

MEETING AGENDA

Meeting	Port Stephens Disability Inclusion and Access Advisory Group (DIAAG)			
Team Name:	Vibrant Places	Theme:	Skill development & input	
Date:	Thursday 27 November 2025	Time:	4pm – 6pm	Venue: Committee Room, Council Admin Building
Chairperson:	Cr Jason Wells and Juanita Vernon	Minutes:	Jessica McDonald	
Purpose of Meeting:	To provide expert advice and community perspectives to identify and address barriers to access and participation, ensuring that Council policies, programs, and infrastructure align with the principles of inclusion and universal design.			

Invitees			
Cr Jason Wells Port Stephens Council	Cr Ros Armstrong Port Stephens Council	Kate Connor Port Stephens Council	Steve McAlister Port Stephens Council
Liz Akerman Port Stephens Council	Kayla Sharp Committee Member	Juanita Vernon Committee Member	Louise Bevilacqua Port Stephens Council
Olivia Hamilton Committee Member	Susan Hopkins Committee Member	David Sams Committee Member	Rosaria Strazzeri Committee Member

Apologies			
Alex Goodwin Committee Member	Henry Flegg Committee Member	Jo Thomas Destination Port Stephens	

Item	Topic	Time Required	Responsible officer	Action	Status / Date to be completed
1.0	Welcome				
1.1	Introduction and Acknowledgement of country	2 mins	Chair	Record: Completed by Cr Wells	
2.0	Projects for Discussion				
2.1	Previous Actions	5 mins	Steve McAlister	Record: Completed by Steve McAlister	See Action List below
2.2	Inclusive Engagement	20 mins	Liz Akerman Louise Bevilacqua	<p>Record: Presented by Liz Akerman.</p> <p>Record: Feedback provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate more face-to-face drop-in sessions in appropriate places. • Ensure Mylink service providers are sharing Council information to reach non-technology users regarding updates and changes. Share opportunities with Community Interagencies • Investigate using public community notice boards, radio and local newspapers. <p>The need for upskilling community groups, leaders and councillors on how to use Councils website and resources.</p>	
2.3	Accessible Business & tourism	20 mins	Steve McAlister	Record: Steve presented the Accessible Business & tourism toolkit and sought feedback on programs and activities to improve	

			<p>accessibility and inclusivity in businesses and tourism opportunities</p> <p>Record: Feedback provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newcastle Airport has been unwelcoming and has a lack of understanding on how to best handle people with diverse needs. Look to partner with the Airport with the toolkit • Council to investigate sunflower lanyards or similar as a bigger opportunity and educate community and businesses. • Would like to see universal Do's and Don'ts in the toolkit and potentially a one-page guide employers could print for staff. • Provide assistance for business owners with disability (networking event) • Ensure lighting in businesses is suitable for those with diverse needs. • Businesses to be encouraged to survey customers and gain feedback. • Suggestions to host a DIAGG meeting at the airport <p>Action: Email out the business toolkit to committee members</p>	
--	--	--	---	--

	BREAK	15 mins			
2.4	Our Incredible Place Strategy & Inclusive Events	20 mins	Kate Connor	<p>Record: Kate presented on the Strategy and sought feedback on events</p> <p>Record: Feedback provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More consideration when planning events so people with accessibility issues aren't impacted (Eg placement of furniture, amenities, thought-out floor plan, cabling) • Reduce any barriers and ask the question – how someone with a disability could get to the event and navigate it. • Ensure informative communications are provided to residents/business that may be impacted when Council host events. Important to include Council's contact details. • For Illuminate, suggest people bring a torch for better visibility. • Continue to offer a pre-walk through for large events. • Pride Festival at Newcastle was a good example of a well-run and inclusive event. • Council could consult with CDAH regarding events for feedback. 	

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little Beach – Council should promote the changing places amenities. • Fingal Beach is not very disability appropriate as some facilities are lacking to make it more disability friendly. • Better lighting at Robinson Reserve would improve the facility 	
2.5	Sports4All Inclusion Coach	5 mins	Steve McAlister	<p>Record: Steve presented on the Sports4All Inclusion Coach</p> <p>Action: Share the Inclusion Coach job advertisement with the group</p>	
2.6	Encouraging participation in programs	15 mins	Cr Wells	<p>Record: Feedback provided on program at Leisure Centre:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regarding the Inclusion pool event, committee feel the time frame is too short, is there ages, classes or time, what is the fun, fitness and learning water safety elements. • Flyer has a lack of detailed information needed so people can plan. • Program and marketing needs improving. <p>Action: Confirm if pool passes can be used at all Council pools for all holders.</p> <p>Action: Kate to call Belgravia Leisure regarding feedback.</p>	

3.0 Future Items					
3.1	Items for future discussion	10 mins	Chair	<p>Record: Items suggested for future meetings included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Day of People with Disability in 2026. • Assets present their pathway matrix plans to the group • Engagement with the team who works in the Environmental/climate change area • Review the accessibility of feedback pathways and documents 	
4.0 General Business					
4.1	Future meeting schedule <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thursday 19 February • Thursday 21 May • Thursday 20 August • Thursday 19 November 	5 mins	Chair	<p>Record: Steve presented next year's dates</p> <p>Record: Discussion around the starting times of meetings and people's availability - later start would make it easier for people to attend, however some noted issues of going home in the dark</p> <p>Decision: Change February meeting to start at 4:30pm. Will discuss future meetings on February 19</p>	

MEETING CLOSED AT:

NEXT MEETINGS

Date: 19 February 2026

Time: 4-6pm

Venue: PSC Administration Building, Raymond Terrace

MEETING CODE OF COOPERATION

We start on time and finish on time.

We all participate and contribute – everyone is given opportunity to voice their opinions.

We use improvement tools that enhance meeting efficiency and effectiveness.

We actively listen to what others have to say, seeking first to understand then to be understood.

We follow up on the actions we are assigned responsibility for and complete them on time.

We give and receive open and honest feedback in a constructive manner.

We use data to make decisions (whenever possible).

We strive to continually improve our meeting process and build time into each agenda for reflection.

We will promote best practice, keeping open minds, combining our experiences and shared learnings to inform our deliberations.

Disability Inclusion and Access Advisory Group - Actions

Item	Topic	Action/Decision	Responsible Officer	Date to be Completed	Status
4 SEPTEMBER 2025					
2.5	Advocacy and building connections	Action: Include CDAH contact details to the group	Steve		Completed – email sent to members on 12 September
3.1	Introduction to the DIAP	Action: Group suggested Council inviting Newcastle Airport, Business Port Stephens and Destination Port Stephens at future meetings	Steve		Listed for future meeting

		Action: Invite a staff member from the emergency section (Janice) to the next meeting.	Steve		Listed for future meeting
		Action: Share details of Councils Emergency committee with the group.	Steve		Listed for future meeting
		Action: Monitor and report on actions including the team responsible, times frames and any updates	Steve		Completed – email sent to members on 26 November
		Action: Send out the details for the Have Your Say page	Steve		Completed – email sent to members on 12 September
3.2	Business toolkit	Action: Group to be forwarded information and invited to provide comment / input (if they wish)	Steve		Completed – email sent to members on 21 October
3.3	Medowie Masterplan	Action: Strategic Planner to present the Salamander Bay Town Centre at next meeting.	Steve		Listed for future meeting
3.4	Placemaking Guidelines	Action: Group to be forwarded information and invited to provide comment / input (if they wish)	Steve		Completed – email sent to members on 21 October
4.1	General Business	Action: Steve to share everyone's contact details with the group to further open communication.	Steve		Completed – email sent to members on 12 September
27 NOVEMBER 2025					
2.3	Accessible Business & tourism	Action: Email out the toolkit to committee members	Steve		
2.5	Sports4All Inclusion Coach	Action: Share the Inclusion Coach advertisement with the group	Steve		
2.6	Encouraging Participation in Programs	Action: Confirm if pool passes can be used at all Council pools for all holders.	Kate		
		Action: Call Belgravia Leisure to provide feedback on program / flyer	Kate		

