



Disability Inclusion Action Plan

We acknowledge the generous contribution made by people in our communities who contributed actively to the development of the Snowy Valleys Council Disability Inclusion and Action Plan. Council is committed to implementing the actions in the Plan.

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Abbreviations

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ADA	Anti- Discrimination Act
CAPT	Continuous accessible pathway of travel
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CSP	Community Strategic Plan
DDA	Disability Discrimination Act
DIA	Disability Inclusion Act
DIAP	Disability Inclusion Action Plan
DIARG	Disability Inclusion & Access Reference Group
LGAs	Local Government Areas
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NDIS	National Disability Insurance Service
NSW	New South Wales
PAMP	Pedestrian Access Mobility Plan
PwD/Carers	People with disability and their carers
SEIFA	Socio-economic indices for areas
SVC	Snowy Valleys Council
WCAG (2.0)	Website Accessibility Guidelines 2.0

Universal Design: Universal design refers to the design of products, environments, programs and services to be usable by all people of different ages and abilities over time, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialised design. *Ref: LG NSW: The Principles of Universal Design Information sheet accessed 21.04.2017*

SVC Vision

- Leading, engaging and supporting strong and vibrant communities

SVC Values

- Do what is right
- Look out for each other
- Work together
- Get the job done
- Build pride
- Look to the future

Snowy Valleys Council Disability Inclusion Vision

- Leading, engaging and supporting strong, vibrant and inclusive communities

Introduction

Snowy Valleys Council (SVC) is a new council formed from the merger of the former Tumbarumba and Tumut Shires. SVC has engaged people with disability and their carers as a key part of their commitment to Disability Inclusion Action Planning as prescribed through the Disability Inclusion Act 2014 (DIAP 2014). Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) supports the fundamental right of choice for people with disability to choose how they live their lives, to access opportunities and enjoy the benefits of living and working in the Snowy Valleys Council region.

Background

Snowy Valleys Council lies at the western edge of the NSW Snowy Mountains. On 12 May 2016, the NSW Government by Proclamation merged Tumut Shire Council and Tumbarumba Shire Council to create Snowy Valleys Council (SVC). The newly formed SVC council brings together the Tumbarumba and Tumut communities who share a common interest in the natural environment and landscape – both as a source of employment and industry, and as an influence on their lifestyle choice. Council employs approximately 290 staff, has a population of 14,292¹, and an area of 8,960 square km.

By Proclamation, the NSW Government appointed an Administrator to oversee the implementation of the new council until elections are held in September 2017. The Senior Officer of the Council is the Acting Interim General Manager who is responsible for the overall operations of the Council.

Council delivers a diverse range of services across a large area and to a number of towns and villages. The former Tumut Shire Council had a strong focus on external works in addition to Council services, and the former Tumbarumba Shire Council had a strong focus on provision of community services.

Council's Planning Program

Council is committed to the requirement that disability inclusion action planning is positioned as core business and incorporated into the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) cycle so that councillors and council staff at every level consider the inclusion of people with disability throughout all areas of council. Council plans to oversee the implementation of the DIAP in the 2017-2021 planning processes.

The Plan recognises the four key focus areas, nominated by people with disability, as being of primary importance in creating an inclusive community. These are:

- Developing positive community attitudes and behaviours
- Creating liveable communities
- Supporting access to meaningful employment
- Improving access to services through better systems and processes

¹ ABS 2011 (Need to clarify the exact pop)

Policy and Legislative Requirements

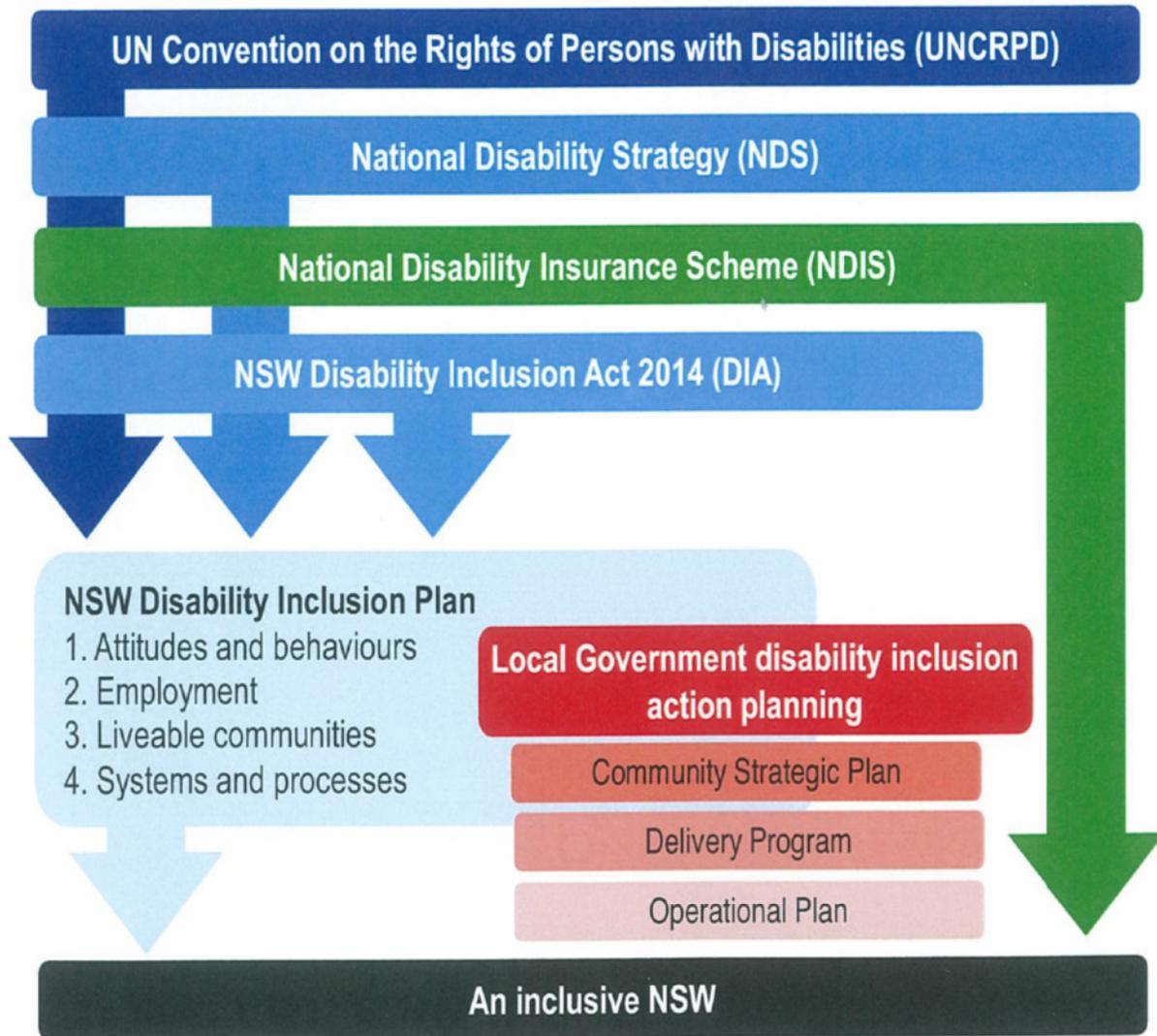
The Disability Services Act (1993) was replaced by the Disability Inclusion Act (2014) and Disability Inclusion Regulation 2014 requiring all councils in NSW to have a Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) by 1 July 2017.

Other relevant Legislation and Standards that inform Council's Work

Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA) Commonwealth Disability (Access to Premises – Buildings) Standards 2010 NSW Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (ADA) Local Government Act 1993 and Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) 2008 Fair Work Act 2009 and the Fair Work Regulations 2009
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The Disability Inclusion Act 2014 (DIA) is linked to national and international policy and legislation improving inclusion for people with a disability (Figure 1).

Figure 1 The relationships between the relevant policy and legislative instruments



Council’s definition

People with disability refers to people who may need support to fully participate in society, whether temporarily or throughout their lives. This may include people with changing abilities due to ageing, people with a temporary illness or injury that affects their ability to participate, children with disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, or people with disability from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Their carers (the ‘family’ of a person with disability who provide unpaid support) are also included in this plan.

Community Profile

Geography

The recently amalgamated SVC encompasses an inland region in the South West Slopes area of southern NSW. The region is bounded by the Murray River and the Victorian border to the south, and the broader Riverina region to the west, adjacent to the Hume Highway. The region is characterised by its high elevation, mountainous landscape, rich agricultural land and cool-to-temperate climate. The area is primarily rural, with a few prominent regional service centres. The area is a gateway to the NSW ski fields and Kosciuszko National Park².

Industry

The regional economy is dominated by agriculture and forestry industries, with Australia's largest softwood processing mill located in the Tumbarumba region. The regional economy also reflects the influence of the tourism sector, with support and supply industries, such as manufacturing and accommodation and food services, based on the natural attractions of the region. This includes attractions such as the Snowy Mountains and adjacent snow fields, national parks and the cool climate wine-growing region.

Population

Characteristics of the Snowy Valleys Population (ABS 2011):

- Total Population: 14,292
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Population 493 (4%)

Like many regions across NSW, the Tumbarumba and Tumut region is experiencing population decline and will also experience the impacts of an ageing population over the next 20 years. For the Tumbarumba region, the expected population decline is 0.4 per cent per annum³

² NSW Government (2016) Merger Proposal: Tumbarumba Shire Council Tumut Shire Council

³ NSW Government (2016) Merger Proposal: Tumbarumba Shire Council Tumut Shire Council

Ageing

- People >65 yrs: 2712 people (19%) compared to NSW (14%) (ABS 2011)

In Tumbarumba, the percentage of the population aged 70 years and over expected to grow and will make up an increasingly higher proportion of the total population by 2031 (22%)⁴.

Disability

The ABS estimates the following:

- 690 people (20.6%) in the Tumbarumba community live in a private dwelling with a disability⁵
- 1873 people (16.7%) in the Tumut community live in a private dwelling with a disability

This is in stark contrast to the ABS 2011 data where in 2011, 471 (3%) people across Tumbarumba and Tumut communities reported requiring assistance with core activities. It is widely recognised that disability is under reported.

In September 2016, 603 (4%) people were in receipt of a Disability Support Pension and 2224 people (16%) were in receipt of an Aged Pension. In total, 2827 people (20%) are either in receipt of an Aged or Disability pension.

Carers

In 2011, 1378 (12%) people provided unpaid assistance for a person with a disability. In September 2016, 631 (4%) people were either receiving a carers allowance or carer payment.

Summary

In line with the national trend, the Snowy Valleys Council region has an ageing population, higher levels of disability and SEIFA scores that are below the state and regional NSW averages. These socio-demographic trends have significant implications for planning disability inclusion and access planning in the region.

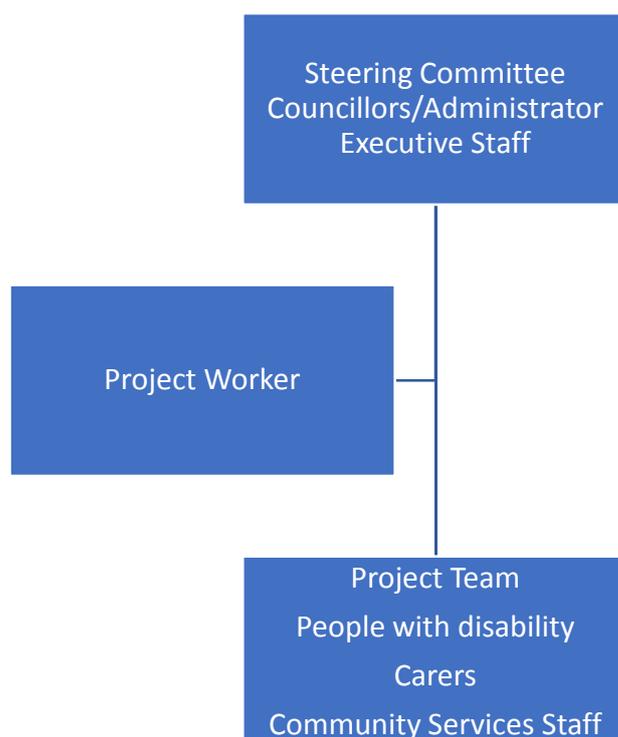
⁴ Murrumbidgee Local Health District (2014) Tumbarumba Fact Sheet Multipurpose Service program.

⁵ ABS 2014

Disability Action Planning Process

Staff and residents with a disability from Greater Hume Shire (GHS) and SVC collaborated to coordinate their respective DIAPs. Both Councils committed to a joint process appointing a project worker in each LGA governed by a Steering Committee representative of executive staff and Mayor/Administrator to oversee the project. A project team representing community services staff and people with disability and their carers coordinated the community engagement and key activities required to develop the Plan (Figure 1).

Figure 1 Governance Structure



The Plan was developed between October 2016 and May 2017.

Community Engagement Strategy

Approach

Council is committed to improving quality of life for people with a disability and their carers in the Snowy Valleys Council region. Council aims to involve the community in determining services and the development of policies, programs and services. Council is also committed to ensuring that all views are considered through inclusive deliberation and active involvement of the community.

Methods

The approach informed the methodology for developing the SVC DIAP. The Project Team comprised of people with disability and carers. Participants informed the development of the community engagement strategy and methodology.

The communities of Tumbarumba, Khancoban, Tumut and Batlow were invited to participate in local focus groups. Staff of SVC were provided with a survey. Table 1 describes the target group, method and outcome.

Table 1 Community Engagement Methodology

Community	Strategy	Outcome
Tumbarumba & Khancoban	Focus groups	Tumbarumba: 8 attendees Khancoban: 7 attendees
Tumbarumba & Khancoban	Survey	11 returned: 9 Tumbarumba 2 Khancoban
Tumut & Batlow	Focus groups	Tumut: 9 attendees Batlow: 0 attendees
Tumut	Survey	8 Returned
Snowy Valleys Council Staff	Survey	49 returned

Community Engagement Outcomes

The four key disability inclusion focus areas were used as the framework for community engagement. The following feedback summarises what participants said within each of the key areas.

1. Developing positive community attitudes and behaviours

What you told us

- Provide training about the needs of people with disability to customer service, planning and environmental services staff
- Engage with people with a disability and their carers in decision making and policies
- Education: partner with schools, business and community groups to raise awareness about the rights of PwD/Carers

“Negative attitudes towards PwD/Carers is an issue in the high schools- students with disabilities have experienced hostility and bullying- the student was told to attend another school- little understanding, awareness and inclusive leadership amongst the teachers and principals.”

- Run awareness campaigns on the rights and needs of PwD/Carers and their carers

“A person with a disability with a guide dog was recently denied access to a local business’.

- Consider all forms of disability, vision, hearing, mental health issues
- Some staff are very considerate and caring
- Include positive images of PwD/Carers in Council advertising and promotional material
- Promote Council’s feedback and requests process

2. Creating liveable communities

What you told us

- Do an audit of council facilities and include PwD/Carers in the process and the prioritising of the actions.
- *'Form a local disability reference group to enable ongoing engagement with people with disability'*
- Improve access to public facilities
- Need disability toilets in town centres
- Accessible and more road crossings with safety islands
- Improved Signage (both tactile, visual and audible)
- Improve footpaths *"Pathways are uneven or non-existent, gutters (lack of), and pedestrian crossings (lack of/or uneven). These are issues for people with low mobility (including the elderly, people using mobility aids, people with visual impairment and people with prams)'*
- Advocate to improve access to and within local business
- Remove private gardens obstructing public paths
- Improve complaints process: *"Sent a letter to Council about an access issue and got a letter back but nothing has happened"*
- Develop an accessibility/mobility map of all the accessible public facilities
- Offer community grants to small business to become accessible
- All public events to have an accessibility plan
- Swimming pools require ramps and hoists
- Review access to libraries and books

3. Supporting access to meaningful employment

What you told us

- Review SVC Human Resource policies and procedures for inclusiveness and diversity
- Offer work experience and work placements for PwD/Carers
- Employ more people with a disability
- Overcome barriers and stigma- *'work with the Chambers of Commerce to offer training and awareness programs on the advantages of employing people with a disability'*
- *'There is general discrimination toward people with disability and the elderly when it comes to employment'*
- Review position requirements' *"drivers licence was an essential criterion for an administration role, consequently she was unable to apply for the position, even though she was more than capable of undertaking the administration role'*
- Eliminate workplace barriers that deny PwD the opportunity to work

4. Improving access to services through better systems and processes

What you told us

- Compliant accessible website: *"Improved website content and access so people can access information and do business with Council, from their homes"*.
- Council information needs to consider all types of disability
- Assistance for older people accessing council services including waste bins etc
- All Council events to be inclusive of PwD/Carers
- Council to take a leadership role advocating for PwD/carers
- Review access and inclusion policies and procedures
- Train staff to be more aware of the needs of PwD/Carers
- Offer grant funding for disability access.

Disability Inclusion Action Plan

The Community Engagement Outcomes have informed the draft Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP). The Plan details the strategies, actions, time frames and resources required to implement the required improvements.

Each of the Strategies will be reflected in the next Community Strategic Plan planned for 2018.

The approved DIAP will assist Council with its obligation under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and provide a strategic framework for Council to plan for, and respond to, issues relating to disability access.

Risk Assessment

The DIAP will provide evidence of Council's commitment to continue to improve access for people with disability. As part of the development of the DIAP a simple High (H), Medium (M) and Low (L) risk management approach has been done by the Project Team. The risk assessment considers risks associated with the ongoing implementation of the DIAP.

Financial Implications

The DIAP is primarily funded through the existing operational and capital budgets. The actions in the Plan will be identified within the annual budgets. Some strategies are unfunded and would require a funding proposal to progress. Unfunded projects, will be considered as part of the preparation of the 2017-2021 Delivery Program and annually via the annual planning process. A number of strategies within the Action Plan relate to audits being undertaken as the first step. Such audits would then inform a strategic and holistic approach to improvement. This work will need to be costed and funding allocated when further details are available at the completion of a detailed strategy such as a public toilet strategy.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Council proposed to engage a Reference Group representing PwD/Carers, Service Providers and Advocates to review and monitor the implementation of the DIAP. A summative review for the DIAP will be undertaken annually and formal review every four years.

Councils must summarise how the DIAP component of the IP&R will be monitored and evaluated. This will be achieved through the usual process of monitoring and reporting on IP&R documents.

Consultation and Feedback

The first Draft was distributed to participants, community consultative groups and staff on 12th April 2017 for feedback. The feedback informed the final Draft DIAP. The Final Draft was made available for public comment through the Council processes. The approved plan is for implementation 1st July 2017.

Conclusion

The provision of accessible and inclusive communities is a vital part of enabling people with disability and their carers to participate in community life in the Snowy Valleys Council region. The Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2017-2021 will assist Council in meeting its obligations in relation to the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014 and ensure a strategic approach exists to support people with disability to participate fully in community life and access Council facilities and services.



Snowy Valley Council Disability Inclusion Action Plan

Objective 1**Attitudes and Behaviours: SVC Value: *Do what is right*****Strategic Goal:****Recognise the rights and contributions of people with disability and their carers**

Action	Expected Outcome	Risk	Measurement	Responsibility	Timeframe
1.1 Council staff undertake the accredited inclusive service provision training. Accredited program provided at orientation.	PwD/Carers feel welcome and included.	H	Accredited Disability Awareness Training undertaken & included in orientation. HR information refers to the DIAP and DIA.	Director Internal Services	2020
1.2 Council's, value ' <i>Do what is right</i> ' and actions are inclusive of all people.	Statements and behaviours are inclusive and behaviours reflect their intent.	H	PwD/Carers report improvements in the attitudes and behaviours of Councillors & Council staff.	Councillors Director Internal Services	2020
1.3 Council planning processes includes the rights of PwD.	Council's planning processes reflect the DIA (2014) & Access to premises Standards.	H	Planning is inclusive of the needs and requirements of PwD.	Director Assets & Infrastructure	2018
1.4 Council takes a leadership role in removing barriers to PwD fully participating in society.	PwD/carers view the Council as supporting and advocating for their needs.	M	PwD/Carers report positive experiences with Council.	Director Internal Services	Ongoing

Action	Expected Outcome	Risk	Measurement	Responsibility	Timeframe
1.5 Establish a SVC Disability Inclusion & Access Reference Group.	DIARG formed and includes PwD/Carers, disability advocacy groups and service providers.	H	DIARG formed, Terms of Reference approved and the group influences Council decisions.	Strategic Planning and Engagement Officer	2017/2018
1.6 Support education initiatives that raise awareness of the needs of PwD/Carers.	Council encourages & supports schools and community groups to host specialist disability programs/speakers.	M	Council partners with schools to host local awareness programs.	Group Manager Community Services	Ongoing
1.7 Develop database of local disability networks and service providers.	Database available on website. Hard copy available.	M	New website includes a Community Services directory and relevant links.	Group Manager Community Services	6 monthly
1.8 Advocate for a “Disability Access” specific award for businesses to be included in local Business Awards.	Recognition of disability access and PwD in the workplace.	M	Presentation of “Disability Access” award at Local Business Awards ceremony.	Economic Development & Tourism Team Leader	Biennially 2019

Action	Expected Outcome	Risk	Measurement	Responsibility	Timeframe
1.9 Utilise International Day of People with Disabilities to promote inclusion to the general community.	Focus on inclusion and access to acknowledge International Day of PwD.	M	Positive feedback and response from participants.	Community Services Libraries	Annually
1.10 Integrate access principles into the planning of Council supported events.	Access principles such as those in “Accessible Events” guidelines integrated into Council organised activities Develop and promote an event resource kit with special reference to inclusion of PwD/Carers.	H	“Accessible Events” checklist is utilised. Development and promotion of “Events Resource Kit”.	Events and Tourism Officer	Annually
1.11 SVC is Recognised as a Council championing and promoting inclusion and access.	DIAP and the principles of Universal Design are integrated into the CSP, Delivery Plan and Operational plan. Council presents promotional material that includes PwD/Carers.	H	DIAP implemented and evaluated. The Principles of Universal Design are adopted for planning.	Strategic Planning & Engagement Officer	2021

Objective 2**Liveable Communities – SVC Values : *Look to the future, Build Pride, Get the job done*****Strategic Goal:****Accessible and inclusive communities.**

Action	Expected Outcome	Risk	Measurement	Responsibility	Timeframe
2.1 Conduct an audit of Council owned assets and facilities (AS1428 parts 1-5).	Access and mobility improvement plan included in regular audits.	H	Implementation of DIAP and access and mobility improvement plan compliant with the principles of Universal Design & AS1428	Director Assets & Infrastructure	2018 - 2021
2.2 Include signage and update to comply with AS1428.	Signage is compliant for the inclusion of PwD/Carers requirements.	M	New signage is compliant with disability standards.	Director Assets & Infrastructure	2017 - 2021
2.3 Develop mobility and Access maps across the Shire.	Maps detail access to community structures.	M	Mobility and Access maps available through SVC Web Site and Tourist Information Centres.	Economic Development & Tourism Team Leader	2020
2.4 Provide resources for business and industry to do an access and mobility audit.	Resources available for compliance with AS1428.	H	PwD report improved access to local business.	Economic Development & Tourism Team Leader	Ongoing
2.5 Community grants include consideration of disability and inclusion criteria.	PwD/Carers are considered in Council grants	M	Community grant funds consider access and inclusion.	Economic Development & Tourism Team Leader	2017/2017 Ongoing

Action	Expected Outcome	Risk	Measurement	Responsibility	Timeframe
2.6 Develop/support shared pathways education campaign to reduce conflict between pedestrians, bicycles and scooters.	Safe shared pathways.	H	Decreased pedestrian complaints.	Strategic Town Planner & Road Safety Officer	Annual
2.7 Accessible transport to events within the Council area.	Community transport vehicles are accessible and can be hired for transport to events etc.	H	Community transport vehicles used to transport PwD/Carers to events.	Community Support Community Transport	Ongoing
2.8 Source funding for 'all abilities' to improve recreation facilities.	Installation of accessible equipment in recreation areas.	H	PwD/Carers report the ability to access and enjoy recreation facilities.	Manager Open Space Recreation & Facilities	Ongoing
2.9 Maintenance of playground & recreation equipment to include access.	Council playground recreation equipment to be compliant with disability standards.	M-H	Regular assessment of equipment. DIA compliant.	Manager Open Space Recreation & Facilities	Ongoing
2.10 Review PAMP to comply with CAPT guidelines (include road crossings).	Continuous Accessible Path of Travel in business precinct.	H	CAPT plan implemented.	Strategic Town Planner & Road Safety Officer	2021

Action	Expected Outcome	Risk	Measurement	Responsibility	Timeframe
2.11 Investigate the options for collection of large waste and green waste.	Waste management plan to include options for collection of large waste and green waste.	H	Large and green waste collection in place.	Waste Management Officer	2020

Objective 3 Employment SVC Values: *Work together, and Look out for each other*

Strategic Goal: A respectful, inclusive and diverse work place.

Action	Expected Outcome	Risk	Measurement	Responsibility	Timeframe
3.1 Review recruitment and HR policies for compliance with DIA eg; Positions advertised welcome applications from PwD/Carers.	Policies and processes are accessible, inclusive and compliant with the DIA.	H	Increased number of PwD employed.	Group Manager People, Culture & Governance	2017/2018 and ongoing
3.2 Provide accessible and flexible workplaces inclusive of limitations of PwD.	Council workplaces are inclusive and accessible.	H	Increased number of PwD employed.	Group Manager People, Culture & Governance	Ongoing
3.3 Offer work experience and work placement to PwD.	PwD undertake work experience/placement with Council	M	Number of PwD undertaking work experience/work placement/year.	Group Manager People, Culture & Governance	Ongoing
3.4 Provide NDIS services.	Council community services are NDIS accredited. Services are promoted and accessed by people using the NDIS.	H	Maintain NDIS approval SVC Community Services are accessed by people using NDIS.	Community Support Community Transport	Ongoing
3.5 Provide opportunities for PwD/Carers to volunteer in Council.	PwD/carers volunteer in Council departments.	M	Number of PwD/Carers volunteering/year.	Group Manager People, Culture & Governance	Ongoing

Action	Expected Outcome	Risk	Measurement	Responsibility	Timeframe
				Community Support Community Transport	
3.6 Continue the MOU arrangements with Valmar Support Services and continue to seek similar arrangements for other Council Services.	PwD obtain meaningful employment	H	MOU between Valmar Services and SVC in place Further options are considered and MOUs in place.	Group Manager Development and Environment	Ongoing

Objective 4: Systems and Processes. SVC Values: *Do what is right, and Look to the future*

Strategic Goal: Council information and resources are accessible and inclusive.

Action	Expected Outcome	Risk	Measurement	Responsibility	Timeframe
4.1 Website is compliant with WCAG 2.0 guidelines.	PwD/carers can access Council information.	M	SVC website complies with the Web Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 AA.	IT Team Leader/Technical Support Communications Officer	2017/2018
4.2 DIARG participate in consultation processes including planning and design projects.	Consultation processes are inclusive.	M	PwD/carers report improved opportunities to participate in Council processes.	Strategic Planning & Engagement Officer	Ongoing
4.3 All Council information is inclusive and accessible.	Council information is inclusive and accessible to PwD/ carers.	M	PwD/carers report improved access to Council information.	Communications Officer	Ongoing
4.4 Promote the NSW Carers Charter.	Carers rights are respected.	M	Staff have knowledge of Carers Charter.	HR Business Partners & Projects	Ongoing

Action	Expected Outcome	Risk	Measurement	Responsibility	Timeframe
4.5 Develop a fact sheet to assist Council customer service staff in responding to queries regarding services for PWD/carers.	Fact sheet available for staff.	H	Utilisation of fact sheet. PwD/Carers report improved customer service.	Coordinator Customer Service	2017/2018
4.6 Develop and maintain a register of interested people in receiving Council information in alternative formats.	Register developed and updated. Information available to PwD/carers upon request.	H	Register will reflect number of requests.	Communications Officer	2017/2018
4.7 Investigate Portable Counter Hearing Loops.	Hearing Loops available for all Council meetings and customer service areas, including Tourist Information Centres so that hearing impaired can access Council information easily and equitably.	M	Hearing loops available.	Economic Development & Tourism Team Leader	2019

Action	Expected Outcome	Risk	Measurement	Responsibility	Timeframe
<p>4.8 Use Disability Inclusion and Access Reference Group when developing the Community Strategic Plan and evaluating the DIAP.</p>	<p>Reference Group invited to participate in the development of the CSP and evaluation of the DIAP.</p>	<p>H</p>	<p>PWD/carers included in recommendations and committee reports. DIAP reviewed annually.</p>	<p>Strategic Planning & Engagement Officer</p>	<p>2017/2018 Annual</p>