

**8.5.1                    DISABILITY INCLUSION ACTION PLAN 2022–  
2027 - ANNUAL UPDATE, JULY 2023 – JUNE  
2024**

**File No:                09.00051**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That the information be noted.

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**REPORT:**

The NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014 mandates that all NSW Councils have a Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP).

The purpose of a DIAP is to outline strategies and actions Council will put in place to remove barriers and enable people with disability to participate equally in their community.

Bathurst Regional Council’s DIAP 2022 – 2027 was adopted on 20 July 2022. The DIAP was developed with four key focus areas aligning with the principles of the Disability Inclusion Act 2014. These focus areas are:

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

The following report provides an update on activities and initiatives delivered by Bathurst Regional Council from July 2023 – June 2024.

**ACTION 1: DEVELOPING POSITIVE COMMUNITY ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOURS**

**Outcome/Objective 1: Improve inclusion, awareness and understanding of disability and mental health conditions in the Bathurst LGA.**

<b>Action</b>	<b>July 2023 – June 2024 Progress</b>
Recognise the achievements and contributions of people living with disability.	Council worked with members of International Day of People with Disability (IDPWD) working group to develop a program of events to celebrate International Day of People with Disability 2023.  IDPWD Council initiatives included an exhibition of photographs and artworks by people with disabilities as part of BRAGS Art Fair.

<b>Action</b>	<b>July 2023 – June 2024 Progress</b>
	<p>Promotion of IDPWD 2023 through Council social media platforms</p> <p>BizMonth Business Lunch 2023 guest speaker Annebelle Williams paralympian and disability advocate.</p>
<p>Improve understanding of a range of disabilities and mental health conditions.</p>	<p>Council Managers were provided with a Guide to Language about Disability document.</p> <p>Disability Inclusion Training was provided to Council staff and Councillor's, facilitated by Social Futures.</p> <p>Promotion of IDPWD in Council Staff Newsletter.</p> <p>A short video was developed for International Day of Sign Language 2023 showing simple signs people can learn to support people living with hearing impairments. A one-page flyer with simple signs was provided to businesses to also assist customers living with hearing impairments. Distributed through Council facilities, Economic Development and Bathurst Business Chamber.</p> <p>Seniors Festival 2024 included a Dementia friendly event as part of the program.</p>
<p>Promote opportunities for inclusion to schools, child care services, businesses and service providers.</p>	<p>Promotion of International Day of People with Disability on Council's social media platforms.</p> <p>Sensory Friendly Session at Bathurst Rail Museum as part of the IDPWD 2023 program of events.</p> <p>Storytime at Bathurst Library with presenter of Short Stature as part of IDPWD</p> <p>Bathurst Library provides Envoys, a listening device, to Home Library Service patrons that are visually impaired.</p>
<p>Support inclusive events and activities such as International Day of People with Disability.</p>	<p>IDPWD 2023 included a program of events in collaboration with local service providers. A working group was formed to support the development of the program.</p>

Action	July 2023 – June 2024 Progress
	<p>The Council hosted an art workshop for IDPWD. Artworks were displayed as part of the BRAGS Art Fair during IDPWD.</p> <p>The Bathurst Rail Museum hosted a sensory friendly session as part of IDPWD 2023 program of events.</p> <p>Council partnered with Social Futures to present the Bathurst Blind Cricket Challenge in April 2024 to raise awareness about the importance of having inclusive and adaptive sporting opportunities in the community.</p>

**Outcome/Objective 2: Bathurst Regional Council employees are disability aware and provided with development opportunities to assist in the delivery of inclusive services and environments.**

Action	July 2023 – June 2024 Progress
Continue to include information about accessibility, inclusion and the DIAP at Bathurst Regional Council new staff induction days, Councillor communication and through Council Staff Newsletter.	<p>Information regarding accessibility, inclusion and the DIAP is presented in the new employee staff inductions.</p> <p>Promotion of IDPWD program of events shared in Council's Staff Newsletter.</p>
Continue to provide disability inclusion training for Bathurst Regional Council employees.	<p>Social Futures provided Disability Inclusion Training to Council staff in October 2023.</p> <p>Scott Jones, former NSW Blind Cricket player and Social Futures presented Disability Awareness Training for Councillors in April 2024.</p>
Acknowledge events that promote inclusion such as International Day of People with Disability within Bathurst Regional Council.	<p>Promotion of International Day of People with Disability via Council's social media platforms including all activities and events.</p> <p>Promotion of BRAGS Art Fair via Council's digital platforms featuring artists living with disability who participated in the art fair.</p>

## **ACTION 2: SUPPORTING ACCESS TO MEANINGFUL EMPLOYMENT**

**Outcome/Objective 1: Build Council's organisational capacity for disability inclusion.**

<b>Action</b>	<b>July 2023 – June 2024 Progress</b>
Ensure Council employment processes continue to be inclusive and support a diverse workforce.	<p>The Council's employment processes continue to be inclusive and are supportive of a diverse workforce.</p> <p>Application of thorough merit-based selection processes in all recruitment initiatives.</p> <p>Council to roll out online mandatory learning around Equal Employment Opportunity and anti-discrimination principles and approaches in the workplace to occur.</p>

## **ACTION 3: CREATING LIVEABLE COMMUNITIES**

**Outcome/Objective 1: Provide clean, accessible toilets throughout the Bathurst LGA.**

<b>Action</b>	<b>July 2023 – June 2024 Progress</b>
Continue to monitor cleaning and maintenance of accessible toilets around the region.	All cleaning and maintenance progressed as per contracts. Conditions and accessibility assessed as part of regular maintenance.

**Outcome/Objective 2: Improve the accessibility of streets, footpaths, parks and open spaces in the Bathurst LGA.**

<b>Action</b>	<b>July 2023 – June 2024 Progress</b>
Improve, where possible, accessibility of parks including inclusive play spaces, accessible equipment, quiet spaces, amenities, paths and seating.	<p>All new playgrounds are designed to comply with Everyone Can Play Guidelines.</p> <p>Centennial Park works complete with additional passive recreational elements. Fully accessible for people of all ages and abilities.</p> <p>Upgrades made at Cousins Park including an upgrade to shade shelter to wheelchair accessible seating in the shelter and installation of connecting footpaths to the existing path network.</p>

Action	July 2023 – June 2024 Progress
	Upgrades to Ralph Cameron Oval to include the construction of a new accessible and inclusive playground with footpaths connecting the car parking, playground and seating.
<p>Continue to implement strategies in the Bathurst Regional Council Access and Cycling Plan 2011 (future Bathurst Region Active Transport Strategy). Including a focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Width of pathways</li> <li>• Access in and around playgrounds and parks</li> <li>• Maintenance of existing paths</li> <li>• Development of pathways</li> <li>• Continual monitoring of standards</li> </ul>	<p>New engineering standards released September 2023 provide 1.5m wide footpath as new standard for all new construction works.</p> <p>January 2024 Grant application lodged under Get Active NSW Program to complete Active Transport Strategy.</p> <p>Upgrades to park areas in this period include the construction of footpaths which connect the playground elements and complimentary recreational elements.</p>
Review the 2011 Access and Cycling Plan to develop a new Bathurst Region Active Transport Strategy that reviews the current standards with a focus on improving the accessibility of existing footpaths and cycleways.	November 2023 consultation with community groups to complete an audit of the 2011 Community Access and Cycling Plan and audit of the plan commenced January 2024.
Plan all new subdivisions with contemporary public and private transport and active transport connections to open spaces and community services and facilities	Development Control Plan provisions for Laffing Waters adopted by Council.
Investigate opportunities to create a pedestrian-friendly CBD.	Streets as Shared Spaces (SaSS2) Round 2 funding- project completed to improve pedestrian access across George Street, including new raised crossing in George Street.

**Outcome/Objective 3: Improve the accessibility of Council owned assets and facilities.**

Action	July 2023 – June 2024 Progress
Annually report improvements to and promote accessibility of Council owned assets.	<p>The new Bathurst Regional Council website launched, includes an accessibility widget and accessibility plugin installed and available for use.</p> <p>Architectural concept design commissioned for Gallery/Library toilet project.</p> <p>Tiles replaced at entrance of the Civic Centre to non-slip tiles.</p>

Action	July 2023 – June 2024 Progress
	<p>A range of seating options is provided at Civic Centre including seats without armrests, wider options and different heights.</p> <p>Bells at customer service desks brought down to front panels to improve accessibility.</p> <p>Static directional signage has been placed on all floors of Civic Centre.</p> <p>Perspex shields on customer service counters at Civic Centre have been removed or adjustments made to assist visually impaired customers.</p>
<p>Review opportunities to provide quiet spaces for sensory seeking and respite in new and existing Council facilities.</p>	<p>Dino-time Sensory Friendly sessions held at Australian Fossil and Mineral Museum</p> <p>Sensory Session held at Bathurst Rail Museum as part of IDPWD</p> <p>Rail Museum 'Kids Central' is designed with sound clouds and acoustic wall panels to minimise noise. Also includes quiet reading corner.</p>

**Outcome/Objective 4: Support safe and accessible transport options**

Action	July 2023 – June 2024 Progress
<p>Advocate for improved accessible transport options including public and community transport services</p>	<p>Discussions underway with Transport for NSW in relation to an Integrated Transport Planning process of the City of Bathurst</p>
<p>Continue to review and monitor accessible parking spaces on street to ensure they cater for the diverse needs of the community</p>	<p>Discussion underway with Transport for NSW in relation to an Integrated Transport Planning process of the City of Bathurst</p> <p>Integrated Transport Planning processes commenced in the Bathurst Region in conjunction with Transport for NSW.</p>

## Outcome/Objective 5: Provide inclusive and accessible events

Action	July 2023 – June 2024 Progress
<p>Continue to provide inclusive and accessible Council events</p>	<p>Winter Festival - Accessible entry points signposted and close to accessible parking. Accessibility audit was completed at the beginning of the festival. Silent sessions were promoted as part of the ice rink, wheelchairs welcome on the ice. Accessibility Day included market stalls by service providers and allocated ice rink sessions. Sensory space created in the ice rink was available for use throughout the festival.</p> <p>All Library events are promoted as accessible.</p> <p>Bathurst Heritage Trades Trail 2023 provided fully accessible activities.</p> <p>IDPWD program of events included a colour run, BBQ lunch, art display, parkrun and storytime. All events were designed to be inclusive and accessible.</p> <p>New online ticketing for Autumn Colours Heritage program to include accessibility information.</p> <p>The Australia Day and Citizenship Awards Ceremonies were held at Bathurst Memorial Entertainment Centre which has accessible infrastructure such as permanent accessible parking, ramps and lift.</p> <p>Bathurst Rail Museum 'Kids Central' - free music sessions included with ticket purchase during January school holidays.</p> <p>The Western Sydney Wanderers game held at Carrington Park provided additional accessible parking, accessible seating options, and an accessible signposted viewing area was installed in the general admission area.</p> <p>Superfest ran over four days in Kings Parade with additional sign posted ramps and parking installed.</p> <p>An accessible viewing stand was installed at Wiggles concert and promoted as a</p>

Action	July 2023 – June 2024 Progress
	<p>sensory space. Additional lighting towers were also provided, and all accessible information was included on Council's website and social media posts.</p> <p>Selfie Day – accessible to all. Free of entry charge at all museum sites.</p> <p>Community public tour of Central Tablelands Collections Facility, accessible and free of charge</p> <p>NRL event was sponsored by Carer Gateway and included an all-abilities touch football game in the half time of main game.</p> <p>Proclamation Day – free event with location having permanent accessible features.</p> <p>When Council is taking bookings for events, staff now ask if any access needs are required, and these are attempted to be addressed.</p> <p>Chifley Home – closed captions are included on introductory video in Chifley Education Centre.</p> <p>Australian Fossil and Mineral Museum have redesigned gallery labels for greater accessibility.</p> <p>Bathurst Careers Expo held at the gymnasium at Charles Sturt University. This location is one level, has access ramps and ambient toilets for attendees. There is also a greater distance between rows and a hard floor allowing easy movement.</p> <p>Bathurst Senior Festival 2024 program provided a range of age-friendly and accessible events and activities.</p>



**Outcome/Objective 6: Improve the accessibility of local businesses and services for people living with disability.**

<b>Actions</b>	<b>July 2023 – June 2024 Progress</b>
Continue to provide Bathurst Regional Access Committee with Bathurst Access Improvement Grants	2023 - Bathurst Access Improvement Grant awarded in 2023. The remaining funds used for access improvements to the Council facilities.
Continue to advocate for improved access to shops, businesses and organisations.	2023 Bathurst Regional Access Improvement Grants offered. Promoted through the Council's social media and Economic Development. BRAC brochure explains benefits of improving access - distributed through the business community.  Free Access at a Glance audit completed on the Civic Centre. Accessibility improvements to entrance points made.
Ensure accessibility and inclusion are considered when processing Development Applications	Individual applications assessed against relevant planning standards

**ACTION 4: IMPROVING ACCESS TO MAINSTREAM SERVICES THROUGH BETTER SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES**

**Outcome/Objective 1: Improve the accessibility of Council information.**

<b>Action</b>	<b>July 2023 – June 2024 Progress</b>
Improve the accessibility of Council information.	New Council Corporate website launched, includes an accessibility widget.  Council has installed the UserWay app on Council corporate website to provide a range of accessibility features for users. The UserWay app on the website makes information more accessible, functions such as the screen reader have been used 17 times during the period March - June 2024 period, the dyslexia/legible fonts function three times, bigger text two times. Other functions have also been activated.  Easy read version of Council's Disability Action Plan 2022-2027 and Bathurst Community Safety Plan 2023-2028 available on Council's website.

Action	July 2023 – June 2024 Progress
	<p>An accessibility website page was created for the NRL, which included information on all accessible features including parking, toilets, viewing areas and grandstand accessible seats. Social media posts included maps with accessible parking.</p> <p>Information stall held at Royal Bathurst Show on 12-14 April incorporating information and upcoming events at Museums Bathurst and BMEC.</p>

**Outcome/Objective 2: Raise awareness of accessible services and facilities**

Action	July 2023 – June 2024 Progress
<p>Continue to update and distribute the Accessible Bathurst Guide, including accessible parking and accessible toilet maps.</p>	<p>Accommodation guides now have accessible information for each property.</p> <p>Accessible guide and online map updated. 1,402 online users in 2023/2024 period.</p> <p>Promotion of Bathurst region at Australasian Incentive Meetings Event 2024 included information on accessible options including meeting with representative from Muscular Dystrophy Australia - planning a potential visit and activity in Bathurst.</p>
<p>Promote Council's accessible programs, services, facilities and resources.</p>	<p>Promotion of Bathurst Access Improvement Grants on all Council communication platforms.</p> <p>Promotion of Sensory Session at Bathurst Rail Museum</p> <p>The library provides Envoys, a listening device, to Home Library Service patrons that are visually impaired.</p>
<p>Continue to update and provide an online disability service directory on Council's website.</p>	<p>Directory provided on Council's website.</p> <p>Bathurst Library has developed Bathurst Regional Council Community Directory, a guide to a range of groups and organisations including disability services.</p>

**Outcome/Objective 3: Ensure people living with disability are informed and consulted in Council’s decision making processes**

<b>Action</b>	<b>July 2023 – June 2024 Progress</b>
Ensure Council engagement processes are inclusive.	<p>Social Futures and Bathurst Regional Access Committee consulted to ensure Winter Festival was accessible.</p> <p>Social Futures and Bathurst Regional Council consulted regarding the accessibility of the Councils Civic Centre.</p> <p>Council staff attend Bathurst Regional Access Committee meetings.</p> <p>Events staff consulted in planning stages of the 2024 Winter Festival regarding the creation of the Winter Festival Accessibility Map.</p>

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

There are no financial implications resulting from this report.

**BATHURST COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN – OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES:**

**Objective 4: Enabling sustainable growth.**

- Strategy 4.1 Facilitate development in the region that considers the current and future needs of our community.
- Strategy 4.2 Provide safe and efficient road, cycleway and pathway networks to improve accessibility.
- Strategy 4.3 Ensure services, facilities and infrastructure meet the changing needs of our region.

**Objective 5: Community health, safety and well being.**

- Strategy 5.1 Provide opportunities for our community to be healthy and active.
- Strategy 5.3 Help build resilient, inclusive communities.
- Strategy 5.4 Make our public places safe and welcoming.
- Strategy 5.5 Plan and respond to demographic changes in the community.

**Objective 6: Community leadership and collaboration.**

- Strategy 6.3 Advocate for our community.
- Strategy 6.4 Meet legislative and compliance requirements.
- Strategy 6.7 Invest in our people.

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:**

01 **Inform** - to provide the public with balanced and objective information to help them understand the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.

## **ATTACHMENTS:**

Nil