



Terms of Reference

City of Melbourne Disability Advisory Committee

2024 – 2027

Endorsed Future Melbourne Committee 5 March 2024

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1. Purpose

The City of Melbourne's Disability Advisory Committee (the Committee) is a consultative forum that provides strategic advice on policy and practice issues to the administration and Council. This advice assists Council in responding to the needs and aspirations of people of all abilities who live, work, study or visit our city.

2. Background

The *Local Government Act 2020* stipulates that the role of a Council is to represent the diverse needs of the local community, address the health and wellbeing needs of community members and foster community cohesion by encouraging active participation in civic life.

3. Role

The Committee provides an ongoing civic engagement process where people with a disability can advocate to Council on barriers and access issues that impact on their life opportunities and experiences within the City of Melbourne and more broadly within society.

4. Objectives

The Committee will:

- Represent issues that impact on the life opportunities of people of all abilities
- Advise on 'best practice' in universal access planning and co-design engagement
- Participate in the development of Council's Disability Action Plan

5. Membership

5.1. Advisory Committee Members

There will be twelve (12) community members comprising individuals with personal and/or professional experience, expertise and commitment to improving equity of access in all aspects of life in the city

Of these, nine (9) members will have direct personal experience of disability, including parents or carers of disabled children. Three (3) members will be persons without disability from fields such as academia, disability rights, tourism and the business sector with a commitment to universal access and the rights of disabled people.

Membership will be representative of the diversity of our community with reference to:

- Age

- Sex and gender identity
- Indigenous and aboriginal
- Cultural and linguistic background
- Socio-economic status

Under Section 12 of the Equal Opportunity Act 2010, a dedicated Indigenous membership has been considered to support Aboriginal representation on the Committee.

The City of Melbourne is committed to fostering a deeper culture of public participation and have developed a policy, as part of the Local Government Act 2020 that commits to deliberative engagement practices.

5.2. Member expertise

The Committee membership will be sought on the basis of achieving a representation of a diverse range of people with mobility, sensory, cognitive, intellectual and/or cognitive disabilities

Members will have expertise and/or experience in one or more of the following areas:

- Expertise in advocacy on disability access issues
- First-hand experience of disability
- Governance experience
- Human rights, social inclusion, empowering people and building on people's strengths and knowledge
- An understanding of City of Melbourne's community and capital city roles
- Demonstrated links to community and neighbourhood relationships
- Operators of the business and tourism sectors within the City of Melbourne
- An academic with expertise in disability and equity of access

5.3. Terms of membership

Decisions to appoint and remove members to the Committee are made by the Chief Executive Officer in consultation with the Councillor Chair of the Committee. All Councillors will be advised of any proposed appointments or changes to the Committee membership and may request referral of the decision to Council within 7 days of notification.

- Community members will be appointed following a formal expression of interest submission
- Members will be appointed as individuals for a period of three (3) years

- All new members will participate in an induction process
- Members may seek re-appointment for a further three (3) year term
- The maximum term will be for a period of six (6) years
- Any member who fails to advise of an absence of up to three (3) meetings, in a calendar year, will be deemed to have resigned
- Vacancies will be filled as soon as possible
- Committee members may be required to undergo a Police and/or Working with Children checks.

6. Committee structure

Committee membership will comprise:

- A Councillor, who will chair the meetings with a nominated member as co-chair
- People with expertise in identifying barriers and promoting equity of access for people with a variety of disabilities including mobility, sensory, cognitive, psycho-social and/or intellectual
- Director of the coordinating branch
- At least one senior officer from the coordinating branch
- One Council officer from the coordinating branch to perform support functions

6.1. Meetings of the Committee

The Committee will meet at least four times annually and on special issues as a working group as required.

Meetings will also be held at the Town Hall in Swanston Street between 2.30pm – 5.00pm on an agreed work day. Members will have the option to participate in person or online. Light refreshments will be provided at face to face meetings.

6.2. Voluntary working group meetings

Members may nominate to attend and participate in working groups to explore other identified issues or projects. No additional sitting fees are payable for meetings of any working group.

7. Council support for committee members

Resources, including printed materials will be provided (if required) by Council.

Council will provide interpreters, carers, reimbursement for travel and any other requirements (as advised) to support members to attend and participate in committee meetings

External Committee members may be paid a sitting fee of \$300 per meeting they attend.

8. Review

The Terms of Reference will be reviewed every three years. The next review is due November 2026.

9. Media

The Councillor Chair of the Disability Advisory Committee is the media spokesperson for the Committee.

10. Reporting

The Committee cannot make decisions binding on Council, but the Councillor Chair and Council officers will convey the Committee's advice and recommendations to the Council. Council officers may attend committee meetings and receive advice directly from members.

11. The Roles and Responsibilities of the Council

- To appoint a Councillor to co-chair the Committee
- Support the active engagement of all members
- Facilitate a collaborative meeting format
- Support committee members to fully engage in the issues on the table by providing information and research findings in a timely and accessible manner
- Co-opt additional support and/or sub committees as required
- Provide policy and secretariat support to the Committee
- Coordinate meetings, agenda and minutes
- Coordinate guest-speakers and attendees for committee meetings, including management representatives from the City of Melbourne who have significant responsibility for planning, decision making, service delivery and implementation of policy and programs in relation to disability access and inclusion

12. The roles and responsibilities of committee members

- Be fully prepared for meetings
- Agree to participate in a collaborative meeting format

- Bring personal, professional knowledge and broad community experience to the table
- Consider and raise relevant issues, proposals and ideas
- Provide informed advice and guidance

13. Code of Conduct and interest provisions

In performing the role of a member, a committee member must:

- Act honestly
- Exercise reasonable care and diligence
- Not make improper use of their position
- Not make improper use of the information acquired because of their position
- Adhere to City of Melbourne Code of Conduct
(Good Governance Advisory Board (2004) Good Governance Guide)

Where the member of the Committee has an interest or conflict of interest in relation to a matter in which the Committee is concerned, or is likely to be considered or discussed, the member must disclose the interest to the Committee before the matter is considered or discussed at the meeting. Disclosure must include the nature of the relevant interest and be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

14. Confidential and sensitive information

- Members are expected to comply with the confidential information provisions contained in Section 125 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.
- Members must treat information they receive as confidential unless otherwise advised. The documents presented to the Disability Advisory Committee will often be in draft format and not ready for wider community distribution.
- Members must not use confidential information other than for the purpose of performing their function as a member of the Committee.
- Draft documents cannot be referred to or used in any grant applications, presentations or in the private or working roles of members.