

Minutes of the Accessibility Advisory Group Meeting

Date: Tuesday, 30 June 2020

Time: 5:31pm – 7:26pm

Venue: Mayor's Reception Room, Level 8,
113 The Terrace

PRESENT

Chairperson

Rachel Noble

Members

Erikka Helliwell

Alan Royal

Nick Ruane

Councillor

In Attendance

Kristine Ford – Senior Policy Advisor

David Halliday – Project Manager Open Spaces

Jenny Rains – Community Services Manager

Public

Callum McMenamin

1. MEETING PROCEDURES

5:31pm

1.1 Welcome

Welcome with introductions around the table.

1.2 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Rebecca Matthews, Moana Mackey, Solmaz Nazari, Amy Evanson, Tristram Ingham and Rosie Macleod.

1.3 Conflicts of Interest

Rachel declared a potential conflict of interest in regards to the COVID-19 pandemic response.

1.4 Confirmation of Minutes – Minutes of 26 May 2020

That the minutes of 26 May 2020 be adopted as a true and accurate record.

Moved by Alan Royal, seconded by Erikka Helliwell

Carried

2. PRESENTATIONS

2.1 Update on Footpath Management Policy and Trading in Public Places Policy

5:34pm

Facilitated by Kristine Ford

Kristine attended AAG previously and spoke about the reviews of these policies; the current policies are available here: [Footpath Management Policy](#) (FMP) and [Trading in Public Places Policy](#) (TPPP).

Kristine has been reviewing and talking to other business units about the proposed changes:

- Consider revoking the FMP
- Add all trading activities and events into TPPP
- Ensure accessibility and pedestrian priority
- Ban sandwich boards
- Mandatory smokefree licences
- Include all public space – including the waterfront
- Improve and streamline processes

Pedestrian priority has been emphasised in the following WWC documents:

- Spatial Plan
- Pedestrian Accessibility Improvement Plan
- Place and Movement Strategy
- Accessible Wellington Action Plan
- Let's Get Wellington Moving
- The Wellington Design Manual

However there is a current gap in the publically available guidance of additional non-trading activities on footpaths, such as placement of signs, bike racks and charging stations. The WDM will fill that gap and will provide minimum clearance widths for footpaths.

Consideration must also be given to the effects on small businesses – WCC's position is to support businesses to bounce back from the impact of the pandemic and need to consider whether we identify more trading sites or leave it to the market.

Members discussed with the presenter:

- Alan – there are two mobility parking sites on lower Cuba Street, which are right next to a bike rack, motorcycle parking and rubbish bins that make it difficult for people exiting vans from the rear or side. Kristine advised that this is an example of things that could be aligned in a new policy. If the FMP is revoked then we would be missing guidelines around fixed

structures. Transport team follow best practice but it is not articulated in a document what this is.

- Nick – important to consider unintended consequences, for example if there is a decrease in revenue due to the removal of sandwich boards, then this may mean the business will be less likely to employ disabled people. It would be good to engage with the Chamber of Commerce. Kristine advised that the Urban Design team will engage with other options like hanging signs. AAG is the first group to be spoken to and things may change after discussing with councillors.
- Erikka – commend Kristine on her exemplary work; that she has come to AAG so early and keeps the group updated on how things are progressing. The proposal is really good, appreciate that it's an operational policy but strategy is being pulled from different areas that are connecting. Interested to see how this links to the strategies that are being developed. Kristine advised that the various strategies will be coming to AAG for feedback as well.
- Rachel – whether there is an opportunity for a disabled person to be present during the workshop with councillors, just to give real life contribution to that discussion from the perspective of mobility impairment and visual impairment. Kristine advised this can happen, and will get in touch with Thomas Bryan to cover the visual impairment aspect. Nick volunteered to cover mobility. Rachel advised that it would be good if the engagement could include a direct question to the disabled community and that AAG be involved in the development of the wording of this question.
- Callum – had many close calls especially down Lambton Quay and thinks that removal of sandwich boards would have a negligible impact on business. Could look into neon signs, projected lights on the footpath, or other strategies to replace sandwich boards that are more interesting and creative. Important to prioritise ability for people to move in the streets

which would increase business and assist with employment of disabled people.

Actions:

- Allan to send Kristine photos of the mobility parks on lower Cuba Street.

The presenter agreed to:

- Follow up with transport team about the lower Cuba St mobility parks.
- Get in touch with Thomas Bryan and keep in contact with Nick in regards to the workshop on 22 July.
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2.2 Shorland Park Play Area Upgrade

6:57pm

Facilitated by Dave Halliday

Dave's team helps upgrade and build new playgrounds. WCC are engaging on Shorland Park at the moment as it is due for a renewal/upgrade this financial year. It's a blank canvas, no plans have been presented but want to know how people are using it, in particular the liberty swing. This was installed 14 years ago and is a swing for wheelchair users. The understanding is that it's old technology but was pretty novel in its time and was donated by Variety. The team has not yet been able to get in touch with Variety for their comment, and want feedback from the disabled community before any plans go out for feedback from the general public.

The liberty swing is fenced off to prevent vandalism and the key is available at the Parks Depot in Newtown or at the dairy across the road from Shorland Park.

The park is split in two, with a toddler area separate to kids, do people still want this? We feel that basketball area gets covered in sand a lot and isn't used to its full potential.

Members discussed with the presenter:

- Erikka – how do you include the voice of children and especially disabled children? Dave advised that through engagement parents will give feedback on behalf of their children. With this engagement they've done direct mail to schools and kindergartens in the area. Kids generally want flying foxes, a big swing and a big slide. We deal with both kids and adults, with a big upgrade such as this one we need to work to a budget, and will need to reign in grand ideas. Erikka noted the example of the Parliament playground – lack of accessibility sends the message that disabled children aren't included/wanted, so it's important to consider the message that's sent. Having the swing in a pen that requires a key is one more obstacle.
- Nick – the example of the Margaret Mahy Playground in Christchurch – initially seemed very inclusive, but later found to not meet the international standard or Christchurch guidelines. It would be best to engage with technical specialists who know best around inclusive play.
- Rachel – there is value in having time/place for a separate engagement with disabled kids. The example of Anderson Park in Napier which won some awards, there is lots of equipment for all kids regardless of who they are. This is the most accessible play area that I know of.
- Allan – good to consult with grandparents as they are heavy users in school holidays.
- Erikka – also consider disabled grandparents taking kids to the playground and their core part in being a whanau. Be interesting to see how the liberty swing is being used as it

doesn't seem well publicised and whether there are other barriers to it being used.

- Dave advised that so far there have been about 300 submissions in the last nine days, but some of these will be in regards to a full park upgrade when the consultation is focused on the play area.
- Erikka – how does park upgrade link to the climate change strategy? Dave advised that after the big storm in 2013, the view was that the park should be incorporated into the beach. At some stage there will be another storm of the same magnitude.
- Rachel – would it be possible to form a small co-design group of disabled parents and kids? Dave requested help to form that group. AAG to reach out to Mark Potter, Principal of Berhampore School.
- Dave advised that the 'blank canvas' engagement is open until 20 July, and submissions will be summarised and published with the themes of the submissions.
- Rachel – is it possible to get sponsors? Dave advised that sometimes WCC is not open to commercial sponsorship in public play spaces. There are three categories of play spaces: neighbourhood (600m walk from home), community (bigger space that caters to a wider age group), or destination playground (Frank Kitts Park is the only one). Shorland Park is a community playground and the budget is \$400,000-\$420,000.

The group thanked Dave for his presentation and for coming to the group so early in the process.

Actions:

- AAG to reach out to Mark Potter, Principal of Berhampore School for assistance in forming a co-design group.

2.3 Emergency Management Update

6:17pm

Facilitated by Jenny Rains

Chris Moore, an advisor from the Wellington Regional Management Office (who share WREMO's readiness planning relating to people with disabilities) was ill and not able to attend and present to the COVID-19 response. The conversation with AAG about Emergency Management started before lockdown, around how we develop a way of co-designing a plan/response for wider disabled community. How would the group like to do this? It will need to be more frequent than the once per month AAG meetings, so recommended to create a working group to meet more often.

Members discussed with presenter:

- Erikka – whether some members have Conflicts of Interest with their work in other sectors or if this would be considered really good knowledge/experience
- Rachel – dealing with each Council individually was not a smooth process. Jenny advises that the COVID-19 response was completely different to any other emergency response. The traditional emergency management aspect was small compared to the welfare aspect around food security and accommodation.
- Nick – there was systems mapping challenges – a systems approach is needed.
- Erikka – one example was WREMO thinking there would be a list of all disabled Wellingtonians' contact details when in reality there isn't.
- Rachel – need to ensure this actually happens, as after 2016 Christchurch Earthquake there were lots of plans that didn't eventuate. In November 2019 the US released a planning shortcut tool which we can use as a checklist. This was used for Katrina or another large event and could be a good basis.

- Alan – There are some good papers from Rod Drury on how we plan for a post-COVID New Zealand, but these don't include a disability perspective.
- Jenny – there has been lots of thinking about this – having managed many disasters this has been so different and at such as different pace. Before COVID-19 we were approaching making a partnership plan in Wellington, but then COVID-19 hit. Keen to do this sooner than later and now is a good time as council is in recess.
- Small working group to form and attend these meetings, Jenny to set up in next couple of weeks. Group members to be paid from Jenny's budget. AAG to send Jenny a list of interested people.
- Jenny has had a conversation with Thomas Bryan about reinvigorating the beacon project. While there are currently beacons in place, we want to start anew and we have more beacons available. Wanting to start something with some longevity.
- Nick – beacons are a legitimate business opportunity that is not being explored properly. The project needs to develop what a full plan would look like – it could work off a model where revenue is generated through advertising and accessibility is a by-product of this. Needs to be a sustainable business model, if it doesn't pay for itself then it relies on the goodwill of the Council for it to be maintained. Jenny advised there are beacon wayfinding systems in place in Melbourne and some in Canada. There's not a business model for income but Sean Ordain is to assist with an approach. It could also promote businesses that aren't on the street front.
- Callum – are the beacons movable? It would be better if the city owned them and built them into structures such as sculptures or plaques, and then the council administered what data was on there; such as shop locations. Then the beacon could give you access to art and poetry as well. Jenny advised that the new proposal is that a company maintains the

beacons rather than WCC, as we wouldn't have the expertise on that. Beacons are currently located in shops like David Jones, the Central Library and Civic Buildings on Wakefield St.

- Jenny advised that the accessibility role at WCC will be advertised, and that the Chairs of the AAG are to be part of the interview panel. The job description will include providing input into work streams, developing relationships and partnerships with key disability organisations, promoting accessibility across all business units, and oversight of projects. The role would be part of the Community Services team but would work in partnership with the Urban Design Team.
- Alan – query whether WCC will be recording the Matariki Sky Show in a format that would be copyable and playable at the later date – previous years' events had been streamed by Brightcove which didn't allow this. Hedi to follow up.

Actions:

- AAG to send Jenny a list of interested people for inclusion the the Emergency Management working group
- Hedi to follow up with Events Team presenting at AAG in the future and regarding Matariki recording.

3. General Business

3.2 Member Updates 7:10pm

- Rachel and Tristram came to SPC to speak about Annual Report, interesting to hear councillors' impatience that the annual reports have included the same issues that haven't been addressed year after year. Erikka – great that we had presenters so early in their projects. Kristine is exemplary. Allan – there's so much turnover in group members, WCC staff

and councillors that it feels like a training session with every group and that there's no memory.

- Hedi to find out why AAG membership number is smaller than other advisory groups. Representation within the group discussed and how diversity matters – if people with diverse disabilities don't apply then you don't get diversity across the group.
- Allan – Health Passports are virtually complete between the three district health boards. Allan has done a couple hours of Zoom sessions about the WCC website improvements. Very well handled. Callum also did this and provided lots of feedback. Allan did a colour contrast check to ensure the WCC yellow and black were sufficiently contrasting.
- WCC hasn't signed the Accessibility Charter – Hedi to follow up. Allan is on the government web standards group that is looking at uniformity across these things. Nick – the Accessibility Charter has a government focus, outside of central government it is not that visible, would prefer that council worked to international standard instead such as Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.1. Rachel – we could recommend that WCC sign up to charter but then on our advice work towards the international standard? Erikka – we should expect local and central government to adhere to the Charter as the minimum standard. Allan – we are one of few countries where this is not obligatory, the UK and Australia have both come out with strong legislation where local authorities must comply. Rachel – Charter must be signed by CEO and appoint IT and Communications champions. The DHB approach is to know the resource requirement before they commit - doing a bit more of the preparatory work.
- Nick – work has included lots of engagement with government in the employment space, education, Tertiary Education Commission, with lots of zoom calls. Everyone is keen to get pieces out and complete. We are looking at significant downturn in the economy which is going to be a real concern.

Interesting the WCC accessibility role that will be advertised as it seems quite technical and you may not get any disabled applicants for the role. Rachel – should we talk to HR? Hedi to schedule HR presentation for August.

- Erikka – good news is that her brother has gained a job due to COVID-19 so not all doom and gloom, there are some positives. Very enlightening to see how accessible things got when it affected everyone, e.g. commuting and attending events online, and how quickly this happened. Allan – the downside of Zoom is the amount of data required – many people with an impairment won't have that data. The digital divide became greater. Erikka - Skinny Jump was something that came out quickly, specifically to support those most at risk of digital exclusion.
- Callum – interested in transformation of golden mile and how that will affect disabled people.

Actions:

- Hedi to follow up about:
 - Why membership limit is low compared to other Advisory Groups
 - Accessibility Charter
 - HR to present in August

4. Member only time

7:15pm

Members discussed the Code of Conduct and how to ensure AAG meetings are safe spaces for people to voice their opinions, while balancing the diversity of different perspectives.

Actions:

- Hedi to draft first cut of statement for Code of Conduct to capture the essence of the conversation.

The meeting was declared closed at 7:26.

The next AAG meeting will be held on 28 July 2020 at 5.30pm.