

Nillumbik Shire Council

Inclusion and Access Advisory Committee

Terms of Reference

To receive the Terms of Reference for the Inclusion and Access Advisory Committee in an alternative format or for assistance, please phone 0438 277 428 (Council welcomes contact via the National Relay Service) or email inclusion@nillumbik.vic.gov.au

Name

Inclusion and Access Advisory Committee (IAAC)

Introduction:

The IAAC provides a formal mechanism for Council to consult with key stakeholders, seek specialist advice and enable community participation to promote disability inclusion.

Policy Statement:

Individuals, local disability services and community group representatives advise Council on actions relating to disability inclusion, as well as other opportunities and challenges related to inclusion in Nillumbik.

Aims:

To make Nillumbik a more welcoming, inclusive and accessible place for people with disability, their families and carers.

Objectives

- Support the development and delivery of actions within Council Plans and Strategies concerning inclusion and access for people with disability and their carers.
- Advocate on barriers and issues affecting people with disability in Nillumbik.
- Consult with and represent the voice and interests of people with disability and carers.
- Respond to and provide input and feedback on proposed strategies, policies or action plans developed by Council.
- Provide a forum for the discussion of issues or barriers which may impact health, safety, wellbeing and resilience of people with disability and carers.
- Support opportunities to raise awareness and create a platform for leadership to promote inclusive communities.

Membership

All Advisory Committee positions are unpaid positions.

The IAAC will consist of up to 14 members, and will include:

- Appointed Councillor to act as chairperson. If a second Councillor is appointed, they are to act as Chair in the appointed Councillor's absence.
- Community representatives, key local disability service providers and community groups and will be selected to represent the diverse needs of the disability community in Nillumbik, including

but not limited to people with disability, their families, carers and advocates.

- A balance of membership representation across groups, including but not limited to representatives living in rural Nillumbik, and from diverse backgrounds including LGBTIQ+, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities.

Council Directorate

The IAAC falls within Council's Community Services Directorate, and will be resourced by Council's Disability Inclusion and Volunteering Unit.

Meeting Frequency

Meetings are held on the fourth Friday of every second month between 10am - 12pm at the Council Offices, Civic Drive, Greensborough, unless otherwise determined by the Committee.

Meeting days, times and venues may change as voted on by the committee and where quorum has been met.

A quorum at a meeting will consist of:

- Five members.
- One Council officer present for administrative purposes.

Subcommittees and working groups for specific projects may be convened as required and meet on a more regular basis.

Endorsed by Council

These Terms of Reference were reviewed January 2025 and endorsed by Council on (TBC)

Next review Due

May 2027

Informal Meetings of Councillors and Conflicts of Interest

The Advisory Committee is considered an Informal Meeting of Councillors as defined in Clause 19 of Council's Governance Rule - Meeting Procedure.

An Informal Meeting of Councillors Record must be completed and sent to Council's Governance team as soon as possible at the completion of the meeting for inclusion in the Agenda for the next Council Meeting.

The Informal Meeting of Councillors Record must outline:

- The names of all Councillors and members of Council staff attending.
- The matters considered.
- Any conflict of interest disclosures made by a Councillor, Committee member or Council staff member.
- Whether an individual who has disclosed a conflict of interest leaves the meeting.

The Minutes of the meeting, including the matters discussed at the meeting must be tabled at the next convenient Council Meeting and recorded in the minutes of that Council Meeting.

Conflicts of Interest as defined by sections 126-131 of the *Local Government Act 2020*

Councillors, Committee members and Council staff are expected to understand the concept of conflicts of interest in the *Local Government Act 2020* and follow Council's procedure for disclosure in the Governance Rule – Decision-making.

Working groups and out-of-session meetings

- The Advisory Committee may invite suitable people to join in an advisory capacity, for a specified purpose and for a specified period of time.
- Where appropriate, working groups may be established to provide an opportunity for members to work collaboratively on specific projects or issues. A working group or sub-committee member will be nominated to provide feedback at advisory committee meetings.
- Membership of the working groups will be open to members and non-members by prior agreement of the Chair on a case-by-case basis. A working group member will be nominated to provide feedback at the Advisory Committee meetings.
- Formal out-of-session meetings may be scheduled on occasion by the Chair, when the timing of a matter that would benefit from Advisory Committee advice requires consideration prior to the next Advisory Committee meeting date.

Recruitment Process

Expressions of Interest for appointment of individual members shall be invited through local media and Council publications. Invitations will also be circulated through relevant Council Committees and networks. Representatives of key organisations will be recruited directly by Council Officers, and through advertising.

Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusiveness

The Gender Equality Act 2020 commenced on 31 March 2021 and seeks to improve workplace gender equality in the Victorian public sector, universities and local councils.

Local councils are required to promote gender equality in policies, programs and services that impact the public. The committee will actively consider how community members of various ages, abilities, cultural and gender identities, sexual orientation, religions, locations and social economic backgrounds might access policies, programs or services differently and if there are any barriers which may hinder these groups from accessing these policies, programs or services.

Child Safety and Wellbeing

Nillumbik Shire Council provides services and facilities for children and young people and is therefore legally required to comply with the Child Safe Standards and Reportable Conduct Scheme in order to protect children from abuse and harm. The Council has zero-tolerance toward child abuse and is committed to being a child safe organisation where child safety is embedded in the everyday thinking and practice of Council.

Advisory Committee members must follow Council's Child Safe Policy and Child Safe Reporting processes. They are also responsible for promoting children's safety, well-being, and empowerment; ensuring their behaviour is appropriate during interactions with children, and creating a supportive environment for their safety and engagement. Advisory Committee members engaged in child-related activities may be required to obtain and maintain a valid Volunteer Working with Children Check, in accordance with the Council's Working with Children Checks Policy.

Selection Criteria for Membership of the Inclusion and Access Advisory Committee

Nominees for membership must be able to demonstrate:

- That they live, work or engage in activities in Nillumbik Shire.
- Lived experience, qualifications, skills or expertise in disability and inclusion.
- A strong understanding of the Nillumbik community and the barriers to inclusion for people with disability.
- An ability to represent a broad range of views that reflect the diversity of the disability community.
- An ability to constructively participate in an advisory capacity, and contribute positively to meetings in a fair and unbiased manner.
- An ability to look beyond personal interests for the benefit of the community and residents in the Shire.
- An ability and willingness to encourage participation from and provide feedback to the community.
- An ability and willingness to celebrate success and achievements.
- Endorsement by their own organisation (if appropriate).
- Strong community networks and linkages.
- A capacity to commit to the Advisory Committee for the required duration.

In addition to the above, representatives of organisations will be selected on the basis of that organisation:

- Having involvement and providing services and programs to Nillumbik residents with disability.
- Having a consistent and substantial presence in Nillumbik.
- Being a not for profit organisation or community group.

- Having capacity to provide a consistent representative for a two-year term.

All Advisory Committee applications will be considered based on the Key Selection Criteria and Application.

Selection Panel to make recommendation of members on Advisory Committees

- Senior member of Council (CEO or Director/Executive Manager – or delegated Manager).
- Disability Inclusion Unit Officers.

A recommendation about the membership is made for the endorsement of Council.

It is noted that once the committee has been appointed, this selection panel is disbanded.

A Councillor must not participate as a selection panel member because in doing so it will trigger the conflict of interest provision of the Local Government Act 2020, whereby they will have to remove themselves from the decision making process at Council.

Terms of Appointment

- Members will be appointed for a two-year term from date of endorsement.
- Members completing their two-year term may re-apply for a further two-year term.
- Should a member wish to resign prior to their term of appointment finishing, written notification (via email and/or mail) must be given to the Council Officer of their intent.
- A members' term of appointment may also cease if they fail to attend three consecutive meetings without notice of an apology.

- Where a member resigns before the end of their term, a replacement committee member may be appointed by a Council Officer.
- It is expected that each member attend a minimum of 60 per cent of all meetings unless reasons are provided to the Chairperson. No reasonable explanation will be denied.

Role of Councillor

The role of the Councillor is:

- To act as Chairperson of the Advisory Committee.
- To be the link between Council and the Advisory Committee.
- To table issues and concerns to Council on behalf of the Advisory Committee.

Should the Chairperson be absent from the meeting, the Advisory Committee is to appoint a temporary Chairperson by a majority vote of those members present.

Observers

When observers are invited to attend Advisory Committee meetings, their role is to observe only unless called upon by the Chairperson to participate.

Executive Support

Council's nominated Department or team managing the Advisory Committee will provide executive support to the Advisory Committee.

Role of Committee members

- Commit to serving for two (2) years.
- Prepare for, attend and actively participate in meetings.

- Take an active role in communicating the views of residents and organisations to Council.
- Provide feedback to Council via the Council staff member assigned to convene the Committee.
- Keep the Committee informed of current and emerging developments, and issues and activities relevant to the Committee.
- Respond to requests for input into and/or feedback on Council activities, policies and reports.
- Seek approval from Council prior to making public statements, submissions or announcements or issuing correspondence (including emails) to external stakeholders on behalf of the Committee or Council.

Accountability and Extent of Authority

- All Advisory Committee members have an active role to provide feedback and advice to Council on issues relating to the aims and objectives of the Advisory Committee within the municipality.
- All Advisory Committee members participate in discussions at Advisory Committee meetings.
- All Advisory Committee members have an advisory role and do not hold any authority to make decisions or commitments on behalf of Council.

Monitoring and reporting

- The minutes of Advisory Committee meetings will be circulated to members via email for confirmation, and then placed on Council's Advisory Committee website for viewing.
- All Committee minutes will be presented to Council at the next available Council Meeting for noting.

- Recommendations and requests arising from Advisory Committee meetings will be presented to Councillors for consideration. Where this occurs, the request will require the majority support of the Advisory Committee members present. Responses to recommendations will be determined based on Council's legislative role, stated commitments in Council's policies and plans and budgetary processes.
- Unless the Council staff member managing the Advisory Committee holds the appropriate delegation from Council to act on formal advice provided by the Committee, that advice must be referred to Council for formal resolution to act. Where formal advice provided by the Advisory Committee cannot be acted on with the delegated power of Council staff, it must be referred to Council for formal resolution before being acted on.

Evaluation and Review

The Advisory Committee Terms of Reference and membership will be reviewed and evaluated on an annual basis or as required for any significant changes.

Support to participate in meetings

Council will provide reasonable support for members to participate in the meetings. This will be negotiated with the members as needed.

Induction and Orientation

An induction and orientation process will occur for all members at the beginning of the term of the Advisory Committee. This process will include:

- Briefing members on the expectations and requirements of membership of the Advisory Committee.

- Providing members with an overview of the advisory structures (including working groups and sub-committees) and decision making processes of Council.
- Introduction to the Council Plan and other relevant Council policies, strategies and plans.
- An overview of key issues relating to the aims and objectives of the Advisory Committee.
- Establishing clear objectives and priorities for the two-year term of the Committee.
- Reviewing Advisory Committee Policy and expectations of members at Advisory Committee meetings and each member signing a declaration to abide by the conduct obligations. Providing information to members to ensure their understanding of obligations relating to:
 - Conflicts of interest
 - Confidentiality
 - Privacy
 - Health and safety, equal opportunity, bullying and harassment
 - Child Safe Standards
 - Social Media Protocol

Confidentiality

Councillors and other members of Advisory Committees established by Council must not disclose information defined in section 3(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* as “confidential information”.

Privacy

Councillors and committee members on advisory committees established by Council are subject to the requirements of the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* and Council’s Information Privacy Policy.

Breaches

Breaches of the Advisory Committee Policy or Terms of Reference will be dealt with under the Policy.

Relevant Council Policies and Strategies

- Nillumbik Shire Council Advisory Committee Policy
- Council Plan 2021 – 2025
- Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021 - 2025

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