

Minutes of the Accessibility Advisory Group Meeting

Date: Tuesday, 24 November 2020

Time: 5:34pm – 7:30pm

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

PRESENT

Chairperson

Rachel Noble

Members

Rosie Macleod (via audiovisual link)

Stuart Mills

Alan Royal

Elected Members

Councillor Rebecca Matthews

In Attendance

Liam Hodgetts – Chief Planning Officer

Hedi Mueller – Democracy Advisor

Samantha Hutcheson – Senior Policy Advisor

Erica Burns – Senior Strategic Advisor

Kate Hodgetts – Senior Advisor Policy and Reporting

Callum McMenamin – member of the public

1. MEETING PROCEDURES

5:34pm

1.1 Welcome and Karakia

Cr Matthews said the karakia and the meeting started with introductions around the table.

1.2 Apologies

Apologies for absence received from Nick Ruane, Erikka Helliwell, Amy Evanson and Solmaz Nazari Orakani.

1.3 Conflicts of Interest

Rachel declared an interest through her role at the District Health Board.

1.4 Confirmation of Minutes – Minutes of 27 October 2020

That the minutes of 27 October 2020 be adopted as a true and accurate record.

Moved by Alan Royal. As no other members present were in attendance at the October meeting, the motion was carried with the leave of the meeting. **Carried**

2. PRESENTATIONS

2.1 Priority Strategies

5:38pm

Samantha, Erica and Kate presented on the Economic Development Strategy, the Arts and Culture Strategy and the Social Strategy (initially focusing on Children and Young People). They discussed how the strategies are interconnected and relate to the outcomes of the Long Term Plan. The phases of the project were discussed and it is currently in the scoping stage. From December, following discussions with the Advisory Groups, the strategies will be drafted, and the team are happy to come back to AAG with the draft for additional feedback.

Members discussed:

- Importance of main entry ways being accessible, so that disabled people do not have to enter through side doors.
- Difficulties of multiple disabled people trying to get to the same event when accessible taxis aren't available.
- Audio based art installations, such as the bird song in the Woodward Street pedestrian tunnel under The Terrace and the streamscape outside of Parliament.
- Cubadupa's accessible navigation trial for the 2021 festival.
- Difficulties of walking through on street events when there are power cables and judder bars in the way.
- Difficulties of booking tickets for events and how different the experience is for an able-bodied person, including the level of service.
- The experience leading up to the event and then actually feeling welcome once you get there.
- The economic influence of the senior population.
- Lack of cognisance of people with disabilities from able bodied people.
- No single definition of what an accessible venue is – lots of venues saying they are 'accessible' but at varying levels.
- The impact of 2016 Kaikoura earthquake and pressure on available venues.
- An update on Accessible Action Plan for future AAG meeting.
- Another invitation to the Events Team for future AAG meeting.
- That it is critical to know what information is available, where the information is, and whether the information is in an accessible format.
- That it may be best to get feedback from disabled youth once they're in 20s and out from protection of parents.
- Making an intentional effort to highlight inequities facing disabled people.
- The difference between access, inclusion and participation.

- That the employment rate of disabled people is 47% lower, so more likely to be in poverty and not have financial access to art events that cost money.
- The Disabled Persons Assembly would be a good group to get feedback from.

3. General Business

3.1 Members' and Councillor Updates

6:18pm

Cr Matthews gave apologies on behalf of Liam Hodgetts as he had to leave early. She discussed the recent appointment to the fixed term Senior Accessibility Advisor role, starting on December 16. Hedi to extend an invitation to attend the January AAG meeting. WCC will also be incorporating disability impact statements in Council/Committee reports and the Senior Accessibility Advisor will be helping to implement that.

Cr Matthews will be meeting with Housing NZ and discussing the housing action plan, as well as meeting with Waka Kotahi NZTA regarding accessible taxis. Cr Matthews to flag the issue with the WCC Safe and Sustainable Transport Forum.

The FIXiT app has been updated and the new WCC website has been launched as well.

The Advisory Group Review will be on the agenda for the Strategy and Policy Committee for the evening of 10 December, all are welcome. Hedi to send invite. Group to think about gaps in group for recruitment in the new year.

Rachel gave an update on a meeting she attended with the Wellington Regional Emergency Management Organisation (WREMO), to discuss strategy and how disabled people have input into it.

Callum talked about the FIXit update, he had given feedback which unfortunately wasn't taken on board, such as support for

dynamic type and for screenreaders. Callum to forward email chain to Cr Matthews.

Alan discussed the FIXiT update and being quoted in the media release – he had similar feedback to Callum, though found the app easier to navigate than the new website, but easiest of all is phoning the Contact Centre.

2.2 Results of the Local Authority Disability Survey 6:37pm

Brian Coffey, Director of the Office of Disability Issues, spoke about a survey which went out to territorial authorities at the end of last year. The survey was based around what Councils are doing to engage with disabled communities and had an approximate 30% return rate. The survey set out to see what good practice might look like, with the aim of making it common practice.

Members discussed:

- Accessibility and inclusion being imbedded into business as usual.
- Consultation at the very start of project as opposed to once the draft is out or even later, and that feedback is valued.
- What information is available, where the information is, and whether it's accessible. Can be hard to find accessible information on accessibility.
- Selwyn District Council signed up to the Accessibility Charter, which is seen as a good start, although the Accessibility Charter is directed to Central Government rather than local.
- COVID lockdowns demonstrating that getting information to the public in accessible way wasn't imbedded in DNA
- Disability impact statements on all council and committee reports.
- Having a Councillor leading an Accessibility Portfolio and having an Advisory Group sitting within the right place within the organisation.
- Good feedback loops.

- Benefit of site visits (such as Arapaki Manners Street Service Centre prior to its opening) and showing the breadth of skill and knowledge that the advisory groups holds.
- Appointment of Senior Accessibility Advisor.
- Meetings with organisations such as WREMO.
- CEO has Key Performance Indicator related to accessibility, which came about as a result of the Accessibility Action Plan process.
- Frequent attendance of AAG meetings by senior staff such as Jenny Rains, and consistent liaison staff.
- How to promote good practice across other Local authorities?
- Parts of WCC are good and parts are not – there are pockets that are hard to get into.
- Possibility of national advisory group conference, to have Elected Members in attendance.
- Ensuring that there is staff training on disability issues – target training in induction.
- Councillors aside from portfolio lead having good awareness of disability issues.
- Wellington has a strong activist community, which is an advantage compared to other local authorities.
- [Access Alliance update](#) on 8th December, 7-8pm via Zoom.
- How to spread best practise through all NZ council - Upper Hutt City Council has a good internal process for event organisers, and Auckland, Tauranga and Hamilton City Councils have formed a cross-council group around planning and design practice.

3.1 Members' and Councillor Updates (continued)

Hedi gave an update on an upcoming traffic signals project, which will mean different sounds at different types of crossings so visually impaired people know which type of crossing they are at.

The Very Welly Christmas event has a page on accessibility, including NZSL Interpreters for the Christmas Carol stage.

By the leave of the meeting, the group agreed to the 2021 meeting dates, and to move to Ngake 16.09 on Level 16.

The meeting was declared closed at 7:24pm.

The next AAG meeting will be held on 26 January 2021 at 5.30pm, on Level 16, 113 The Terrace.