



Draft Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2025



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INTRODUCTION

The Glen Innes Severn Council Local Government Area (LGA) covers 5,487 sq. km of the beautiful New England area of NSW, servicing the town of Glen Innes and villages of Deepwater, Emmaville, Glencoe, and Red Range.

The Glen Innes Severn area has a proud Celtic Heritage and is home to the Australian Standing Stones – the National monument erected to honour all the Celtic pioneers of Australia. Glen Innes hosts the annual Australian Celtic Festival in May each year. The World Heritage Washpool and Gibraltar National Parks border the LGA to the east.

*Council acknowledges that people with a disability have the same human rights as other people and maintains a strong commitment to the principals of the NSW **Disability Inclusion Act 2014 (DIA)**, the **National Disability Strategy 2010-2020 (NDS)** and the **United Nations Convention on the Rights for People with Disabilities (UNCRPD)**. Council is committed to eliminating discrimination and embracing diversity.*

Council has a long and proud history in providing community services for not only the Glen Innes Severn LGA but also the LGA's of Gwydir, Inverell, and Tenterfield. Services delivered across these LGA's have included community-based supports for people who are older and people with a disability.

The Glen Innes Community Access Committee is a Section 355 Community Committee of Council and provides valuable feedback, guidance, and advice to Council regarding access to community for people of all abilities.

Council's new Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2025 (DIAP), will coincide with the current term of office for Local Government in NSW and aligns with the three (3) year Glen Innes Severn Delivery Program. Council reaffirms its commitment to building a strong and equitable community for people of all abilities within the new DIAP. We are committed to role modelling this as a positive position for everyone in the community.



Photo: Glen Innes local's enjoying a fishing trip



Photo: Friends at the Glen Innes History House

The key messages coming from the Disability Inclusion Action Plan are to have:

- a welcoming, inclusive community;
- an accessible community;
- a supportive community; and
- an informed and engaged community.

It is with great pleasure that I introduce the Glen Innes Severn Council Disability Inclusion Action Plan for 2022-2025. The DIAP reflects extensive community consultation and experience working with people of all abilities. The DIAP provides the clear direction Council will provide to disability inclusion. The DIAP is measurable and will allow for future gaps in accessible services to be identified and corrected.

Rob Banham
Mayor
 (12 April 2022)



Photo: Community access to sport with Lawn Bowls.

PUBLIC STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO DISABILITY INCLUSION

Personal choice and control for all people in society is only possible in a community which ensures access and inclusion for people with a disability, this includes physical disabilities, intellectual disabilities, cognitive disabilities, sensory disabilities, and those with mental health conditions. Exclusion leads to disadvantage and discrimination, both of which have significant impacts on all aspects of life including, health, education, welfare and wellbeing and employment.

An inclusive community is one which promotes control of choice for people of all abilities. It is a community which creates opportunities for positive change, respectful of the diverse range of viewpoints from all individual perspectives.

Council is committed to the continued building of a strong and equitable community by being inclusive to people of all abilities and promoting this as a positive position for everyone in the community. Council encourages people who have a disability and its community members to be aware of access and employment obstacles for any individual and to work with us to remove such obstacles.

There is a strong economic imperative for increasing inclusiveness within our community and creating real job opportunities. Council has recently undertaken training with the Council for Intellectual Disability (CID) to assist with the employment of people of all abilities.

The Glen Innes Community Access Committee are a key link between Council and community offering ongoing support, advice and feedback to Council and assisting to identify barriers that limit or prevent access to facilities, transport, and employment.

Council is supportive of, and proactive towards, people with a disability achieving their personal goals, having choice and being able to reach their full potential. This DIAP outlines strategies, actions, and timeframes to address many of the concerns that you as individuals have told Council about in the community consultation process.



Photo: Life Choices - Support Services NDIS Friends Hub and CHSP groups sharing a holiday moment at Toowoomba

COUNCIL'S VISION AND PRINCIPLES FOR INCLUSION

Vision Statement

'A prosperous highlands community that cares for its people and places'

The *NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014* (DIA) was passed in August 2014 and requires all government departments and some public authorities, including Councils, in NSW to have a DIAP with a focus on inclusion. Voice, Choice and Control, is only practicable when the community in which a person with a disability lives, is inclusive. Council acknowledges that people with a disability have the same rights as those without disability and have a vision to remove barriers within the community which may prevent people with a disability fully participating in mainstream services. This will not limit Council's awareness and attention to providing services specific to people with a disability, but rather compliment them.

Council will take a leadership role within the community to work towards the achievement of the principles of the four (4) Key Outcome Areas listed below. Actions included in the Delivery Program and subsequent Operational Plan documents will further underpin these principles.

1: Key Outcome Area – Attitudes and Behaviours

Principle: To have a welcoming community that demonstrates the positivity and benefits of an inclusive community.

2: Key Outcome Area - Liveable Communities

Principle: To have an accessible community that supports and encourages access by people of all abilities.

3: Key Outcome Area – Employment

Principle: To have a supportive community that creates opportunities for learning and employment for people of all abilities.

4: Key Outcome Area – Systems and Processes

Principle: Encourage community connectivity and cohesion for people of all abilities conducting regular reviews of the formats and platforms Council uses for communication to ensure suitability for people of all abilities.

Direct community consultation has proven difficult during the term of the previous DIAP due to NSW Department of Health Public Health Order (PHO) restrictions associated with COVID-19. With the easing of restrictions earlier this year, Council's Manager of Community Services was able to facilitate one (1) face to face community consultation meeting on Monday, 28 March 2022.

Council's Manager of Community Services also prepared surveys for internal Council staff and facilitated an online survey on Council's website for all community members. Six (6) internal responses and one (1) external online response were received. Hard copy surveys were prepared and made available at various locations within Glen Innes, Deepwater and Emmaville. Ninety-one of these surveys were collected and the information collated.

This DIAP replaces the existing Disability Action Plan 2017-2021. It has been developed following direct consultation with the community and the Glen Innes Community Access Committee.

POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

The NSW *Disability Inclusion Act 2014* (DIA) provides the legislative framework to guide State and Local Government disability inclusion and access planning.

The Act supports people with disabilities to access:

- The same human rights as other members of the community and that governments and communities have a responsibility to facilitate the exercise of those rights;
- Independence and social and economic inclusion within the community; and
- Choice and control in the pursuit of their goals and the planning and delivery of their supports and services.

In meeting the requirements under the Act for disability inclusion and access planning, Council has reviewed its Service Delivery Policies (Disability) to:

- Support participants/consumers in understanding their rights;
- Respect those rights;
- Support inclusion and participation;
- Work within an ethical framework;
- Facilitate choice for the participants/consumers; and
- Adhere to NSW *Disability Inclusion Act 2014* and the National Standards for Disability Services.

POLICY STATEMENT

Glen Innes Severn Council is committed to building a strong, equitable, inclusive community by promoting awareness of, and being supportive towards, people with a disability having choice, control and being able to maximise their opportunities and access to community facilities.

LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS THAT INFORM COUNCIL'S WORK

- *Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992*;
- Australian Standard (AS 1428) – Design for Access and Mobility;
- Disability Access to Premises Buildings Standards 2010;
- Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002; and
- Web Accessibility National Transition Strategy 2010.

LINKS TO GOVERNMENT LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

- The Model Code of Conduct can be accessed from the Office of Local Government; and
- The Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework is also accessed from the Office of Local Government.

NSW

All NSW legislation including the *Local Government Act 1993* http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/nsw/consol_act/lga1993182/ and *Local Government (General) Regulation 2005* can be accessed at: http://www5.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/nsw/consol_reg/lgr2005328/.

Other important NSW Acts for assisting with action planning are:

- [NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014](#); and
- [NSW Anti-Discrimination Act 1977](#).

COMMONWEALTH

All Commonwealth legislation can be accessed at: www.comlaw.gov.au.

- [Disability \(Access to Premises – Buildings\) Standards 2010](#); and
- [Disability Discrimination Act 1992](#).

OTHER USEFUL LINKS

- [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0](#);
- [Universal Design Principles](#);
- [NSW Disability Inclusion Plan](#);
- [NSW Disability Action Planning](#); and
- [National Disability Strategy](#).

The diagram below demonstrates the relationships between the relevant policy and legislative instruments involved with Local Government disability inclusion action planning.

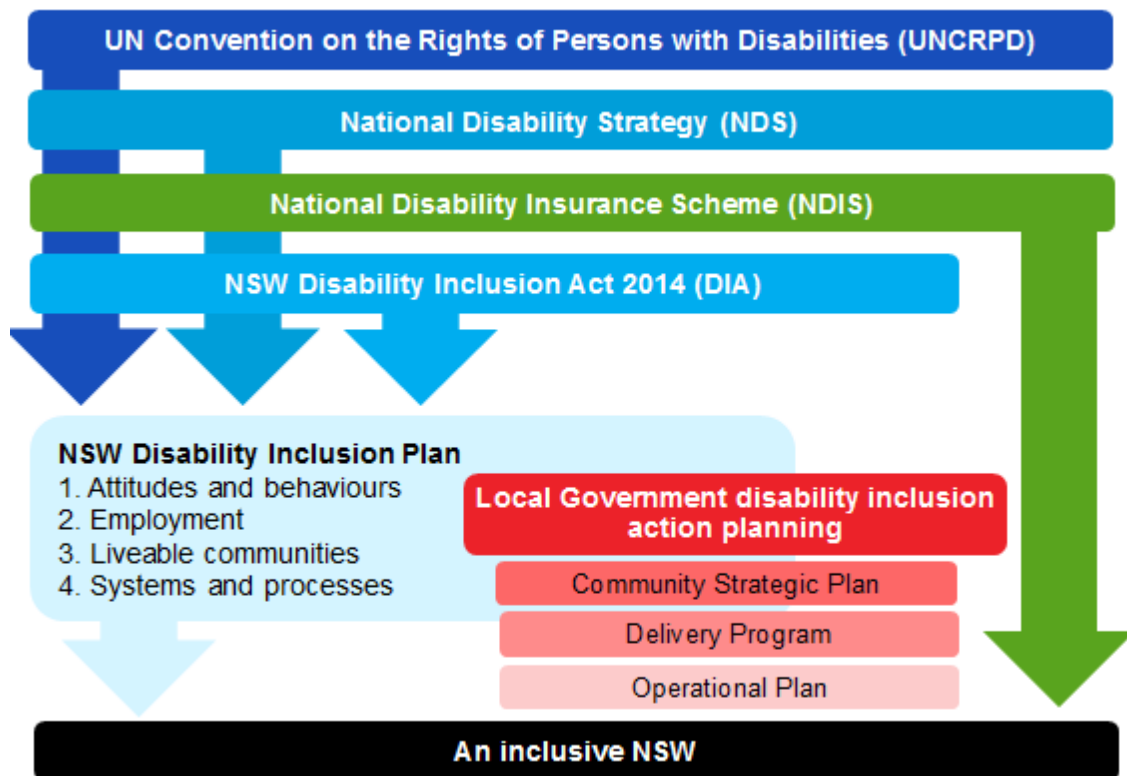


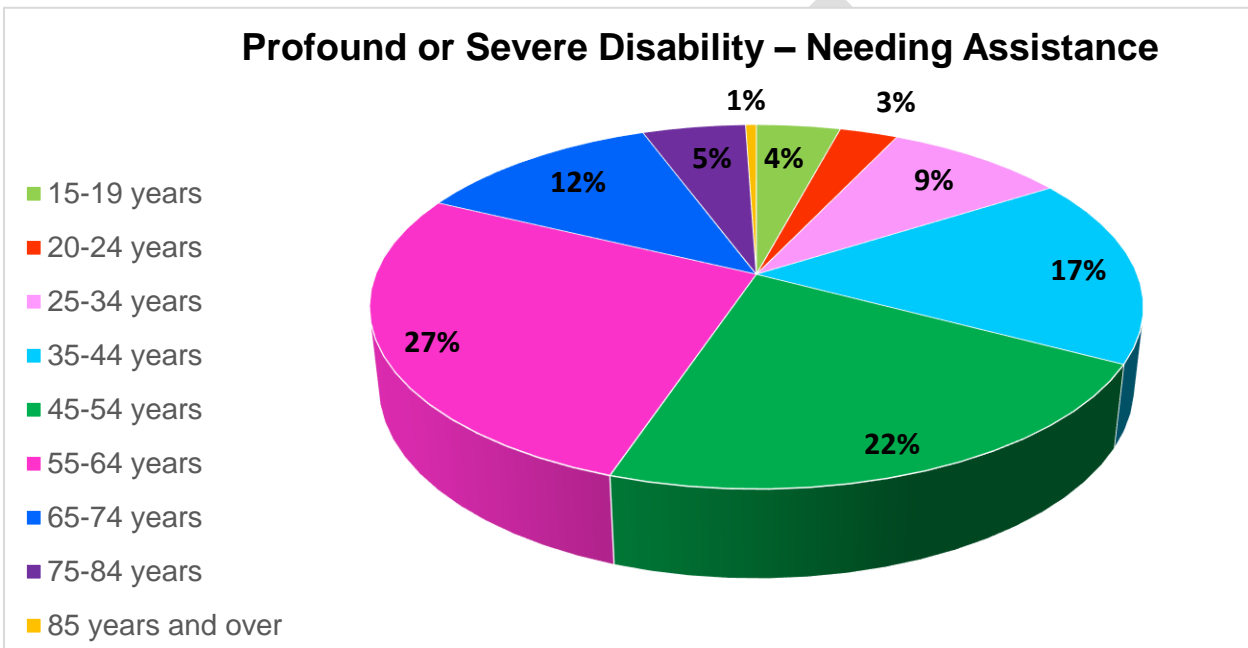
Image source: Local Government NSW and NSW Family and Community Service - Disability Inclusion Action Plan Guidelines

COMMUNITY PROFILE

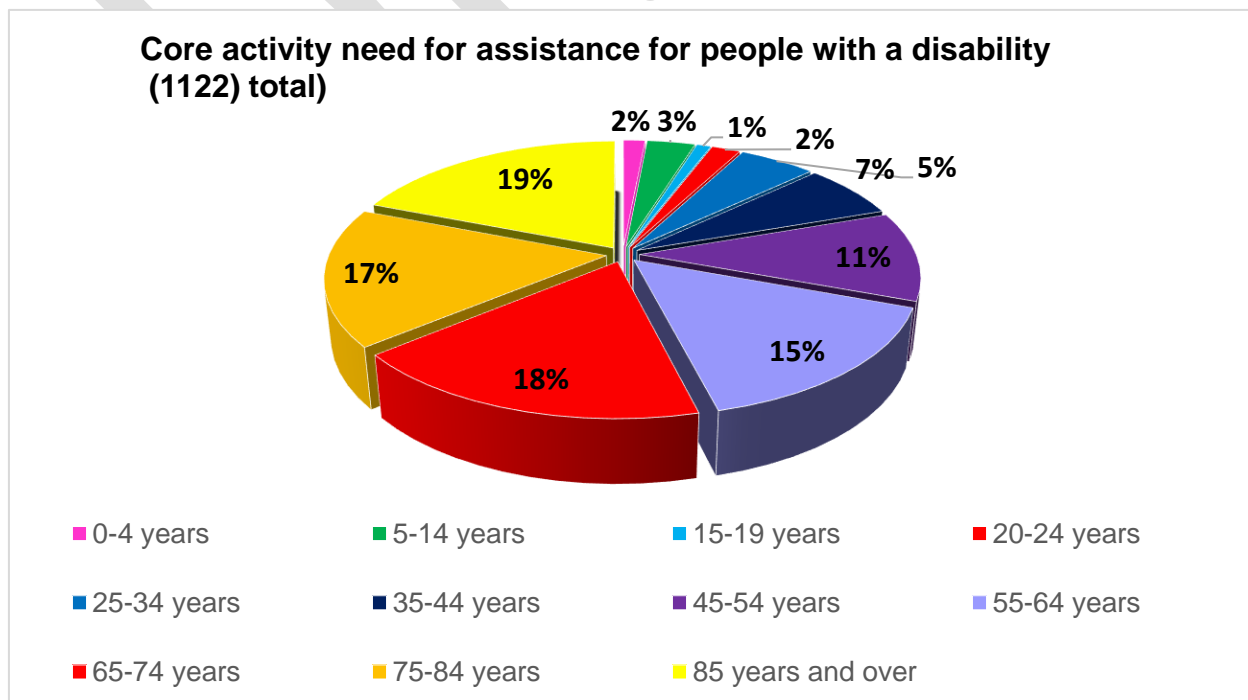
The Australian Bureau of Statistics (2016 Census) recorded that 932 people (462 males and 470 females) provided unpaid assistance to someone (due to their disability) in the Glen Innes Severn Area (the whole LGA), representing 12.7% of the population of 8,836.

The Glen Innes LGA provided unpaid assistance to ‘family members or others due to a disability, long term illness or problem related to disability, long term illness or problems related to’ ageing. This equated to 12.7% of the people listed for the 2370 postcode, compared with 11.6 % of the population in NSW and 11.3% of the population across Australia.

There were 1,122 people (2016 Census) in the Glen Innes Seven LGA that had a core need for assistance due to disability. Of the total, 566 were female and 556 were male.



Reference: AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS 2016 Census of Population and Housing for Glen Innes Severn Local Government Area



PROVIDING FOR ALL ABILITIES

The Community Access Committee facilitates a strong link between Council and Community and provide valuable feedback and information regarding access for people of all abilities throughout the LGA. COVID-19 has caused the cancellation of the last two (2) 'All Abilities Walks' which the committee usually conduct annually to provide insight and information regarding accessibility to community businesses and other venues. Information obtained on the walks, significantly contributes to the review of Council's Mobility Brochure. With the easing of COVID-19 restrictions this year, the 'All Ability Walk' is back on the agenda and will be performed following Council's maintenance program addressing uneven pathways. Council has purchased a Concrete Grinding machine to eliminate uneven areas of pathways which create trip hazards.

The Community Access Committee which includes Council representatives, recently conducted a review of accessibility for the Glen Innes Showground Trust. The visit included simulated scenarios encountered by people with compromised mobility and provided significant feedback and suggestions which will lead to future improvements for access at the popular Glen Innes Showgrounds site.

The Glen Innes Severn Library Learning Centre is well equipped to cater for people of all abilities. The Centre has:

- A hearing aid loop installed in the Conference Room;
- Two computers for the senior kiosk;
- Home Library Service is offered at Glen Innes, Emmaville and Deepwater;
- Large print, talking books, and e-Resources (e-Books and e-Audio);
- Easy access through sliding doors, level paths and flooring and wide shelving aisles;
- Social groups that are disability friendly such as the monthly Book Club, Weekly Wraps with Love, Wednesday Classic Movie Nights and Wednesday Storytime sessions (both of these were suspended due to COVID-19);
- An accessible toilet;
- All mobility parking;
- Touch screen self service desk; and
- Sensory / Tactile area – operates every Saturday morning.

Council is an Equal Opportunity Employer that encourages and values diversity in the workforce.

People with a disability are encouraged to apply for all positions at Council. Council currently employs people with a disability and participated in the 'More Than Just a Job' training program with the Council for Intellectual Disability (CID). The program delivered knowledge and skills to assist Council to employ a person with an Intellectual Disability.

Council's Life Choices - Support Services and Children Youth and Family Services buildings are fully accessible. Nest Swings have been installed at the Children Youth and Family Services outlet at West Avenue and King Edward Park Glen Innes. The Liberty swing is situated at ANZAC Park and the ramp access into the swimming lap pool at the Glen Innes Aquatic Centre is in regular use.

Council's Pedestrian Access Mobility Plan (PAMP) is currently being reviewed with the new Plan due for release October 2022. Although pedestrian and traffic volumes in the LGA are relatively low in comparison with the much more densely populated areas, the need to provide adequate facilities is just as important to the community. The focal aim of the new Glen Innes PAMP is to identify the pedestrian routes of most significance to the community and provide a strategy for the enhancement of those routes in terms of safety and mobility.

The installation of additional Tactile Ground Surface Indicators (TGSI) at critical pedestrian access points within Glen Innes along with the construction of the pathway linking West Glen Innes to the CBD via Jorgen La Cour Way have been improvements delivered under the previous Plan.



Photo: Jorgen La Cour Way linking West Glen Innes to the CBD.



Photos: The Liberty Swing and TGSI at the Glen Innes Town Square

WHAT THE COMMUNITY TOLD US

During planning and research for Council's new DIAP, community members and Council staff were invited to provide insight and feedback regarding current challenges and obstacles that people with a disability experience across the Glen Innes Seven LGA. Community consultation and survey information has been collated with the number one (1) priority for respondents listed below.

This Graph shows what people think is the number one (1) priority for Council when developing a new DIAP



Feedback and suggestions were received to assist Council facilitate inclusion and improve access for people of all abilities within the community.

- Parking spots for gophers and operator guidelines for use of gophers within the CBD;
- Clear signage that indicates shared pathways;
- Education for the community regarding the use of pathways;
- Improved linkage of pathways around Glen Innes and villages;
- Improved access for all medical, dental and allied health services within the community;
- Advocate for improved employment opportunities for people of all abilities within the community;
- Increasing awareness / visibility of the needs of people living with a disability in our community and increasing employment opportunities and access in workplaces.
- Review and implement the accessibility rating criteria for shops in Glen Innes;
- Improved lighting at night-time especially along pathways and areas that are poorly lit;
- Creation of concrete pathways in order for people of all abilities to easily access the liberty and nest swings;

- Increasing awareness / visibility of the needs of people who are older and those living with a disability in our community;
- Use of conscious language e.g. Mobility parking spaces (not disability parking spaces) and how inclusiveness helps the wider community and how it helps change society (not just about compliance);
- Parcel pick-up and delivery services from local businesses;
- Increase awareness for shared community facilities;
- Ensure pedestrian access on local bridges is maintained and used rather than people using the roadway on gophers and/or with prams;
- Maintenance of roadways in Glen Innes and Emmaville to limit potholes and obstacles;
- Increased laybacks for wheelie walkers, mobility scooters (gophers) and wheelchairs along Grey Street;
- Need to have all abilities access at the Town Hall public toilets. (The new ablution block at the Town Hall has a left hand all abilities unisex toilet);
- Better maintenance of parks and sporting fields and footpaths with long grass that need mowing;
- Improved taxi and transport services for people with a disability;
- Footpaths need to be wide enough to cater for a wheelchair and not just two (2) people walking past each other;
- Advocate for the addition of programs for young people with a disability;
- Additional mobility parking spaces within the CBD;
- Footpath furniture such as seating, umbrellas and advertising flags create problems for the visually impaired – review and revise; and
- Improved footpaths at Deepwater, Emmaville and Glencoe.

The information received from the community is appreciated and will be considered in conjunction with other identified priorities. Many of the ideas and suggestions received from the community consultation process for the DIAP were also identified during consultation for Council's revised Community Strategic Plan 2022-2032.

DISABILITY INCLUSION ACTION PLAN 2022-2025 ACTIONS

CS 1.1.7 – Review and implement the Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) relating to CS 1.1 Encourage an Inclusive Active Lifestyle

1. Key Outcome Area - Attitudes and Behaviours To have a welcoming community that demonstrates the positivity and benefits of an inclusive community.	Time (Year to start)	Responsibility	Funding
Investigate the creation of gopher operator guidelines specific to the Glen Innes CBD.	2023	Manager of Community Services (MCS)	NA
Advocate for community education and clear signage regarding the use of shared pathways.	Annually	MCS	NA
Promote awareness of the importance for inclusion of people living with a disability in our community by adding articles to the Residents Newsletter and Council's electronic media forums.	Annually	Coordinator Activity and Lifestyle Support (CALs)	NA
Adopt a process of education using conscious language e.g., Mobility Parking Spaces (not disability parking spaces) and how inclusiveness helps the wider community and how it helps change society (not just about compliance).	Annually	MCS	NA
Increase awareness of shared community facilities by advocating for education at Glen Innes Interagency meetings.	Annually	MCS	NA
Maintain regular contact with the Council Ranger and Police to ensure disability parking and bus zones are being used appropriately.	Quarterly	CALs	NA
2. Key Outcome Area – Liveable Communities To have an accessible community that supports and encourages access by people of all abilities.	Time (Year to start)	Responsibility	Funding
Investigate the possibility of creating designated parking places for mobility aids including gophers within the CBD.	2023	MCS	NA
Maintain a minimum of two (2) Council staff on the Glen Innes Community Access Committee and advocate for continued accessibility reviews and improvements for the LGA in particular, footpath designs and locations within Glen Innes and outlying villages.	Annually	MCS	NA

2. Key Outcome Area – Liveable Communities (continued) To have an accessible community that supports and encourages access by people of all abilities.	Time (Year to start)	Responsibility	Funding
Advocate for improved access to Medical and Allied Health facilities including local dental surgeries.	Annually	MCS	NA
Review the accessibility and rating criteria for shops in Glen Innes and promote the rating scale amongst local businesses.	2023	MCS	NA
Advocate for improved lighting at night-time especially along pathways and areas that are poorly lit.	Annually	MCS	NA
Advocate for concrete pathways in order that people of all abilities can easily access the liberty and nest swings.	2023	MCS	NA
Improve maintenance of approaches and pedestrian access on local bridges, parks and footpaths to encourage community use of designated pathways rather than the road.	Annually	MCS	Operational Plan and Budget (OP)
Advocate for improved taxi and transport services for people with a disability.	Annually	Coordinator Direct Support (CDS)	NA
Review mobility parking spaces within the CBD – location and number.	Annually	CDS	NA
Include information regarding parcel pickup and home delivery options in the Mobility Brochure.	Annually	MCS	OP
Incorporate improved accessibility information for tourists and locals with information published on both Council's and the Visitor Information websites.	Annually	MCS	NA

3. Key Outcome Area – Employment To have a supportive community that creates opportunities for learning and employment for people of all abilities	Time (Year to start)	Responsibility	Funding
Advocate for workplace changes so that Council becomes a disability confident organisation and a benchmark for the employment of people of all abilities within the community.	Annually	MCS	NA
Ensure that all abilities employment information is made available at all Council facilitated employment / disability expos and open days.	Annually	MCS	NA
4. Key Outcome Area – Systems and Processes Encourage community connectivity and cohesion for people of all abilities conducting regular reviews of the formats and platforms Council uses for communication to ensure suitability for people of all abilities.	Time (Year to start)	Responsibility	Funding
Advocate for the transition of a minimum of two (2) Council Policies and/or Procedure documents into the 'Easy Read' format annually.	Annually	MCS	NA
Regularly (at least annually) obtain feedback from consumers and NDIS participants about their experiences, goal achievements and the degree of choice available to them.	Annually	MCS	NA

EVALUATION, PROCESS AND CONTACT

The DIAP will be submitted to the Ordinary Meeting of Council to be held on Thursday, 28 April 2022 for approval to be placed on public exhibition for 28 days. This will provide an additional opportunity for the community to provide feedback. A further report will be submitted to Council after the exhibition period in the event of Council receiving any significant submissions regarding the DIAP, otherwise the DIAP will be adopted by Council.

Council must, as soon as possible after 1 July 2022, make the DIAP publicly available.

The actions from the DIAP will be evaluated and documented six (6) monthly in line with Council's reporting on the Operational Plan. They will also form part of Council's Annual Report and will be available on Council's website. A copy of the Annual Report or the relevant sections should be provided to the Department of Family and Community Services by 30 November each year for the duration of the DIAP.

Progress on the actions will also be reported at the Community Access Committee Meetings. The Committee welcomes attendance by people of all abilities at their meetings and transport assistance can be arranged. Please telephone 6730 2500 if you would like to take up the transport option.

Council is required to submit a copy of its DIAP by email to NSW FACS Disability and Action Planning at NSWDIP@facs.nsw.gov.au and to the Local Government New South Wales (LGNSW) Social and Community Team at lgnsw@lgnsw.org.au on or before 1 July 2022.

If additional information is required please contact Council's Manager of Community Services, by phone on 6730 2500 or by emailing council@gisc.nsw.gov.au attention: Manager of Community Services.