

Community Inclusion and Wellbeing Reference Group

Date	Friday 26 July 2019	Time	9:35a.m – 12.00p.m
Venue	Committee Room, MidCoast Council (Gloucester)	Note-taker	Michelle Palmer
Present	Karen Fuller, Mark Norris, John Price, David Isbel, Michelle Palmer, Kylie Atkinson, Paul De Szell, Jane Stevenson, Bree Katsamangos		
Apologies	Cr Katheryn Smith, Judy Hollingworth, Mave Richardson, Felicity Carter		
Not present	Anna Burley, Cr David Keegan		

Meeting items

Item	Key points/actions
1	Acknowledgement of Country
2	Declaration of any conflicts of interests Nil
3	Introductions Brief introductions by all attendees
4	Action items update The group reviewed progress on action items from their previous meeting.
5	Guidelines for constructive meetings and the groups purpose (discussed at last meeting) were confirmed by those present.
6	Critical success factors The group re-workshopped critical success factors.
7	Barriers The group further discussed barriers to inclusion and wellbeing.
8	Strategies The group further discussed strategies to overcome barriers.
9	General discussion The group had general discussion on relevant issues.

Next meeting





Date	Friday 27 September 2019	Time	9:30a.m.–11:30a.m.
Venue	Manning Valley Visitor Information Centre 21 Manning River Drive, Taree		

Community Inclusion and Wellbeing Reference Group

Action items update

Item No	Description	Date Raised	Action for	Due Date/ Timeframe	Status Update as at 31/5/19
1	Consult Aboriginal community on Aboriginal representation on the reference group.	29/3/19	HE	27/8/19	HE advised no meetings have taken place by local Aboriginal Land Councils since the last CIWRG meeting. Discussions are ongoing. HE to attend until a member is found.
2	Arrange new provider representative on the CI&WRG following Charles Broadfoot's resignation.	31/5/19	PDS	27/8/19	Dementia Australia have not replied
3	Invite Dennis Christensen to attend next meeting to discuss Council's Vibrant Spaces	26/7/19	MP	27/8/19	
4	Invite Jenny Tisdell to attend next meeting to discuss Council's community directory	26/7/19	MP	27/8/19	
5	Invite Chris Jones to attend next meeting to discuss his vision for the future of libraries	26/7/19	MP	27/8/19	

Key:

	Not yet scheduled for commencement		Commenced and on schedule		Commenced and not on schedule or overdue		Complete	→	Deferred	W	Withdrawn
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Community Inclusion and Wellbeing Reference Group

Guidelines for constructive meetings

The group re-committed to the following guidelines for reference group meetings:

- Be respectful
- All members have a right of opinion and opinions are of equal worth
- We listen
- We won't speak over each other
- Allow and encourage every voice
- No judgement of responses
- Allow sufficient time and stay within time
- Stay on topic/stick to agenda
- Have a "parking board" for other issues to be raised in general business
- Discussions not of broad interest/relevance to be followed up off line
- Diverse facilitation methods
- Group participation on facilitation and possible guest speakers
- Work toward positive outcomes
- Promote CIWRG to community
- Ability to change and be flexible to achieve outcomes
- Work to consensus rather than votes
- Consider confidentiality

Purpose

The CI&WRG's purpose is to provide strategic advice and feedback to assist Council in making the MidCoast an accessible, inclusive and cohesive community, where all people can participate fully in community life, regardless of their age, ability or background.

Critical Success Factors

The group re-workshopped the factors critical to the MidCoast becoming an accessible, inclusive and cohesive community. This resulted in refining the previous work undertaken as well as removing and adding new factors as follows:

Actions

- Increasing advocacy to State and Federal government
- Identifying areas that Council can actively make decisions on
- Promoting wellness for all via RUOK day and other mental health and wellbeing programs
- Promoting the group to the broader community via communications team, engagement team and story telling
- Canvassing for “coalface” feedback
- Providing access and equity for all in all spaces
- Developing a range of employment options both in Council and the community
- Supporting early intervention for vulnerable families
- Develop a community directory to understand how to access community groups
- Promote awareness of what is already available so we don’t reinvent what we have already done

Outcomes

- All people feel valued
- All people have the ability to participate in everyday life – working/social/sporting
- There are diverse and accessible higher education opportunities
- The community, employers, Council staff and social groups are better educated regarding inclusiveness, worth and well being
- Council models best practice and considers inclusiveness and wellbeing in all its decision making
- Social isolation is reduced
- Improved access to technology and communication
- Increase in affordable housing options

Barriers

The group re-workshopped the existing and potential barriers to the MidCoast being an accessible, inclusive and cohesive community. This resulted in refining the previous work undertaken as well as removing and adding new factors as follows:

- Lack of
 - access to technology
 - transport
 - appropriate or meaningful job opportunities
 - awareness re: services available and advocacy
 - intensive support for vulnerable young people
 - homework support centres/school readiness programs
 - awareness and empathy particularly towards homelessness

- aged care and discharge follow up planning
- Fragmentation of services for remote/regional locations resulting in no buy-in to community
- The role of language which can marginalise and the role of media in that. Hard to value people if you're shaming them
- Social skills of young people particularly when job seeking and need for employment readiness/life readiness programs
- Physical access
 - Footpaths
 - Toilets
 - Cobblestone streets
 - Transport access weekends, out of hours
- Access to education
 - Technology access
 - Children starting school behind due to lack of school readiness programs
 - Truly integrated education system such as in NZ. No segregation and cultural inclusion in all areas of schooling and society
- Access to funding
 - Sharing resources
 - Grant writing
 - Collaboration
- Mental health services are lacking
- When people have major illness or health crisis there is a lack of services available to support them
- Lack of wellbeing programs to prevent major mental illness
- Need for early intervention for at-risk underage youth

Strategies

The group continued to brainstorm potential actions that Council and the reference group could undertake during 2019/20 to enable the MidCoast to become a more accessible, inclusive and cohesive community, as follows:

- Invite Dennis Christensen from Council's economic development team to next meeting to discuss Vibrant Spaces program and how that can be managed from an accessibility point of view
- Invite communications team representative to come along to next meeting to discuss promotion plan
- Invite Jenny Tisdell, Community Strengthening Officer, along to next meeting to discuss the community directory
- Invite Chris Jones, Manager Libraries and Acting Manager Community Services, to discuss his vision for future of libraries and accessibility (book return is not usable for many people living with disability)
- Staff consideration of inclusiveness
 - Education
 - Resource/support
 - Process
 - Inclusion prioritisation in customer request system
- Encourage people to "know" our community through statistics. i.e. soundbites on us
 - Education
 - Keeping up with Council newsletter

- Volunteers:
 - Link together with other organisations
 - Build capacity in community to manage volunteers and raise awareness
 - Investigate the need for a volunteer manager in Council
 - Promote volunteerism more on Council's website
 - Investigate establishment of a "volunteer clearing house" possibly in community directory
- Capacity building for:
 - Getting projects "shovel ready"
 - Navigating Council processes
 - Grant writing
 - Community statistics
- Develop short, medium and long term community plans
- Increase empathy through raising awareness
- Focus on strengths
- Encourage "walk a mile in their shoes" through wheelchair experiences, blindfolds etc
- Identify projects for short term results
- Train staff on inclusion for all - accessibility is not just for wheelchair users

Additional discussion

- Council should use evidence and research based decision making and best practice from other communities
- Building empathy is the key to success
- Identify strategies eg. advocacy for bus services
- Establish actions eg. volunteer clearing house
- Build strategy to promote inclusion which helps everyone's wellbeing via:
 - Employment
 - Empathy
 - Community stories
 - Group promotion
 - Volunteering
- Council to lead by example regarding inclusion - engage disability providers in recruitment
- Encourage mainstream businesses to utilise disability providers for recruitment