

Terms of Reference - Access & Inclusion Advisory Committee (AIAC)

Purpose

To provide Council with information enabling it to promote and improve access and inclusion for people with disability living, working and studying in, or visiting Bass Coast. The AIAC will act as a resource to Council on issues affecting people with disabilities. It will advise on community and Council practices which may limit access or inclusion. The AIAC will recommend best practice solutions to those issues of concern to Bass Coast Shire.

AIAC member responsibilities

- Provide advice and expertise on access and inclusion issues in all Council plans and strategies, as requested by Council.
- Provide advice and assist with the implementation for nominated actions within Council's Disability Action Plan.
- Maintain an awareness of current trends and changes in access and inclusion issues affecting people with disability and provide information to Council staff as these arise.
- Assist Council to identify practical solutions to access and inclusion issues affecting people with disability living, working and studying in, or visiting Bass Coast.
- Be representative of the community, with particular focus on people with disability and maintain an awareness of community needs, aspirations, and access and inclusion issues.
- Nominate members to represent the Committee in community consultation and other relevant Council forums.
- Ensure that sensitive or confidential information and documentation remains within the membership of the Committee.
- Advocate to Council and other relevant bodies on behalf of people with disability for improved access and inclusion in Bass Coast Shire.

Areas outside the Committee's responsibility

- The AIAC is not responsible for involvement in day-to-day operational issues related to the service provision of Council. Members of the AIAC have the same right as all community members to raise issues of concern through the appropriate Council system.
- The AIAC is not a decision making Committee and has no responsibility for Council budget.

- Members of the AIAC do not have media responsibility unless specifically requested by Council (individuals may approach the media, however not as representatives of the AIAC).

Membership

Membership of the AIAC will ideally cover a broad range including age, disability type, gender, ethnicity and geographical area in Bass Coast Shire. The AIAC will include a total of 15 people with additional people able to join subcommittees (if formed) based on their area of interest.

Membership will comprise:

- Councillor (1)
- Community representatives (6)
- Community Organisation/Group representatives (3)
- Coordinator, Social and Community Planning (1)
- Community Facilitator – RuralAccess (1)
- Council staff (3)

Term of Office

The term of office for each AIAC member will be two years. At the end of the two year term, all positions will be declared vacant.

Members who do not attend three (3) meetings in a calendar year without apology will be deemed to have resigned from the AIAC and a casual vacancy will result. If a casual vacancy occurs, it will be filled at the discretion of Council.

Method of nomination

- Bass Coast Shire Council will seek a Councillor representative for the AIAC.
- The Council staff members in the positions of Coordinator, Social and Community Planning and Community Facilitator RuralAccess will be members of the AIAC.
- Nominations for the positions of community representatives and community organisation/group representatives will be called for by public notice. Nominees will be required to complete a nomination form outlining their skills and areas of interest. Outgoing committee members will be eligible to re-nominate.
- Where the number of nominations received is greater than the vacancies available, appointments will be made by Council, based on the person most suited to represent the interests of people with disability living, working and studying in, or visiting Bass Coast Shire.

Meetings

- Meetings will be held every second month (even numbered months) for 1.5 hours on a day to be agreed upon by AIAC members.
- AIAC members will be notified of the meeting by email and requested to provide apologies if unable to attend.
- Minutes will be circulated to all AIAC members.
- AIAC members must submit agenda items prior to the meeting, where possible.

Pecuniary interests/conflict of interest

- Members of the AIAC must disclose any pecuniary interests to ensure there is no conflict of interest.
- Community organisations/group representatives must ensure they represent the interests of people with disability rather than (purely) the interests of their organisation/group.
- Where AIAC members believe a conflict of interest exists they should abstain from voting on an issue.

Support

- Administrative support for AIAC meetings will be provided by Council.
- Refreshments for meeting attendees will be provided by Council and will cater for special diets, as advised.
- Disability related support required by members of the Committee will be paid for/provided by Council, as relevant.
- Community representatives on the AIAC will be eligible to claim reimbursement for the cost of travel (public transport, petrol costs or where agreed, cost of taxi) within Bass Coast Shire to and from meetings.
- Community representatives may seek reimbursements of other out of pocket expenses directly related to their role on the AIAC. These expenses must be agreed (with the Coordinator, Social and Community Planning) prior to the expenditure in order to claim reimbursement. All reimbursement must be supported by receipts.
- Community representatives will be registered as Council volunteers and covered by Council insurance while on official AIAC business.
- AIAC members will be offered opportunities to participate in a range of relevant training where available.
- AIAC members will be offered the opportunity to participate in conferences relevant to their role when available.

- AIAC members may request additional support which they believe will improve their ability to fulfil their role to the Committee, at any time during their term of membership.