
ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY GROUP ANNUAL REPORT 2013

1. Purpose of report

This report outlines the work and achievements of the Accessibility Advisory Group in 2013.

2. Executive summary

The Accessibility Advisory Group (AAG) has written its own Annual Report for 2013, which is attached as Appendix 1.

3. Recommendations

Officers recommend that the Governance, Finance and Planning Committee:

1. *Receive the information.*
2. *Note the work and achievements of the Accessibility Advisory Group in 2013.*
3. *Note the issues highlighted in the report.*

4. Background

The AAG is one of the most long standing Council advisory groups. It was established in 1996 to provide advice to the Council on issues that concern people with disabilities in Wellington City.

As outlined in the AAG's Terms of Reference (TOR)¹, the purpose of the AAG is to provide feedback and advice on the Council's strategy and policy development, planning and service delivery across all of the Council's strategy areas from the perspective of people living with disabilities.

The TOR specifies that the AAG Annual Report to the Council should note work undertaken with Council staff, the group's achievements and any issues it wishes the Council to consider further.

Officers are initiating a review of all the Council's advisory groups including the AAG's. The review will be conducted under the Council's Engagement

¹ <http://wellington.govt.nz/~media/your-council/meetings/files/toraccessibility.pdf>

Improvement Plan as set out in the Council's new Engagement Policy, which was adopted in October 2013.

5. Discussion

The AAG's report for 2013 is attached as Annex 1.

The report contains an extensive list of activities for the year.

The report cites a number of highlights including on the establishment and enhancement of relationships with business units. The AAG believe that these partnerships are achieving excellent results for the Council and are enhancing accessibility in Wellington city.

Also, the AAG worked in an ongoing way with the Memorial Park Alliance project to enhance the accessibility of the project and this is cited as a particular example of excellent engagement leading to good results.

The Wellington Accessible Forum was also cited as a success.

The report outlines a number of challenges that the AAG have experienced. These are:

- serious safety concerns with the Lower Cuba Street area,
- the design for the Parliamentary steps.

The current status of these two projects are outlined below.

Lower Cuba Street area

In late 2013 Urban Design was asked to review Lower Cuba Shared Space primarily to:

1. Identify and cost solutions to the current maintenance and safety issues with the rain gardens and tree pits in the Lower Cuba Shared Space.
2. Identify and cost amendments that will improve the shared space qualities of the area in conjunction with the above.

Council has funded \$30,000 to remediate some of the failings of the tree-pits and raingardens, that in turn address some of the safety and accessibility issues. Most of the safety and accessibility concerns of the space are largely attributed to the fall-hazards around the garden areas, which are attributed to poorly specified and constructed tree/rain gardens. Re-construction of the tree pits and raingardens (to improve the drainage and plant growth) is planned to take place before the end of the financial year.

Parliamentary steps

The Parliament Precinct project is divided in two portions: the Cenotaph Square and the Parliamentary steps (on Parliament Grounds).

The project as a whole is at detailed design stage and there is currently an application for resource consent underway.

The Parliamentary Steps part of the project is dependent on funding by Parliamentary Services and a decision about the budget is expected in May.

The issue of accessibility with the Parliamentary steps current design was identified by the Accessibility Advisory Group and brought to the attention of Parliamentary Services by the Council's Urban Design. The design decision sits with Parliamentary Services as owners of the land.

6. Conclusion

This report provides a summary of the work and activities of the AAG in 2013.

Contact Officer: *Lisa Matthews, Research, Consultation and Planning.*

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1) Strategic fit / Strategic outcome

This report supports the outcomes of the Council's governance activities.

2) LTP/Annual Plan reference and long term financial impact

The Accessibility Advisory Group is managed within existing budgets.

3) Treaty of Waitangi considerations

There are no Treaty of Waitangi implications from this report.

4) Decision-making

No significant decisions need to be made.

5) Consultation

a) General consultation

No general consultation has been undertaken for this report.

b) Consultation with Maori

No consultation with Maori has been undertaken for this report.

6) Legal implications

There are no legal implications from this report.

7) Consistency with existing policy

The activities of the Accessibility Advisory Group are consistent with existing policy and support ongoing policy development.