

Terms of Reference

City of Melbourne Disability Advisory Committee

2020 - 2023

Endorsed Future Melbourne Committee 1 June 2021

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# Purpose

The City of Melbourne’s Disability Advisory Committee (the Committee) is a consultative forum that provides strategic advice on policy and practice issues to the administration and Council. This advice assists Council in responding to the needs and aspirations of people of all abilities who live, work, study or visit our city.

# Background

The Local Government Act 1989 stipulates that the role of a Council is to represent the diverse needs of the local community, address the health and wellbeing needs of community members and foster community cohesion by encouraging active participation in civic life.

# Role

The Committee provides an ongoing civic engagement process where people with a disability can advocate to Council on barriers and access issues that impact on their life opportunities and experiences within the City of Melbourne and more broadly within society.

# Objectives

The Committee will:

* Represent issues that impact on the life opportunities of people of all abilities
* Advise on ‘best practice’ in universal access planning and co-design engagement
* Participate in the development of Council’s Disability Action Plan

# Membership

## Advisory Committee Members

There will be twelve (12) community members comprising individuals with personal and/or professional experience, expertise and commitment to improving equity of access in all aspects of life in the city

Of these, nine (9) members will have direct personal experience of disability. Three (3) members will be appointed as professionals from academia, tourism and the business sector, with a commitment to universal access and that can influence equity of participation of people with disability.

Membership will be representative of the diversity of our community with reference to:

* Ability
* Age
* Sex and sexual identification
* Indigenous and aboriginal
* Cultural and linguistic background
* Socio-economic status

Under Section 12 of the Equal Opportunity Act 2010, a dedicated Indigenous membership has been considered to support Aboriginal representation on the Committee.

The City of Melbourne is committed to fostering a deeper culture of public participation and have developed a policy, as part of the Local Government Act 2020 that commits to deliberative engagement practices.

## Member expertise

The Committee membership will be sought on the basis of achieving a representation of a diverse range of people with mobility, sensory, cognitive, intellectual and/or cognitive disabilities

Members will have expertise and/or experience in one or more of the following areas:

* Expertise in advocacy on disability access issues
* First-hand experience of disability
* Governance experience
* Human rights, social inclusion, empowering people and building on people’s strengths and knowledge
* An understanding of City of Melbourne’s community and capital city roles
* Demonstrated links to community and neighbourhood relationships
* Operators of the business and tourism sectors within the City of Melbourne
* An academic with expertise in disability and equity of access

Members will be recommended to Council for endorsement by the nominated Chairperson, by the Director or General Manager of Community Services and City Services.

## Terms of membership

* Community members will be appointed following a formal expression of interest submission
* Members will be appointed as individuals for a period of three (3) years
* Members may seek re-appointment for a further three year term
* The maximum term will be for a period of six (6) years
* Any member who fails to advise of an absence of up to three (3) meetings, in a calendar year, will be deemed to have resigned
* Vacancies will be filled as soon as possible
* Committee members may be required to undergo a Police and/or Working with Children checks.

## Committee structure

Committee membership will comprise:

* A Councillor, who will chair the meetings with a nominated member as co-chair
* People with expertise in identifying barriers and promoting equity of access for people with a variety of disabilities including mobility, sensory, cognitive, psycho-social and/or intellectual
* Director of applicable branch
* At least one senior officer from a relevant branch of Council
* Support functions will be performed by a Council officer within the Community and City Services Branch

## Appointment

The Committee will be appointed for three years through a public expression of interest process and proposed members will be referred to the Future Melbourne Committee for endorsement.

# Meetings of the Committee

The Committee will meet at least four times annually and on special issues as a working group as required.

Meetings will also be held at the Town Hall in Swanston Street between 3.00pm – 5.00pm on an agreed work day and available online. Light refreshments will be provided at face to face meetings.

## Operation and working group meetings

* All new members will participate in an induction process
* Members may nominate to attend and participate in working group to explore identified issues and present recommendation/s for endorsement at the Disability Advisory Committee
* Members already receiving a remuneration fee for attendance at the Disability Advisory Committee meeting only

# Council support for Committee Members

Resources, including printed materials will be provided (if required) by Council.

Council will provide interpreters, carers, cab vouchers, car parking vouchers and any other requirements (as advised) to support members to attend and participate in committee meetings

A remuneration fee of $200 will be paid to all members, excluding Council staff and Councillor Portfolio holders for attendance at meetings.

# Review

The Terms of Reference will be reviewed every three years. Next review due November 2023.

# Media

The Chair of the Disability Advisory Committee is the media spokesperson for the Advisory Committee.

# Reporting

The Committee will provide strategic advice to the City of Melbourne through the Chairperson and will report to Council through the Chair of Future Melbourne (People City) Committee on matters of importance or priority.

# Protocols

As an appointed advisory committee of Council, the Committee will be chaired by the Chair of Council’s Future Melbourne Committee (People City) or another nominated Councillor.

## The roles and responsibilities of the Council

* Chair the Committee (Chair of Council’s Future Melbourne (People City) Committee or another nominated Councillor)
* Support the active engagement of all members
* Facilitate a collaborative meeting format
* Support Committee members to fully engage in the issues on the table by providing information and research findings in a timely and accessible manner
* Co-opt additional support and/or sub committees as required
* Provide policy and secretariat support to the Committee
* Coordinate meetings, agenda and minutes

Meetings will include management representatives from the City of Melbourne who have significant responsibility for planning, decision making, service delivery and implementation of policy and programs in relation to disability access and inclusion.

## The roles and responsibilities of the Committee Members

* Be fully prepared for meetings
* Agree to participate in a collaborative meeting format
* Bring personal, professional knowledge and broad community experience to the table
* Consider and raise relevant issues, proposals and ideas
* Provide informed advice and guidance

## Code of Conduct and interest provisions

In performing the role of a member, a committee member must:

* Act honestly
* Exercise reasonable care and diligence
* Not make improper use of their position
* Not make improper use of the information acquired because of their position
* Adhere to City of Melbourne Code of Conduct
(Good Governance Advisory Board (2004) Good Governance Guide)

Where the member of the committee has an interest or conflict of interest in relation to a matter in which the committee is concerns, or is likely to be considered or discussed, the member must disclose the interest to the committee before the matter is considered or discussed at the meeting. Disclosure must include the nature of the relevant interest and be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

## Confidential and sensitive information

* Members are expected to comply with the confidential information provisions contained in Sections 77 and 89 of the Local Government Act 1989.
* Members must treat information they receive as confidential unless otherwise advised. The documents presented to the Disability Advisory Committee will often be in draft format and not ready for wider community distribution.
* Members must not use confidential information other than for the purpose of performing their function as a member of the advisory committee.
* Draft documents cannot be referred to or used in any grant applications, presentations or in the private or working roles of members.