



# DISABILITY INCLUSION ACTION PLAN



June 2017

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## MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR OF SUTHERLAND SHIRE

It is with great pleasure that I present Sutherland Shire Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2017-2021. The Plan was created in consultation with community disability services in accordance with the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014. Its aim is to improve the lives of people with disability and moves us closer to a fully inclusive society for all.

Almost one in five people in NSW live with disability. Sutherland Shire Council is committed to ensuring that people with disability are provided with the facilities that enable them to participate fully in the community. The Disability Inclusion Action Plan will be incorporated into all aspects of Council business including consideration of how our built environment is developed, how we can remove barriers to our services and facilities and the promotion of positive attitudes and behaviour toward people with disability.

We acknowledge the contribution that people living with disability have made and continue to make in the Sutherland Shire, and more broadly to our society. It is our belief that this Plan will give Council a framework to enable these contributions to continue and grow.

Several key documents were referenced in the creation of the plan, including the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the National Disability Strategy and the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014.

Thank you to all the people who have contributed to the development of this Plan and those who will be working with us to implement it.



- Carmelo Pesce  
Sutherland Shire Mayor

## OVERVIEW AND VISION

In August 2014 the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014 was passed. This Act requires Council to develop a Disability Inclusion Action Plan to help remove barriers and enable people with disability to participate equally in their communities.

Sutherland Shire Council is committed to protecting the rights of people with disability and in promoting the value of diversity and inclusion across the community.

Personal choice and control is only possible when communities are inclusive for all people with disability, including those with physical, intellectual, cognitive, sensory disabilities and those with mental health conditions.

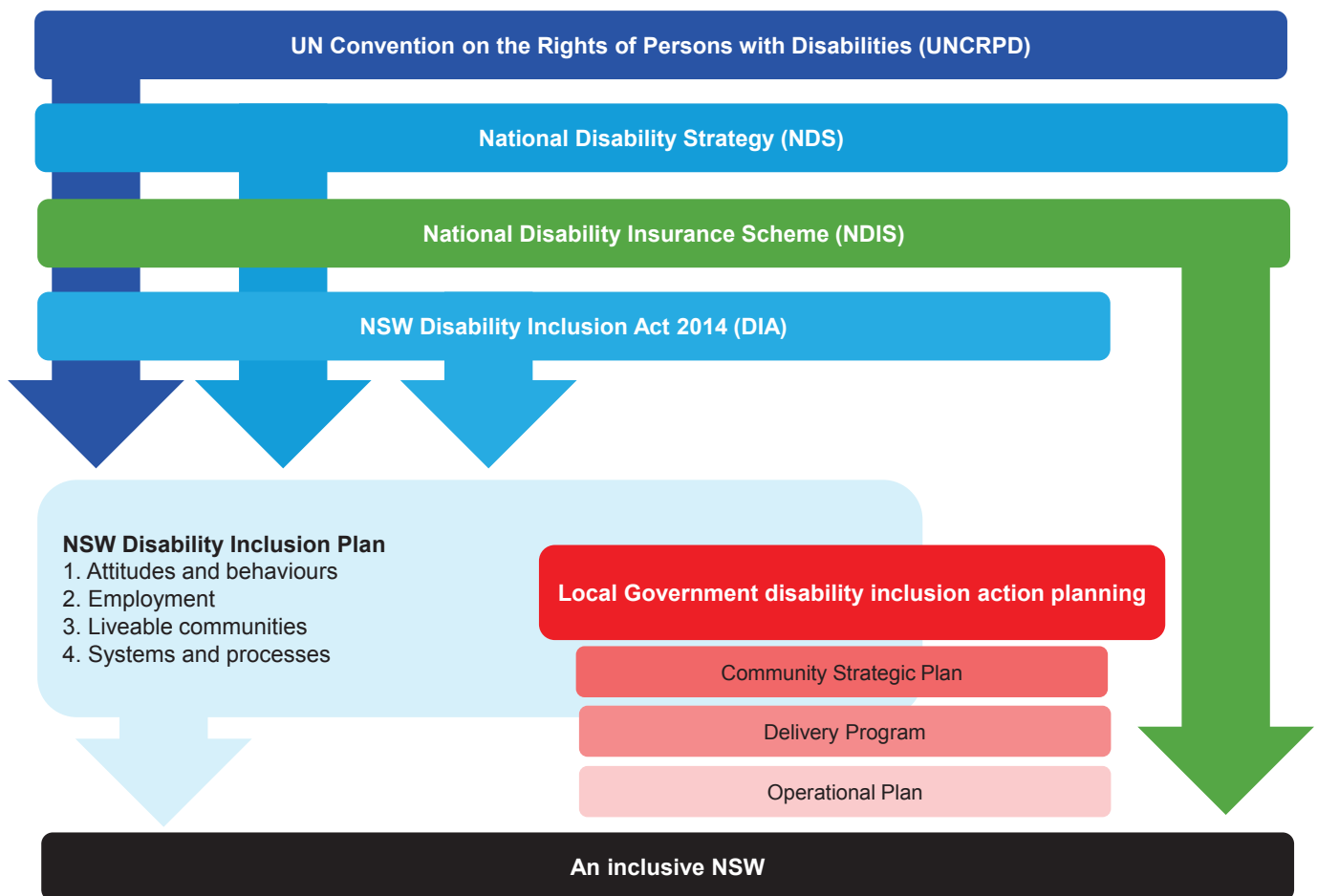
In addition to the human rights imperative, the case for an inclusive community is strong:

- As a community, we are poorer without a diverse range of viewpoints and individual perspectives
- Exclusion leads to disadvantage and discrimination, which have far reaching negative impacts across all aspects of life, including health, welfare, education and employment. These impacts are felt beyond the individual, with families and the broader community being negatively impacted by a non-inclusive community
- There is a strong economic imperative for increasing the inclusiveness of our society. Employment can provide independence, reduce reliance on government income support and improve the living standards of people with disability. This can also have positive health impacts and contribute to a greater sense of self-worth
- Providing physical access to businesses benefits not only people with disability, but older people, parents with prams and business owners by expanding their business reach
- With an ageing population there is a growing need to be inclusive and ensure that all places are designed to be inclusive and embrace people of all abilities

## POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

The Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (the Act) is a piece of Commonwealth legislation. The Act makes it unlawful to discriminate, in the provision of goods, services or facilities, against people on the basis that they have, or may have, a disability. It also makes it unlawful to discriminate against a person on the basis that one of her or his associates has or may have, a disability.

The following diagram details the relationships between other relevant policy and legislative instruments:





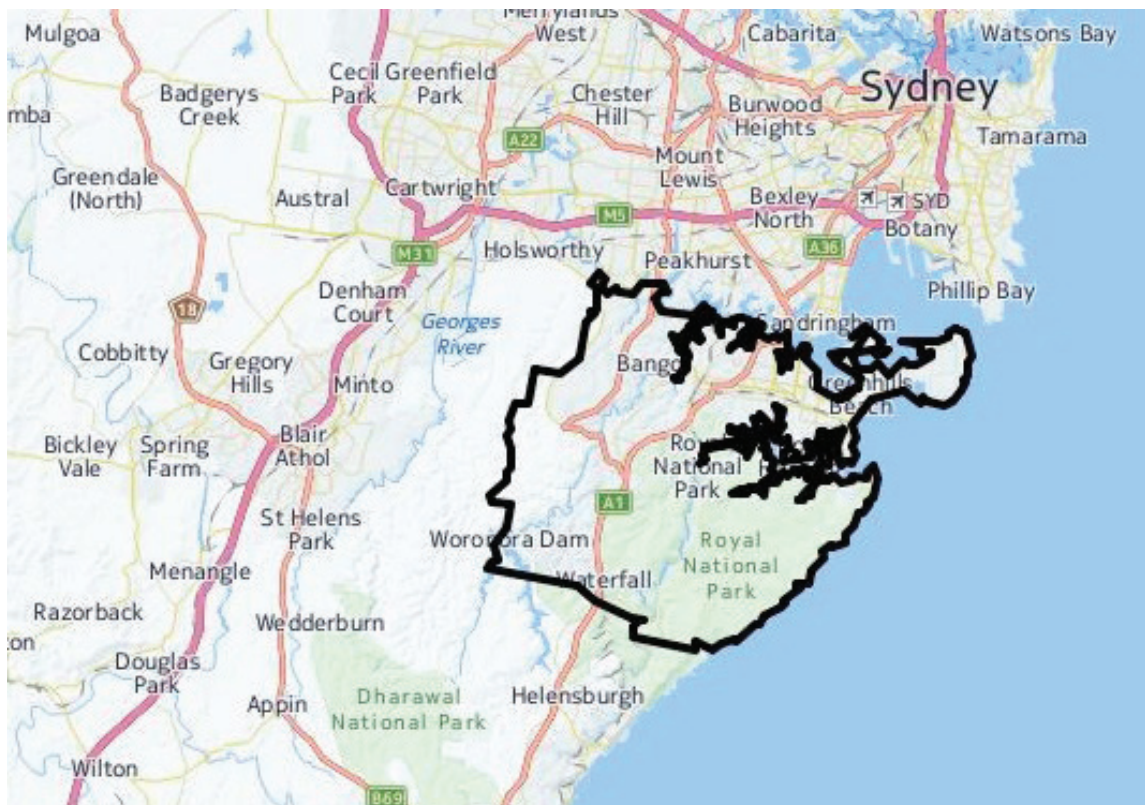
## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The guiding principles that embody this plan were developed by the NSW Government Department of Family and Community Services and underpinned by the legislative framework as above. The following key areas form the basis of our plan:

- Creating *liveable communities*
- Supporting access to *meaningful employment*
- Developing positive community *attitudes and behaviours*
- Improving access to services through better *systems and processes*

## THE SUTHERLAND SHIRE

The Sutherland Shire is located on the southern coastal fringe of metropolitan Sydney with approximately 230,000 residents and 88,000 households.<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> NSW Department of Planning Population Projections, 2016



## SUTHERLAND SHIRE COUNCIL'S VISION:

A connected and safe community that respects people and nature, enjoying active lives in a strong local economy.

## SUTHERLAND SHIRE COUNCIL'S GOALS:

1. Work together in Sutherland Shire as a community *informed and engaged in its future*
2. Enhance and protect the *beautiful and healthy natural environment* of Sutherland Shire
3. Sustain Sutherland Shire as a *caring and supportive community*
4. Evolve Sutherland Shire's *culture and unique identity*
5. Progress the Sutherland Shire as a *prosperous community* for all
6. Sustain Sutherland Shire as a liveable place where we can all continue to enjoy a *high quality of life*.



## DISABILITY IN THE SUTHERLAND SHIRE

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, 4.2 million Australians (18.5%) had a disability in 2012. Of those with a reported disability, 87% had a specific limitation or restriction; that is, an impairment restricting their ability to perform communication, mobility or self-care activities, or a restriction associated with schooling or employment. In line with the national trend, approximately one in five people who live in the Sutherland Shire currently report some level of disability (Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia – ABS, 2012).

The Sutherland Shire has a significant number of carers of people with disability. In 2011, 12% or 20,534 people stated that they provided unpaid assistance to persons with disability in the Sutherland Shire. This compares to 6.3% or 9,979 in the City of Sydney Local Government Area. This highlights the crucial role carers play in our community and that ensuring ongoing support is vital. (Source: Public Health Information Development Unit/Social Health Atlas NSW/Disability – 2011)

The population of the Sutherland Shire is ageing. This is significant as the rate of disability increases steadily with our ageing community.

## CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

In developing this Disability Inclusion Action Plan Council undertook a variety of consultations both internal and external. A survey was posted on our Join the Conversation portal. The survey results are detailed in Appendix 1.

Three Liveable Communities Workshops were conducted with 89 participants attending. The workshops were attended by a diverse mix of stakeholders including residents, service providers working in mental health, aged care, Aboriginal services, disability, youth, and members of the Senior Activity Unity and Council staff.

In addition, two focus groups were conducted. One involving members of the St George and Sutherland Shire Disability Interagency and the other with clients and staff of Advance Diversity Services in Caringbah.

A presentation was made to Council's Access Committee and to the Combined Chambers of Commerce meeting and input invited.

Council's senior leadership team was consulted to ensure actions and strategies in the Disability Inclusion Action Plan were integrated in business plans and the Delivery Program.

The draft Disability Inclusion Action Plan was placed on public exhibition for 28 days from 12 April 2017 to 11 May 2017. Submissions closed on the 12 May 2017. The Plan was adopted by Council at its meeting on the 19th of June.

# 1. LIVEABLE COMMUNITIES

Community Strategic Plan - Outcome	Community Strategic Plan Strategy	CSP KPI	Delivery Program Strategy [Strategic Asset Management Plan]	Operational Plan/Business Plan Action	Timeframe	Department Responsible	Evaluation Method	Outcome
Sutherland Shire: A liveable place with a high quality of life	6.3.2 – Improve the design and accessibility of our spaces and places	% of residents with disability who are satisfied with the accessibility of Council owned-operated assets, and / or the wider public domain	Implement Disability Inclusion Action Plan	1.1 Renewal programs achieve Disability Inclusion (aligned to MEERA <sup>2</sup> and Code of Accounting Practice 25)	Ongoing	Asset Management Group	% of residents with disability who are satisfied with the accessibility of Council owned and operated assets, and/ or the wider public domain	Council's planning framework and processes result in Sutherland Shire being a liveable place with a high quality of life.
			Identify barriers to disability inclusion within existing services and facilities, prioritise their removal	1.2 Apply to all infrastructure planning within Asset Class Management Plans	Ongoing	Asset Management Group	% of residents with disability who are satisfied with the accessibility of Council owned and operated assets, and/ or the wider public domain.	Council's planning framework and processes result in Sutherland Shire being a liveable place with a high quality of life.

2. MEERA – Modern Engineering Equivalent Replacement Asset

Community Strategic Plan - Outcome	Community Strategic Plan Strategy	CSP KPI	Delivery Program Strategy [Strategic Asset Management Plan]	Operational Plan/Business Plan Action	Timeframe	Department Responsible	Evaluation Method	Outcome
				1.3 Barriers identified and project proposals created	Ongoing	Asset Management Group	% of residents with disability who are satisfied with the accessibility of Council owned and operated assets, and/or the wider public domain	Council's planning framework and processes result in Sutherland Shire being a liveable place with a high quality of life
				1.4 Investigate provision of hearing loops and Braille signage in branch libraries, including sourcing funding	Ongoing	Manager – Library Services	Investigation and business case complete or project not viable	Project identified as viable

Community Strategic Plan - Outcome	Community Strategic Plan Strategy	CSP KPI	Delivery Program Strategy [Strategic Asset Management Plan]	Operational Plan/Business Plan Action	Timeframe	Department Responsible	Evaluation Method	Outcome
				1.5 Implement provision of Auslan interpreters at relevant library events in response to identified need	2018	Manager – Library Services	Auslan interpreters available when required	Increased attendance at library events by people with disability
				1.6 Investigate the provision of a Platform lift to be installed at Sutherland Leisure Centre.	2018	Manager Business Unit Sutherland Leisure Centre	Community consultation and Business case developed	Community consultation is conducted and lift installed
				1.7 A planning accessible events checklist as per our events tool kit is made available on website to assist event planners.	2018	Economic and Community Development	Checklist created and available on website	Events held in the Sutherland Shire are accessible and inclusive

Community Strategic Plan - Outcome	Community Strategic Plan Strategy	CSP KPI	Delivery Program Strategy [Strategic Asset Management Plan]	Operational Plan/Business Plan Action	Timeframe	Department Responsible	Evaluation Method	Outcome
				1.8 Encourage accessibility at events in the Shire by including questions on accessibility in Council's event application.	2017	Economic and Community Development	Marketing materials highlight accessible and inclusive events.	Increase in visits to the Sutherland Shire by people with disability and their support persons.



## 2. EMPLOYMENT

Community Strategic Plan - Outcome	Community Strategic Plan Strategy	CSP KPI	Delivery Program Strategy	Operational Plan/ Business Plan Action	Timeframe	Department Responsible	Evaluation Method	Outcome
Sutherland Shire: A prosperous community for all	5.2 Increase access to local employment and training opportunities	Satisfaction that the local economy provides a wide range of accessible and inclusive employment opportunities	Workforce Strategy (for SSC employment only)	2.1 Continue to promote apprenticeships and traineeships and provide local employment through a range of advertised vacancies – Workforce strategy – Recruitment Framework	Ongoing	People and Culture	No barriers to employment where possible	Varied range of employment types and employees to add diversity to Council makeup
				2.2 Continue to have a designated position in the unit for a person with a disability	Ongoing	Children's Services	Employment continues	Meaningful employment opportunity is provided, giving a sense of purpose, belonging & value.

Community Strategic Plan - Outcome	Community Strategic Plan Strategy	CSP KPI	Delivery Program Strategy	Operational Plan/ Business Plan Action	Timeframe	Department Responsible	Evaluation Method	Outcome
				2.3 Create an annual Community and Inclusion Award to be awarded prior to International Day of Disability.	Ongoing	Economic and Community Development	The number of nominations increasing annually.	Shire businesses are motivated to consider access and inclusion and a diverse workforce as good for business

### 3. SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES

Community Strategic Plan - Outcome	Community Strategic Plan Strategy	CSP KPI	Delivery Program Strategy	Operational Plan/ Business Plan Action	Timeframe	Responsible	Evaluation Method	Outcome
Sutherland Shire: A caring and supportive community	3.2 Support and enable all in our community	Satisfaction that people have a fair opportunity to participate in community life.	A2 - Implement the Information Management & Technology Strategy	3.1 Training is provided to all staff authoring web pages and creating printed materials on how to create accessible information.	4 years	IM&T and People and Culture	Training is identified and delivered to relevant staff	Information on website is consistent and created in an accessible format.
				3.2 Guidelines are provided to staff on creating accessible information online and in hard copy	4 years	IM&T and Communications	Guidelines are easily available	Accessibility and inclusion is built into all marketing and communications materials.
				3.3 Select video and audio materials on the website and intranet are captioned and described and are accessible against the WCAG 2.0 'AA' guidelines	4 years	IM&T and Communications	Test a selection of videos on website and intranet.	AA compliance

Community Strategic Plan - Outcome	Community Strategic Plan Strategy	CSP KPI	Delivery Program Strategy	Operational Plan/ Business Plan Action	Timeframe	Responsible	Evaluation Method	Outcome
				3.4 Ensure any online mechanisms are accessible against the WCAG 2.0 'AA' guidelines.	4 years	IM&T, Governance and Customer Service and Strategy and Performance	Confirm compliance to WCAG 2.0 guidelines	AA compliance
				3.5 Ensure various options for customers to communicate with Council including via the National Relay Service (NRS)	4 years	Governance and Customer Service,	Information is publicly available and easily accessed on Council website	The community can easily communicate with Council using their preferred method of communication.
				3.6 Economic and Community Development staff give advice and guidance regarding issues related to access and inclusion.	Ongoing	Economic and Community Development	Role of Community workers specialising in Access and Inclusion is well informed to all staff.	Increased communication between Community Workers and other staff.

Community Strategic Plan - Outcome	Community Strategic Plan Strategy	CSP KPI	Delivery Program Strategy	Operational Plan/ Business Plan Action	Timeframe	Responsible	Evaluation Method	Outcome
				3.7 Purchasing decisions consider accessibility	2 years	Procurement	Accessibility requirements are outlined in Procurement Manual.	Goods and services procured meet accessibility standards and/or have considered the needs of people with disability.
				3.8 Identify a list of Australian Disability Enterprises (ADE's) through the National Disability Services Website.	2 years	Procurement	A list of ADE's including the services they provide is made available to staff	ADE's are considered when making procurement decisions for goods and services.
				3.9 Develop an inclusion guideline within Children's Services	2018	Children's Services	Inclusion Guideline developed & implemented	Guideline used to inform daily practices

## 4. ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOURS

Community Strategic Plan - Outcome	Community Strategic Plan Strategy	CSP KPI	Delivery Program Strategy	Operational Plan/ Business Plan Action	Timeframe	Department Responsible	Evaluation Method	Outcome
Sutherland Shire: a caring and supportive community	3.3 Opportunities will be fostered that help build a sense of community	Satisfaction that the community is harmonious cohesive and inclusive	Leadership Strategy	4.1 Disability awareness and confidence training is provided for executive teams	June 2018	People and Culture	Awareness and training embedded into leadership training programs	Senior leadership team have an increased awareness and added confidence of access and inclusion
			Learning and Development framework	4.2 Communication and etiquette training and/ or resources is provided for employees with customer facing roles initially and then to managers and employees	June 2018	People and Culture	Confirm learning on disability awareness and track attendance and/or access to resources	Increased awareness and added confidence to communicate with employees and customers with disability.



Community Strategic Plan - Outcome	Community Strategic Plan Strategy	CSP KPI	Delivery Program Strategy	Operational Plan/ Business Plan Action	Timeframe	Department Responsible	Evaluation Method	Outcome
				4.3 Action items from each Access Committee meeting be documented and forwarded to the relevant Council Unit for investigation and action as required.	Ongoing	Governance and whole of Council	Action items from the Access Committee are investigated and outcomes reported back to the Committee in a timely manner	Council's Access Committee resourced and its recommendations are valued and actioned as required.
				4.4 Create an annual Community and Inclusion Award to be awarded prior to International Day of Disability.	Ongoing	Economic and Community Development	A Community Access and Inclusion award is awarded annually.	Shire businesses are motivated to consider access and inclusion as good business.
				4.5 Include a question in future Business Surveys regarding accessibility and inclusion.	Ongoing	Economic and Community Development	An increase in the levels of accessibility at Shire businesses	Shire businesses consider access and inclusion as good business.

Community Strategic Plan - Outcome	Community Strategic Plan Strategy	CSP KPI	Delivery Program Strategy	Operational Plan/ Business Plan Action	Timeframe	Department Responsible	Evaluation Method	Outcome
				4.6 Continue to support services to improve their capacity and capability to provide quality inclusive practices. Work collaboratively with the Inclusion Support program agency to embed inclusion strategies and practices, increase knowledge, skills and confidence of educators.	Ongoing	Children's Services	Staff report that they have had adequate training to meet the needs of children in their care	Children's needs are being met & responded to appropriately

Community Strategic Plan - Outcome	Community Strategic Plan Strategy	CSP KPI	Delivery Program Strategy	Operational Plan/ Business Plan Action	Timeframe	Department Responsible	Evaluation Method	Outcome
				4.7 Continue to apply for funding through both State and Federal bodies and administer the Inclusion support program for children with disabilities for services across the Sutherland Shire	Ongoing	Children's Services	Funding is maintained	Children enrolled in our services as well as Community based preschools receive specialised support
				4.8 Strengthen our connection with disability services in the local area & investigate ways we can respond proactively to the NDIS	2017 – 2019	Children's Services	Engagement & collaboration that exists with disability services for children enrolled in our services	Staff is aware of the services in the community & can confidently refer families where there is a need. A collaborative approach is implemented with disability services where we enrol a child with disabilities.



## FUNDING THE PLAN

Various actions in the Plan will require additional funds to improve access and inclusion. The funding to do this work will be allocated through the annual budget process. At times Council may apply for funding from external sources to help achieve the actions in the Plan.

## MOVING FORWARD

Council is committed to its legal responsibility not to discriminate against another person on the grounds of that person's disability.

Council will continue to increase access to information, upgrade facilities and improve how it delivers services to remove barriers to access and meet this obligation.

The appropriateness and effectiveness of the strategies outlined in the plan need to be continually assessed over the lifespan of the Plan and changed if necessary.

As a live document, we welcome input, feedback and suggestions from the community about how we can continue to make the Sutherland Shire a more inclusive and welcoming place for all.

## APPENDIX 1: SURVEY RESULTS

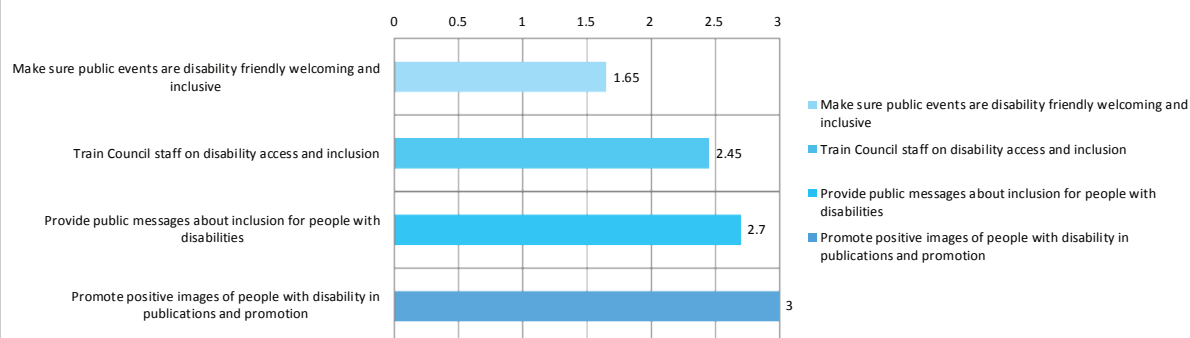
*Council is performing well in the following areas:*

- Information about Council events facilities and services
- Council customer service centre
- Community centres and halls
- Libraries
- Leisure Centres
- Sporting facilities
- Parks and playgrounds
- Public toilets
- Road crossings

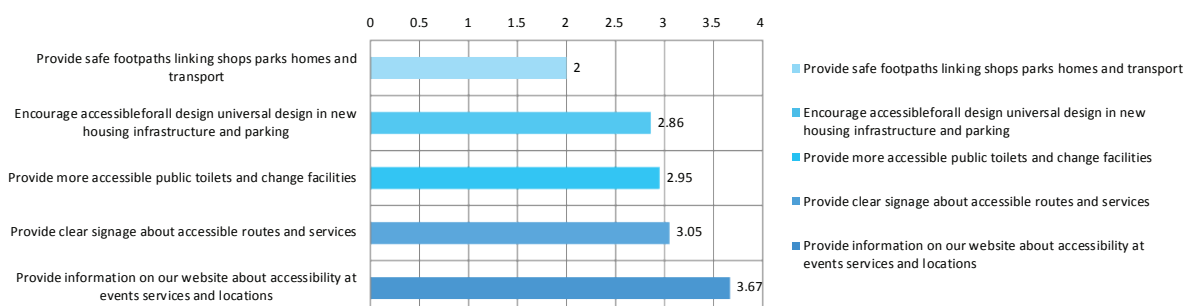
*Council needs to improve in the following areas:*

- Accessible parking
- Footpaths
- Bus shelter and drop off pick up areas
- Accessible Council events such as Australia Day
- Accessible events at the Sutherland Entertainment Centre

From the list below rank from 14 what Council can do to create more positive attitudes about people with disabilities 1 being your highest preference

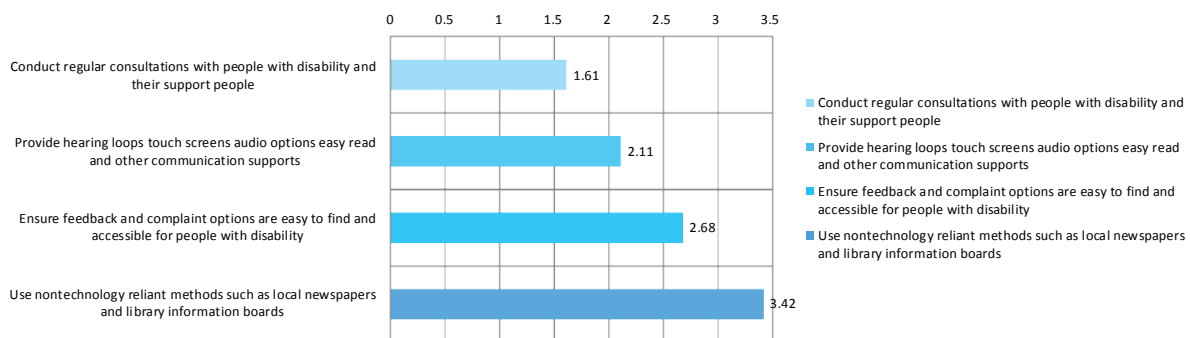


From the list below rank from 15 what Council can do to make Sutherland Shire easier to get around and better to live in for people with disability 1 being your highest preference

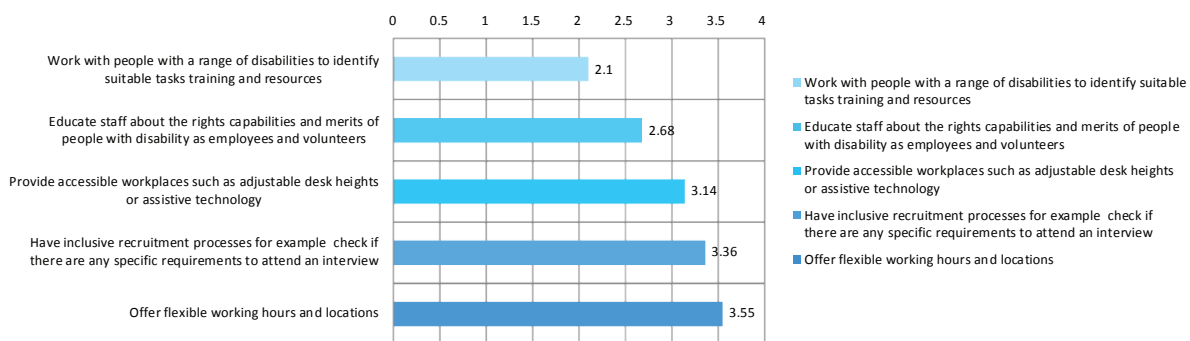




For people with disability from the list below rank from 14 how we can improve how you interact with Council 1 being your highest preference




From the list below rank from 15 how Council can improve employment and volunteer opportunities for people with disability 1 being your highest preference



## SELECTED COMMENTS OR SUGGESTIONS:

- *Beach wheelchairs and matting at Cronulla. Have a look at what Avoca Beach on the Central Coast and other Councils are doing. Suggest the Hippocampe Beach wheelchair - can be purchased from Mogo Wheelchairs. National Parks NSW have purchased 10 of these last year, they can also go bush when you swap the wheels over.*
- *Playgrounds - all new playgrounds and upgrades need to have all abilities in mind.*
- *Auslan interpreting and captioning should be provided at all council events, particularly Australia Day which is a huge deal for Shire residents that deaf and hearing impaired people are basically excluded from.*
- *Updates on Council produced newsletters/documents/information (website) for people with low-vision. Adapting larger fonts, simple text/language in a readable format is essential. Website is too content heavy and not easy to navigate. Our Shire should also be produced in an audio format for those in the community who may need this. Vision Australia can assist with this. Also review our strategies and policy documents listed on our website - PDF Format is not suitable for people with low vision or blind. They need to be available using a document reader or audio version. Way finding and signage in streets and suburbs for low vision/blind or people with Dementia to navigate safely.*
- *Went to the Seniors' concert. Obviously we are not Senior enough yet as we still have our hearing. As a carer for a dementia patient I was appalled at the loudness of the compere and the music. My patient became frightened and agitated and we had to leave.*
- *Cycling area for specialized bikes with outriggers (see bikes provided by TAD NSW). These bikes require broadening of the paths. Provision of more disability parking spaces.*


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- *Accessibility to fitness services - I feel like staff are afraid of breaking me if I try to access these because they don't know enough about my disability to feel confident.*
  - *Disability is not just physical. There needs to be consideration for mental health and reinforcing messages of community and support available to people doing it tough but trying to get on with life. Community notice boards, positive signage and providing places to connect or just sit with nature in public places are as important as physical accessibility. Parc Menai and the community hub around it is a great example of public space meeting diverse needs.*
  - *Employ more people with a disability (like me)!*
  - *Better public transport options and infrastructure (bus shelters, paved footpaths, etc.) would make life a lot easier for me.*

## APPENDIX 2: WHAT COUNCIL ALREADY DOES

Council's Development Control Plan includes provisions that require new medium density residential and mixed use developments to provide a proportion of adaptable and liveable housing. The requirements of the DCP and the building access provisions of the Building Code of Australia are implemented through Council's development assessment and certification process. Through these actions Council is improving the accessibility to buildings and facilitating improved housing choice and diversity.

Council employs a dedicated Community Development Worker – Disability. This position provides sector development and support to the Disability services in the Sutherland Shire including:

- Co-hosting and resourcing the St George and Sutherland Disability Interagency.
- Supporting and resourcing the St George and Sutherland Mental Health Network.
- Organising information sessions on relevant disability/accessibility related topics, including disability sector reforms such as the NDIS.
- Delivering events that celebrate the achievements of people with disability including mental health, such as International Day of People with Disability and Mental Health Week.
- Providing support to a range of disability organisations in the Sutherland Shire. Including Sylvanvale, Civic Industries, Interrelate and Sutherland Shire Carer's Network.

- 
- Facilitating the provision of funding from Council's Community Grants Program to increase accessibility and inclusiveness. For example this year the program funded \$7,500 for Carer Wellness Week, \$9,500 for Music Ability – Music Therapy for children with disability and \$2,000 to the Sutherland Shire Special Needs Toy Library.
  - In partnership with Asset management staff, carrying out audits of Council facilities to ensure compliance with accessibility.
  - Supporting and resourcing Council's Access Committee.
  - Giving advice and guidance to internal staff regarding issues related to access and inclusion. For example all abilities playground equipment, beach wheelchairs and swimming pool platform lifts.
  - Providing oversight to ensure strategies in Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan are implemented and that the Plan is part of the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework and reported on through the Annual Plan.

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**Sutherland Shire**  
COUNCIL

