

DISABILITY REFERENCE GROUP

MINUTES

5.30 P.M. – Tuesday 23rd February 2010

Committee Room 2

Members Present

Sara Pivac-Alexander (Co-Chair)
Philippa McDonald (Co-Chair)
Lisette Wesseling
Errolyn Jones
Alan Royal

Also Present

Jenny Rains (WCC)
Councillor Ngarie Best

1. Welcome

The Chairs welcomed to Errolyn Jones, a new member to the DRG

2. Apologies

Thomas Bryan
Councillor Iona Pannett

3. Bridget Duley, Senior Policy Advisor – Update on the Housing Policy

Copies of the submission for the draft housing policy were tabled and the timeline for submissions was explained (closing 26 February)

It was noted that a submission has been received from the DRG but more time was available if needed for any amendments.

It was noted the proposed new policy recognises disability and mental health as priority areas in the needs assessment framework.

Comments & Questions

The group questioned whether Council was planning to get rid of bedsits over the next 10 years. Although this is not part of the scope of the policy officers were able to confirm that this will be assessed on a complex by complex basis

The group also were interested in knowing if the changing demographics of the city (in particular the aging population) was considered in the policy. It was confirmed that this has been part of the discussion particularly in planning for the future.

Action: update on all aspects of the Housing Upgrade Project to be scheduled in the forward programme.

4. Suzanne Eynon, Project Manager – Golden Mile Update

The project team have taken into account the written and oral submissions from the DRG and as well as more detailed information from the subgroup.

It was noted that Council is looking at minimising obstacles and taking into account the whole journey when considering design. This included provision of pedestrian crossings with tactile

surface indicators and signals; reduced speed limit; bus stops with a higher kerb height with the bus shelters still under consideration.

It was noted that:

- Although the planned shared space will be one flat surface there will be a distinct area for pedestrians only.
- The options for mobility parking within the shared space; will be considered
- Paving materials in the shared space will be different, ie, asphalt, basalt and paving.
- Trees will also be included in the pedestrian space, however it was noted that trees are not enough of a distinction for visually impaired
- There is some concern over the lighting plan and that Council need to look at past projects that worked well.
- The project Team will look at the possibility of tactile pavers being included in the design.

Council is now finalising construction drawings but plans will also be subject to final consultation. The Environment Court hearing will occur in April if this gets the go ahead then work will start in the second half of the year in Manners Mall. A peer review of the design will be conducted in March/April time.

Action The Urban Design Team will keep the DRG updated as the project progresses

5. Report from the Chair

Accessibility Policy: A letter from the Mayor was tabled, and the group would reply

The group noted that a policy could be drafted with an emphasis on principles rather than issue

The Group also noted that a preference is for a robust policy that would be a starting point and guide all staff. Although an action plan is although it could set a clear goals that could be reorted back on.

Actions:

- Invite the Director of Strategy to attend a DRG meeting to discuss Council Strategies.
- to set a workshop meeting to work on the action plan.

New Subgroups: The group decided to have 5 subgroups with each having 2-3 clear goals with milestones. This would be part of the action plan

- Governance
- Cultural and Economic
- Housing
- Urban Design
- Transport

6. Council Officer's Report

Accessibility Advisor – this vacancy has now closed. (32 applications and it is hope interviews well be arranged as soon as possible.

DRG Membership – four applications have been received and interview will be arranged. Council are setting up a tracking process to follow up on the minutes also to give feedback and updates.

Leadership Course – this will be discussed when Thomas is present.

Action Plan: A facilitated meeting is planned.

Action: Meeting for the action plan to be arranged.

Possible Agenda Items for the Next Meeting:

- Policy/Action Plan-The Director of Strategy will be invited.
- Community Action Project and Housing Upgrade
- Cobblestone Park Lighting

The meeting closed at 7.45pm
Next meeting is scheduled for: Tuesday, March 30th 2010 at 5:30 pm.

DRAFT