

# **DUNGOG SHIRE COUNCIL**



## **DISABILITY INCLUSION ACTION PLAN**

**2017 - 2020**

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Dungog Shire Council acknowledges the traditional owners and pays its respect to Elders both past and present.

We recognise and respect their cultural heritage, beliefs and continuing relationship with the land, and that they are proud survivors.

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Message from the Mayor

Dungog Shire Council embraces the inclusion of people with a disability in all aspects of community life. We are committed to creating a more inclusive and welcoming community for people with disabilities and it is with pleasure that I present the Disability Inclusion Action Plan.

The Plan demonstrates our commitment to improve the quality of our services, facilities, systems and programs over a three year period. The Plan was developed through consultation with the community and outlines the actions we will take to provide more accessible and inclusive services.

We look forward to hearing about the positive impact the Plan has for people with a disability in our Shire.

Mayor, Councillor Harold Johnston

## Message from the General Manager

Disability Inclusion Planning is about supporting the basic right of choice for people with disability in our community. People with disability have the same right to choose how to live, work and enjoy community life as we all do. Council's aim is to ensure that our services, programs and facilities are inclusive.

The Plan aims to improve conditions for people with a disability who live, work and visit our Shire. I look forward to working with staff and our community to put the plan into action.

General Manager, Craig Deasey

## 1.2 Background

In August 2014 the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014 was passed. This Act requires Council to develop a Disability Inclusion Action Plan to help remove barriers and enable people with a disability to participate fully in their communities. This plan sets out a series of principles, strategies and actions that will guide Council operations over the next four years.

Council's vision is for an inclusive, respectful and diverse community where all residents and visitors enjoy a safe and friendly environment. Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan will aim to provide better access to Council information, services and facilities ensuring people with disabilities can fully participate in their community.

This Disability Inclusion Action Plan was developed through community consultation and research process. A review of Council documents and Government policy took place and a staff surveyed was conducted.

Community consultation involved talking with numerous groups and directly 143 people over a 5 month period. During this time we held agency meetings, conducted surveys, held community conversations, kitchen table conversations and Dungog Shire Access committee, consisting of community members, played a role in the development of this Plan.

## 2. Legislation and Policy

People with a disability, their families and carers have the same rights as all people to access services and facilities. These rights are part of State and Commonwealth policy and legislation which make it unlawful to discriminate against a person with a disability.

For the first time all levels of government across Australia have committed to a unified, national approach to improving the lives of people with disability, their families and carers through the development of the National Disability Strategy. The Commonwealth National Disability Strategy (NDS) 2010-2020 sets out a 10 year national plan for improving life for Australians with disability, their families and carers. The NDS is underpinned by the UN Human rights approach. This approach also supports the NSW Government enactment of the NSW Disability Inclusion Act (DIA) 2014.

### ***Related Legislation and Standards***

#### International

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

#### Commonwealth

- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- National Disability Strategy 2010-2020
- National Art and Disability Strategy (2009)
- Disability (Access to Premises Standards – Buildings) Standards 2010

#### NSW

- NSW Disability Inclusion Act (DIA) 2014
- Carers (Recognition) Act 2010 (NSW)
- NSW Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (ADA)
- Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002
- National Disability Strategy – NSW Implementation Plan 2012 -2014
- Local Government Act 1993 and Local Government (General) Regulation 2005

This diagram below shows the Commonwealth and State Legislation that informs the development of local government disability access and inclusion planning.

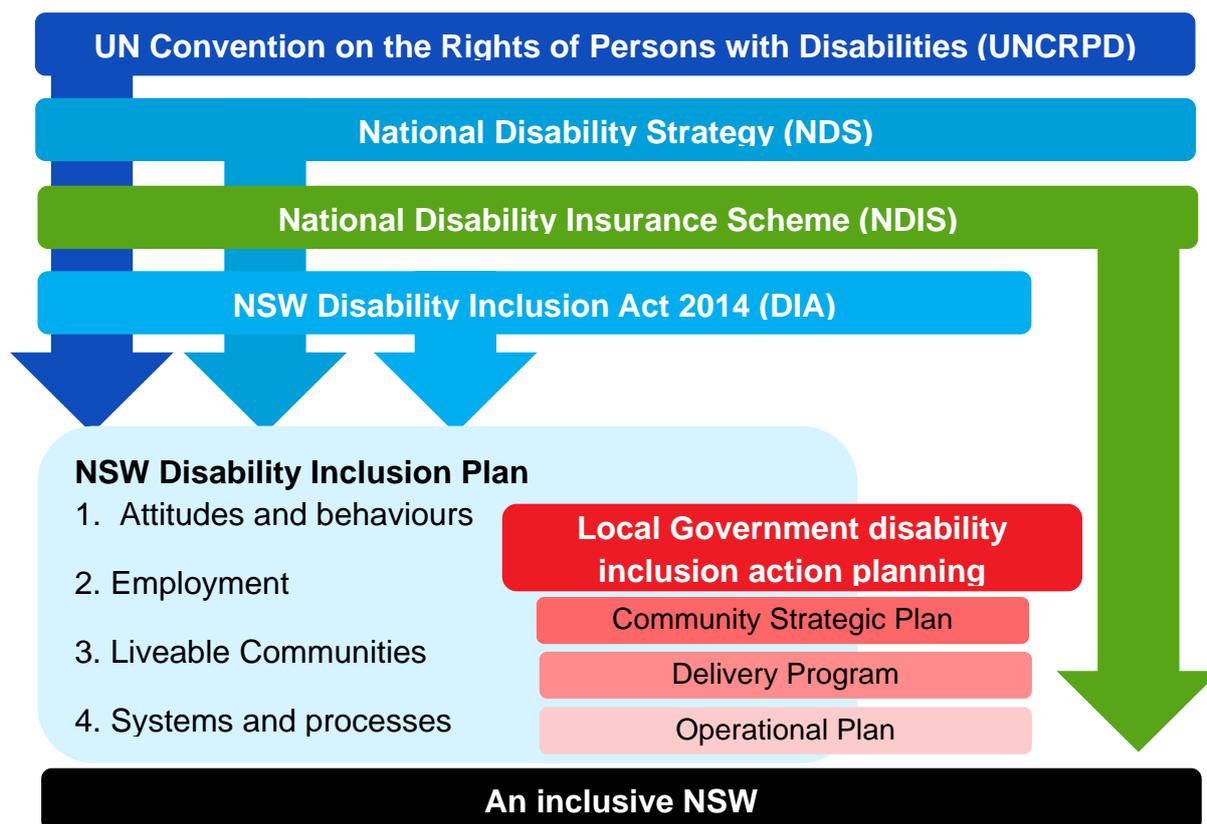


Figure 1: The relationships between the relevant policy and legislative instruments.

Source: Disability Inclusion Action Planning Guidelines Local Government.

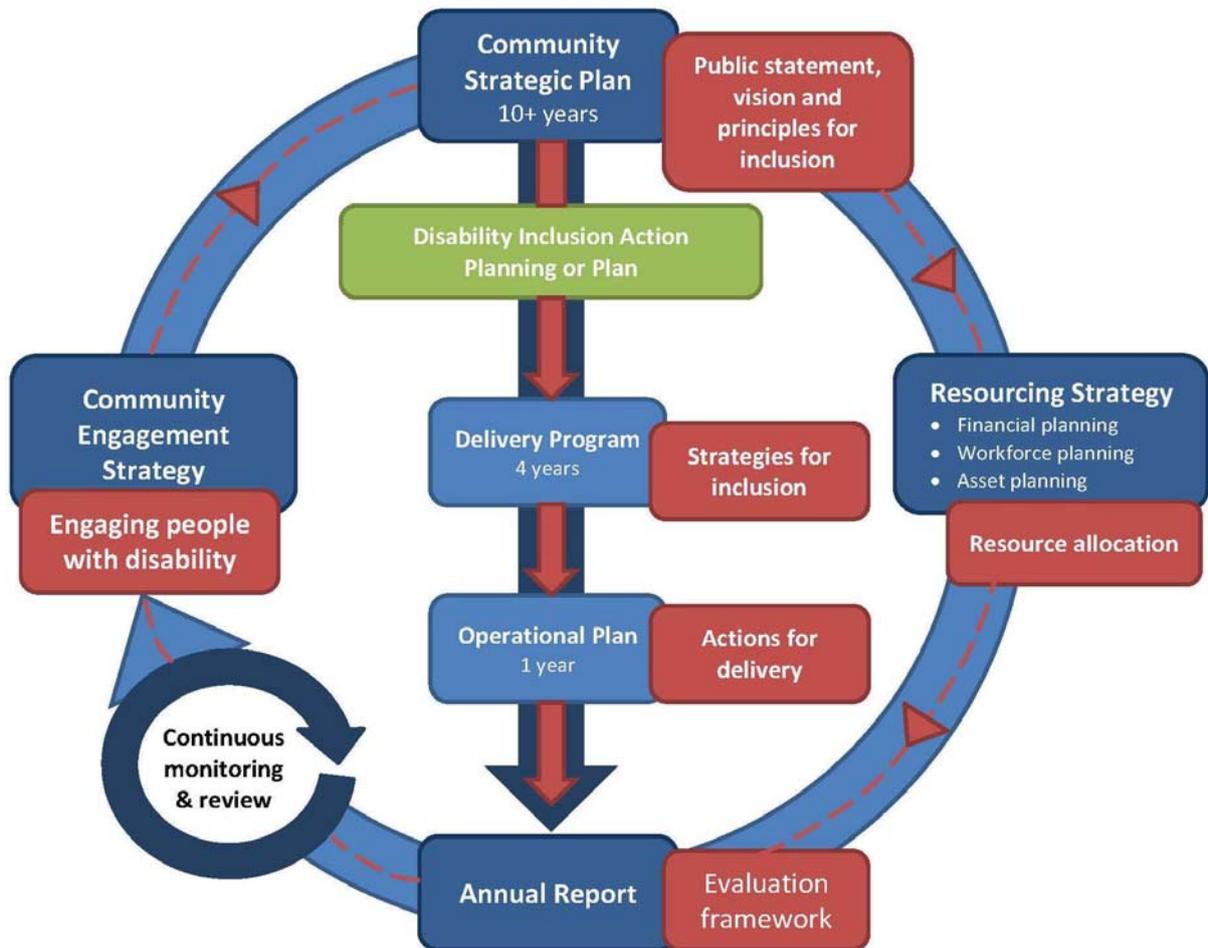
The Disability Inclusion Plan supports Dungog Shire Councils Community Strategic plan and aligns with the principles of the Disability Inclusion Act 2014, as well as the NSW Government’s Disability Inclusion Plan which specifies four focus areas.

The four focus areas are “aimed at creating long term change and require consistent efforts from government and the wider community” These are:

1. Developing positive community attitudes and behaviours
2. Creating Liveable communities
3. Supporting access to meaningful employment
4. Improving access to the mainstream services through better systems and processes  
- (NSW Disability Inclusion Plan)

## Local

Dungog Shire Council Community Strategic Plan 2030 was created by the community and provides a long term vision for our Shire. The Community Strategic Plan informs Council's Delivery Program and Operational Plan, which set out Council's role in achieving the community's vision. The Disability Inclusion Action Plan is within this framework



This diagram shows how the Disability Inclusion Action Plan fits into the integrated planning and reporting framework of local government.

### 3. Dungog LGA Disability Snapshot

The Disability Inclusion Act 2014 (DIA) defines disability as:

“The long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment which in interaction with various barriers may hinder the full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.”

Information about disability in Dungog Shire is based on Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Census data. The Census records information on people who identify as needing help with mobility, self-care or communication due to disability or long-term health conditions.

- Dungog Shire Population 9108
- 90% of the population is Australian born with 3.8% of total population being Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.
- 5.9 % of the population, or 490 people living in Dungog Shire, Identified as needing assistance because of a profound or severe disability.
- 18.8% of the population, or 1633 people identified as living in a private dwelling with a person that is in need of assistance because of a profound or severe disability.
- The number of people who provide unpaid assistance to person living in Dungog Shire with a disability over the age of 15 is 950.

#### ***Council Activity***

- Celebrate International Day of People with Disabilities as an annual event
- Provision of Mobility Parking spaces within the LGA
- Provision of Accessible toilets within the LGA
- Dungog Shire Library provides support for people with impairments
- Installation of fitness equipment within one of our local parks for people with disability

## 4. Community Consultation

This plan was informed by a Community survey, staff survey, community conversations, conversations with community service and health workers, people with a disability and their carers over a 5 month period.

A number of key areas were consistently identified throughout all of the consultations. The opportunity to constructively engage with Council was of significant importance to those who willingly engaged in the discussion contributing to Council's understanding of the challenges that people with a disability experience across the Shire.

One of those key areas identified was that disability was diverse, hidden and often stereotyped with assumptions and generalisations. It was of importance that there was more opportunities to understand more about disability in Dungog Shire and identify major disadvantages frequently faced such as employment opportunities for those with disabilities or transport for those who live outside of the townships to link with existing services.

### ***Community Conversation Snapshot:***

#### ***Community Attitudes and Behaviours***

- Provide more opportunities for the community to both engage and include people with disability
- More education for the community, businesses and Council about the broad range of disabilities
- Promote accessible businesses and tourism

#### ***Creating Liveable Communities***

- Accessible footpaths that connect to parking, facilities and services
- More parking and drop off points near facilities
- More accessible toilets in particular sporting facilities
- Provision of disability seating and fencing within parks and venues

#### ***Employment***

- Designated positions for people with disability
- Accessible work places
- Support social enterprises

#### ***Improving our Systems and Processes***

- Let the community know what Council can and can not do in relation to access and the challenges faced
- Ensure Council's website, print material and media is accessible
- Ensure Information is kept simple

## **Moving Forward**

Overall the community input has assisted Dungog Shire Council in developing the strategies and actions included under each outcome area – Attitudes and Behaviours, Liveable Communities, Employment and Systems and Processes, which will be implemented over the next three years.

This represents a summary of key issues and concerns raised in the community consultation process. Under the guidance of the NSW Disability Inclusion Act, Council's first Disability Inclusion Action Plan has specific strategies and actions that will enable Dungog Shire to work towards becoming an accessible and inclusive community for all.

## 5. ACTION PLAN

### *Attitudes and Behaviours*

Council encourages positive and inclusive staff behaviours and a whole of community attitude to people with a disability as people's attitudes impact all aspects of community life.

| STRATEGY   | ACTION  | OUTCOME  | DELIVERY |
|--|---|--|----------|
| 1. Improve staff awareness of disability issues in the community in order to provide responsive services for customers with disability | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Include disability awareness training in staff induction.</li> <li>- Undertake 'break down barriers' awareness with councillors, management and staff</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Module to be included</li> <li>- Annual workshop</li> </ul> | ongoing  |
| 2. Celebrate inclusiveness   | Partner with local organisations to support IDPWD to promote inclusion to the wider community   | Annually held  | December |
| 3. Dungog Shire Access Committee   | Committee of both community individuals and organisations to advocate, identify and advise council to improve access and inclusion  | Held quarterly   |          |

**Liveable Communities**

Council contributes and advocates for liveable and welcoming Shire, where people can move about easily to access services and facilities and participate in community life.

| STRATEGY  | ACTION   | OUTCOME   | DELIVERY |
|---|--|---|----------|
| 3. Safe and accessible community facilities   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Undertake an LGA wide assessment of community infrastructure to identify location, design and management of accessible toilet and change facilities</li> <li>- Identify and promote accessible council venues and infrastructure</li> <li>- Improve the continuous accessible paths of travel including parking, footpaths and kerb ramps in our town and village centres, to key destinations such as recreation and community facilities</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Assessment annually</li> <li>- Information provided on website and to all enquiries</li> <li>- Prioritise actions to be completed to timeframe and budget</li> </ul> | Ongoing  |
| 4. Progress actions in Councils Pedestrian Access Mobility Plan                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review the Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan</li> <li>- Ensure all new road and transport infrastructure (such as pedestrian crossings) undertaken by Council are co ordinated with Plan priorities</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Plan to reviewed and provide opportunity for input</li> <li>- Identify priorities based on budget allocations</li> </ul>   |          |
| 5. Advocate for improved access and inclusion outcomes in "whole of governments" policy         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide input to the Dungog Shire Traffic Committee to improve access outcomes</li> <li>- Work with community transport providers to maintain understanding of issues impacting the disability sector</li> </ul>  | Opportunities to participate identified   | ongoing  |
| 6. Contribute towards programs which aim to increase social inclusion and community connections | Advocate for accessible and inclusive whole of community events facilitated by Council and community groups  | Programs and projects identified annually   | ongoing  |
| 7. Audit signage at key venues ie tactile signage   | Audit to be completed  | Identify and prioritise   |          |



## 6. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Each year, Council will report on its progress against the Disability Inclusion Action Plan as part of its Annual Report. The plan will be reviewed annually in line with the Integrated Planning and Reporting Cycle. A summary of its achievement will also be prepared and provided to the NSW Disability Council.

An Audit, evaluation and review of the Plan will be conducted at the end of its term.