 Community Engagement Update

- The social procurement engagement occurred in early November with representatives from the Municipal Association of Victoria, Knox City Council, City of Greater Dandenong, Outlook Victoria, TRY, The Bridge, Southern Migrant and Refugee Centre, Wellsprings for Women, and Casey's Procurement Team. Objectives developed from the engagement were
 - Audit and increase the City of Casey's procurement spend on social impact businesses
 - Attend further workshops and seek resources from other Councils to increase understanding of social procurement best practice
 - Meet with additional social enterprises in the region
 - Draft a procurement policy with mandated social impact targets
 - Work with the Procurement Team on further measures to increase social outcomes for the Casey community.
- Further social enterprise opportunities were raised such as catering at Bunjil Place and other Council facilities. The Committee recommended that Council investigate opportunities for social enterprise catering at Council meetings and events (see section 10).
- The inclusive community engagement workshop is scheduled for Tuesday December 10. With the help of internal and external stakeholders this consultation will examine barriers to participation that exist within Council's community engagement processes. The output from the community engagement will be to develop a checklist for staff when conducting consultations to ensure they have considered and included opportunities for Casey's diverse voices.

Action: John Hardie to follow up with the Committee about a suitable date for an informal get together.

8. Items for Next Meeting

- The issue of racism was raised as significant in the City of Casey, particularly within online platforms such as the Casey crime page. Ethnic groups are targeted, and a focus should be to address this harm.
- The Aboriginal Gathering Place was raised as providing significant support to Casey's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population. A desire was expressed to increase support for this important community space and seek additional funding for its projects. The Committee agreed to hold a future meeting at the Gathering Place to increase member knowledge and understanding of the support that is needed. This will be arranged for the next meeting in February if availability permits.

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9. Next Meeting:

- Monday 10th February, 6pm to 8pm, Aboriginal Gathering Place, 20 Agonis Street, Doveton (TBC).

10. Recommendations

- It was suggested that the Committee make recommendations to Council in the event that significant areas of concern and interest arise.

Recommendation	Council to investigate opportunities for social enterprise catering at Council meetings and events.
	Moved – Robin Dzedinis Seconded – John Hardie

11. Action List

Action	Officers to gain feedback from other Advisory Committees and Governance on the draft terms of reference, particularly around reappointment limits.
Action	Officers to investigate the inclusion of a minimum financial support commitment for the Committee's operations in the Terms of Reference.
Action	Committee members to consider how to tackle the issues raised and discuss approaches with other members before next meeting.
Action	Council Officers to investigate past and future events at Bunjil Place that target the vision or hearing-impaired community and report back to the Committee.
Action	John Hardie to follow up with the Committee about a suitable date for an informal get together.

Meeting Closed: 8.00pm.