

SOUTH GIPPSLAND SHIRE COUNCIL

Disability Action Plan 2018 -2022



**Disability awareness becomes second
nature, not a second thought.**



*South Gippsland
Shire Council*

Acknowledgement of Country

South Gippsland Shire Council acknowledges the traditional custodians of these lands, their spiritual ancestors and elders past and present.

Statement of Intention

This Disability Action Plan 2018-2022 aims to outline Council's approach to building a more inclusive community and to meet both Council's obligations and community aspirations in doing so.

Contents

Mayor's Message	4
Introduction	5
What is a Disability Action Plan?	6
Description of Disability	7
The Disability Discrimination Act	7
Our Vision for South Gippsland	8
Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee	10
Consultation and Engagement	10
Council Services and Provisions for People with Disabilities	11
International context	12
Federal & State context	13
National Disability Insurance Scheme	13
Local context	14
Achievements from Previous Access and Inclusion Plan	15
Areas for improvement	16
Action Planning	
1. Reduce barriers to persons with disability accessing services, goods and facilities	17
2. Reduce barriers to persons with disability obtaining and maintaining employment and volunteering opportunities	22
3. Promote inclusion and participation in the community of persons with disability	25
4. Achieve tangible changes in attitudes and practices which discriminate against persons with disability	29
Review and Evaluation	33



Mayor's Message

The ability and contribution made by people with disabilities, their right to make meaningful decisions about their own lives and to participate in decision-making about the communities in which they live.

For people with disability, the present era is a dynamic one – the implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme and a changing political climate means that the lives of people with disability living in Australia will change significantly over the coming years, and during the life of this Plan.

As Councillor representative on Council's Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee, I wish to acknowledge the role of this Committee in providing advice and direction to Council on matters related to disability, access and inclusion. The contribution of this Committee to the making our community inclusive is an important and valued one.

Council can also contribute through championing and demonstrating inclusive practice and attitudes, and equity and access to all services, facilities and information. This Plan demonstrates Council's ongoing commitment to creating an environment which is inclusive, accessible and supportive of all.

Cr. Lorraine Brunt

Mayor

Introduction

South Gippsland Shire Council's Disability Action Plan 2018-2022 aims to improve the way Council responds to the needs of people with disability, their families and carers, and service providers. Actions requiring a new investment from Council will be assessed against the Council Plan.

The Plan has been developed with input from people with disability, their families and carers, service providers and Council staff. At a strategic level, the Plan seeks to build a more accessible and inclusive community in which people with disability have increased opportunity to participate and make meaningful choices about their lives. From a practical perspective, the Plan outlines what will be done, by whom, when, and the resources required to achieve this.



What is a Disability Action Plan?

A Disability Action Plan (DAP) is a Plan that allows organisations to address access and inclusion issues for people with disability. A DAP is mandated by the *Disability Act 2006* for all public sector bodies.

According to s.38 of this Act, the Plan must:

- Reduce barriers to persons with a disability accessing goods, services and facilities;
- Reduce barriers to persons with a disability obtaining and maintaining employment;
- Promote inclusion and participation in the community of persons with a disability; and
- Achieve tangible changes in attitudes and practices which discriminate against persons with a disability.

The Plan will be lodged with the Australian Human Rights Commission and implementation of the Plan will be reported quarterly to Council.

Description of Disability

Disability can occur at any time in life. Some disabilities occur at birth however, most people acquire their disability as an adult. Disability can occur suddenly, through accident or illness, or it can occur over a period of time. Some forms of disability, such as depression or epilepsy, come and go. Others are temporary, as with someone who breaks a leg or an arm.

Some disabilities are obvious, such as someone using a wheelchair. Others like hearing impairment, diabetes or epilepsy are not. Some people have more than one disability.

It is important to remember that people with a disability can also be carers for and supports to others. The actions outlined in this plan intend to address access and inclusion issues not only for individuals with disability, but also for their families, service providers and supports, as well as the broader community.

The Disability Discrimination Act

The Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA) was developed to protect everyone in Australia from discrimination based on disability. Under this Act, 'disability' is broadly defined to offer protection to everyone with a disability, whether the disability is physical, intellectual, psychiatric, neurological, sensory or learning, or relates to the presence in the body of disease-causing organisms.

The definition also includes people who currently have a disability, who had a disability in the past, who may have a disability in the future (such as a condition that runs in the family), who are believed to have a disability and who have assistance for a disability.

The Act seeks to:

- Ensure that persons with disabilities have the same rights to equality before the law as the rest of the community;
- Promote recognition and acceptance within the community of the principle that people with disabilities have the same fundamental rights as the rest of the community; and
- Where possible, eliminate discrimination against persons based on disability in the areas of employment, education, access to premises, provision of goods, facilities, services, accommodation, clubs, associations, sport and buying land.



Our Vision for South Gippsland

Council's Vision as stated in the Council Plan 2017-2021 articulates a vision for South Gippsland, guiding Council in the development of strategies and plans to ensure they respond to the needs of the community.

"South Gippsland is a place where our quality of life and sense of community are balanced by sustainable and sensitive development, population and economic growth"

Council Plan 2017-2021

Council further commits to:

- Value the contribution made by everyone; to listen to you and each other.
- Value individual diversity, act with respect and professionalism in our interactions with you and each other, and never seek to undermine, mislead or undervalue anyone.
- Value opportunities that come from change, keeping our focus on the future and our responses flexible for a constantly evolving world.
- Value the community spirit, vibrancy and unique character of each of our towns and rural areas.
- Encourage our communities and support our community leaders.

- Value the depth and breadth of creative thinking and the outcomes that can be achieved from working closely with our communities, businesses, supporting agencies, government agencies and other councils.
- Embrace and encourage community engagement, work collaboratively with others and establish partnerships that benefit our communities and the wider region.
- Value our reputation in the community and the region, and acknowledge that we are the guardians of community information.
- Respect the trust placed in us by seeking to be as open and transparent in our decisions as the law allows, to help the community understand the decisions Council makes.
- Value constructive criticism that helps us understand how and where we need to improve.
- Proactively reflect on our own behaviour, that of each other and of the organisation as a whole, to continually build the capacity, passion and success of this Council.



Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee

The Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee provides strategic and practical advice to Council on issues related to disability, access and inclusion. In working with this Committee, Council aims to create a community that is inclusive, accessible and equitable to all.

The Committee has been in existence since 2001 and is made up of community representatives, including individuals with disability, family members and carers and service providers. The Mayor, as the Councillor Representative, and Community Strengthening Officer are also members of the Committee.

Consultation and Engagement

Consultation to develop the Plan was undertaken between October and December 2017. Types of engagement included:

- Meetings with community members and Council Staff,
- Meetings with and presentations to the Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee,
- Request for comment from external agencies.

Council Services and Provisions for people with Disabilities

Council provides a range of services and programs for the South Gippsland community. Some services are specific to the needs of people with disabilities, their families and carers.

These include:

- **Mobility maps** – maps of the four major towns, outlining accessible paths of travel, accessible parking and toilets, as well as other community locations.
- **Parking permits** – administration of the Disabled Persons Parking Permit scheme.
- **All terrain wheel chair** – available for loan by residents and visitors to be used on beaches, rail trails and other locations to provide access to the natural environment.
- **Mobility matting** – to assist in ease of walking and wheel chair use on unstable ground, available for use at community events and for long-term loan to improve access to the built or natural environment.
- **Companion Card** – allowing free entry for carers to participating events.

These are accepted at Council and community events.



International context

The *United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability* (the Convention) states that “disability results from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others”¹. This Convention highlights that it is these barriers which are the cause of disability, and seeks to foster attitudes and environments which enable individuals rather than disabling them.

The principles of this Convention, upon which local, State and Commonwealth policy on disability are built, relate to:

- 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 of services, information and facilities to allow for greater autonomy and choice for people with disabilities,
- Equality between men and women; and
- Respect for the evolving capacities of children with disabilities and respect for the right of children with disabilities to preserve their identities.

Federal and State context

Under Federal² and State³ legislation and policy, it is against the law to discriminate because of disability. All Victorian state government departments, statutory authorities and corporations, and local councils have obligations under these laws to respect, protect and fulfil the rights of people with a disability and to take positive action towards “substantive equality”. Positive action is interpreted as: making “reasonable adjustments and accommodations for persons with disabilities and parent/carer responsibilities”, helping to remove some of the structural barriers to equality”.

The *Victorian State Disability Plan 2017-2020*⁵ reflects the Government commitment to ensuring that people with disabilities have the chance to participate fully in Victoria’s economy and communities.

This plan continues the reform of services to provide greater alignment of State and local planning, multi-agency collaboration and seeks to enable inclusive communities.

Local Government is a key stakeholder and providers of services at a local level.

National Disability Insurance Scheme

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) was launched in July 2013, as a new way of providing individualised support for eligible people with permanent and significant disability, their families and carers. It provides a flexible, whole-of-life approach to the support needed by people with a disability, to pursue their goals and aspirations and participate in daily life.

The implementation of the NDIS commenced in South Gippsland from 1 October 2017, with the transition period ending on 30 September 2018. It is very important for Local, State and Federal Government to work together to ensure successful implementation of the NDIS.

2 – Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Federal)
3 – Equal Opportunity Act 2010, Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (State)
4 – Victorian State Disability Plan 2017-2020
5 – Victorian Discrimination Law Resource 2013



Local context

The South Gippsland population is estimated to be 28,936. In South Gippsland Shire, 1,585 people or 5.5% of the population report that they need help in their day-to-day lives due to disability.⁶

The age structure in South Gippsland indicates higher proportion of persons at post retirement age than Victoria⁵. As carers age there will be less people in the community to provide support for people with disability. In South Gippsland Shire, there are 3,018 carers providing unpaid assistance to a person with a disability, long term illness or old age.⁶

The need for services to be accessible and inclusive is well recognised by South Gippsland Shire Council. This is reflected in provision of programs, specialist staff and the existence of a Disability Plan and Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee which provides advice to Council on matters related to disability, access and inclusion. As part of this role, the Committee provides input to the Disability Action Plan.

The Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee is made up of representatives of the community and the Council. Committee meetings are usually held monthly.

Achievements from Previous Access and Inclusion Plan

South Gippsland Shire Council first implemented an Access and Inclusion Plan in 2007.

The most recent Disability Action Plan 2013 – 2016 achieved the following actions:

- (it's no) drama project provided an opportunity for performers with and without disability to develop and deliver an original work, in partnership with local artists and the Creative Arts Industry.
- Annual Community Engagement Conference includes a focus on accessibility and inclusion, providing support for community organisations to provide inclusive services, facilities and information.
- Council business is now more accessible due to improvements to Council's website, with a focus on communication access (inclusion of public documents in MS Word format) and Council Meetings being available via live stream.
- Council's Style & Writing Guide and the Community Engagement Plan and Toolkit include accessibility criteria and inclusive communication methods.
- Good Access is Good Business information distributed to a range of businesses across the municipality.
- Volunteering mentors identified and supported to develop a greater understanding of the needs in the volunteering sector for people with disabilities.
- Access auditing of Council's community assets, including buildings and reserves, and designated accessible parking, undertaken on a priority basis.
- Partnering with Work Solutions Gippsland to deliver an annual Job Shadow Day, where job seekers with a disability shadow job hosts in Council.
- Broader community representation in the Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee.



Areas for improvement

The review identified the following areas for improvement and possible future action:

- Council's **induction program** to include more information about disability and inclusion, such as Communication Access videos to deliver information to new starts.
- **Access equipment**, such as accessible wheelchairs and matting, are available to improve access to the natural environment, including local beaches.
- Increasing the availability of **Accessible tourism information** both online and in Visitor Information Centres. Further work with Prom Country Regional Tourism is needed to determine explore online accessibility content, including a self-assessment tool for business owners and operators. Accessible Tourism tools to be developed and promoted to businesses. Mobility maps are recommended to move to online format.
- Provide an Annual/Biennial report to Council and AIAC on actions completed.
- Greater focus on **communication access** and accessible culture, particularly in recreational facilities, rather than the built environment.
- Development and promotion of **Best Practice Case Studies** in the areas of business, recreation and employment to promote the benefits of access and inclusion across the community.
- Improvements to **infrastructure upgrades** continue to be a challenge due to financial constraints. Specific funding will be required to make improvements outside identified wider infrastructure projects if we are to meet current Australian Standards across all assets.

Action Planning

1. Reduce barriers to persons with disability accessing services, goods and facilities

It is often not so much a person's disability that makes life difficult to access good services and facilities; it is more that the physical or information environment places barriers that exclude them from the community and using mainstream services.

ASPIRATION 1.1

Improve access to Council owned facilities

ACTION: 1.1.1 – Undertake accessibility assessments on Council owned facilities, including car parking & footpaths.

Who	Partners	Timeline	Resources	Evidence of Success
Community Strengthening Team	Assets team, Local Laws, Infrastructure team	Ongoing	Existing Staff resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The accessibility of Council owned facilities is understood and communicated to users. • Facilities that are frequently used by or are important to people with disability will be prioritised for review and upgrade. • Access and inclusion upgrade needs of Council owned facilities is understood by Assets Team and considered and improved when planning upgrades to buildings, facilities and streetscapes. • Accessibility improvements are implemented where possible.

ACTION: 1.1.2 – Identify priorities for upgrading car parks / footpaths and provide to the Infrastructure team.

Who	Partners	Timeline	Resources	Evidence of Success
Community Strengthening Officer	Assets team, Local Laws, Infrastructure team	Ongoing	Existing Staff resources External Funding if required/ available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure team is equipped to prioritise improvements to car parking according to accessibility criteria. • Parking upgrade plans match priorities.

ASPIRATION 1.2

Improve access to information about Council services, events and facilities.

ACTION: 1.2.1 – Ensure Council information is accessible.

Who	Partners	Timeline	Resources	Evidence of Success
Communications Officer	All Teams	Ongoing	Existing Staff resources for regular promotion. Financial resources may be requested where new tools or information is required.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Style Guide provides for minimum accessibility criteria.• Council produced information is reviewed by Communications Team to ensure it adheres to the Style Guide (minimum accessibility criteria) and includes accessibility statement.• Council's website reflects current best practice access requirements.• Sufficient tools are available to meet the range of access needs typically experienced.

ACTION: 1.2.2 – Ensure Council run meetings are accessible.

Who	Partners	Timeline	Resources	Evidence of Success
Governance Officer	Information Technology	Ongoing	Existing Staff resources for regular promotion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Council information is available in alternative formats: large print, voice to text or in other languages upon request.• All Council meetings, and community meetings run by Council, are held in accessible venues and provided online via Live Stream.• Auslan interpreters and hearing augmentation is available at meetings and activities when requested and available.

ACTION: 1.2.3 - Ensure Council Officer interactions with customers are accessible.

Who	Partners	Timeline	Resources	Evidence of Success
Customer Service	All Teams	Ongoing	Existing Staff resources for regular promotion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accessibility tools and skill development are available to all staff.• Council Staff is aware of accessibility tools, such as National Relay Service, they can use.• Accessible Business Card template is used where appropriate.

ACTION: 1.2.4 – Ensure signage on and around Council buildings are accessible.

Who	Partners	Timeline	Resources	Evidence of Success
Community Strengthening Officer	Assets, Communications	As identified	Existing Staff resources for regular promotion.	• Signage on and around Council buildings meets minimum accessibility criteria.

ACTION: 1.2.5 – Ensure structure and use of customer service points is accessible.

Who	Partners	Timeline	Resources	Evidence of Success
Customer Service, Community Strengthening Officer	Assets	Annual audit, upgrades made as issues identified	Existing Staff resources for regular promotion. Financial resources for changes where required and within reason.	• Customer Service points meet minimum accessibility criteria. • Customer service is independently audited regularly and after changes for compliance.

ACTION: 1.2.6 – Enhance awareness of accessible Council services.

Who	Partners	Timeline	Resources	Evidence of Success
Council service provision teams, Community Strengthening Officer	Customer Service, Community Strengthening	Ongoing	Existing Staff resources for regular promotion.	• Companion Card information is included in information for all Council supported events. • Information about resources available through Community Strengthening Team and Aged & Disability Service Team regularly promoted to target groups and more generally.

ACTION: 1.2.7 – Commitment to consult AIAC to ensure emergency messaging and communications are accessible and inclusive

Who	Partners	Timeline	Resources	Evidence of Success
Emergency Management	Ongoing	As identified	Existing Staff resources.	• Emergency messaging and communications are provided in a range of accessible formats.

ASPIRATION 1.3

Acknowledge businesses that provide good access for all.

ACTION: 1.3.1 – Provide advice and assistance to businesses to improve access.

Who	Partners	Timeline	Resources	Evidence of Success
Economic Development	Community Strengthening Officer	Ongoing	Staff time – Economic Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All businesses seeking Council support are provided with Good Access is Good Business information and other advice as appropriate.• Existence of the Good Access is Good Business Ambassadors network. Increase in accessible businesses in the municipality.

ACTION: 1.3.2 – Acknowledge businesses which operate with a “Good Access is Good Business” approach.

Who	Partners	Timeline	Resources	Evidence of Success
Community Strengthening Officer	Economic Development	Ongoing	Staff time - Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Best Practice Case Studies promoted on International Day of People with Disability and in Council publications.

ASPIRATION 1.4

Collaborate with tourism stakeholders to promote access and inclusion in tourism activities and facilities.

ACTION 1.4.1 – Produce promotional material that is accessible for all.

Who	Partners	Timeline	Resources	Evidence of Success
Tourism	Community Strengthening Officer, Communications	Ongoing, in line with the Gippsland Accessible Tourism Plan	Staff time - Communications.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All promotional material meets Style guide and minimum accessibility criteria.

ACTION 1.4.2 – Work with Tourism partners to promote recognition and value of Accessible Tourism.

Who	Partners	Timeline	Resources	Evidence of Success
Tourism	Community Strengthening Officer, Destination Gippsland, Prom Country Regional Tourism (PCRT), Tourism Victoria, Office for Disability	Ongoing, in line with the Gippsland Accessible Tourism Plan	Staff time – Tourism Printing costs for information sheets	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Customer Service points meet minimum accessibility criteria.• Customer service is independently audited regularly and after changes for compliance.

ACTION: 1.4.3 - Support a database of accessible accommodation and tourist attractions through advocacy and project delivery.

Who	Partners	Timeline	Resources	Evidence of Success
Tourism	Gippsland Councils	Ongoing, in line with the Gippsland Accessible Tourism Plan	Cost of upgrade to online database	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Database is maintained and filter options improved where available to allow for diversity in need identification. Proprietary Online databases improve accessibility information.

ACTION: 1.4.4 Maintain accurate and accessible Mobility Maps of Korumburra, Leongatha, Foster and Mirboo North.

Who	Partners	Timeline	Resources	Evidence of Success
Community Strengthening Officer, Communications, Customer Service	Citizens Advice Bureau, Visitor Information Centres	Biennial review, reprint as required.	Cost of reprint/improvement to online interactive map/s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maps are available at community access points, distributed with new Disabled Parking Permits and on website. Mobility maps are accessible within an online interactive format.

Action Planning

1. Reduce barriers to persons with disability obtaining and maintaining employment and volunteering opportunities

People with disability represent an untapped potential in the Australian workforce – people with disability experience higher unemployment and earn less than persons without a disability. There is great importance in employment as a means of earning an income and contributing to one’s overall personal identity.

ASPIRATION 2.1
Ensure that Council has employment policies and practices that eliminate discrimination and address barriers to paid employment.

ACTION: 2.1.1 – Provide training, information and support to enhance “disability confidence” of employing Managers and supervisors.

Who	Partners	Timeline	Resources	Evidence of Success
People and Culture	Community Strengthening Officer, Chief Executive Officer, OHS/ RTW Advisor	Review and update of employment process and information by June 2018. Ongoing delivery of employment training.	Existing human resources to review and update of employment process and information Existing recurrent Employment training costs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment Toolkit includes disability parity information. Managers and Supervisors understand their responsibilities for equitable employment opportunities and are able demonstrate use of plain English, accessibility criteria and reasonable adjustment for applicants with disabilities. Position descriptions meet accessibility criteria.

ACTION: 2.1.2 – Ensure best practice facilities, policies and employment practices are in place to provide opportunity parity for employment within Council for persons with disability.

Who	Partners	Timeline	Resources	Evidence of Success
People and Culture	Community Strengthening Officer, Chief Executive, Officer OHS/RTW Advisor Disability Employment Service providers and individuals with disability	Review of existing PDs to meet accessibility criteria by 2019. All vacated positions to have PDs updated at that time. Feasibility of main office upgrade by 2020. Job Shadow Day annually. All other outcomes ongoing.	Staff time – Human Resources for review of PDs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of existing employment policies and processes to eliminate discrimination against people with disability. • Evidence of implementation of best practice policy and processes. • Position documentation is in plain English and meets accessibility criteria. • All work areas are accessible for all. • Current workers who acquire a disability are adequately supported. • Council participates in accessible employment initiatives such as Job Shadow Day. • Council has a productive work relationship with employment providers, such as Work Solutions.

ASPIRATION 2.2

Collaborate with local networks to increase volunteering opportunities.

ACTION: 2.2.1 – Present information at Council supported community networks to promote the contribution of people with disability.

Who	Partners	Timeline	Resources	Evidence of Success
Volunteer Development Officer	Community Strengthening	Ongoing	Existing Staff resources for regular promotion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agendas of Council-supported networks include access and inclusion items and guest speakers.

ACTION: 2.2.2 – Support external partners such as community organisations, clubs and networks to provide volunteering opportunities for those with disability needs.

Who	Partners	Timeline	Resources	Evidence of Success
Volunteer Development Officer	Community Strengthening, Youth in Transition Network, SGBCL-LEN, National Disability Coordination Officer	Ongoing Accessible format volunteer information by December 2018	Staff or volunteer time to translate Volunteer information into accessible format.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disability, Access and Inclusion is a regular presentation topic at the annual Community Engagement Conference. • Support information is available to external partners on how to deliver their services in a way that is inclusive for all. • A range of community organisations, clubs and networks have inclusive policies and practices.

ASPIRATION 2.3

Improve community inclusion, health and wellbeing through facilitating equitable access to education, training, employment, services and support.

ACTION: 2.3.1 – Positively participate in service provider networks.

Who	Partners	Timeline	Resources	Evidence of Success
Community Strengthening Officer	Councillors	Ongoing	Existing staff resources for regular attendance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council representation and support provided to service provider networks such as SPIN and Youth in Transition. Council representation at forums that facilitate greater collaboration in delivering services to people with a disability.

ACTION: 2.3.2 Advocate for improved public transport delivery and infrastructure.

Who	Partners	Timeline	Resources	Evidence of Success
Community Strengthening Officer, Social Planner	Community Strengthening, Strategic Planning, Councillors	Ongoing	Existing staff resources for regular promotion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The public transport need of the community are understood and advocated to Public Transport Victoria and alternative transport providers. • Alternative travel support is provided in absence of public transport. • Bus stops are accessible for all.

ACTION 2.3.3 – Advocate for improved internet access.

Who	Partners	Timeline	Resources	Evidence of Success
Economic Development Team	Community Strengthening Officer	Ongoing	Existing staff resources for regular advocacy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expansion of improved internet access to facilitate greater accessibility of employment and social connectivity.

ACTION 2.3.4 – ?

Who	Partners	Timeline	Resources	Evidence of Success
Community Strengthening Officer, Pre-School Field Officer	Children Services, Property Manger, Education and Training providers, Employment Services, Youth in Transition Network, Yooralla First Base Leongatha.	Ongoing	<p>Existing staff resources for support.</p> <p>Cost of resources where required.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved access to education programs and materials that are accessible and meet the needs of students with learning barriers, their families and educators. • Delivery of activities and events for students with learning barriers to provide information about services and opportunities assist them on their post-school journey.

Action Planning

3. Promote inclusion and participation in the community of persons with disability

For a long time some people with disability were left out of community life because of attitudes, assumptions and barriers to participation. Communities are richer for including the diversity and insights offered by people with varying life experience.

ASPIRATION 3.1
Promote participation in community decision making.

ACTION: 3.1.1 – Ensure community events are welcoming and accessible.

Who	Partners	Timeline	Resources	Evidence of Success
Community Strengthening	Customer Service, Communications, Community Strengthening Officer, Governance, Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee SCOPE, Yooralla First Base Leongatha, individuals with disability.	Ongoing	Existing staff resources for regular promotion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All community events consider access and inclusion issues. • People with a disability are aware of community events that meet their accessibility needs. • Individuals with disability feel included in community events. • Evidence of representation of issues related to access and inclusion at community events.

ACTION: 3.1.2 – Ensure processes of community consultation are inclusive of people with disability.

Who	Partners	Timeline	Resources	Evidence of Success
Community Strengthening	Communications, Governance, Community Strengthening Officer SCOPE, Yooralla First Base Leongatha, individuals with disability.	Ongoing	Existing staff resources for regular promotion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community consultation processes adhere to accessibility criteria and utilise a range of communication methods. • Community Engagement Plan and Toolkit is appropriately implemented by all staff.

ACTION: 3.1.3 – Ensure community decision-making events and activities are inclusive, and are promoted to people with disability.

Who	Partners	Timeline	Resources	Evidence of Success
Community Strengthening	Customer Service, Communications, Community Strengthening Officer, Governance	Ongoing	Existing staff resources for regular attendance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Planning Processes engage with Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee and all print and online information meets Style Guide's accessibility criteria. • Evidence of representation of issues related to access and inclusion in community decision making events and activities.

ACTION: 3.1.4 – Ensure active involvement of people with disability in the design, development and delivery of Council policy, process and practice.

Who	Partners	Timeline	Resources	Evidence of Success
Governance	Community Strengthening Officer, Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee, Council teams/ departments including Engineering/ Infrastructure, Planning. Community members, SCOPE, Yooralla First Base Leongatha, individuals with disability.	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Contract and Procurement process review completed by June 2019</p>	<p>Staff resources to review Contract and Procurement process for improvement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council Agenda and Briefing information is available in accessible format. • Accessibility tools are available at each public Council meeting. • Evidence of representation of issues related to access and inclusion in Council policy, process and practice. • Contract and Procurement process include specifications that reference universal access principles for services that may impact disability and accessibility, e.g. infrastructure and town design. • Town and infrastructure designs consider accessibility needs.

ASPIRATION 3.2

Work with Council staff, organisations, clubs and groups to promote opportunities to actively participate in sport, recreation, the arts, culture, leisure activities and civic life.

ACTION 3.2.1 – Ensure Council events and facilities are as accessible and inclusive as possible.

Who	Partners	Timeline	Resources	Evidence of Success
Community Strengthening	Assets, Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee, GippSport	Criteria included in AMP and EMP and endorsed by AIAC by June 2020. Other actions are ongoing.	Staff resources to review AMP and EMP to ensure accessibility criteria inclusion. Purchase of accessibility tools where required.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accessibility criteria included in Asset Management Plan (AMP) and Event Management Plan (EMP) and endorsed by AIAC.• Council events and facilities meet minimum accessibility criteria and accept Companion Card.• Positive feedback received about the accessibility of Council events and facilities.
Community Strengthening	Assets, Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee, GippSport	Ongoing	Staff resources to update Events Process when access concerns are raised and deemed to require a change in process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Council Events permit process is updated to address any access concerns raised by clients or community members.• Companion card is promoted and utilised at Council supported events.

ACTION: 3.2.3 – Provide information and support to community organisations to develop their understanding of access and inclusion.

Who	Partners	Timeline	Resources	Evidence of Success
Governance	Community Strengthening	Assets	Annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provision of information and support to Council's Section 86 Special Committees.• Section 86 committees address their Access for All responsibilities as committees of Council.

ACTION 3.2.4 – Provide training, information and support to organisations, clubs and groups to facilitate improved access to community events for people with disability.

Who	Partners	Timeline	Resources	Evidence of Success
Community Strengthening	GippSport, South Gippsland Arts Network.	Annually	Existing Staff resources for regular promotion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase access by people with disability of sporting, recreation, arts, cultural and leisure groups.• Maintain focus on access and inclusion at community engagement conference.

ASPIRATION 3.3

Identify, improve and promote accessible opportunities for access to public open space, such as, local beaches, foreshores, recreational reserves and parks.

ACTION 3.3.1 – Provide training, information and support to organisations, clubs and groups to facilitate improved access to community events for people with disability.

Who	Partners	Timeline	Resources	Evidence of Success
Community Strengthening	Recreation Officer, Assets, Parks and Gardens GippSport	Annually	Existing Staff resources for regular promotion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All new projects and upgrades consider universal design for people with disability.• Improved access to local beaches, foreshores, parks and open spaces by people with disability.• Accessible infrastructure is appropriate and safe.• Accessible public open space locations and any changes to these are promoted to community.

ACTION: 3.3.2 – Collaborate with the Maintenance and Parks & Gardens teams in the planning, design, construction, maintenance and mapping of public places and spaces.

Who	Partners	Timeline	Resources	Evidence of Success
Assets, Parks and Gardens	Infrastructure Maintenance, Aged and Disability, Community Strengthening	Ongoing	Existing staff resources for regular promotion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Council recreation reserves, gardens, and parks have appropriate access for all.• Accessibility needs are considered in maintenance and upgrades of recreation reserves, gardens and parks.• Accessibility of public open space is identified and promoted to the community.

Action Planning

4. Achieve tangible changes in attitudes and practices which discriminate against persons with disability

While physical barriers are the most obvious, attitudinal barriers such as ignorance and stereotypical thinking contributes to prejudice and actions which discriminate against and exclude people with a disability. Training about disability issues gives facts and information which can counteract prejudicial attitudes and promote understanding. offered by people with varying life experience.

ASPIRATION 4.1
Enhance understanding of disability, its barriers and opportunities by Councillors, Council employees, Council stakeholders and the community.

ACTION: 4.1.1: Provide support to staff and Councilors to improve disability awareness.				
Who	Partners	Timeline	Resources	Evidence of Success
Community Strengthening Officer, Coordinator Community Strengthening, Human Resources	All of Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schedule of training for staff set by July 2019. Training sessions offered at least annually. 	Training sessions offered at least annually.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access for All Induction presentation developed (PPT or video) for use in staff induction and event management. Access and inclusion information included in Council Staff and Councilor induction process. All departments consider access and inclusion issues when planning and developing services, information and facilities.

ACTION: 4.1.2 - Assist staff to communicate effectively with people with disability using a range of communication tools

Who	Partners	Timeline	Resources	Evidence of Success
Community Strengthening Officer, Customer Service	All Council staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On line tools available for staff use by Oct 2018 Communication access training completed for key staff by Sep 2018 SCOPE Audit conducted by August 2018. 	<p>Staff resources to develop key frontline communication boards.</p> <p>Cost of SCOPE Communication Access audit.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff demonstrate awareness of accessible communication, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Plain English - Font, Contrast - Business cards - Assistive technology Authentic engagement Communication board available at Council reception and for use in communication with customers with complex communication needs. Council offices audited by SCOPE for Communication Access, actions prioritised and scheduled for implementation.

ACTION: 4.1.3 – Ensure the Disability Action Plan is available to Councilors and to all Council staff.
“Disability awareness becomes second nature not a second thought.”

Who	Partners	Timeline	Resources	Evidence of Success
Community Strengthening Officer	All Managers, Information Services team, Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee	Annual and ongoing	Existing Staff resources for advocacy, promotion and meeting attendance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disability Action Plan link is sent to all managers and is available on Council's intranet. Community Strengthening Officer attends staff general and departmental meetings as required. Community Strengthening Officer attends Council briefings and meetings as required.

ASPIRATION 4.2

Encourage community awareness of disability and inclusion planning and identification and report barriers to active participation by community members with access and inclusion needs.

ACTION: 4.2.1 – Engage with community to identify barriers to active participation by people with a disability in the community, and in relation to Council business.

Who	Partners	Timeline	Resources	Evidence of Success
Community Strengthening Officer	Customer Service team, Assets, Risk Management and other staff.	Commence customer request process by October 2018 then ongoing. Reporting quarterly.	Existing Staff resources for advocacy and promotion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Barriers and actions implemented are recorded in Council's customer request database and promoted to staff to use when receiving reports of barriers.• Significant notifications of barriers are actioned and solutions implemented in a timely manner.• Community identified barriers and resolutions are reported to Council quarterly as part of general business reporting. Awareness of existing barriers and Council's ability to implement change measures is expanded.

ACTION: 4.2.2 – Showcase achievements and contributions of people with a disability during Council events and media releases.

Who	Partners	Timeline	Resources	Evidence of Success
Community Strengthening Team, Communications Team	Community Strengthening Officer, Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee, Disability Service Providers, South Gippsland Specialist School	Ongoing events and media releases	Existing staff resources for advocacy and promotion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community members with a disability and/or provide an Inclusive Community Contribution feel valued.• Council meets community expectation of positive acknowledgement of the achievements and inclusive contribution made by people with or without disability.

ACTION: 4.2.3 – South Gippsland Achievement Award for a Person with Disability, Inclusive Community Contribution is delivered and celebrated each year.

Who	Partners	Timeline	Resources	Evidence of Success
Communications Team	Community Strengthening Officer	Annually	Existing Staff resources for advocacy and promotion. Cost of award.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community members with a Disability and/or provide an Inclusive Community Contribution feel valued.• Council meets community expectation of positive acknowledgement.

ASPIRATION 4.3

Communicate effectively with people with disability using a range of communication tools and through authentic engagement and respectful

ACTION: 4.3.1 – Educate South Gippsland Shire Council staff about accessible communication.

Who	Partners	Timeline	Resources	Evidence of Success
All Staff	Communications Team	Ongoing	Existing Staff resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff members are aware of accessibility communication tools and aids. • Accessible communication standards and visual aids are utilised including; Plain English, Font, Contrast, Business cards, Assistive technology.

ACTION: 4.3.2 – Develop implementation plan for Communication Access project and related audit process.

Who	Partners	Timeline	Resources	Evidence of Success
Customer Service	Community Strengthening Officer	June 2018	Existing staff resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication access project completed. • Project recommendations are prioritised and scheduled for implementation (attached to the DAP as Schedule).

ACTION: 4.3.3 – Facilitate the Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee (AIAC).

Who	Partners	Timeline	Resources	Evidence of Success
Community Strengthening Officer	Council	Ongoing	Existing Staff resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AIAC meets regularly and is supported by Council. • Council staff and Councillor representative regularly attend AIAC meetings. • Community members with a disability or are carers to those with a disability are consulted on key policy changes and feel valued.



Review and Evaluation

The actions in this plan will be incorporated into the work plans of the appropriate Council departments. Responsible teams and departments will report on the actions and awareness levels through an annual review and a short online staff survey.

The plan may change in response to changing circumstances, including policy, legislation and available resources.

Council's Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee will be involved in reviews, and will have input on any significant changes made to the Plan.

Achievements of the Plan will be documented and case studies shared with the community to highlight Council's ongoing commitment to access and inclusion for people of all abilities.

South Gippsland Shire Council
9 Smith Street , Leongatha VIC 3953
03 5662 9200
council@southgippsland.vic.gov.au
www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au