

Access and Inclusion Policy

Corporate and Community Services



June 2023

This policy was adopted by Council to set governing principles in place that align the strategic direction of the organisation with the Strategic Community Plan 2040: Outcome PE.1: Diverse cultural values are respected and adopted and Outcome PE.2: Equal opportunities for all.

Objectives

The purpose of this policy is to set the strategic direction of the Shire of Augusta Margaret River (the Shire) in ensuring inclusive Shire services, buildings and facilities are welcoming and inclusive for all members of our community.

The policy also serves to outline the commitment of the Shire to comply with the *WA Disability Services Act 1993 (amended 2004)* and to ensure that people with disability have the same access to events, services, buildings, facilities, information, quality services, opportunities to contribute, make complaints and gain employment as other people in the Shire

The Shire acknowledges that some people experience barriers to access and inclusion due to discriminations such as those in relation to age, race, gender, culture, class and sexual orientation. These discriminations can be embedded in the community through policy, infrastructure, resource allocation and programs. The Shire acknowledges it has an important role to play in addressing these structural barriers through policies, planning and functions. This policy is one of a suite that guide the Shire to work for a fairer, just and equal community

Application

This policy applies to Council, the CEO, staff and contractors providing services on behalf of the Shire.

Responsibility for the implementation of this policy rests with the Chief Executive Officer and Directors and is to inform all strategies and plans of the Shire.

Definitions

Access (sometimes referred to as universal access):

Refers to physical access to the natural and built environment – buildings, recreational facilities, parks, bushland, beaches and footpaths – as well as access to the Shire's services, events and information.

Inclusion:

Refers to social inclusion, in that all people of diverse abilities and backgrounds have the opportunity to contribute within a welcoming community.

ACCESS AND INCLUSION POLICY

Policy

The Shire is committed to providing services and working within a diverse community, including First Nations, people with disability, their families and carers, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, refugees, the elderly, women, LGBTQIA+ people and people experiencing financial hardships, housing stress or homelessness. The Shire strives to continually improve access and inclusion for all of its community members.

The Shire interprets an accessible and inclusive community as one in which all community members have access and are welcomed to contribute in all Local Government functions, facilities and services (both in-house and contracted) in the same manner and with the same rights and responsibilities as other members of the community.

A community that recognises its diversity and supports the contribution and inclusion of all its members makes for a richer community life.

The Shire commits to achieving the following eight objectives:

1. Improve the accessibility and inclusiveness of services and events for all our community.
2. Improve access to the Shire's buildings and facilities and open spaces for all our community.
3. Improve access to information that is inclusive to all our community.
4. Improve the quality of service delivered by the Shire.
5. Ensure the Shire's feedback and complaints procedure is inclusive for all our community.
6. Improve opportunities for all our community to contribute in public consultation undertaken by the Shire.
7. Improve opportunities for all people with diverse abilities and backgrounds to obtain and maintain employment with the Shire.
8. Building the capacity of our community to achieve access and inclusion outcomes.

The Shire also acknowledges its responsibility to advocate on behalf of all members of its community. The Shire recognises its role in advocating for:

- a. The needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged people within the community
- b. The provision of state and federal government funded services and evidence based policies
- c. The support of local community groups action towards addressing social issues and disadvantage and improving access and inclusion outcomes for all.

The implementation of the Policy is applied through the Shire's current Access and Inclusion Plan (AIP). The Policy is measured according to progress against the annual implementation plan that sits alongside the AIP.

The Shire is committed to achieving the desired outcomes of its AIP by taking all practical measures to ensure the implementation of the AIP by its Councillors, staff, agents and contractors.

Relevant legislation

WA Disability Services Act 1993

Related documents

Access and Inclusion Plan 2023-2027

| Document and version control table | | | |
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