



Hobsons Bay
CITY COUNCIL

Disability Access and Inclusion Strategy 2013 – 2017

Background Paper

July 2013

Acknowledgements

January 2013

The paper provides the background information on which the Disability Access and Inclusion Strategy is based. For further information contact the Hobsons Bay City Council on 9932 1000 www.hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au

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Executive Summary

In 2009, people with disabilities represented 17.1% (or 14,825) of the total Hobsons Bay population. Whilst disability can impact individuals in many different forms, some of the largest impacts on people with disabilities are the attitudes and environmental barriers that impede on their full participation and inclusion in the community.

Hobsons Bay City Council has a legal responsibility to ensure its services and programs are accessible, inclusive and responsive to people with disabilities. These responsibilities are underpinned by legislation and policies at the International, National, State and Local levels of Government.

Under the Victorian Local Government Act 1989 Councils' have a responsibility to improve the overall quality of life for people in the local community and to ensure that services and facilities provided by the Council are accessible and equitable.

More specifically, Council's are specifically required to act under Section 38 of the Disability Act 2006 which states that all Councils are required to prepare a Disability Action Plan. This paper presents an analysis of the current policy environment affecting people with disabilities and the services/organisations they use.

The Council's Disability Action Plan 2008– 2012 built on the achievements from the Council's first Disability Policy and Action Plan. This paper presents the findings of an evaluation process which highlights the major achievements the Council has made towards access and inclusion to date as well as the community needs which are yet to be addressed.

In addition to the evaluation, two forms of community consultation, one with people with disabilities and the other with the broader Hobsons Bay community were carried out. The results of these are presented in this paper and will be used to shape the goals and objectives of the Council's next Disability Strategy.

Introduction

This document presents an analysis of the current policies relating to people with disabilities, a summary of the outcomes of the community consultation process undertaken in April 2010 with residents. It also presents an evaluation of the Council's Disability Action Plan 2008-2013 and recommendations for the Council's next disability strategy.

People with disabilities, their families and carers continue to be amongst the most disadvantaged groups in Australia. In Australia people with disabilities are less likely to complete their education, less likely to be employed and more likely to be in poverty and dependent on income support.

People with disabilities, their families and carers have made it clear that they do not want to be seen as victims or recipients of welfare and charity. However there are many barriers that impede on their ability to allow them full inclusion into the community and their participation in social, economic and cultural life in Australia.

The Hobsons Bay City Council is committed to breaking down these barriers and striving towards an accessible community. It has a responsibility to ensure that all people have the opportunity to participate in community life. The Council formalised this commitment with the development of its first Disability Policy and Action Plan, which was implemented between 2003 to 2007, and then again with its second Disability Action Plan from 2008 to 2012.

The Council's current Disability Action Plan has reached the end of its four year cycle. As such, it is timely for the Council to reflect on its achievements and areas for further work that need to be considered in the development of the Council's next disability strategy to be implemented between 2013-2017.

This document presents an analysis of the current policies relating to people with disabilities, a summary of the outcomes of the community consultation process undertaken in April 2010 with residents. It also presents an evaluation of the Council's Disability Action Plan 2008-2013 and recommendations for the Council's next disability strategy.

Disability in Hobsons Bay

People with disabilities represent over 17 per cent of the total Hobsons Bay Population, and contribute to community life in many ways.

The data presented here is from the Survey of the Disability, Ageing and Carers, which was conducted in 2009 by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). With the results of the survey the ABS, in partnership with the Disability Policy and Research Working Group, has produced local area estimates which provide information about people with disabilities at a local level. This was the most recent data available at the time of writing this paper.

Population

In 2009, people with disabilities represented 17.1 per cent (or 14,825) of the total Hobsons Bay population. As shown by Figure 1, the rate of disability increases with age, with majority of people who have a disability being 55 years or above.

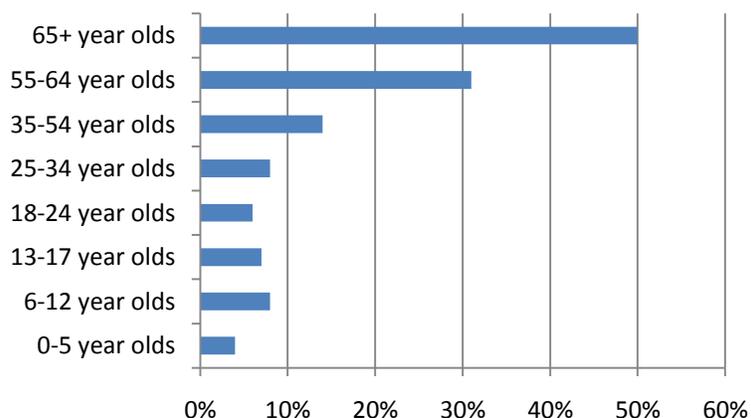


Figure 1 Disability by Age, 2010

Language Proficiency

In Hobsons Bay in 2010, out of the people who needed assistance, 37 per cent (715 people) did not speak English well at home, and 9 per cent (175

people) did not speak English at all at home (ABS, 2011).

Types of Disability

The range of disabilities that people can experience is broad and can include physical, intellectual, psychiatric, neurological, learning and sensory disabilities. As shown in Figure 2, in 2009 the most common disability was physical (52%) followed by sensory (23%).

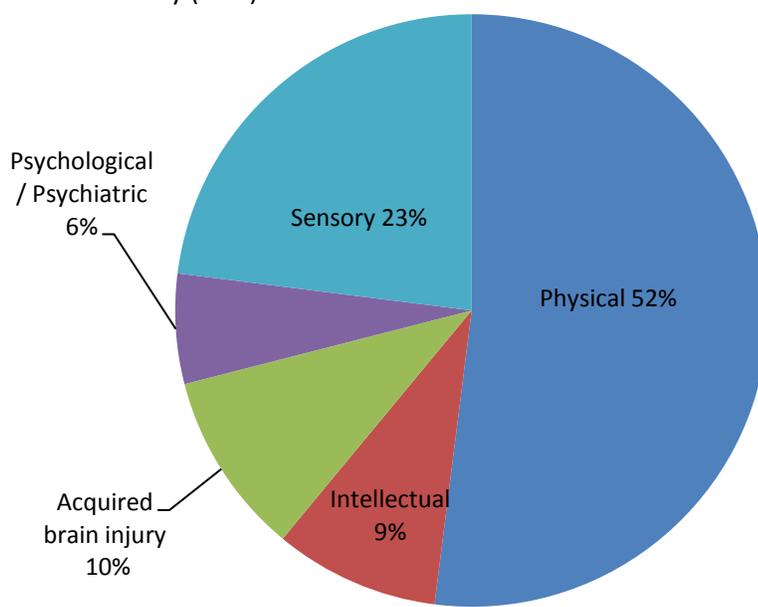


Figure 2 Types of Disability, 2010

Disability Classification and Support

The Australian Bureau of Statistics classifies types of disabilities depending on their level of help needed with core activities.

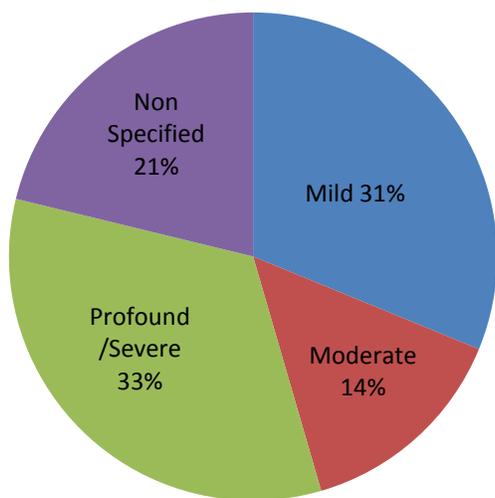


Figure 4 Disability Classification

As shown in Figure 3, the 2009 survey highlights that of the Hobsons Bay residents with a disability:

- about one third (4,942) were estimated to have a disability that is profound or severe in nature, meaning that they always or sometimes need help with the core activities such as communication, mobility and self-care (ABS, 2010).
- Fourteen per cent (2,115) were estimated to have a moderate disability and while they do not need daily assistance they have difficulty with a core-activity.
- Just over 30 per cent (4,632) were estimated to have a mild disability. While requiring no help with core-activities these residents may be limited in their capacity to undertake other activities. (ABS, 2010).
- A further 21 per cent (3,134) of residents with a disability were 'not specified' however they may have a restriction that affects their capacity to participate in education or work. (ABS, 2010).

The 2011 Census shows that there were a larger proportion of people in Hobsons Bay (compared to Western Region and Metropolitan Statistical Division) who reported needing assistance with core activities (5.2%). As shown in Figure 4, according to 2010 data, it was estimated that over half of people with disabilities in Hobsons Bay needed mobility support.

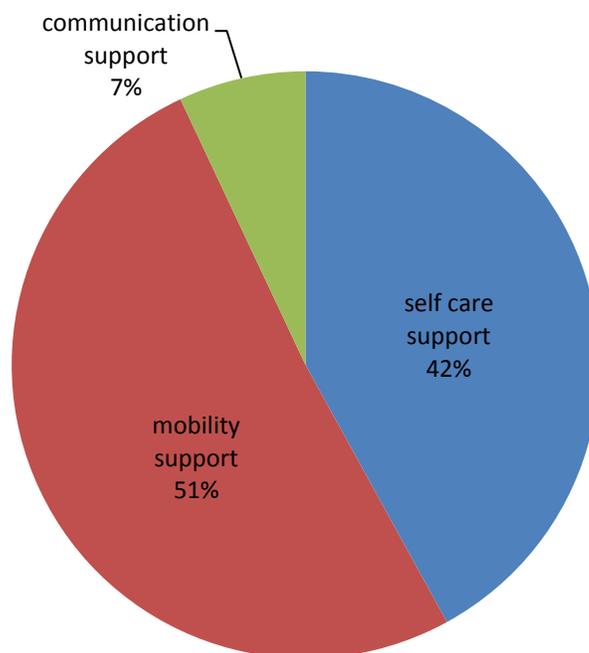


Figure 3 Need for Assistance, 2010

According to the 2011 Census, 11.5 per cent (7,867) of residents provided unpaid assistance to a person with a disability.

Education, Employment and Income

People with disabilities are more likely to leave formal education earlier than people without a disability. Twenty-two per cent of people aged 15-24 years who had specific restrictions were twice as likely to leave school either at or before the age of 15 years. This is compared to 11 per cent of those without a disability (ABS, 2010).

According to the Council of Australian Governments Reform Council (2012) the employment participation rate for people with a disability was 54 per cent compared to 83 per cent for the wider population.

The median individual income for people with disabilities in Australia was \$343 per week, compared with \$650 for people without a disability (ABS, 2012a).

According to Centrelink data, there were approximately 3,165 residents of Hobsons Bay receiving the Disability Support Pension in the first quarter of 2007.

Housing

In 2009 an estimated 36 per cent of all people with a disability Australia-wide owned homes with mortgages compared with 45 per cent of people without a disability (ABS, 2010). No data is available locally; however it can be assumed that this issue is widespread.

According to the Department of Human Services (2012), 28 per cent of people with a disability lived in rented accommodation in Victoria in 2009, compared with 25 per cent of people without a disability.

In 2009, 7 per cent of Victorians with a disability rented from a state housing authority compared with 1 per cent of people without a disability (DHS, 2012).

Health and Wellbeing

The Department of Health, Victorian Population Health Survey of People with an Intellectual Disability 2009 described the health and wellbeing of Victorians with an intellectual disability and compared this to the health and wellbeing of the general community. This was the first time that the survey has been carried out in Victoria.

Some of the key findings of this survey are as follows:

- the percentage of people with intellectual disability who met the recommended minimum daily intake levels of fruit and vegetables was similar to the general Victorian population at 48% for fruit and 11% for vegetables.
- compared to the general Victorian population, people with an intellectual disability were less likely to drink water and three times more likely to drink soft drinks when thirsty. However they were more likely to be non drinkers and non smokers
- the proportion of people with an intellectual disability undertaking adequate physical activity according to national guidelines was 22 per cent, much lower than the general Victorian population (60.3%)
- health status reported as excellent, good or very good of people with an intellectual disability aged over 18 was lower than the general population (76% compared to 82% respectively)
- over half of all people with an intellectual disability were either overweight or obese, higher than the general Victorian population (48.6%)
- the prevalence of diabetes for people with an intellectual disability was similar to that of the general Victorian population at 6 per cent.
- people with an intellectual disability were more likely to have depression compared with the general Victorian population.
- 26 per cent of people with an intellectual disability sought professional help for a mental health problem in the last 12 months, higher than the general Victorian population (11%)
- although rates of health screening for such issues as blood pressure and diabetes were similar to the general Victorian population, only 15 per cent of females with an intellectual disability aged 20–69 years were reported to

have had a Pap smear in the past two years, compared to 71 per cent of females from the general Victorian population.

- Half of females with an intellectual disability were reported to have had a mammogram in the past two years, compared to 76 per cent of females from the general Victorian population.
- 23 per cent of people with an intellectual disability were members of a sports group and 16 per cent were members of a church group, similar to the general Victorian population. However, people with an intellectual disability were less likely to help out as a volunteer, get help from family, friends and neighbours when needed, or access community resources, compared with the general Victorian population.
- people with an intellectual disability were less likely to be married, born overseas, employed and educated, but were more likely to have lived in their current neighbourhood for over 10 years.

Forecast Increase in Disability Incidence

In 2003, the Victorian Local Governance Association released estimates of the number of people with disabilities in municipalities for each year to 2031. This revealed that the incidence of all disabilities is set to increase, most significantly both profound/severe disabilities, as shown in Figure 5 below.

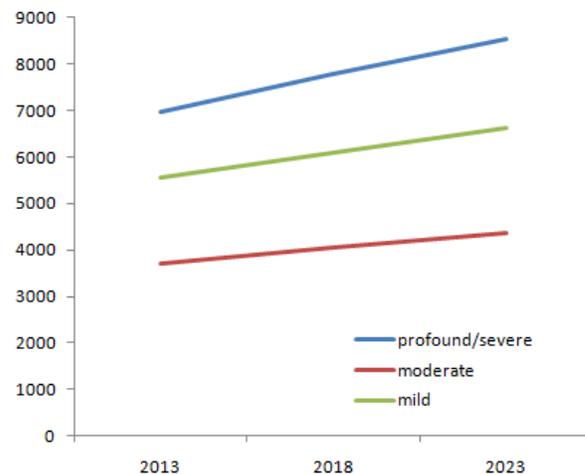


Figure 5 Forecast Increase in Disability Incidence, 2003

Legislation and Policy Analysis

Hobsons Bay City Council has a legal responsibility to ensure its services and programs are accessible, inclusive and responsive to people with disabilities. These responsibilities are underpinned by legislation and policies at the International, National, State and Local levels of Government.

International, National, State and Local policy frameworks inform funding priorities and local policy initiatives in the disability field. Each of these influences are presented below. The Council has a responsibility of abiding by all relevant legislation and regulations and is committed to enforcing the principles of relevant policies and standards.

International

United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Australia ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in 2008 and signed the Optional Protocol in 2009.

The CRPD takes viewing persons with disabilities as 'objects of charity, medical treatment and social protection' towards viewing persons with disabilities as 'subjects with rights, who are capable of claiming those rights and making decisions for their lives based on their free, and informed consent as well as being active members of society'.

The CRPD clarifies and qualifies how all categories of rights apply to persons with disabilities and identifies areas where adaptations have to be made for persons with disabilities to enable them to effectively exercise their rights and where protection of rights must be reinforced.

As a result of the ratification of the CRPD, local government is committed to operating in a manner

that upholds the general principles of the CRPD including:

- Respect for inherent dignity, individual autonomy including the freedom to make one's own choices
- Non discrimination
- Full and effective participation and inclusion in society
- Respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity
- Equality of opportunity
- Accessibility
- Equality between men and women
- Respect for the evolving capacity of children with disabilities and respect for the right of children with disabilities to preserve their identities.

National

Disability Discrimination Act 1992

Prior to the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA) being passed a variety of anti-discrimination acts for people with disabilities already existed in the different state legislatures, some dating back to the early 1980s. As such the DDA aimed to standardise the scope of rights offered around the country and to enable regulation of discriminatory practices of Commonwealth authorities.

The DDA therefore promotes the rights of people with disabilities in areas such as housing,

education, employment and the provision of goods and services.

Complaints made under the DDA are made to the Australian Human Rights Commission (previously known as the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission), which also handles complaints relating to the Racial Discrimination Act 1975, Sex Discrimination Act 1984, Age Discrimination Act 2004 and the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986.

Disability Discrimination Act Standards

Under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), the Attorney-General may make Disability Standards to specify rights and responsibilities about equal access and opportunity for people with disabilities, in more detail and with more certainty than the DDA itself provides

Standards can be made in the areas of employment, education, public transport services, access to premises, accommodation and the administration of Commonwealth laws and programs.

For example The Disability (Access to Premises - Building) Standards 2010, came into effect across Australia in May, 2011. These standards affect the requirements for access to new buildings and buildings undergoing significant upgrade.

The aim of these Standards is to provide the building and design industry with detailed information regarding the required access provisions associated with the design and construction or new buildings and upgrades.

National Disability Strategy 2010 – 2020

The National Disability Strategy was developed under the auspices of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) and formally endorsed by on the 13th February 2011.

It sets out a ten year national plan for improving life for Australians with disability, their families and carers within six policy areas for action which include:

- Inclusive and accessible communities
- Rights protection, justice and legislation
- Economic security
- Personal and community support
- Learning and skills
- Health and wellbeing

These policy areas are aligned to the articles of the CRPD and were agreed following a large nationwide public consultation process, involving more than 2,500 people reflected in the publication '*Shut Out: the Experience of People with Disabilities and their Families in Australia*'.

The Strategy aims to address the challenges faced by people with disability, both now and into the future.

National Disability Agreement

The National Disability Agreement came into effect on 1 January 2009 replacing the Commonwealth State Territory Disability Agreement and provides the framework for the provision of government support for people with disability.

The agreement is designed specifically to improve and expand services to assist people with disability to live as independently as possible, by helping them to establish stable and sustainable living arrangements, increasing their choices, and improving their health and wellbeing. At the same time, the agreement focuses on supporting families and carers in their caring roles.

From 1 January 2009 to 30 June 2015, the Commonwealth Government will be providing around \$7.6 billion in funding to the state and territory governments for increased and improved specialist disability services such as supported accommodation, targeted support and respite.

Building Code of Australia 2006

In Australia, the design and structure of buildings and how people use them is set by the Australian Building Codes Board. It is the Building Code of Australia that architects, town planners, engineers and councils use when designing buildings, streets, parks and all other public areas. The Building Code of Australia includes specifications for ensuring dignified access to, and use of, buildings for people with disability.

These standards seek to align building codes with the Disability Discrimination Act and equivalent state and territory laws, and ensure public buildings, businesses and other types of buildings meet the needs of all people.

New buildings must comply with the Building Code of Australia and the Access to Premises Standards when they are constructed and older buildings must comply when the owner, person or business using the building does major renovations or changes. This way, over time all buildings will become accessible.

Productivity Commission Report on Disability Care and Support

In February 2010 the Federal Government requested the Productivity Commission (PC) to undertake a public inquiry into a long-term disability care and support scheme. The inquiry examined how a scheme should be designed and funded to better meet the long-term needs of people with disability, their families and carers. In July 2011 the Productivity Commission released a report on the findings of its inquiry.

The PC report outlined that the current disability sector is inequitable, inadequate and underfunded. and highlighted a need for reform in the disability sector and the introduction of a National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

The proposed NDIS scheme would allow individuals who have a disability to obtain the appropriate social, physical, medical and emotional support required to live up to their full potential.

Implementing the NDIS

A Select Council on Disability Reform was established by the Commonwealth Government. It consisted of treasurers and disability ministers at state and federal level who met to consider and discussed the major reform of Australia's disability support system as set out by the PC. The Council has overseen the implementation of the NDIS in mid-2013.

The National Disability Insurance Scheme Advisory Group was announced by the Prime Minister in August 2011. The Advisory Group helped steer the development of a National Disability Insurance Scheme by providing advice on progress with the foundation reforms required to improve the system of care and support for Australians with disability and their carers.

All States, except for Western Australian, have become 'NDIS ready'. Some examples of activities that were undertaken by State Governments to prepare for an NDIS includes moving towards personalised funding models; undertaking industry development; and working with the disability sector to prepare organisations and individuals for an NDIS.

The Prime Minister, in December 2012 appointed the Hon. Jenny Macklin MP to a new position of Minister for Disability Reform.

On the 8th May 2012, the Federal Treasurer Wayne Swan announced \$1 billion over four years to kick start the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

As part of the budget, the government announced:

- \$342.5 million over three years from July next year for individually funded packages for

people with significant and permanent disability

- \$154.8 million over three years from July next year to employ Local Area Coordinators to provide an individualised approach to delivering care and support to people with disabilities.
- \$58.6 million over three years from July next year to assess the needs of people with disabilities in the launch locations.
- \$122.6 million over four years to start preparing the disability sector for the new way of delivering disability services.

The NDIS became legislation in May 2013, which means that it is now a part of the Australian system, and will help Australians living with disability beyond the next few years.

State

Equal Opportunity Act 2010

The Equal Opportunity Act legislation protects people from discrimination on the basis of their individual attributes in certain areas of public life, and provides redress for people who have been discriminated against within employment, education, accommodation, clubs, sport, goods and services, land sales and transfers and local government. It also aims to eliminate, as far as possible, sexual harassment and victimisation.

The *Equal Opportunity Act 2010* came into force on the 1st of August 2011 and replaced the *Equal Opportunity Act 1995*.

In addition to the attributes protected under the 1995 legislation, the 2010 Act has an extended definition of disability and also prohibits discrimination as a result of a contravention of requirements to:

- accommodate a person's parental or carer responsibilities in their employment
- make reasonable adjustments in employment, education and the provision of goods and services to enable a person with a disability to participate
- refuse to provide accommodation to a person with a disability because they have an assistance dog, or to make the person to pay an extra charge because of the dog or make them keep the dog elsewhere allow reasonable alterations to accommodation to meet the special needs of a person with a disability.

Disability Act 2006

The Disability Act 2006 applies to disability service providers funded under the Disability Services program of the Victorian Department of Human Services (DHS) replacing the Intellectually Disabled Persons' Services Act 1986 and the Disability Services Act 1991. The Act provides for:

- a stronger whole-of-government, whole-of-community response to the rights and needs of people with disabilities, and
- a framework for the provision of high quality services and supports for people with disabilities

Disability Regulations 2007 have been developed to support the Act in the areas of residents' fund, charges, and restrictive interventions and supervised treatment.

Section 38 of the Act requires that a public sector body (including Councils) must ensure that a Disability Action Plan is prepared for the purpose of—

- reducing barriers to persons with a disability accessing goods, services and facilities;
- reducing barriers to persons with a disability obtaining and maintaining employment;

- promoting inclusion and participation in the community of persons with a disability;
- achieving tangible changes in attitudes and practices which discriminate against persons with a disability.

The Disability Amendment Bill 2012 has been introduced to the Victorian parliament to update the 2006 Act with the following improvements:

- protect people's rights
- reduce administrative burden on disability service providers
- clarify unintended consequences of the Act to align with original policy intention
- address technical and administrative issues that have arisen since the Act commenced
- give the disability services commissioner new powers to consider complaints about organisations including Disability Advocacy Organisations

In particular the purpose of the Bill includes clarifying the requirements for Councils in relation to Disability Action Plans, including ensuring that:

- the Disability Action Plan is addressed in the Council Plan
- reporting on the implementation of the Disability Action Plan is undertaken within a Council's annual report

The Bill is proposed to come into operation the 1st July 2012.

Victorian State Disability Plan 2013-2016

The Disability Act 2006 (Vic) requires that a new State Disability Plan is in place by 1 January 2013. The plan will focus on a whole of government approach to improving the economic and social outcomes for Victorians with a disability, their families and carers.

The development of the State Disability Plan will also provide a framework for Victoria to deliver on its commitments under the National Disability Strategy.

The new plan intends on improving access and participation to mainstream services and opportunities, as well as looking at how disability services can be reformed to help lay the foundation for the introduction of a possible National Disability Insurance Scheme.

At the time of writing this paper the State government had not yet released the draft plan for public consultation.

Office for Disability

The Office for Disability was established in 2006, the first of its kind for Victoria. It works to implement a coordinated, Victorian Government response to disability with the aim of improving the lives of people with disabilities and to help address barriers to community participation. The Office's role includes:

- providing expert support and policy advice to the Minister for Community Services
- supporting the Victorian Disability Advisory Council
- leading the development and implementation of Victorian Government policy for people with disabilities
- working to improve community attitudes to disability
- running programs that support people with disabilities to speak for themselves and protect their rights.

As a result of machinery of government changes the Office for Disability transferred to the Department of Human Services on the 1st January 2011.

Victorian Charter of Human and Responsibilities 2006

The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities is designed to protect the fundamental rights and freedoms of citizens. The Charter gives legal protection to 20 fundamental human rights under four key values which include freedom, respect, equality and dignity.

The Council needs to consider all human rights within the Charter when developing specific policies, however the following are particularly relevant to the rights of people with disabilities:

- Freedom from forced work
- Freedom of movement
- Property rights
- Right to liberty and security of person
- Right to taking part in public life
- Protection from torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment

Local Government

Under the Victorian Local Government Act 1989 Councils have a responsibility to improve the overall quality of life of people in the local community and to ensure that services and facilities provided by the Council are accessible and equitable.

Disability Access and Inclusion Strategic Framework, MAV

According to the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) Councils have been working to increase the inclusiveness of their communities by addressing a wide range of issues that limit equitable access, inclusion and opportunity for particular groups in local communities.

The MAV and the Office for Disability are working in partnership to support local government in its ongoing efforts to build diverse, well designed, accessible and inclusive local communities.

A joint outcome of this work is the development of the *MAV Disability Access and Inclusion Strategic Framework*. The purpose of this framework is to present the diversity of aspects that need to be addressed in order to reduce the barriers experienced by people with disability in the community.

The framework proposes work that the Council's can do to improve inclusion of people with disabilities, their families and carers including:

- taking a whole of Council approach
- incorporating access and inclusion objectives in key strategic documents
- facilitating civic participation and inclusive consultation
- systematically improving the accessibility of Council buildings and infrastructure as well as services, programs and events
- ensuring communication and information is inclusive
- use their statutory and regulatory roles to influence improved inclusion and accessibility
- improving employment opportunities
- influencing community attitudes and perceptions
- exercising leadership in advocating to other organisations
- fostering partnerships and collaboration
- having effective accountability practices including publically reporting on progress
- reviewing and evaluating progress

A copy of the full document can be found at Appendix 1.

The Council Plan

The Hobsons Bay City Council articulates its commitment to inclusion through the Council Plan's vision and values:

Working together to achieve a vibrant and sustainable community that celebrates its diversity and provides opportunities for all.

Council Plan 2009-13 Vision

Passion about our people, city, services and environment

Respect for each other

Integrity

Diversity in our people and environment

Excellence in all we do.

Council Plan 2009-13 Values

Disability Action Plan 2008 -2012

The Council's Disability Action Plan builds on the achievements from the Council's first Disability Policy and Action Plan. It also identifies new goals to further build the municipality's capacity to become a stronger, more vibrant and inclusive community.

The Plan allows for the Council to take a Whole of Council approach via the development of annual action plans which articulate each department's work towards achieving the goals and objectives of the Plan which include:

- An accessible community
- An informed community
- An equitable community
- An inclusive community

The next section of this paper discusses the progress of the current Disability Action Plan and its effectiveness in achieving improvements for people with disabilities.

Disability Advisory Committee

The Hobsons Bay Disability Advisory Committee (DAC) provides advice to the Council on long term

and strategic issues that affect people with disabilities and their families' participation in community life in Hobsons Bay.

Its key responsibilities include

- Advising the Council on priorities and key issues affecting people with disabilities and their families/carers, particularly in relation to the implementation of the Council's Disability Action Plan
- Raising community awareness of the rights of people with disabilities

Council Disability Support Services

Hobsons Bay City Council provides a range of services, for people with disabilities aged up to 25 years and their families/carers including:

Home Care – general housekeeping tasks including cleaning, vacuuming, washing and dusting as an indirect form of respite.

Personal Care – involves helping with showering, bathing, dressing, grooming, toileting and other personal non-nursing tasks.

Respite Care – involves caring for a person whose family needs a break. Service can be in the home or community based.

Delivered Meals – home delivered nutritious three-course meals including soup, main course and dessert to meet dietary requirements.

Café Meals – a subsidised meal service purchased from approved and participating cafes.

Youth Services -Youth Services offers recreational programs for young people aged between 12 to 25 with mild to moderate disabilities. The programs provide a safe environment for young people to socialise while getting involved in fun activities including:

- Expand – for young people aged between 18 to 25
- Be Yourself – operates during school holidays and offers activities for young people aged 12 to 17.
- Combi – operates monthly on Saturdays for young people aged 12 to 25.

The Council also provides funding to the South Kingsville Community Centre for the provision of the following programs:

- Great Breaks - school holiday program children who have a disability
- Disability Respite - runs every third Saturday of the month for two age groups 5 -12 year olds and 12- 18 years olds.

The Council has two specific programs funded by the State government to improve inclusion and accessibility across the municipality including:

Access All Abilities - the Hobsons Bay Access for All Abilities Officer works with local sport and recreation providers, to increase the number of opportunities for people with disabilities to participate in local sport and recreation.

The Access for All Abilities Program is a Victorian Government initiative co-ordinated by Sport and Recreation Victoria. Funding is provided by the Department of Planning and Community Development and Hobsons Bay City Council.

Metro Access - is a partnership initiative between Councils and the Victorian Government.

The aim of Metro Access is to facilitate access and inclusion within the Council and across the Community.

The role of the Metro Access worker is to educate the community about the needs, aspirations and abilities of people with disabilities; and to work

with the community to develop and implement responses to community priorities;

The Metro Access program assists the Council to implement its Disability Action Plan.

Evaluation of the Council's Disability Strategies

The Hobsons Bay City Council has so far had two Disability Strategies aimed at improving the municipality for people with disabilities, their carers and families.

An Inclusive Community: Disability Policy and Action Plan 2003 - 2007

In 2003, the Hobsons Bay City Council developed its first Disability Policy and Action Plan. The vision of this plan was:

to lead the way in the development of an inclusive community. The Council will provide services and facilities that are flexible, responsive and accessible to meet the diverse needs of our community.

Through this policy, the Council articulated its commitments to:

- ensuring any new or upgraded Council buildings are accessible are compliant with DDA legislation.
- ensuring all staff are trained to plan and respond to the needs of people with disabilities
- ensuring open space is developed with the needs of people with disabilities in mind
- ensuring people with disabilities participate in public consultation and decision making processes
- ensuring Council information is available in alternative formats
- advocate for and on behalf of people with disabilities
- work in partnership with relevant stakeholders to create an inclusive community and meet the needs of people with disabilities

In 2006 an evaluation of this plan was carried out which concluded that the plan was successful in raising awareness of the needs of people with disabilities, yet progress on some issues was not

made. Therefore actions were required to be carried forward and included in the development of the Council's second Disability Action Plan 2008 - 2012 as follows:

- the need for more direct service provision
- the need to continue to ensure accessible buildings and spaces are built
- the need for alternative transport options and better public transport

A shortfall of the 2003-2007 Disability Policy and Action Plan included the lack of particular goals, making it difficult to further analyse achievements.

A copy of the audit report relating to the An Inclusive Community: Disability Policy and Action Plan 2003 – 2007 is available by contacting the Social Planning and Development unit at the Hobsons Bay City Council.

Disability Action Plan 2008-2012

The Disability Action Plan 2008 – 2012 aimed to:

address the structural, attitudinal and cultural barriers people with disabilities experience when participating in community life.

Eliminate discrimination for people with disabilities who use services, facilities and infrastructure provided by the Council, or are current or prospective employees of the Council

The plan consisted of four goal areas as follows aimed at building a stronger municipality that is inclusive of all.

Goal 1: An accessible community

→ All people have access to building, infrastructure and public spaces across Hobsons Bay.

Whilst the Council has seen various achievements within this goal area, they are primarily aimed at ensuring that the built environment complies with the requirements set out by the Building Code of Australia, Access to Premises Standards (*Australian Standards 1428, Parts 1 -4, 2009*). These standards are law and therefore should be considered as core business.

The Council's libraries have led the way in aiming for universal access approaches within the development of the Altona North library and more recently the design of the Williamstown library.

In 2010, the Council also adopted Social Impact Assessment guidelines which require developers of developments larger than 20 dwellings to consider provision of accessible design and allows the Council to suggest improvements to make private developments at least visitable for people with disabilities.

As such, the Council's next plan should aim away from minimum compliance and strive for best practice in achieving accessibility including taking a universal access approach to all its facilities.

In addition the Council should continue its strong advocacy to the State Government in relation to ensuring accessible and adequate provision of public transport for the municipality.

Goal 2: An informed community

→ Ensure communication is a two way process that empowers all.

The Council's two Disability Plans have had a focus on minimising and breaking down communication barriers that people with disabilities often face.

The Disability Action Plan 2008-2012 has seen the Council implement a hearing augmentation system in the Council chambers and a portable hearing augmentation system made available to meeting rooms, however this equipment does not promote the most dignified form of access and therefore will need to be reviewed in the 2013-2017 Strategy. The 2008 - 2012 has also initiated the implementation of Telephone Typewriter (TTY) system within customer service and the TTY number listed in all Council publications.

Most importantly the Plan saw the implementation of the Council's first Disability Advisory Committee (DAC). This committee has provided an avenue by which the Council can consult with people with disabilities and therefore gain first hand information to inform and support its decisions and overall work.

However, a new disability strategy will need to keep a focus on communication and effective information provision. With ever changing technology, the Council will need to ensure that it is able to resource updates to technology environment to ensure that it can keep pace in maintaining dignified and equitable access to all its services.

Goal 3: An equitable community

→ All people are able to gain equitable access to appropriate and responsive services.

The adequacy and demand for direct support services for people with disabilities, their families and carers has been an ongoing issue since the development of the Council's first disability plan.

This issue cuts across all levels of government and the Council is constrained in its ability to address it without significant reform.

Having said that, the Council was able to introduce some additional recreation options specifically for children and young people aged 8-25 who have a disability.

Whilst the introduction of these services managed to meet a significant community need, there continues to exist a gap in service delivery for those people who have a disability aged between 26 and 65. This issue was also raised as a priority for action by the Council's DAC.

Given the proposed introduction of a National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), the Council's new disability strategy will need to acknowledge the implications that this national reform could have within its work and upon its residents with disabilities, their families and carers.

The Council's new disability strategy should allow for opportunities arising from these reforms to be acted upon wherever possible.

In line with the objective which aimed to ensure a whole of council approach towards people with disabilities, the Disability Action Plan 2008 – 2012 was supported by a robust governance structure has ensured a whole of council approach. This included a quarterly meeting of senior management from the majority of Council business areas to oversee the implementation of the plan. A working group of coordinators and officers with

disability related portfolios also met on a quarterly basis to discuss implementation of the plan's specific actions.

Action plans were developed annually to ensure actions remained relevant from year to year. The action plan was subject to a six monthly reporting cycle with annual progress reports presented to the Council.

An evaluation framework which included a method by which to measure if any change had occurred as a result of the plan was not included.

As such, the Council's new disability strategy should include an evaluation framework from the outset and progress of the plan should be reported not only to the Council, but within the Council's annual report as proposed by the Disability Act Amendment Bill 2012. The plan should also maintain the robust governance structure that is already in place.

Goal 4: An inclusive community

→ People with disabilities have opportunities to participate in lifestyle choices within the municipality.

The Council, through the creation of the Hobsons Bay Business Awards has been able to showcase businesses within the municipality who recruit and support staff with a disability and who ensure their businesses provide equal access to goods and services.

More recently, the Council has partnered with Yooralla and a steering committee made up of parents and carers of young people with disabilities to initiate the UCAN café; a social enterprise. The café is located within the Altona North Library and currently employs 11 young people with disabilities and has recently won an LGPRO award for excellence in service delivery.

As a major employer within Hobsons Bay, it is important that the Council's next disability strategy acknowledge that the Council should lead by example and themselves provide opportunities for employment for people with disabilities.

Through the celebration of International Day for People With Disabilities (IDPWD) the Council has been able to raise awareness and promote positive images of people with disabilities to the wider community.

The Council's next strategy should build on this and extend awareness raising to challenging attitudes and demystifying aspects of disability not so readily accepted within mainstream community.

Community Consultation Results

To inform the development of the Council's next Disability Strategy a range of consultation activities were undertaken.

Community Attitudes Towards People With A Disability

The need to address community attitudes was featured in both the consultations for the National Disability Strategy and the National Mental Health and Disability Employment Strategy.

According to the '*Community attitudes to people with disability paper*', 2011 undertaken by the Social Policy Centre, Disability Studies and Research New South Wales, social policies concerned with people with disabilities are intended to promote their social inclusion within their communities and acceptance within mainstream services and facilities.

To counter the effect of negative community attitudes to people with disabilities, it is important for the Council to understand what the current community attitudes are as social inclusion and exclusion of people with disabilities is largely determined by the community's cultural values, and perceptions.

As such, in order to inform its next Disability Strategy the Council engaged new focus market research to undertake a quantitative research among the broad Hobsons Bay population.

A semi structured questionnaire was prepared by the Council (see Appendix 3) which explored residents' attitudes towards people with disabilities in general and towards specific groups of people with disabilities (eg. intellectual, vs physical and mental health types of disabilities). It examined

attitudes within different life domains including education, employment and within the community.

Key Findings:

- A random sample of 300 residents were interviewed using the Computer Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI) facilities which between 28th March and 3rd April 2012.
- The age spread of residents interviewed included 21 per cent aged between 18-39 year, 42 per cent aged 40-59 years and 37 per cent aged 60 years or more. There was also a decent spread. The spread of residency reflected Hobsons Bay accurately.
- The majority of people surveyed knew someone with a disability, 52 per cent of people knew various people with disability and 25 per cent knew at least one person with a disability.
- The overwhelming majority of the sample agreed that people with disabilities can make positive contributions to community life (94%) and that we should do more to ensure people with disabilities can participate in the community (90%).
- Only one in four (24%) agreed that people with disabilities are treated fairly and equally and 54% agreed that there are too many barriers for people with disabilities to participate in life.

- In relation to education, 51% of people agree that children with disabilities should attend mainstream school, 27% think they should attend separate schools. However, two thirds (64%) of the sample agreed that all children, including those with physical disabilities, should attend a mainstream school. For children with vision or hearing impairments and intellectual disabilities attending mainstream schools, agreement was lower (56% and 40% respectively).
- Importantly, the overwhelming majority (84%) of the sample agreed that there is not enough support for children with disabilities to attend mainstream schools. Very few (19%) agreed that children with disabilities pose a safety issue to other children.
- In relation to employment, almost four in five residents (79%) surveyed mentioned that they would be comfortable working alongside people with vision and hearing impairments, and people with physical disabilities. However, three in five (61%) would feel comfortable working with people with an intellectual disability. On the other hand, being comfortable working with people with mental health issues was rated lower than others, as only one in two (50%) indicated this.
- The proportion of respondents that would be comfortable working with people with the conditions described was significantly higher among those aged under 40.
- In relation to the neighbourhood, with the exception of people with mental health issues (which was rated lower than others), residents of the Hobsons Bay City Council area indicated that they would be quite comfortable having people with disabilities as neighbours.

- The proportion of those comfortable with having people with disabilities as neighbours was significantly higher among residents aged under 40. The overwhelming majority (92%) agreed that they would be comfortable having people with disabilities as neighbours if they have the right support.

A copy of the report pertaining to this survey can be found at Appendix 3. For further information contact the Social Planning and Development unit at the Hobsons Bay City Council.

People with disabilities: Your Aspirations and Hopes for the Future

On the 29th of March 2012 the Hobsons Bay City Council hosted the 'Be What you Want to Be' Community Forum and Masquerade Ball. The aim of the forum was to engage residents in a discussion regarding the needs and aspirations of people with disabilities.

A panel of inspirational speakers spoke publically about how they manage to achieve what they want in life despite their disability and encouraged those present to aspire to what they want to be, despite their disability.

The forum attracted over 120 guests including people with disabilities, their carers and professionals from the disability sector.

Through the use of a survey (see appendix 4) the Council encouraged people with disabilities within Hobsons Bay to indicate to the Council their wishes for the future.

The survey asked a series of questions in relation to different life domains to get a sense about people with disabilities needs. The key findings of the survey are as follows:

- 82 surveys were completed by people with disabilities, 75 per cent of which identified as having an intellectual disability and 48 per cent identified as having a moderate disability.
- An even spread of ages responded to the survey with the highest percentage (32%) aged between 18 – 39.
- 61 per cent of respondents live with family or a carer, 30 percent live in supported residential accommodation and 9 percent live independently.
- 85 percent of respondents stated that they are happy with where they live, however, 33 percent stated that if they could change something it would be that they would like to go out more.
- Majority (90%) of respondents didn't have a job, however 32 percent would like to enter the workforce.
- 50 per cent of respondents were not studying, however 25 percent would like to.
- 80 per cent of respondents stated that they rely on someone to take them where they need to go, and the other most common form of getting around is public transport.
- 50 percent of respondents were not members of the libraries, 48 percent stated that they didn't know adaptive technology was available at the libraries and 64 per cent of respondents said that they would find recreation and social programs at the library useful.
- 30 percent of respondents stated that they did not play sport or exercise and of those 40 percent stated that they would like to play sport.

The final question of the survey was an open question and asked if you had one wish what would you wish for? There were obviously various responses but the main themes included:

- To get married have a relationship
- To be able to go on a holiday
- Have more social and recreational opportunities.
- For better transport and for it to be easier to get around.
- For better access to the built environment
- To be treated equally
- More education opportunities

Disability Advisory Committee Consultation Workshop

On the 18th of April 2012 Lisa Smith from Minds At Work facilitated a workshop with the Hobsons Bay City Council's Disability Advisory Committee (DAC) to identify what the vision and aims of the Council's next disability strategy should be.

In relation to what the vision of the Council's next disability strategy should be, the DAC identified the following themes:

- for the community to be accepting of people with disabilities
- equality
- that we don't see disability, that it becomes a non issue
- that people with disabilities can do what they want when they want, regardless of their abilities
- that families are happy and have what they need
- that the built environment is supportive
- spontaneity, that people with disabilities don't have to plan everything they do, they just do it
- that all children are supported to attend mainstream education

- that people with disabilities are not seen as being the problem, but that they can be engaged to become part of the solution
- that people live where they want to live
- that people with disabilities have choices.

In order to gain an understanding about where the Council's next strategy should focus, the DAC discussed the Council's work to date and identified the following achievements:

- the Council is supportive of disability and is reaching out to the community
- places are being made more accessible
- there's more of a whole of government approach
- people with disabilities are more readily being included in mainstream places and programs
- the Council is showcasing what people with disabilities can achieve eg. celebrating disability, forum, IDWPD events
- the Council has shown strong advocacy for the NDIS

In order to achieve the visions and hopes of people with disabilities and build on the work achieved to date, the DAC identified areas of focus for the Council's next disability strategy including:

- advocate for increased availability of secure, appropriate and affordable housing for people with disabilities; act on opportunities to develop land for affordable housing projects specifically targeting people with disabilities, address young people in residential aged care homes
- advocate for improved and accessible public transport
- seek funding to undertake pilots of community transport options
- accessibility to the whole built environment, universal access principles, aim for total inclusion
- provision of adequate support to those who need it

- more employment opportunities and training for people with disabilities; train up/ employ people with disabilities for direct service provision
- ensure gaps in support provision are addressed; eg. secondary school level support to allow people with disabilities to attend mainstream schools, more options for people aged over 26
- better access to health care and physical opportunities
- need to get more solution focused
- take a leadership role, develop partnerships particularly at regional level, advocate!

Some of the barriers identified by the DAC to being able to achieve progress included:

- negative community attitudes
- need to ensure accountability, and ensure everyone understands that addressing disability issues is everyone's business
- things outside Council control or area of influence including political factors
- funding not being available or not sustainable, there's not enough of it
- change management is difficult

Internal Council Staff Consultation Workshop

The internal council staff consultation occurred on the 15th of May 2012. The purpose of this workshop was to confirm the vision and directions for the Council's next disability strategy and to identify what actions each department is going to undertake in order to meet the objectives of the next disability strategy.

A range of business areas were represented at this workshop. All present received a presentation which detailed the information gathered so far including:

- Results of survey with people with disabilities

- Results of community attitudes survey
- Outcomes of workshop with the DAC
- A set of goal areas and objectives which the strategy should contain if its going to be consistent with what the community's needs and wants.

Those present at the workshop came up with some preliminary actions against the proposed goal and objective areas identified (see Attachment 5).

At this workshop, it was also decided that the next disability strategy would be known as the Disability Access and Inclusion Strategy.

Appendix 1 MAV Framework

Creating a
more inclusive
community for
people with
a disability

A Strategic Framework for Local Government

Victorian councils have been making ongoing and important progress in reducing barriers to inclusion by people with a disability. Councils across Victoria now have a sound understanding of the ongoing efforts required to enable people with a disability to fulfill their potential as equal citizens.

MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA
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1 A whole-of council approach

Councils will work to ensure a culture within their organisation that recognises that everyone within the organisation (councillors, senior managers and staff) has a responsibility and an important role to play in addressing the discrimination experienced by people with a disability and in systematically addressing the barriers created by attitudes, practices and structures that limit the opportunities for people with a disability to fully participate in the life of the community.

2 Incorporate access and inclusion objectives in key strategic documents

Councils will reflect their commitment to improving access and inclusion in their key strategic policy and planning documents such as the Council Plan, Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan and Municipal Strategic Statement.

3 Facilitate civic participation and inclusive consultation

Councils will work to ensure that people with a disability can exercise their rights as equal citizens in areas such as council elections, council meetings, council consultation processes, membership of council's committees involving community representatives and in making complaints.

4 Systematically improve the accessibility of council buildings and infrastructure

All new council buildings will be designed to incorporate all legislated accessibility standards and wherever possible to incorporate enhanced accessibility features that facilitate access for all community members.

Councils will maximise the accessibility of all new council infrastructure (including parks, open space, signage, roads, kerbs, footpaths, playgrounds, bus stops, street furniture) taking account of regulatory requirements, constraint of local terrain and a council's financial capacity.

Councils have a program for progressive improvement to the accessibility of existing council owned buildings and infrastructure within a framework of inclusive policies, local priorities and the financial capacity of individual councils.

5 Inclusive communication and information approaches

Councils' communication and information approaches and systems continue to be progressively improved to ensure that they appropriately address the needs of staff, volunteers, and community members with a disability.

6 Accessible and inclusive council services, programs and events

Council services, programs and events are accessible to people with a disability, promote their participation and provide people with a disability with opportunities to participate equally alongside other members of the community.

7 Strategic use of statutory and regulatory roles

Councils will use their statutory and regulatory roles to lead and influence improved inclusion, participation and accessibility for all members of the community.

8 Improve employment opportunities

Councils will exercise their responsibilities as equal opportunity employers and exercise their community leadership role to work with others to enhance local employment opportunities for people with a disability.

9 Influence community attitudes and perceptions

Councils will exercise leadership in their community in promoting the importance of inclusion for all, addressing discriminatory attitudes, promoting good models of inclusive practices and approaches and influencing others through information provision and education.

10 Exercise leadership in advocating to other organisations

Councils will advocate to other spheres of government, business, other organisations and the community, in collaboration with people with a disability and their families/carers, to promote the rights of people with a disability and advance inclusion of people with a disability.

11 Foster partnership and collaboration

Councils will work in partnership with other spheres of government, business, other organisations and the community to improve access and inclusion for people with a disability.

12 Effective accountability practices

Councils will ensure that they have organisational accountability processes in place for implementing their access and inclusion initiatives and will publically report on progress on implementation of these initiatives at least annually.

13 Review and evaluate progress

Councils will review their progress on improving access and inclusion and work to evaluate impacts and outcomes to inform further actions.

Appendix 2 Achievements of Disability Action Plan 2008 – 2012 and Recommendations for the Council’s Next Strategy

Goal Area and Objectives	Achievements 2008-2012	Considerations For Next Disability Strategy
<p>Goal 1: An Accessible Community – All people have access to buildings, infrastructure and public spaces across Hobsons Bay.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure a continuous accessible path-of-travel is incorporated throughout all medium to high usage areas and social family recreation parks. 2. Ensure Accessible Parking Spaces throughout the municipality are appropriately located and provide a continuous accessible path-of-travel. 3. Ensure all parties undertaking new developments or major refurbishments or alterations to existing commercial/public/community buildings satisfy their obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 or as amended. 4. Support local developers and builders to incorporate universal access design principles in the development and construction of residential housing. 5. Advocate for accessible, reliable and affordable modes of transport. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Developed a fact sheet outlining access to building requirements under the Disability Discrimination Act ▪ An accessible trail has been constructed along Laverton Creek and extended towards Victoria Street from Queen Street. ▪ Continued to redevelop existing public toilets incorporating relevant Australian Standards and accessible features through implementing the Council’s Public Toilet Strategy. For example, new toilets have been constructed at Cherry Lake. ▪ Created permanent accessible seating in the Altona Theatre. ▪ Developed a tip sheet about building access requirements for use by Council officers when preparing design briefs and assessing plans and designs. ▪ The Council continues to have all plans for new works and refurbishments of its buildings and facilities reviewed by an accredited access professional. ▪ Replaced the step within the Council chambers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Council’s next Disability Strategy should aim away from minimum compliance and strive for best practice in achieving accessibility including taking a universal access approach to all its facilities, as well as encourage developers to take a similar approach. ▪ Council should continue its strong advocacy to the State Government in relation to ensuring accessible and adequate provision of public transport for the municipality.

Goal Area and Objectives

**Goal 2: An informed community –
Ensure communication is a two way process that empowers all.**

1. **Ensure the Council's information is available in accessible and alternative formats and methods.**
2. **Increase user-friendly signage across Hobsons Bay.**
3. **Ensure the Council communicates effectively with people with disabilities.**
4. **Ensure there are structured processes for people with disabilities to enquire and/or provide comment to the Council on matters of interest and concern.**

Achievements 2008-2012

- Installed and continually promoted the Council's teletypewriter (TTY) and audio loop services
- The Services for People with disabilities booklet has been redeveloped and updated.
- Is in the process of updating the Council's website, which will incorporate the highest rating that can be reasonably achieved under the World Wide Web Consortium's Web Accessibility Initiative.
- Has installed a new telephone system that incorporates TTY and SMS functions
- Continually provided compulsory disability awareness training to all new Council employees.

Considerations For Next Disability Strategy

The next disability strategy will need to:

- Continue to try and make communication and information provision accessible.
- Ensure the Council is able to resource updates to the technology environment, in order to provide the most dignified and equitable form of access to all its services.
- Ensure it is vigilant in providing the most accessible form of information across all the whole of council not just those with a disability specific role.

Goal Area and Objectives

Goal 3: An Equitable Community – All people are able to gain equitable access to appropriate and responsive services.

- 1. Improve the range of flexible, direct support services provided to residents to meet the individual needs and aspirations of children and adults with a disability, their families and carers.**
- 2. Encourage and support Council owned / sponsored sporting and recreation clubs and facilities to be accessible to and inclusive of people with disabilities.**
- 3. Enhance the accessibility of the Council's library services.**
- 4. Advocate for the provision of quality health and support services within the municipality.**
- 5. Advocate for equal access to a broad range of inclusive learning opportunities for people with disabilities across all ages.**
- 6. Work towards best practice in service delivery and a whole of organisation approach for people with disabilities.**

Achievements 2008-2012

- Introduced and regularly provided Auslan story-time at the libraries
- Adaptive technology has been installed onto four public computers at Hobsons Bay Libraries
- Supported the Royal Yacht Club of Victoria to establish an inclusive sailing program for high school students with a disability
- The "Recharge" program has been introduced in all Hobsons Bay Libraries
- Continues to convene six Council's Disability Advisory Committee meetings per year
- Has been successful with obtaining Federal Government funding to install digital readers or the daisy software on computers at libraries

Considerations For Next Disability Strategy

- To ensure a whole of council approach, the Council's new disability strategy should include an evaluation framework from the outset and progress of the plan should be reported not only to the Council, but within the Council's annual report as proposed by the Disability Act Amendment Bill 2012.
- There continues to be an identified gap in service delivery for those aged 25 – 65, this will need to remain as a priority in the 2013 -2017 Strategy in order to continue further exploration.

Goal Area and Objectives	Achievements 2008-2012	Considerations For Next Disability Strategy
<p>Goal 4: An inclusive Community – People with disabilities have opportunities to participate in lifestyle choices within the municipality.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promote and support recreation, social and cultural events and activities to be inclusive of people with disabilities. 2. Lead by example and encourage local employers to recruit and support staff with a disability. 3. Encourage local businesses to provide equal access to goods and services. 4. Promote volunteerism amongst and with people with disabilities. 5. Provide leadership and a positive image of people with disabilities within the municipality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Council has created permanent accessible seating in the Altona Theatre ▪ Identified and developed partnerships with employment organisations and supports to increase employment opportunities for people with disabilities at the Council ▪ Hold the Hobsons Bay Business Awards, which requires nominating businesses to demonstrate a commitment to good access ▪ Introduced and continually provide compulsory disability awareness training to all new Council employees. ▪ The development and implementation of the UCAN Café ▪ The establishment and implementation of the Arts Program 'The Garden' for people with disabilities at the Substation ▪ Introduced and continually provided Council's position descriptions in an accessible format (Goal 4; Objective 3.2). ▪ Developed a diversity statement to be used when advertising positions at the Council (Goal 4; Objective 2.4). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ As a major employer within Hobsons Bay, it is important that the Council's next disability strategy demonstrate leading by example and themselves provide opportunities for employment for people with disabilities. ▪ To identify further opportunities to promote positive images of people with disabilities to the wider community in mainstream events. ▪ Continue to encourage developers and local businesses to create accessible services and venues.

Appendix 3 Community Attitudes Towards People with disabilities Report

The image shows the front cover of a report. The background is a solid dark blue. In the top right corner, the 'newfocus' logo is displayed in white, consisting of a circular icon with four white quadrants and the text 'newfocus' below it. The main title, 'Community Attitudes Towards People with a Disability', is centered in a large, bold, white font. Below the title, 'Executive Summary' is written in a smaller white font. To the right of the title, the text 'Prepared for' is followed by the Hobsons Bay City Council logo, which features a stylized white bird with a blue and green wing and an orange beak, with the text 'Hobsons Bay CITY COUNCIL' underneath. Below the council logo, the text 'Prepared by' is followed by 'Pablo Rengifo, Research Consultant' in a smaller white font. At the bottom right, the date 'April 2012' and the reference number 'nf:7738-pr/am' are listed. A small red and white logo for 'THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND' is located in the bottom right corner of the cover.

newfocus

Community Attitudes Towards People with a Disability

Executive Summary

Prepared for



Hobsons Bay
CITY COUNCIL

Prepared by

Pablo Rengifo, Research Consultant

April 2012
nf:7738-pr/am



Project background

- ❖ Hobsons Bay City Council has a legal requirement under the Victorian Disability Act 2006 to develop a strategic document that will outline the ways in which the Council will reduce barriers and create an accessible and inclusive community for people with a disability. The development of the Disability Strategy will be informed by undertaking research which will include:
 - a review and evaluation of the achievements to date as a result of the Council's previous Disability Action Plans
 - a data profile providing information about the demography of people with a disability in Hobsons Bay
 - a policy review which presents an overview of relevant legislation, policy and issues which impact on the Council's Disability Strategy
 - a consultation process with the broader community and people with a disability specifically
- ❖ The Council's Social Planning Unit developed a community survey focusing on current perceptions and attitudes towards people with a disability in the local government. new**focus** reviewed, adapted to interviewing language and pilot tested the instrument.
- ❖ It is envisaged that the results from the survey will be used as an indicator of change to measure the success of the interventions developed and implemented throughout the life of the strategy.
- ❖ This Executive Summary covers the main findings of the survey.

Methodology



- newfocus undertook quantitative research among the broad population within suburbs of the Hobsons Bay City Council. A semi structured questionnaire was prepared by the Council and reviewed, adapted and pilot tested by newfocus to comply with the Privacy Act and the Australian Market and Social Research Society standards.
- A simple random sample of 303 residents were interviewed using the newfocus' Computer Assisted Telephone Interview facilities which were supervised directly by the National Field Manager. newfocus contacted 4,673 households in order to complete the sample. Fieldwork was conducted between 28th March and 3rd April 2012.
- Random sampling means that each element of the population has a known and equal probability of participating on the survey. In other words, the opinions of the 303 residents selected to complete the survey represent (with an error margin of $\pm 5.66\%$) the opinions of all the Hobsons Bay City Council residents aged 18+ because all had the same chances of being interviewed. The statistical approach to determining the sample size of $n=303$ is based on a traditional statistical inference which relies on the construction of intervals around sample means or proportions.

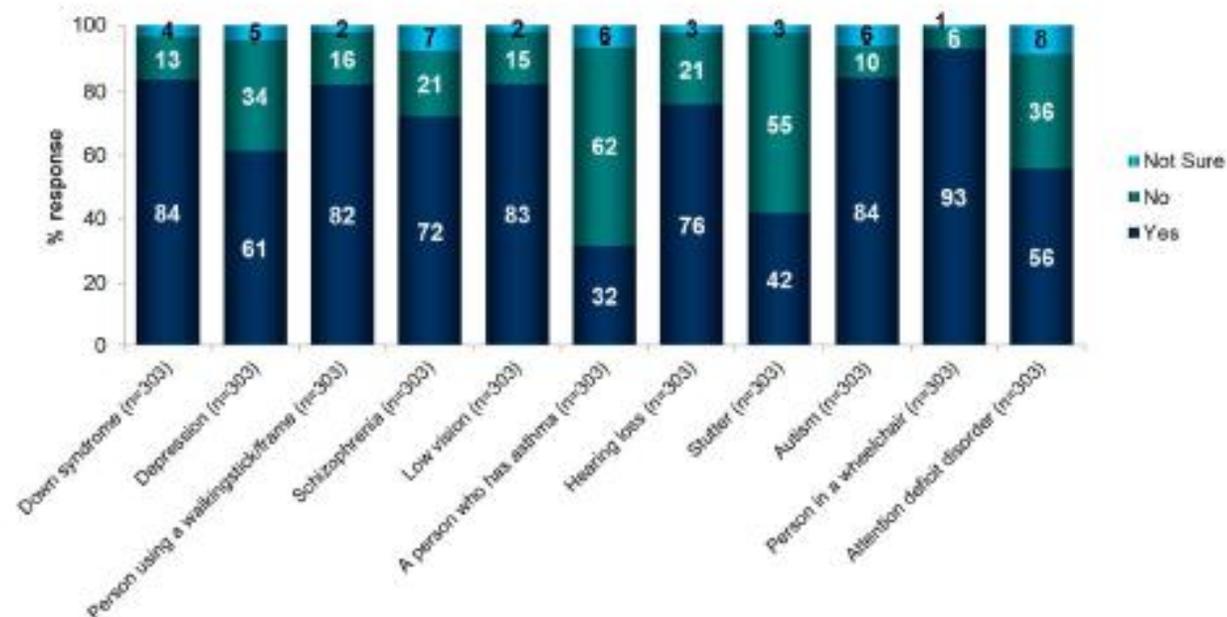
- The size and error margin of the sample used on this project are outlined below:

Population of HBCC	Sample	Error Margin @ 95% confidence level
87,000	303	$\pm 5.66\%$

- The research was carried out in compliance with International Standard AS ISO 20252.

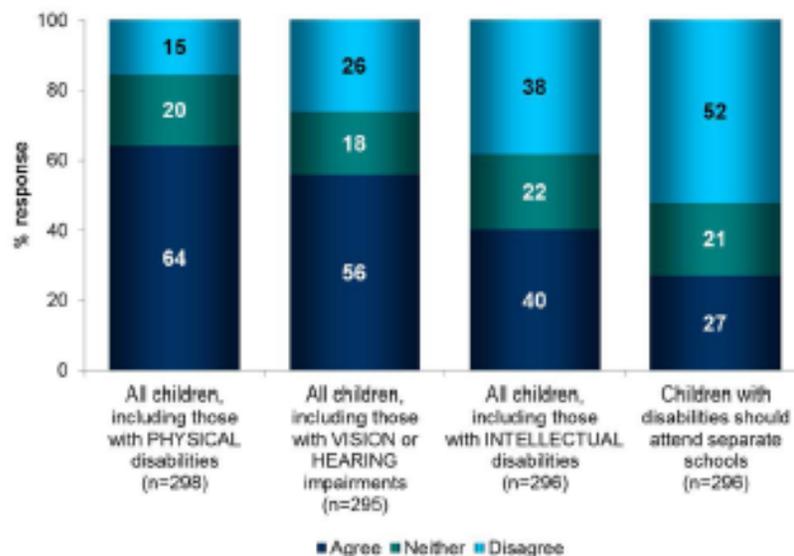
Perceptions of what a disability is

- Over nine in ten residents (93%) consider a person in a wheelchair to be somebody with a disability. In terms of other physical conditions, a person using a walking stick/frame was considered to have a disability by 84% of the sample, while a similar proportion (83%) named low vision. Intellectual conditions such as Autism and Down Syndrome were both named as disabilities by 84% of the sample. These proportions varied depending on the age and gender of the respondents.
- On the other hand, only one in three (32%) and two in five (42%) named asthma and stutter respectively to be disabilities.



Attitudes towards children with a disability attending school

- Perceptions of who can or cannot attend a mainstream school were quite different among the sample surveyed. Two thirds (64%) of the sample agreed that all children, including those with physical disabilities, should attend a mainstream school.
- For children with vision or hearing impairments and intellectual disabilities attending mainstream schools, agreement was lower (56% and 40% respectively), however with a higher proportion among residents aged under 40 years.

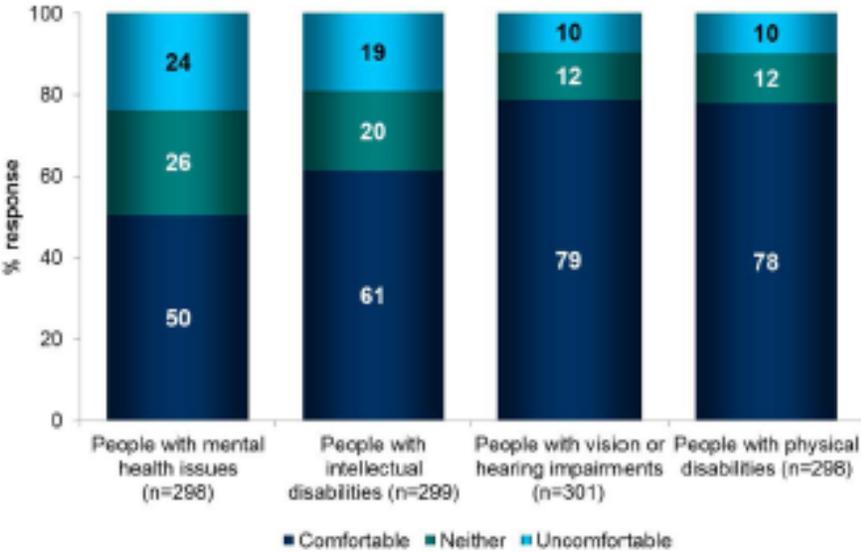


- Agreement with the statement *children with disabilities should attend separate schools* was low among the total sample (27%), however significantly higher among residents aged 60 years and over, in particular males.
- Importantly, the overwhelming majority (84%) of the sample agreed that there is not enough support for children with disabilities to attend mainstream schools. Very few (19%) agreed that children with disabilities pose a safety issue to other children.

Attitudes towards people with a disability in the workplace

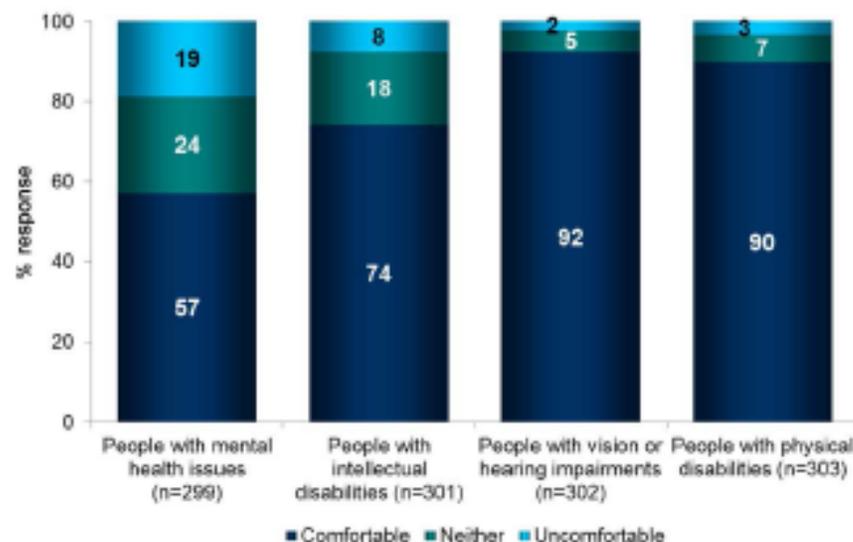


- Almost four in five residents (79%) surveyed mentioned that they would be comfortable working alongside people with vision and hearing impairments, while only one in ten (10%) would feel uncomfortable. A similar proportion of residents (78%) indicated that they would feel comfortable working alongside people with physical disabilities; however one in ten (10%) would be uncomfortable.
- Three in five (61%) would feel comfortable working with people with an intellectual disability, while one in five (19%) would feel uncomfortable.
- On the other hand, being comfortable working with people with mental health issues was rated lower than others, as only one in two (50%) indicated this. One in four (24%), however, would be uncomfortable.
- The proportion of respondents that would be comfortable working with people with the conditions described was significantly higher among those aged under 40.



Attitudes towards people with a disability in the neighbourhood

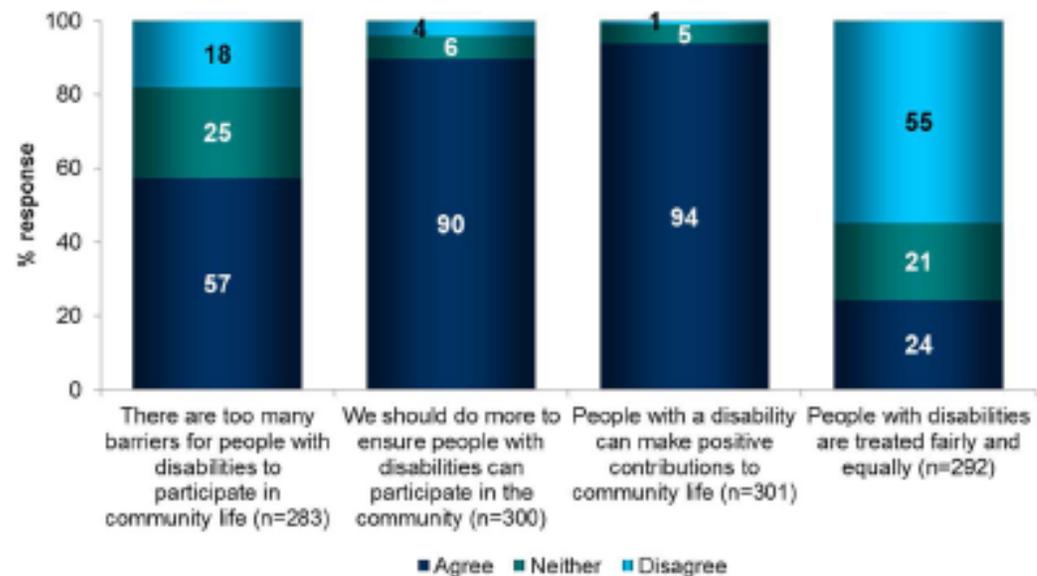
- With the exception of people with mental health issues (which was rated lower than others), residents of the Hobsons Bay City Council area indicated that they would be quite comfortable having people with a disability as neighbours.
- In particular, approximately nine in ten residents indicated that they would feel comfortable having people with vision or hearing impairments (92%) or people with a physical disability (90%) as neighbours. Three in four (74%) felt comfortable if they had neighbours with intellectual disabilities.



- A lower proportion (57%) felt they would be comfortable having people with mental health issues as neighbours. One in five (19%) mentioned that they would be uncomfortable.
- The proportion of those comfortable with having people with disabilities as neighbours was significantly higher among residents aged under 40.
- The overwhelming majority (92%) agreed that they would be comfortable having people with disabilities as neighbours if they have the right support.

Overall attitudes towards people with a disability

- The overwhelming majority of the sample agreed that people with a disability can make positive contributions to community life (94%) and that we should do more to ensure people with disabilities can participate in the community (90%).
- The proportion of those agreeing that there are too many barriers for people with disabilities to participate in community life was lower at 57%. This proportion was significantly higher among residents aged 60 or over.
- Only one in four (24%, but significantly lower among those aged 40 to 59) agreed that people with disabilities are treated fairly and equally.



Version 2

4258_Hobsons_Bay_CC_Disability

Last modified:27/03/2012 9:54:47 AM

Q1. Good afternoon/evening, my name is ... from newfocus research, a national market research company. We're conducting a survey on behalf of Hobsons Bay City Council and we would appreciate your comments about perceptions of people with a disability. Can I please speak to a person in the household aged 18 or over? The information you provide will be used for research purposes only and will remain completely confidential in compliance with the Privacy Act.

Q2. Are you willing to participate?

Yes	1	
No	2	End

Q3. Could you please tell me what age category do you fall into?

READ AGE CATEGORIES

18 - 30 years	1
30 - 50 years	2
50 years or more	3

Q4. Which suburb do you live in?

Altona	1
Altona North	2
Altona Meadows	3
Laverton	4
Seabrook	5
Seaholme	6
Brooklyn	7
Newport	8
South Kingsville	9
Spotswood	10
Williamstown	11
Williamstown North	12
Other Local Government	13

Q5. Record gender

DO NOT READ OUT

Male	1
Female	2

Q6. PART A: KNOWLEDGE OF DISABILITY

Q7. In your opinion, which of the following conditions do you think the term 'people with a disability' refers to:

	Yes	No	Not sure	
Down syndrome	1	2	000	Q7_1
Depression	1	2	000	Q7_2
Person using a walking stick/frame	1	2	000	Q7_3
Schizophrenia	1	2	000	Q7_4
Low vision	1	2	000	Q7_5
A person who has asthma	1	2	000	Q7_6
Hearing loss	1	2	000	Q7_7
Stutter	1	2	000	Q7_8
Autism	1	2	000	Q7_9
Person in a wheelchair	1	2	000	Q7_10
Attention deficit disorder	1	2	000	Q7_11

Q8. Do you know anyone who has a disability?

Yes, one person	1	
Yes, various persons	2	
No, I don't know any	3	Q8
Not sure	000	

Q9. What type of disability do they have?

*Do not answer if Attribute 'No, I don't know any' from Q8 is SELECTED OR
Do not answer if Attribute 'Not sure' from Q8 is SELECTED*

MULTIPLE RESPONSES

Physical disability (ie. in a wheelchair)	1	Q9_1
Hearing loss	2	Q9_2
Vision difficulties	3	Q9_3
Speech difficulties	4	Q9_4
Mental health issues	5	Q9_5
Long term illness	6	Q9_6
Dementia	7	Q9_7
Down syndrome	8	Q9_8
Behavioural issues (ie. Autism, Attention Deficit Disorder)	9	Q9_9
		Q9_10

Q10. PART B: ABOUT PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY - EDUCATION In the next questions, we would like to ask you about your opinions about people with a disability in mainstream schools (ie primary or secondary)

Q11. Using a scale from 5 to 1, where 5 is completely agree and 1 is completely disagree, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements relating to who can attend a mainstream school? Please be reminded that there are no right or wrong answers; we are just after your honest opinion.

READ STATEMENTS AND SCALE

	Complet ely agree	Agree	Neither	Disagre e	Complet ely disagree	Don't know
All children, including those with PHYSICAL disabilities	5	4	3	2	1	999
All children, including those with VISION or HEARING impairments	5	4	3	2	1	999
All children, including those with INTELLECTUAL disabilities	5	4	3	2	1	999
Children with disabilities should attend separate schools	5	4	3	2	1	999

Q11_1
Q11_2
Q11_3
Q11_4

Q12. Using a scale from 5 to 1, where 5 is completely agree and 1 is completely disagree, please rate your level of agreement with the following statements...

READ STATEMENTS AND SCALE

	Complet ely agree	Agree	Neither	Disagre e	Complet ely disagree	Don't know
There is not enough support for children with disabilities to attend mainstream schools	5	4	3	2	1	999
Having children with disabilities in mainstream schools hinders the progress of other children	5	4	3	2	1	999
Children with disabilities pose a safety issue to other children	5	4	3	2	1	999

Q12_1
Q12_2
Q12_3

Q13. PART B: ABOUT PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY - EMPLOYMENT

Q14. Are you currently working, including volunteer work?

Yes	1
No	2

Q14

Q15. Even if you are not currently working, and using a scale from 5 to 1, where 5 is very comfortable and 1 is very uncomfortable, to what extent would you feel comfortable working with the following people? Be reminded that there are no right or wrong answers; we are just after your honest opinion.

READ STATEMENTS AND SCALE

	Very comforta ble	Comfort able	Neither	Uncomf ortable	Very uncomfo rtable	Don't know
People with mental health issues	5	4	3	2	1	999
People with intellectual disabilities	5	4	3	2	1	999
People with vision or hearing impairments	5	4	3	2	1	999
People with physical disabilities	5	4	3	2	1	999

Q15_1
Q15_2
Q15_3
Q15_4

Q16. Thinking about your workplace and using a scale from 5 to 1, where 5 is completely agree and 1 is completely disagree, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements...?

Do not answer if Attribute 'No' from Q14 is SELECTED

READ STATEMENTS AND SCALE

	Complet ely agree	Agree	Neither	Disagre e	Complet ely disagree	Don't know
I am/would be comfortable working with people with disabilities, given the right supports	5	4	3	2	1	999
I cannot relate to people with disabilities	5	4	3	2	1	999
It is not safe for people with disabilities to work in mainstream workplaces	5	4	3	2	1	999
People with disabilities should only work in supported employment opportunities	5	4	3	2	1	999
It is too hard for people with disabilities to work in mainstream workplaces eg it causes disruption, requires workplace changes	5	4	3	2	1	999
There are jobs that people with disabilities should not do eg. serve food, operate machinery	5	4	3	2	1	999

Q17. PART B: ABOUT PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY - NEIGHBOURHOOD

Q18. Using a scale from 5 to 1, where 5 is very comfortable and 1 is very uncomfortable, to what extent would you feel comfortable having the following people as your neighbours? Please be reminded that there are no right or wrong answers; we are just after your opinion.

READ STATEMENTS AND SCALE

	Very comforta ble	Comfort able	Neither	Uncomf ortable	Very uncomfo rtable	Don't know
People with mental health issues	5	4	3	2	1	999
People with intellectual disabilities	5	4	3	2	1	999
People with vision or hearing impairments	5	4	3	2	1	999
People with physical disabilities	5	4	3	2	1	999

Q19. Thinking about your neighbourhood and using a scale from 5 to 1, where 5 is completely agree and 1 is completely disagree, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements...?

READ STATEMENTS AND SCALE

	Complet ely agree	Agree	Neither	Disagre e	Complet ely disagree	Don't know
I would be comfortable having people with disabilities as	5	4	3	2	1	999

my neighbours, if they have the right support								
People with disabilities pose a risk to themselves and others	5	4	3	2	1	999		Q19_2
I don't know how to relate to people with a disability	5	4	3	2	1	999		Q19_3
There should be more supported accommodation in order for people with disabilities to live in the community	5	4	3	2	1	999		Q19_4
Having people with disabilities as neighbours puts a responsibility on me to provide support	5	4	3	2	1	999		Q19_5

Q20. PART C: GENERAL ATTITUDES

Q21. Using a scale from 5 to 1, where 5 is completely agree and 1 is completely disagree, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Remember that there are no right or wrong answers; we are just after your opinion.

READ STATEMENTS AND SCALE

	Complet ly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagre e	Complet ly disagree	Don't know	
There are too many barriers for people with disabilities to participate in community life	5	4	3	2	1	999	Q21_1
We should do more to ensure people with disabilities can participate in the community	5	4	3	2	1	999	Q21_2
People with a disability can make positive contributions to community life	5	4	3	2	1	999	Q21_3
People with disabilities are treated fairly and equitably	5	4	3	2	1	999	Q21_4

Q22. Thank you for your time. What you have told us will be used in the development of the Hobsons Bay City Council's new Disability Strategy. The results of the survey will be available over the next couple of months on the Council's website.

In case you missed it, my name is from newfocus. As part of our quality standards, my supervisor validates 10% of our interviews so you may get a quick call from her to validate this survey. If you have any questions about this research you can telephone our office on 1800 010 310 or the Social Planning Unit at Hobsons Bay City Council on 9932 1000.

Appendix 4 People with disabilities: Your Aspirations and Hopes for the Future Survey

People With Disabilities - Tell Us About Your Experiences and Hopes for the Future 

1. Who is filling in this survey?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Person with a disability	35.4%	28
Carer	43.0%	34
Support worker	21.5%	17
Other (please specify)		5
answered question		79
skipped question		4

2. Your gender

	Response Percent	Response Count
Male	44.6%	37
Female	55.4%	46
answered question		83
skipped question		0

3. Your Age			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Under 18		28.9%	24
18-39		31.3%	26
40-59		19.3%	16
60+		20.5%	17
answered question			83
skipped question			0

4. Where Do You Live?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Altona / Seaholme		12.0%	10
Altona North / Brooklyn		10.8%	9
Altona Meadows		20.5%	17
Laverton		1.2%	1
Williamstown / Williamstown North		18.1%	15
Newport (West / East)		15.7%	13
Seabrook		3.6%	3
Spotswood / South Kingsville		4.8%	4
I am not a resident of Hobsons Bay		13.3%	11
answered question			83
skipped question			0

5. How does your disability affect you? (tick all that apply)

		Response Percent	Response Count
Mobility		22.8%	18
Hearing		13.9%	11
Behavioural		38.0%	30
Vision		11.4%	9
Intellectual		74.7%	59
Mental Health		15.2%	12
Other (please specify)			12
		answered question	79
		skipped question	4

6. How would you describe your disability?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Mild		23.2%	19
Moderate		47.6%	39
Severe		23.2%	19
Not Sure		6.1%	5
		answered question	82
		skipped question	1

7. Where Do You Live?

	Response Percent	Response Count
I live on my own	4.8%	4
I live with my family / carer	61.4%	51
I live with friends	3.6%	3
I live in supported accomodation	30.1%	25
Other (please specify)		0
answered question		83
skipped question		0

8. Are you happy with where you live?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Happy	84.3%	70
Not Sure	10.8%	9
Unhappy	4.8%	4
If Unhappy (please specify)		2
answered question		83
skipped question		0

9. If you could change something about your life what would it be? (tick all those that apply)

		Response Percent	Response Count
I'd like to have a pet		15.6%	12
I'd like to choose where I live		7.8%	6
I'd like to choose what I eat		13.0%	10
I'd like more privacy		10.4%	8
I'd like to go out more		32.5%	25
I'd like to live independently		11.7%	9
I'd like to choose who I live with		11.7%	9
I'd like to do my own shopping and cooking		19.5%	15
I'd like better support		15.6%	12
I dont want to change anything		27.3%	21
Other (please specify)			8
		answered question	77
		skipped question	6

10. Do you have a job?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		9.6%	8
No		90.4%	75
Other (please specify)			1
		answered question	83
		skipped question	0

11. Where do you work?

	Response Count
	8
answered question	8
skipped question	75

12. Do you like your job?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	100.0%	10
No	0.0%	0
If No (please specify)		0
answered question		10
skipped question		73

13. Would you like to have a job?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	32.4%	24
Not Sure	21.6%	16
No	45.9%	34
If No (please specify)		32
answered question		74
skipped question		9

14. What sort of job would you like to have if you could choose?

	Response Count
	33
answered question	33
skipped question	50

15. Where are you studying?

	Response Percent	Response Count
At school	39.0%	23
TAFE	5.1%	3
University	5.1%	3
Not studying	52.8%	31
Other (please specify)		16
answered question		59
skipped question		24

16. Do other students in your class have a disability?

	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	84.1%	37
No	11.4%	5
Not Sure	4.5%	2
answered question		44
skipped question		39

17. Do you like where you go to school / TAFE / University?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		87.2%	34
No		12.8%	5
If No (please specify)			7
answered question			39
skipped question			44

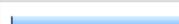
18. Would you like to go to school / TAFE / Uni?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		25.0%	14
Not Sure		46.4%	26
No		28.6%	16
If No (please specify)			13
answered question			56
skipped question			27

19. Tick all that apply. How do you get around?

		Response Percent	Response Count
I drive		6.2%	5
I get taxis		21.0%	17
I catch public transport		30.9%	25
I walk / use a mobility device		14.8%	12
Someone takes me where I need to go		82.7%	67
Other (please specify)			3
		answered question	81
		skipped question	2

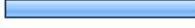
20. What do you do in your spare time? (tick all that apply)

		Response Percent	Response Count
Play sport and exercise		26.1%	18
Watch movies - at home or at the cinema		82.6%	57
Play games - eg. kick the footy, nintendo wii		27.5%	19
Visit the library		23.2%	16
Visit friends		55.1%	38
Visit the park		43.5%	30
Other (please specify)			34
		answered question	69
		skipped question	14

21. Are you a member of the Hobsons Bay libraries?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		46.3%	37
No		43.8%	35
Not Sure		10.0%	8
		answered question	80
		skipped question	3

22. How often do you use the Adaptive Technology at the Libraries? (eg. large screen, mouse, software)

		Response Percent	Response Count
Never, I dont need it		43.5%	30
Never, I didnt know it was available		47.8%	33
Every week		2.9%	2
One or two times a month		5.8%	4
		answered question	69
		skipped question	14

23. What library services or resources would be useful to you? (tick all that apply)

		Response Percent	Response Count
Home library service		16.4%	9
Electronic texts and books		23.6%	13
Electronic Journals and newspapers		9.1%	5
Materials in large print		14.5%	8
Audio books		41.8%	23
Adaptive technology		18.2%	10
Recreation and social programs		63.6%	35
Other (please specify)			4
		answered question	55
		skipped question	28

24. If you do exercise where do you do it? (tick all that apply)

		Response Percent	Response Count
I am part of a team at a sports club		10.5%	8
At the swimming pool		25.0%	19
At the gym		14.5%	11
I walk / run / jog at the park		35.5%	27
I exercise at home		26.3%	20
I dont do exercise or play sport		27.6%	21
Other (please specify)			18
		answered question	76
		skipped question	7

25. Would you like to exercise and play sport?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		40.4%	23
Not Sure		42.1%	24
No		17.5%	10
If No or Yes (please specify)			25
answered question			57
skipped question			26