



Disabled in Norwood Payneham and St Peters

Newsletter 12 - August 2014

THAT ACCESS AND INCLUSION PLAN

Yes we are still waiting and there is a way to go yet.

However, yesterday I had a fairly lengthy meeting with Rosanna Busolin, Manager Community Services, at her instigation. I thank her for that – it is good that we have someone who is willing to be in communication with us.

The news is that the 5-year plan is still a work in progress and its release will be further inhibited by the legal requirement of a Council caretaker period during council elections.

The plan will need to be consolidated against the **National Disability Strategy**. See: <http://www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/disability-and-carers/program-services/government-international/national-disability-strategy#5>

This is interesting reading and I commend it to you.

Plans also need to be made to measure the success/progress of Council's plan.

Rosanna sees one of the major aspects of the plan as trying to build a culture of acceptance and accommodation of the disabled both by Council staff and by the community in general. This can only occur through a continuing process of education in both areas. Another major area needing attention is the physical domain where we still have many examples of poor/no physical access. This

occurs both in Council buildings and other Council controlled areas, but also in buildings such as shops and businesses we would hope are accessible.

She would also like to see an improvement in accessibility of those things which improve "lifestyle" accessibility such as improved library resources for the visually impaired, better access to the Norwood Public Library building.

Of course such things as an audit of all Council buildings will take time and, my comment, we must recognise that improvements cost money and must be prioritised. Every cent Council spends must be supported from Council rates and none of us wants a vast increase in those rates. I would see many accessibility improvements as being able to be made at the same times as other repairs and upgrades to buildings.

The final draft will be released as an Executive Summary, an overview, together with a detailed plan, hopefully early next year. This will go to a Council Meeting for in principle approval and then to public consultation.

Knowing me, I will probably have commented before then on our behalf!

MERCHANDISE ON THE FOOTPATH

I noted the delay in this policy in the last newsletter. This has now drifted out to Dec. 2014. I am assured however that Footpath Policy will form part of the Access and Inclusion Plan also.

LOOK EAST

There is a brief article about the Access and Inclusion Plan in the July edition of Look East, which includes:

To subscribe to receive the Access & Inclusion eNewsletter, please visit www.npsp.sa.gov.au

(Actually for the eNewsletter go to http://www.npsp.sa.gov.au/our_community/health_and_wellbeing/access_and_inclusion_policy)

The newsletter will also be available in hard copy. If you would like to join the mailing list to receive the newsletter via **post**, please contact the Council's Community Services Unit on 8366 4611.

A FEW THOUGHTS

Confrontation or Negotiation?

Following the last newsletter I received an email from one of the group to whom it had been sent. That person recommended in no uncertain terms that I contact the SA Ombudsman and complain about the Footpath Trading Policy and the Access and Inclusion Plan.

Firstly, the Ombudsman's webpage refers you to the State **Equal Opportunity Commission** at 8297 1977 or <http://www.eoc.sa.gov.au/>

Alternatively there is the Federal **Human Rights Commission** on 1300 656 419 or <http://www.humanrights.gov.au/complaints-information>

Further the very first criterion for a complaint under either body is to get that complaint in within a limited period of time.

Shut Out, linked to the **National Disability Strategy**, says, "the process to lodge a complaint under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cwlth) is onerous and relies too

heavily on individuals being prepared and able to take part in lengthy and costly legal proceedings. The significant personal and financial cost involved in making a complaint prevents many from taking their concerns forward."

I would concur with that judgement having made a complaint some years ago through what was then HREOC. The initial stage of either the State or Federal complaint processes is conciliatory. That does not prevent the person/organisation against whom one is making a complaint involving heavy legal bodies. And so it becomes confrontational rather than conciliatory.

So is this the process I want to use? Frankly, no.

We are looking for long-term solutions to a variety of problems and in my view these are better accomplished by mutual understanding than by a process likely to induce antagonism.

THOSE MOBILITY SCOOTERS AGAIN

I have recently been advised: "to travel in an Access cab the rider must be able to independently transfer from the scooter to the seat in the cab" and that is probably a reflection of changes in Australian Standards.

The seats in access cabs are quite low and anyone thinking of getting a scooter should check with Access Cabs about this whole situation before making a decision about buying a scooter. There appears to be NO information available online.

users.adam.com.au/marcia/DisabilityNPSP.html

or

Google DisabilityNPSP

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