

14 CARDINIA DISABILITY, ACCESS AND INCLUSION PLAN 2017-2021

FILE REFERENCE INT1754610

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RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Formally adopt the Cardinia Disability, Access and Inclusion Policy 2017-2021
2. Formally adopt the Cardinia Disability, Access and Inclusion Action Plan 2017-2021

Attachments

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| 1 | Cardinia disability, action and inclusion plan 2017-21 | 6 Pages |
| 2 | Cardinia disability, action and inclusion action plan 2017-21 | 9 Pages |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Consistent with the Cardinia Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee's key function as outlined in its Instrument of Delegation:

"To monitor and review Councils Disability Policy and its associated Strategies and Implementation Plan ", the Committee has for the last twelve months been engaged in a review and consultation process resulting in the development of the two documents before you today:

1. Cardinia Disability, Access and Inclusion Policy
2. Cardinia Disability, Access and Inclusion Action Plan

Together these documents highlight the strategies Council will take in the next four years to ensure the Shire is a welcoming, accessible and inclusive place for people of all abilities to enjoy - be that in the capacity of a resident, worker or visitor.

BACKGROUND

Compliance -

- Council has a civic responsibility to provide programs and services that are equitable and inclusive for all members of the community
- Council has a social and ethical responsibility to address the access and inclusion needs and expectations of people living with a disability, their families and carers in the Shire
- Council also has a legal responsibility to address those Council practices that may result in discrimination against people with a disability

Victorian Disability Act 2006

"Under Section 38 of the Victorian Disability Act 2006 councils are required to prepare disability action plans."

Victorian Disability Amendment Act 2012

"From 1 July 2012 for the first time council is required to report on the implementation of its disability Action Plan in its annual report."

(The Municipal Association of Victoria, Building Inclusive Communities 2012)

Adopting its inaugural Disability Policy in 2000, and establishing the Cardinia Disability Advisory Committee in 2005 (in 2014 changing its name to the Cardinia Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee), Cardinia Shire Council has a proven track record of access and inclusion commitment and innovation spanning in excess of twenty-five years.

Key achievements of the 2014-2017 Access and Inclusion Action Plan include:

- Council's induction program refined to include disability inclusion planning as a probationary requirement.
- Development of pictograph communication boards to support the needs of people with complex communication issues presenting at relief centres in times of an emergency
- An access consultant engaged as a member of the design team for all of Council's new facilities

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The draft Plan builds on the achievements of Cardinia's current 2014-2017 Access and Inclusion Plan, complements the directions of Victorian and Australian Government policy relating to access and inclusion planning, while enhancing compliance with relevant legislation.

RELEVANCE TO COUNCIL PLAN

The draft Plan complements Council's integrated approach to service planning and delivery across each of its five designated priority areas:

Our people - Our community - Our environment - Our economy - Our governance

CONSULTATION/COMMUNICATION

Following a three-month desk top review of current and emerging access and inclusion policy innovation Australia wide; the consultation process for the development of the draft Cardinia Disability, Access and Inclusion Plan was conducted over a nine-month period (July 2016 to March 2017). Enhanced by input from Cardinia's Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee, Councils Community Engagement Facilitator, and the State Government (community consultation guidelines for the development of Disability Action Plans), the consultation process involved a broad range of internal and external stakeholders including:

- The Cardinia Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee (2 workshops conducted, July & Nov. 2016)
- People with a disability, their families and carers (on-going one on one interviews, September 2016 to March 2017)
- Disability service providers / supports (e.g. Outlook, Scope)
- Support agencies and networks (e.g. Hills ASD and Special Needs Support Group, ERMHA)
- Community groups (e.g. Emerald Community House (Disability Program staff), U3A Pakenham - one on one interviews, plus, on-line survey)
- The broader community (on line survey, Disability, Access and Inclusion Plan 2017-2021 'Survey Monkey' rolled out on Council's website)
- Cardinia Shire Council staff (On-going discussion across all business units, January to March 2017)

Following the development of the draft Disability, Access and Inclusion Plan 2017-2021 and its presentation to SLT and Council Briefing in May, the policy and action plan were sent out for public

exhibition. At the conclusion of this six-week process, with no responses received, the documents are now being presented to Council for approval and ratification.

FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Nil.

CONCLUSION

Demonstrating Cardinia Shire Council's commitment to social inclusion, the draft Disability, Access and Inclusion Plan reflects Council's leadership in the area of access and inclusion innovation.

It is recommended that the draft Disability, Access and Inclusion Plan (Policy and Action Plan), as presented, be formally ratified by Council.

Attachment 1



Cardinia Disability, Access and Inclusion Plan 2017-2021

*"People with disabilities want to bring about a transformation in their lives.
They want their human rights recognised and realised.
They want the things that everyone else in the community takes for granted.
They want somewhere to live, a job, better health carer, a good education, a chance
To enjoy the company of friends and family, to go the footy and to go to the movies.
They want a chance to participate meaningfully in the life of the community."*

Shut Out: The Experience of People with Disability and their Families in Australia 2009

Introduction

Cardinia Shire Council has an ethical and legal responsibility to ensure that **all** people have equal access to services, facilities and resources within the community. In line with this, the Disability, Access and Inclusion Plan 2017-2021 affirms Council's commitment to creating a welcoming, inclusive and accessible community for all.

Complementing the directions of local, state and national policy and legislation, the four-year plan aims to assist Council achieve its compliance requirements while moving towards a best practice model of access and inclusion planning, with a particular focus on achieving better outcomes for people with a disability.

It provides a strategic framework that will guide future planning, decision making and resource allocation across the organisation, in the community and in partnership with the Cardinia Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee. The Plan will also assist Council staff in the realisation of key actions within each division and business unit of Council.

Purpose

The Cardinia Disability, Access and Inclusion Plan seeks to improve the overall quality of life of people living, working and visiting the Shire, by removing the barriers which directly or indirectly discriminate against people with a disability.

Specifically, it is envisaged that the Plan will:

- Ensure that facilities and services provided by Council are accessible, equitable and inclusive
- Improve outcomes across Council's various roles of planning, regulation, construction and the Provision of programs and services
- Build a stronger, more vibrant community through the increased participation of people with a disability in community life
- Demonstrate Cardinia Shire Council's leadership in the area of access and inclusion
- Minimise the risk of litigation by assisting Council to meet its legislative requirements

Key policy statement

Cardinia Shire Council acknowledges the rights of all community members to enjoy full participation in community life and is committed to working towards demonstrating best practice access and inclusion planning.

Council recognises that it isn't necessarily a person's disability, but rather *the barriers* which exist in the community; those related to *infrastructure* (the physical environment), as well as barriers related to *attitudes* (the social environment) which limit a person's ability to fully participate in community life.

Access and inclusion outcomes for the Shire will be achieved through a whole of organisation approach, universal access design and on-going community engagement.

Background and demographics

Disability is part of human diversity. People with a disability purchase consumer goods, have jobs, go on holidays, access information and contribute to society in the same way as other community members do. Despite this however, Victorians with a disability are more likely to experience discrimination and stigma, live in poverty, have poorer health, lower levels of educational attainment and be unemployed. (*State Disability Plan 2017-2020*)

As a result, people with a disability are less likely to reach their full potential, and, or, be actively involved in social, economic and civic life.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (Survey of Disability, Aging & Carers 2012) estimated that 4.2 million Australians, 18.5% of the population live with a disability, the incidence of disability increasing with age.

A disability may be generally defined as a condition which may restrict a person's mobility, sensory or mental functions to undertake or perform a task in the same way as a person who does not have a disability.

Disabilities affect people in different ways. While many people associate 'disability' with someone who uses a wheelchair, the application of disability is much broader. The Disability Discrimination Act (1992) identifies and defines the following categories of disability:

- Physical – affects a person's mobility or dexterity
- Intellectual – affects a person's ability to learn
- Psychiatric – affects a person's thinking processes and behaviours
- Sensory – affects a person's ability to hear or see
- Neurological including ABI – results in the loss of some mental or bodily functions
- Physical disfigurement
- Learning disability
- Immunological – the presence of organisms causing disease in the body

While some people are born with a disability, many people acquire a disability, approaching, or as part of adult life, as a result of an accident, illness, genetic condition or as part of the aging process. Along with different disability 'types' it is also acknowledged that disability may be experienced alongside other barriers to participation, such as gender, age, sexuality, language and culture.

It is predicted that Cardinia will continue to experience significant population growth over the next twenty years. Cardinia Shire's current population (2017) is estimated to be 99,192, of which approximately 17%, (16.6% ABS), or 16,465 of all residents report living with a disability. By 2036 Cardinia's population is estimated to reach 180,308, a dramatic overall increase of 82%. Reflecting this trend will be a corresponding increase in the number of our residents living with a disability.

Council recognises that it will be particularly important in a period of rapid change for the municipality to remain inclusive and welcoming of people of all abilities.

Consultation process

Involving broad based participation (community consultations, surveys and interviews) from a range of stakeholders including:

- Cardinia Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee members
- People with a disability, their families and carers in the community
- Disability service providers and support agencies
- Community groups and organisations
- Staff representing all business units across Council
- The broader Cardinia Shire community

the Disability, Access and Inclusion Plan 2017-2021 has been developed.

Influences on the Plan

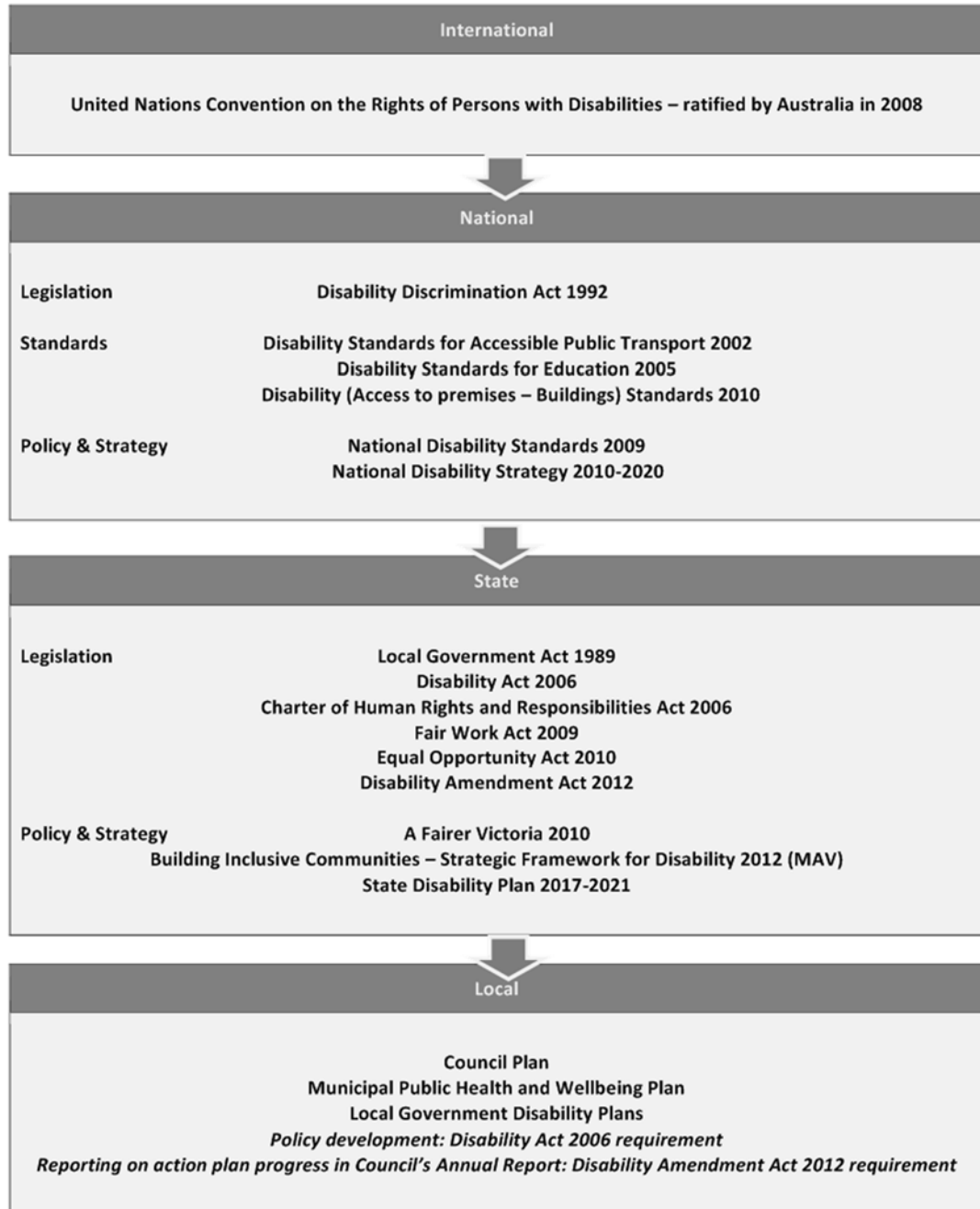


The Disability, Access and Inclusion Plan has been informed by:

- feedback received from a diverse range of internal and external stakeholders
- past disability plans
- relevant research
- direction provided by government, state & federal
- key internal documents including the Council Plan and the Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan

enabling the Plans responsiveness and relevance to both the community and Council; while ensuring that Council meets its legislative requirements.

Disability Regulatory Matrix



Alignment:

Internally, the *Draft* Disability, Access and Inclusion Plan aligns with the **Council Plan** and the **Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan**. (*Draft* Liveability Health Plan)

It also influences a range of internal strategies, policies & action plans, including, but not limited to:

- Access Design Policy, Guidelines/Matrix
- Age Friendly Strategy
- Community Engagement Plan
- Community Grants Policy
- Cultural Diversity Plan
- Footpath Trading Code
- Housing Strategy
- Municipal Emergency Management Plan
- Play Space Strategy
- Reconciliation Action Plan
- Recreation Open Space Strategy
- Road Safety Strategy
- Universal Access Design Policy
- Youth Strategy

More information on these policies and plans can be found on Council's website:

www.cardinia.vic.gov.au

Implementation, monitoring and reporting

- Responsible officers will be allocated to each action, providing a monthly status report to their relevant Manager via Council's Cycle reporting platform
- An internal annual report, mapping progress against actions, will be provided to Council by the Plan facilitator
- Council's Annual Plan will report on the implementation of the action plan (*legislative requirement*)
- The Cardinia Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee will assist Council to monitor and review the implementation of the Action Plan, consistent with its key functions, as identified in the Committee's Instrument of Delegation.

Disability, Access and Inclusion Action Plan

The following actions identify how Council intends to improve the overall quality of life of all people living, working and visiting the Shire. Specifically, the Action Plan:

- Identifies areas where there are access barriers and access opportunities
- Outlines actions to remove barriers and realise on-going improvement
- Identifies who has responsibility for ensuring actions are completed, as well as other accountabilities including timelines for action and resourcing

Attachment 2

Cardinia Disability, Access and Inclusion

Action Plan

2017-2021

Focus area 1: Building inclusive communities

Vision: People with a disability are able to participate in civic life in the same way as people without a disability

1.1 Building Inclusive Communities	<i>Responsibility: People and Culture</i>
<p>Council will exercise leadership in improving its culture of acceptance of all people, continuing to schedule Building Inclusive Communities (Disability Awareness) training on the corporate training calendar as a compulsory component of Council's induction process, and preferred probationary requirement for all new and returning staff.</p> <p>Timeline: Completion by June end 2018 Resourcing: Within existing resources</p>	
1.2 Building Inclusive Communities	<i>Responsibility: Aligned Leisure/Active Communities</i>
<p>DHHS supported YouMeUs disability awareness training will be rolled out to all Aligned Leisure Leaders and Captains on a compulsory basis; while the programs take up will be encouraged on a voluntary basis for all Aligned Leisure casual staff. Applicable to all eight sites over a four-year period.</p> <p>Timeline: Completion by June end 2021 Resourcing: Within existing resources</p>	
1.3 Building Inclusive Communities	<i>Responsibility: Customer Communications</i>
<p>Council via its <i>Connect</i> magazine will feature one article a year positively profiling disability, access and inclusion in the Shire as a means of changing attitudes about people with a disability</p> <p>Timeline: Phase 1 June end 2018, completion June 2021 Resources: Within existing resources</p>	
1.4 Building Inclusive Communities	<i>Responsibility: Customer Communications</i>
<p>Council will ensure that its (Scope) Communication Access accreditation remains current</p> <p>Timeline: Completion by June end 2018 Resources: Within existing resources</p>	

1.5 Building Inclusive Communities	<i>Responsibility: Strategic and Economic Development</i>
<p>Council via its <i>Grow</i> magazine will feature one article per year as a minimum positively profiling disability and employment</p> <p>Timeline: Phase 1 June 2018, completion by June 2021 Resources: Within existing resources</p>	
1.6 Building Inclusive Communities	<i>Responsibility: Strategic and Economic Development</i>
<p>On an annual basis, disability and employment articles produced for <i>Grow</i> magazine will be presented to the Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee, along with all other access and inclusion initiatives</p> <p>Timeline: Phase 1 June 2018, completion June 2021 Resources: Within existing resources</p>	
1.7 Building Inclusive Communities	<i>Responsibility: Buildings and Facilities</i>
<p>Council will apply universal design principles to the design and construction of all future capital works projects as well as major refurbishment projects undertaken across the Shire</p> <p>Timeline: On-going June 2017-2021 Resources: Within existing resources</p>	
1.8 Building Inclusive Communities	<i>Responsibility: Buildings and Facilities</i>
<p>Council will engage the services of an <i>independent</i> access auditor to provide advice on access and inclusion compliance and best practice, during the design and post design phases of each new major capital works /refurbishment project. Applicable to projects managed by Council's Buildings and Facilities business unit</p> <p>Timeline: On-going from July 2017 to June 2021 Resources: Within existing resources</p>	
1.9 Building Inclusive Communities	<i>Responsibility: Buildings and Facilities</i>
<p>Council will ensure that relevant Buildings and Facilities staff receive access and inclusion training related to the built environment from a qualified access audit/training provider</p> <p>Timeline: Completion by June end 2019 Resources: Within existing resources</p>	

Focus area 2: Health, housing and well-being

Vision: People with a disability are healthy and fulfilled, enjoying access to the same services and opportunities as other members of the community

2.1 Health, housing and well-being	<i>Responsibility: Community Strengthening</i>
<p>Council will partner with local disability services, doctors and health and community providers to develop a health promotion initiative targeting people with a disability</p> <p>Timeline: Completion by June end 2020 Resources: Within existing resources</p>	
2.2 Health, housing and well-being	<i>Responsibility: Community Strengthening</i>
<p>Council will assist the community's transition to the NDIS by providing resources and an information forum to people with a disability, their families and carers in the lead up to Cardinia's 1 September 2018 NDIS roll out</p> <p>Timeline: Completion by August end 2018 Resources: Within existing resources</p>	
2.3 Health, housing and well-being	<i>Responsibility: Community and Family Services</i>
<p>Council via its existing aged and disability service provider partnership will develop on going marketing and communication strategies for informing the community about the anticipated operation of the NDIS</p> <p>Timeline: Completion by August end 2018 Resources: Within existing resources</p>	
2.4 Health, housing and well-being	<i>Responsibility: Community Strengthening</i>
<p>Council will actively engage <i>disability focused</i>, mixed equity, social housing providers and associations to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Facilitate liaison between local disability service providers and mixed equity social housing providers as a means of increasing accessible and affordable housing stock for people with a disability in the Shire, <i>and, or</i> 	

<p>2. Partner with Council to establish disability focused, mixed equity social housing on Council land within the Shire</p> <p>Timeline: Completion by June end 2019 Resources: Within existing resources</p>	
<p>2.5 Health, housing and well-being</p>	<p><i>Responsibility: Community and Family Services</i></p>
<p>Council will ensure that the residents (seniors and people with a disability) of the 10 community housing properties it owns and maintains will have information on My Aged Care should they require community home support services or access to NDIS services.</p> <p>Timeline: Completion by June end 2021 Resources: Within existing resources</p>	
<p>2.6 Health, housing and well-being</p>	<p><i>Responsibility: Infrastructure Services</i></p>
<p>Council will include ‘access and inclusion’ as a category in its prioritisation for consideration of future funding allocation relating to new footpath implementation within the municipality.</p> <p>Timeline: On-going from September 2017 Resources: Within existing resources</p>	
<p>2.7 Health, housing and well-being</p>	<p><i>Responsibility: Infrastructure Services</i></p>
<p>Council will develop one all weather, wheelchair accessible walking trail in the municipality in the next four years</p> <p>Timeline: Completion by June end 2021 Resources: Within existing resources</p>	
<p>2.8 Health, housing and well-being</p>	<p><i>Responsibility: Community Strengthening</i></p>
<p>Council will develop promotional material advertising the location, accessibility features and related local amenities of all-weather, wheelchair accessible walking trails in the municipality</p> <p>Timeline: Completion June 2021, start July 2020 Resources: Within existing resources</p>	

Focus area 3: Fairness and Safety

Vision: People with a disability can expect to be treated with respect, dignity and fairness, enjoying the same rights as other members of the community in environments which are safe and supportive

3.1 Fairness and safety	<i>Responsibility: People and Culture</i>
<p>Council will ensure that its recruitment processes do not present barriers to employment for people with a disability, and will review and revise its employment accommodations policy to reflect best practice modelling e.g. Premier’s Award: Brisbane City Council - Accommodations Policy</p> <p>Timeline: Completion by June end 2019 Resources: Within existing resources</p>	
3.2 Fairness and safety	<i>Responsibility: Community Strengthening</i>
<p>Council will work with the Red Cross as well as local disability and community support agencies to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Identify vulnerable people with a disability in the Shire (b) Provide information/raise the awareness of people with a disability, their families and carers around the importance of emergency planning (c) Facilitate the development of personal emergency management plans (Rediplans) for vulnerable people with a disability in the Shire <p>Timeline: Completion by June end 2018 Resources: Within existing resources</p>	
3.3 Fairness and safety	<i>Responsibility: Community Strengthening</i>
<p>Council will provide dedicated communication access training to its Emergency Support team, (internal group of volunteer staff from a diverse range of business units), equipping/upskilling these staff to better support people with communication difficulties presenting at Relief Centres in times of emergency</p> <p>Timeline: Completion by June end 2018 Resources: Within existing resources</p>	

3.4 Fairness and safety	<i>Responsibility: Corporate Services</i>
<p>Council will develop an accessibility checklist for corporate events, (inclusive of both indoor and outdoor events) as a guide to its events management practices and procedures</p>	
Timeline: Start July 2018 end June 2019	Resources: Within existing resources
3.5 Fairness and safety	<i>Responsibility: Community Strengthening</i>
<p>Council will develop a plan for emergency egress / evacuation at the <i>Civic Centre</i> that makes specific provision for staff and, or visitors with mobility limitations who may be on levels above the ground floor at the time of an emergency. Specifically, Council will identify and promote safe areas of refuge where people with disabilities / limited mobility might assemble</p>	
Timeline: Completion by June end 2018	Resources: Within existing resources
3.6 Fairness and safety	<i>Responsibility: Community Strengthening</i>
<p>Council will develop a plan for emergency egress / evacuation at the <i>Depot</i> that makes specific provision for staff and, or visitors with mobility limitations who may have difficulty evacuating in a timely manner to a standard designated emergency assembly area in an emergency. Specifically, Council will identify and promote safe area(s) of refuge where people with disabilities / limited mobility might assemble</p>	
Timeline: Completion by June end 2019	Resources: Within existing resources
3.7 Fairness and safety	<i>Responsibility: Community Strengthening</i>
<p>Council will develop a plan for emergency egress / evacuation at the <i>Cardinia Cultural Centre</i> that makes specific provision for staff and, or visitors with mobility limitations who may have difficulty evacuating in a timely manner to a standard designated emergency assembly area in an emergency. Specifically, Council will identify and promote safe area(s) of refuge where people with disabilities / limited mobility might assemble</p>	
Timeline: Completion by June end 2020	Resources: Within existing resources

Focus area 4: Living in & contributing to the community

Vision: People with a disability enjoy increased opportunity and independence, influencing and contributing to community life along with other members of the community

4.1 Living in & contributing to the community <i>Responsibility: Community & Family Services</i>	
Council will work with the service sector, to identify system strategies / improvements that support people in the Shire with a disability, their families and carers to effectively navigate access to the NDIS and My Aged care system	
Timeline: Completion by June end 2021	Resources: Within existing resources
4.2 Living in & contributing to the community <i>Responsibility: People and Culture</i>	
Council will exercise its responsibility as an equal opportunity employer to demonstrate and enhance work experience and placement opportunities for people with a disability; a minimum of two disability specific engagements being facilitated in a four-year period	
Timeline: Completion by June end 2021	Resources: Within existing resources
4.3 Living in & contributing to the community <i>Responsibility: Community Strengthening</i>	
Council will target people with a disability, particularly <i>women with a disability</i> , in its strategies, promotions and consultations aimed to Stop, Prevent and End Family Violence in the Shire	
Timeline: Completion by June end 2020	Resources: Within existing resources
4.4 Living in & contributing to the community <i>Responsibility: Community & Family Services</i>	
Council will develop one personal development/life skills program for children at Officer Specialist School and where possible expand, the range of activities offered to support young people with a mild to moderate disability in Cardinia Shire	
Timeline: Completion by June end 2019	Resources: Within existing resources

4.5 Living in & contributing to the community <i>Responsibility: Community & Family Services</i>
Council will continue to deliver infrastructure for Early Childhood Intervention Services (ECIS), while supporting external providers to deliver services and supports for children with a diagnosed development delay
Timeline: On-going, completion by June end 2020 Resources: Within existing resources
4.6 Living in & contributing to the community <i>Responsibility: Community & Family Services</i>
Council will continue to support the access and participation of children with a disability in its range of early years' program offerings
Timeline: On-going, completion by June end 2020 Resources: Within existing resources