



Brewarrina Shire Council Disability Inclusion Action Plan

2017 – 2019

Adopted 24 February 2017



Contents

Message from the Mayor 3

Message from the General Manager 3

Background 4

Legislation and Policy 4

Disability Snapshot in Brewarrina Shire 7

Community Consultation 8

Action Plan – What Council will do 10

Monitoring and Evaluation 14

Acknowledgement 14

Message from the Mayor



Brewarrina 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 Phillip O'Connor

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, Dan Simmons

Background

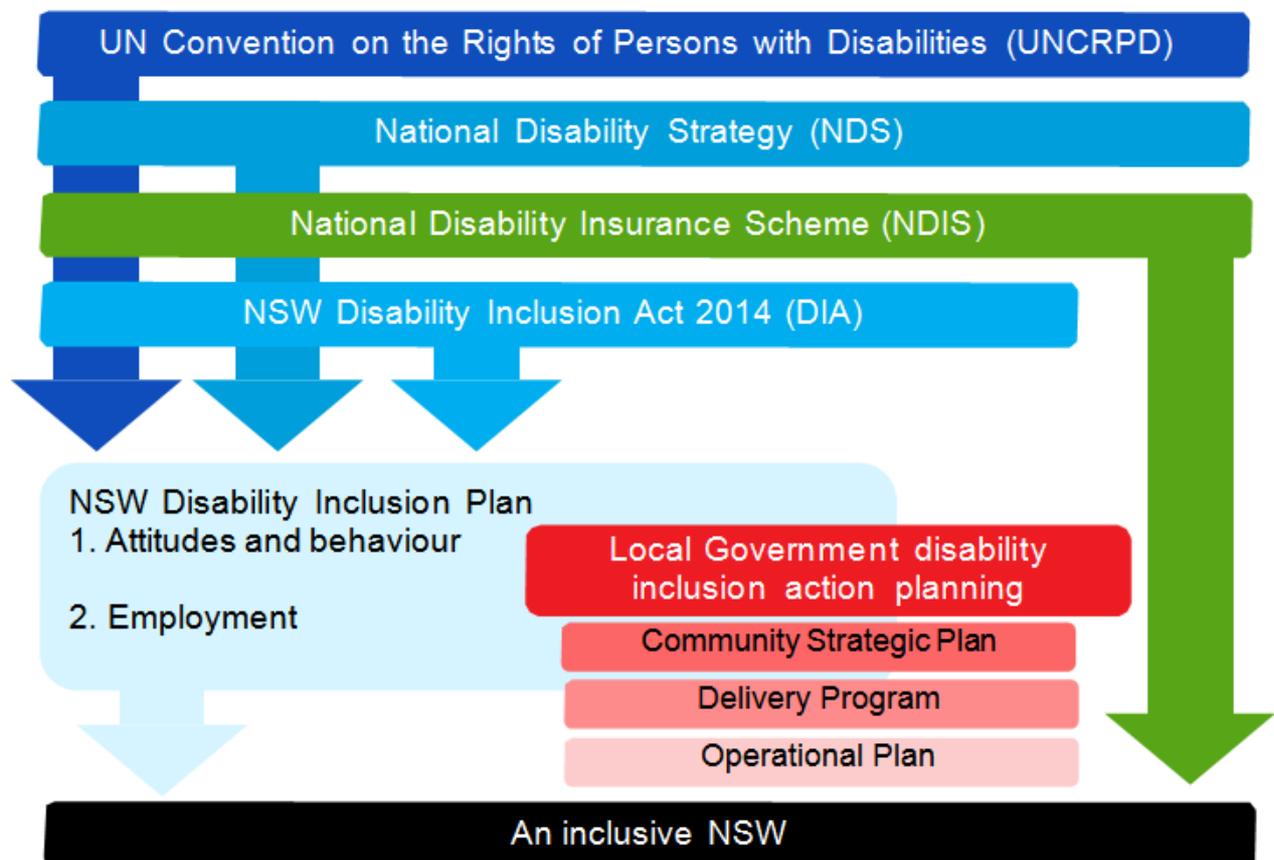
In August 2014 the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014 was passed. This Act requires Brewarrina Shire Council to develop a Disability Inclusion Action Plan to help remove barriers and enable people with a disability to participate fully in their communities.

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 a community consultation and research process. A review of Council documents and Government policy took place and a staff / community surveyed was conducted. Community consultation involved talking with service providers that worked with aged and disabled members of our community.

The plan was endorsed at Council's November 2016 meeting and placed on public exhibition. The Plan was formally adopted at Council's February 2017 meeting.

Legislation and Policy



Source: Disability Inclusion Action Planning Guidelines Local Government

International

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities protects the rights of all people with a disability around the world. Australia was one of the first countries to sign the Convention when it was ratified in 2008. The convention acknowledges that people with disability have the same human rights as those without disability. This commits participating governments to ensure these rights can be exercised and that barriers are removed. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities supports the social model of disability. This recognises that attitudes, practices and structures are disabling and can create barriers for people with disability from enjoying economic participation, social inclusion and equality which are not an inevitable outcome of their disability.

The Convention is guided by the following principles:

- respect for inherent dignity, individual autonomy including the freedom to make one's own choices and independence of persons;
- non-discrimination;
- full and effective participation and inclusion in society;
- respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity;
- equality of opportunity;
- Accessibility;
- equality between men and women;
- respect for the evolving capacities of children with disabilities and respect for the right of children with disabilities to preserve their identities.

National

National Disability Strategy 2010-2020

The National Disability Strategy 2010-2020, developed in partnership by the Commonwealth, State, Territory and Local Governments, sets out a national plan for improving life for Australians with disability, their families and carers, to support the commitment made to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Actions in the Implementation Plan that involve councils include improving Web Content accessibility, access to infrastructure, recreation, employment and community participation.

National Disability Insurance Scheme

The National Disability Insurance Scheme is a major reform that will deliver a national system of disability support focused on the individual needs and choices of people with disability. The National Disability Insurance Scheme gives participants more choice and control over how, when and where supports are provided.

State

Disability Inclusion Act 2014 (NSW)

The Disability Inclusion Act (2014) acknowledges human rights; promoting the independence and social and economic inclusion of people with disability.

The Act requires NSW government departments, local councils and some other public authorities to develop and implement a Disability Inclusion Action Plan. The plan must be consistent with the State Disability Inclusion Plan and include strategies to increase access and participation.

Local

Brewarrina Shire Council Community Strategic Plan 2026 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. Other Council plans and documents relevant to the Disability Inclusion Action Plan include:

- Pedestrian Access Mobility Plan
- Community Engagement Strategy
- Equal Employment Opportunity Policy

Community Priorities

Council is committed to focusing on the following future priorities;

- Ensuring Local Government Representation by striving to be "Fit for the Future"
- Increase pride in our towns and villages
- Attract and retain population and visitation numbers
- Maintain current services and improve access to services
- Create employment opportunities
- Foster a safe community
- Involve our children and youth in decisions and activities
- Build community respect and purpose within the community
- Improve our sporting and recreational infrastructure
- Encourage residents and ratepayers to have a say in decisions affecting the community
- Develop local leaders

Other legislation and standards informing Council's work

- Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Commonwealth Disability (Access to Premises-Buildings) Standards 2010
- NSW Anti-Discrimination Act 1977
- Carers Recognition Act 2012
- Local Government Act 1993 and Local Government (General) Regulation 2005

Disability Snapshot in Brewarrina Shire

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 Brewarrina 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.

4.3% of the population, or 70 people living in Brewarrina Shire, Identified as needing assistance because of a profound or severe disability.

Need for assistance with core activities 2011

Assistance needed by age group (years)	Number
0 to 4	0
5 to 14	3
15 to 19	3
20 to 24	0
25 to 34	0
35 to 44	3
45 to 54	11
55 to 64	20
65 to 74	9
75 to 84	13
85 and over	8
Total persons needing assistance	70

Disability Support Pension and Career Pension

In Brewarrina Shire there were 26 persons receiving Career Payments in 2012 and in 2014 this had increased to 35.

The number of people receiving the Disability support Pension in 2012 was 149 and in 2014 it had increased to 168.

	2012	2013	2014
Career Payment	26	32	35
Disability Support Pension	149	152	168

Council Activity

Council works to provide opportunities and raise awareness of inclusion of people with disabilities.

Some examples include:

- Raising the entrance to the Brewarrina Shire Council Library / Centrelink entrance and removing the step
- Putting hand rails at the Brewarrina Swimming Pool to assist with access to the pool
- Celebrate Careers Day, recognising people that care for people with as an annual event
- Ensuring Brewarrina's Pedestrian Access Mobility Plan recognises those with disabilities and mobility issues.

Community Consultation

Council visited and staff spoke with 25 careers, aged, disabled and mobility challenged people over a 4 week period (October – November 2016). During these visits the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DIAP) Survey, was given out to those in the community who have a disability and the careers of those who have a disability.

There was a series of questions in the in the survey asking the participants how the Brewarrina Shire can support and allow for people with a disability to fully participate in community life. Many of the questions asked in the survey were about council facilities and accessing them.

There were around 20 people men and women from the ages of 25 – 90 years, who completed the survey and gave their opinions on how the Brewarrina Shire Council can support those with a disability and their careers.

Key community responses highlighted the importance of being involved in the local community and having access to appropriate services and recreational and social opportunities.

Positive feedback for Council services and programs involved improvements at the Brewarrina Swimming Pool and the development of Library/Centrelink access. The majority of challenges identified by participants related to mobility (in terms of navigating the built environment).

The answers in many of the surveys were the same and it revolved around the Brewarrina Shire Councils Footpaths, particularly in the main street.

- "The footpath is uneven and it is a trip hazard for many"
- "When wet they are extremely slippery"
- "Wheel chair wheels can fall between the cracks"
- "There is not enough gutter access for those, in wheelchairs – if you park in the middle of the street you have to wheel up to the end of the street to get up the gutter"

Participants of the survey questioned as to why there are no footpaths placed around "Newtown" or the "Billabong" areas of town. Careers made a point of saying, "Not everyone has access to transport and the kilometer walk into town is challenging when they have to go through mud, dirt and burs because there are no foot paths." Another person made this point about the Brewarrina Cemetery as well.

Many people found that accessing Brewarrina Shire Council buildings and facilities generally was not too bad, however it was pointed out that some council buildings and businesses do have double door access and are wheel chair friendly, but generally only one of those doors is open. It was mentioned that people do find it embarrassing to ask for help from staff to open both doors.

The participants of the survey did not mind that there are no disabled parking spots around the town, as you can always get a park, except when there is an event on in town, this is most challenging.

Other widely accepted barriers and issues for people with disabilities in Brewarrina include;

Positive attitudes and behaviour

- Stereotypes and negative attitudes about disability cause barriers to full access and inclusion. Many people make assumptions based on what they think people with a disability can and cannot do, should or should not do.
- Attitudes to people with a disability should not be determined by fear or ignorance and Council can play a role in promoting positive community behaviour.
- Increase visibility of people with a disability in Council and community publications.
- More education for the community about the broad range of disabilities.
- Higher awareness among businesses about the value of employing people with a disability.

Live able communities

- It is important that all people can move about easily to access facilities and services and participate in community life. Pedestrian access featured highly with calls for more footpaths that are wider and better maintained. Suggestions were also made for safety education for pedestrians and mobility aid users. Seating in main-street, and along primary routes, for aged/people with mobility issues was raised on a number of occasions.
- Lack of access into shops for mobility aid users was raised along with improved street lighting.

Employment

- Meaningful employment contributes to independence and feelings of self-worth. Opportunities to work in paid and volunteer roles are important. Local employment, especially for school leavers, is important to the long term future of the community.
- Educate employers on the value of employing people with a disability.
- Provide more opportunities for meaningful employment for people with a disability.
- Provide accessible work places and volunteer opportunities.
- Ensure accessible recruitment practices - simple forms and language.

Service systems and processes

- Some Council information is difficult to access and is only available in print format. Service information and processes don't allow for people with a range of disabilities.
- Keep information simple.
- Ensure information is provided in a variety of formats.
- Provide information about the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

Action Plan – What Council will do

1. – Positive attitudes and behaviour

Strategic Goal	Action	Measurement	Responsibility-Business Unit	Timeframe	Community Strategic Plan Link
Promote positive attitudes and behaviour	Audit website to ensure that images include people with disabilities and that language is appropriate.	Website includes appropriate images and language.	Tourism and Events Manager	December 2017	TBA on review of CSP 2017
	Develop and facilitate Disability Awareness Training for staff (other than induction training).	Staff training completed.	Human Resources	Develop July 2018 Facilitate annually	

2 – Live able communities

Strategic Goal	Action	Measurement	Responsibility	Timeframe	Community Strategic Plan Link
	Continue to provide opportunities for community connection by facilitating and promoting International Day of People with Disabilities event.	Community celebration and participant feedback.	Community Development Officer	Annually	TBA on review of CSP 2017
	Promote universal design practices to home owners, house designers, and builders.	Information provided to all applicants.	Health, Building & Environmental Services	December 2017	
	Audit activities and events run by Council for accessibility.	Accessibility issues identified and addressed.	Tourism and Events Manager	July 2018	

	Progress actions in Council's Pedestrian Access Mobility Plan.	Priority actions completed to timeframe and budget.	Engineering Services	December 2018	TBA on review of CSP 2017
	Investigate improvement to pedestrian crossing in the Brewarrina main street.	Viability of Pedestrian Crossing assessed and progressed if appropriate	Engineering Services	July 2018	
	Review seating provision in Brewarrina main street.	Seating provision reviewed by Council. Outcomes communicated to community.	Technical Services	December 2018	
	Source funding for all abilities play equipment to improve playgrounds throughout the Shire.	Installation of accessible play equipment throughout Shire.	Technical Services	July 2017 – Dec 2019	
	Develop and maintain a NDIS page on the Council Website.	NDIS Website established and maintained.	Tourism and Events Manager / Community Development Officer	December 2017	TBA on review of CSP 2017
	Assist ageing and disability service providers as required in the changing climate of the National Disability Insurance Scheme.	Number of local organisations/ partnerships supported.	Community Development Officer	July 2017 – Dec 2019	
	Audit Council buildings and facilities to ensure accessibility compliance.	Audit complete with recommendations for action.	Human Resource Manager	December 2017	TBA on review of CSP 2017

3 – Employment

Strategic Goal	Action	Measurement	Responsibility	Timeframe	Community Strategic Plan Link
Enhance employment of people with a disability within Council.	Develop Council's Workforce Management Strategy to include best practice guidelines for inclusion.	Gaps in Workforce Management Strategy identified and addressed.	Human Resources	December 2018	TBA on review of CSP 2017
	Review recruitment processes, forms and language for accessibility.	Recruitment process, forms and language targeted and simplified.	Human Resources	December 2017	
	Provide information and training for Council supervisors/ managers in order to increase their knowledge and skill.	Increased level of knowledge and skill displayed by supervisors/managers.	Human Resources	July 2019	
	Continue to conduct and respond to staff disability inclusion survey.	Staff survey conducted and collated with recommendation made.	Human Resources	Annually.	

4 – Service systems and processes

Strategic Goal	Action	Measurement	Responsibility	Timeframe	Community Strategic Plan Link
Information is provided in a variety of formats	Develop a fact sheet to assist Brewarrina Shire Council customer service staff respond to queries regarding services for people with disabilities.	Fact sheet developed and utilised by staff. Increased level of staff knowledge.	Community Services	December 2017	TBA on review of CSP 2017
	Develop plan for Website content compliance with disability standards.	Website content meets accessibility standards	Tourism and Events Manager	December 2019	

	Investigate technologies to enhance the accessibility of customer service experience across Council.	Community members who are hearing impaired can access Council information easily and equitably.	Director Corporate and Community Services	July 2018	TBA on review of CSP 2017
Consult with people with a disability regarding their needs.	Review the current community consultation procedure to include a checklist on inclusive consultation.	Community Consultation includes people with disabilities.	Community Development Officer	December 2017	TBA on review of CSP 2017

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring

The Disability Inclusion Action Plan includes timelines to guide the completion of the actions. The process will be monitored and evaluated through the Integrated Planning and Reporting cycle.

Implementation of the Plan will be undertaken by the responsible Business Units. Each action will be monitored and reported against for the periods 1 July – 31 December and 1 January – 30 June of each year.

The Director of Corporate and Community Services will monitor the overall implementation of the Plan and the integration of its actions into Council's new Delivery Program and annual Operational Plan.

Reporting

Outcomes and achievements will be reported in Council's Annual Report and General Managers six monthly report to the community. These reports will be available on Council's Website and at its Administration Building, 57 Bathurst Street, Brewarrina.

A report will also be provided to the Department of Family and Community Services and the Minister for Disability Services.

Review

The Plan will be reviewed annually in line with the Integrated Planning and Reporting cycle. An audit, evaluation and review of the Plan will be conducted at the end of Council's term.

Acknowledgement

Council would like to thank the many community members who provided their views, personal stories and ideas for positive change.