

Minutes of the Accessibility Advisory Group Meeting

Date: Tuesday, 23 February 2021

Time: 5:31pm – 7:13pm

Venue: Ngake (Room 16.09), Level 16, 113 The Terrace / Zoom

PRESENT

Chairperson

Rachel Noble and Nick Ruane

Members

Amy Evanson

Erikka Helliwell

Rosie Macleod (via audiovisual link)

Stuart Mills

Solmaz Nazari Orakani

Alan Royal

Elected Members

Councillor Rebecca Matthews

In Attendance

Jane Hadaway – Team Leader Website Product Management

Amy Brannigan – Advisor Planning and Reporting

Melissa Wells – Senior Accessibility Advisor

Hedi Mueller – Democracy Advisor

Callum McMenemy – member of the public

1. MEETING PROCEDURES

5:31pm

1.1 Welcome and Apologies

Cr Matthews said the karakia on behalf of the group. Apologies for Claire Richardson, Liam Hodgetts, Jenny Rains were received.

1.2 Introductions

Group members and staff introduced themselves.

1.3 Conflicts of Interest

No conflicts were declared.

1.4 Confirmation of Minutes – Minutes of 26 January 2021

That the minutes of 26 January 2021 be adopted as a true and accurate record.

Moved by Nick Ruane, seconded Stuart Mills.

Carried

2. PRESENTATIONS

Items on the agenda were reordered as follows.

2.2 Emergency Evacuation Plan

5:36pm

Hedi discussed the draft AAG Emergency Evacuation plan, and members discussed:

- The location of the safe space in case on members waiting on the fire department – this is inside the stairwell.
- Clarity on who can facilitate use of the evacuation chair.
- That the building does not have visual fire alarms for Deaf people.
- How this plan differs from the standard evacuation plan, and whether there is something in place in the standard plan for after-hours meetings.
- Including an introduction paragraph, and when the plan applies (e.g. fire, earthquake).

- Specific wording within the plan.

Hedi to update the Evacuation Plan to incorporate this feedback and circulate to the group.

2.1 Digital Communication Discussion Forum

5:52pm

Jane Hadaway introduced herself as Team Leader Website Product Management and advised that she could speak to the wcc.govt.nz website.

Members discussed:

- That having an Accessibility information page linked at the bottom of a site is standard and whether this could be included higher up the page – Jane advised that the Accessibility page can also be found by using the search bar at the top of the page.
- Whether access keys conflict with assistive technology.
- User testing having taken place with about 350 participants, some of whom had visual or intellectual disabilities, who were consciously sought for testing.
- Use of alternative text on social media posts.
- Use of website accessibility testing software, such as Monsido or Siteimprove – WCC has used SortSite in the past.
- That website content is about a level 7, and a scan is run on new content before it is added.
- How disabled people are talked about on the website, and the use of empowering language.

Amy Brannigan introduced herself as the site manager of the Let's Talk site, which is the consultation and engagement website. Let's Talk has a rigorous accessibility policy, for example it will not allow images to be uploaded if they don't include alt text.

Members discussed:

- How to systematise good practice – the Engagement team are developing best practice guidelines for how engagement sites look, will the focus on ease for the user.
- That operational policy is more useful than guidelines.
- The possibility of livestreams of events being hosted on the website – more likely on the YouTube channel or on Social Media, would need to check with Events team. For the previous Skyshow there was a link on the WCC website to the livestream hosted by Newshub.
- How to ensure that Council is engaging with the disabled community, and having Communications and Engagement come to an AAG meeting in 2021.
- Long-Term Plan at the March AAG meeting and having a conversation about what material AAG can pass on to communities.
- Website directory of accessible services mostly includes wheelchair accessibility, would be good if more inclusive.
- Link for people to join website user testing:
<https://forms.wellington.govt.nz/s3/join-user-feedback-database>

3. General Business

3.1 Members' and Councillor Updates

6:26pm

- Erikka: Summer events often not missing accessibility information on the website.
- Cr Matthews: Had meetings with Melissa and Jenny, as well as with Cyrus Dahl who has fundraised enough for accessible bucket swings in five playgrounds in Wellington. Will be interested to see LTP outcomes around financial sustainability of city housing and accessible housing, given that accessible new builds are less expensive than having to retrofit.
- Amy: Ministry of Health seeing a lot of data being collated and segregated by disability, which helps to figure out where gaps are. Would like to see this from WCC.

- Alan: Attended a workshop on the signage for the children's hospital.
- Melissa gave an update on the following items:
 - An Accessibility Governance group is starting up with key people from Urban Design, Transport and Community Services. Terms of Reference yet to be confirmed, AAG will be updated after first meeting.
 - Meeting with Playground Specialist from Parks, Sports and Recreation later this week to work out what "accessible" means in terms of play equipment - the plan is to work with our GIS team to map where the inclusive playground items are around Wellington.
 - In contact with NZTA Waka Kotahi around a piece of research they're doing. Project is called "Understanding the transport experiences of disabled people, determining what barriers exist for people wanting to use Total Mobility and exploring new opportunities". Will pass out more information as it comes available but believe there will be a series of focus groups.
 - Meeting with MBIE next week to hear about their Building Accessibility Strategic Roadmap where they're aiming to achieve "building access for all". Their work is underpinned by the UNCRPD and the project is currently in a draft phase.
 - Looking into training opportunities for Council staff around Accessibility. Currently talking to Raewyn Hailes from CCS Disability Action- let Melissa know if there's other training opportunities she should look into - also on the table are Strawbridge Accessibility training, Tiaho No Problem You're Welcome training, Life Unlimited Disability Start training, and Be. Accessible training. Libraries staff have mentioned that they would appreciate some training.
 - Drafted accessibility/disability impact statement into the new report template for Democracy Services, there wasn't anything around accessibility prior to this.
 - Still meeting and networking with people across council:

- Manager City Housing: Angelique Jackson who is supportive for more accessibility across city housing. At a crossroads Kainga Ora standard or own strategy.
- Amy Stewart and Chris Mitchell from Creative & Brand: already thinking about accessibility just needs to be part of their everyday processes.
- Planning to do fortnightly intranet articles around accessibility after internal comms have done an introductory piece.
- Bowen Street steps: looking into how to make the main entry way to Ministry of Education accessible. A ramp has been ruled out but now looking at the possibility of a wheelchair platform lift. This is so that people aren't forced to take Bolton/Mowbray Streets to get there.
- Currently looking into NZSL training for the Community Services team with the hope of offering this across Council in the future.
- WCC does not hold data on disabled staff. Council is looking to improve data collection as part of their work in the inclusion space.
- Nick: Has been thinking about a regional focus.
- Rachel: Attended same signage project as Alan – found that following guidelines doesn't always lead to something accessible. Last week's APLTP tussle led to reflections on the Long-Term Plan process, how AAG can have an early influence early, and whether submissions are worthwhile.

The meeting was declared closed at 7:13 pm.

The next AAG meeting will be held on 30 March 2021 at 5.30pm, on Level 16, 113 The Terrace.