Diversity, Access and Social Inclusion Plan 2014–2017

Strategic Directions

EAST GIPPSLAND
SHIRE COUNCIL

Acknowledgements

East Gippsland Shire Council acknowledges the Gunaikurnai, Monero and the Bidhawel (Bidwell) people as the Traditional Custodians of this land that encompasses East Gippsland Shire, and their enduring relationship with country. The Traditional Custodians have cared and nurtured East Gippsland for tens of thousands of years.

Council recognises the impacts of colonisation and that past government policies contributed to the erosion of Aboriginal culture in East Gippsland. Council aspires to strengthen partnerships and supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in Indigenous Cultural processes for East Gippsland Shire Council. We recognise Australia's rich cultural heritage and aim to encourage integrated decision making now and in the future.

Council wishes to acknowledge and thank the members of the Reference Group who provided important and valuable guidance to the process of the development of this Plan.

Council also wishes to thank the Disability Advisory Committee (DAC) of Council and acknowledge their wisdom and practice knowledge in developing this Plan. The DAC is an established advisory group which has provided valuable advice to Council over many years. Their input has ensured that Council has taken into account the needs of people with a range of abilities and ensured that access and inclusiveness are primary objectives across all areas of Council's work. This group will evolve and change as the strategies of this Plan are implemented.

Importantly, Council wishes to thank all the members of the community and organisations who contributed their ideas about how Council can work collaboratively with local community members to create more inclusive communities where all people are respected and valued. These ideas have driven the actions and strategies of this Plan and will continue to guide the implementation.

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Diversity and social inclusion in East Gippsland

OUR VISION FOR INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES

East Gippsland will be a leader in promoting and developing communities that value diversity and encourage belonging and understanding.

PRINCIPLES AND VALUES WE WANT AS A COMMUNITY

- Acceptance;
- Respect;
- Community engagement and ownership; and
- Strong partnerships

What do we mean by "diversity" and "social inclusion"?

Diversity is what makes us unique as individuals and communities. It makes our communities strong and is critical to the health and wellbeing of our residents and to social and economic sustainability. In East Gippsland, diversity covers all aspects of individuals' and communities' identities: gender, language, ethnicity and culture, Aboriginality, abilities, where we live, age, our beliefs, socio-economic factors and sexual orientation.

Socially inclusive communities value everyone and create opportunities for everyone to participate in community life, employment and education. All people are respected and regarded as equal.

"A socially inclusive society is... one where all people feel valued, their differences are respected, and their basic needs are met so they can live in dignity. Social exclusion is the process of being shut out from the social, economic, political and cultural systems which contribute to the integration of a person into the community."

David Cappo 2002

The values that underpin social inclusion

The values that underpin social inclusion include:

Everyone Is Ready – None of us has to pass a test or meet a set of criteria before we can be included.

Everyone Can Learn – As human beings, we all grow and change and make mistakes and we are all capable of learning.

Everyone Needs Support – Sometimes some of us need more support than others.

Everyone Can Communicate – Not using words doesn't mean we don't have anything to say.

Everyone Can Contribute – We need to recognise, encourage and value each person's contributions – including our own.

Together We Are Better – We are not dreaming of a world where everyone is like us – difference is our most important renewable resource.[1]

East Gippsland's approach to diversity and social inclusion is shown in the "diversity wheel", which is based on Australian and international models developed for diversity training in the workplace, and the definition developed by the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission.[2]

It represents the key aspects that our community identified as important.
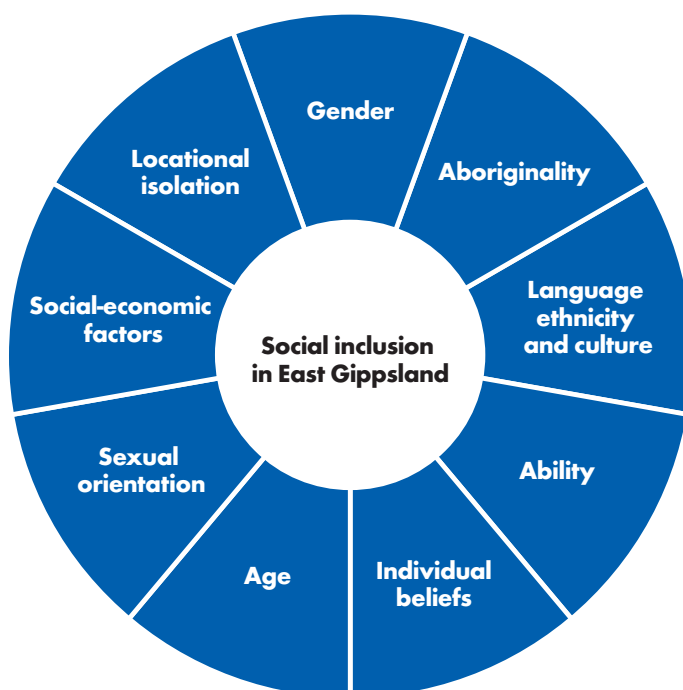
The context

East Gippsland Shire Council is committed to developing more socially inclusive communities and townships – communities that value everyone and encourage all people to belong. This is reflected in the priorities of the Council Plan 2013–2017. It focuses on four areas for action: People, Place, Economy and Stewardship. The key goals focussing on the outcomes for "People" are:

- Our communities are connected and inclusive;

- Our communities are resilient and adaptable; and

- Safe, active and healthy lifestyles are supported.

Council is committed to working with communities, businesses, education providers and service organisations to develop neighbourhoods, communities and towns that are welcoming of everyone, where everyone can feel included and where communities appreciate and value diversity.

This means making sure that everyone can join in community activities, participate in education, obtain employment and have access to the services that they need. Council believes that diversity makes our communities strong and is critical to the health and wellbeing of the community and to social and economic sustainability.

Unfortunately, some people in our communities experience prejudice and negative attitudes because of their language, ethnicity and culture, where they were born, their sexual orientation or their abilities. Some people also find it difficult to access services because they live in isolated towns. To help us build communities that include and support everyone, Council is developing this *Diversity, Access and Social Inclusion Plan (DASIP)*.

Our approach

This is the first Diversity Access and Social Inclusion Plan for Council. It builds on and expands actions to include people with disabilities in social and economic life of our communities. This Plan includes:

- A vision for the organisation and the community;

- A framework for the whole of the Shire for valuing, celebrating and respecting all people in our community and regarding them as equal; and

- Actions and strategies aimed at building and strengthening communities where everyone feels welcomed and valued.

- The actions are targeted at Council's internal practices and activities as well as building partnerships across local communities. The Disability Action Plan is an integral part of this Plan.

The supporting documents for this Plan:

- Describe what the organisation and community agencies do currently to value diversity and encourage belonging;

- Provide information about why it is important to develop and support communities that value diversity and encourage people to belong;

- Highlight the major strengths of diverse communities;

- Outline what the community and service providers think diversity is in East Gippsland;

- Review the actions of the existing Disability Action Plan;

- Describe the major challenges to creating strong, inclusive communities across East Gippsland; and

- Provide the framework for an updated Disability Action Plan.

- The first year actions focus on developing awareness and understanding of the importance of diversity and a building collaborative approach across the community, focusing on achieving our goals. These actions will extend the conversations that commenced through the consultation for this Plan.

Developing this Plan

Council did several things to engage as many people as possible in developing this Plan so that it reflects the ideas of people across the Shire:

• We had discussions with people with a range of abilities who use support services;

• We met with young people across the Shire;

• We had discussions in workplaces, specifically, Bairnsdale Regional Health and Council; and

We asked residents to complete a survey, which was available on our website, through neighbourhood houses and at Council service centres and libraries.

Advice was provided by the Disability Advisory Committee and a Reference Group, comprised of residents and key agencies. In total, around 100 people contributed their ideas to the development of the Plan.

A key purpose of the Plan is to help local communities understand what diversity in East Gippsland is now and how we can be more accepting of diversity into the future.

Key drivers for this Plan

There are a number of factors which drive this Plan. They include Australia's international obligations, Commonwealth and State Legislation, research studies and the views of our communities. We've provided a summary of this information in this section. More detailed information is contained in the "Context and Analysis" document which supports these strategic directions.

AUSTRALIA'S INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS

Australia has signed a number of treaties and agreed to abide by them. They include:

- United Nations Declaration of Human Rights;

- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;

- Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment;

- Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;

- Convention on the Rights of the Child; and

- Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities.

The vision for the future and the principles and values of Council's strategies are underpinned by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights[3].

Article One of the Declaration states:

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 1

COMMONWEALTH AND STATE LEGISLATION

Australia's international obligations are supported by Commonwealth and Victorian laws, which are designed to protect individuals from discrimination, and a range of strategies that support how the laws are implemented. Commonwealth laws and strategies include:

- Racial Discrimination Act 1975, amended in 2012;

- Age Discrimination Act, 2004;

- Sex Discrimination Act, 1984;

- Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Act, 1986;

- Disability Discrimination Act 1992A

- National Disability Strategy 2010–2020; and

- National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), 2013.

Victorian laws are important in protecting individuals from discrimination and provide the legislative basis for this Plan. They are supported by a range of plans and strategies, which include:

- Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006;

- The Equal Opportunity Act 2010;

- Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001;

- Disability Act 2006;

- Carers Recognition Act 2012;

- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2009;

- Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework 2013–2018;

- State Disability Plan 2013–2016;

- Victoria's Action Plan to Address Violence against Women and Children; and

- Elder Abuse Prevention and Response Guidelines for Action 2012–2014.

THE POPULATION IN EAST GIPPSLAND

Understanding the nature of the population in East Gippsland is important, as this can help to decide what the most important actions need to be[4].

- The population is projected to grow at a similar rate to the State, overall, through to 2021.

- The population is considerably older than the State average, with more than 50% of residents aged 45 years or older, and nearly 23% aged 65 years or older.

- East Gippsland has the fourth highest proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents (1,332 people) in Victoria.

- The level of cultural diversity is low, with only 4.7% born in a non-English speaking country, and 3.4% speaking a language other than English at home.

- The total fertility rate is among the highest of all local government areas (LGAs) in Victoria.

- The rate of family violence incidents is higher than the Victorian average.[5]

- There are higher than average levels of volunteering and citizen engagement.

- Median household income is well below the State average, and there is a higher than average percentage of low income individuals.

- Mortgage and rental stress are above average, although median house prices are low and rental affordability is relatively high.

- The unemployment rate was the same as for Victoria (5.4%).

- The majority of the Shire is subject to greater levels of disadvantage than regional Victoria, as measured by the SEIFA Index.

- The rate of people with disabilities is well above average, as are rates of disability support and age pensions. In East Gippsland, 6.5% of the people required assistance with core activities, compared with 5.7% for Regional Victoria.

- The level of disengagement of young people – i.e. the measure of young people not attending school, a higher education course or participating in training or employment – is higher than the Victorian average, especially for young females. In East Gippsland, 7.4% of young people aged between 15 and 19 years were disengaged from education and employment, compared to 5.2% in metropolitan Melbourne. For young people aged 20–24 years, more twice the proportion of young people in East Gippsland were disengaged compared to metropolitan Melbourne – 21.0% compared to 10.3%. Significantly, a quarter of females in this age cohort were disengaged (25.2%) compared to 17.0% of males. This represents the eighth highest level of young people who are disengaged from employment and education across the 79 municipalities in Victoria (2011 figures).

WHAT DOES THE RESEARCH TELL US?

Studies conducted across Australia and in other countries have found that a number of factors influence individuals' perceptions of how included they feel in the community. Other studies have found that diversity is important to developing successful businesses. The research has also found that having access to education, employment and health services are important to assist people to reach their potential, to be able to contribute to the life of the community, to get a job and to feel comfortable in being part of community activities.

Social Inclusion and Exclusion

A number of factors impact on the extent to which people are able to feel part of their community and participate actively in community life. These include participation in education and employment, personal mobility, capacity to be able to access services by public transport, capacity to be able to afford to participate in social activities, have a family holiday or visit friends or relatives, and living alone. The research has found that social support strengthens mental health. This applies across age groups[6].

The evidence shows that social isolation and exclusion are associated with depression, other mental illnesses and decreased capacity to manage one's own health[7].

Socio-economic Disadvantage

People who are socio-economically disadvantaged are those who have difficulties providing food, clothing and housing for themselves and their families and/ or accessing the services and supports which can assist them. This includes people who are dependent on Centrelink payment support because they have a disability, are unemployed or are elderly. People who live in isolated rural towns can also be disadvantaged.

This impacts on health outcomes as well as people's capacity to participate fully in community life. Compared with people living in areas of relatively low socioeconomic disadvantage, people living in highly disadvantaged areas have higher death rates and reduced life expectancy at all ages and higher rates of a number of chronic health conditions including diabetes and mental illness[8].

There are higher levels of socio-economic disadvantage in East Gippsland than Victoria as a whole.

Education

Research undertaken by the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission (VEOHRC) in relation students with disabilities in schools in Victoria, across all sectors, found that despite 30 years of equal opportunity legislation in Victoria, significant barriers still exist for students with disabilities. These include limited funding, lack of specialist supports and not enough knowledge and training in disability among teachers. As a result, students' experiences depend on which school they go to, which teacher they have and the knowledge and attitudes of the school towards disabilities.[9]

Employment

Studies have indicated that there are strong economic benefits associated with the inclusion of people with diverse skills, knowledge and backgrounds[10]. The research has indicated that there is a need to have an increased focus on inclusion and diversity in the workplace. Through doing this, business outcomes were found to improve.

Older Residents

The majority of studies focus on the ageing population as a "problem", highlighting the challenges for the economy in a community where the proportion of people who have retired from the workforce is higher than those who remain working. However, there is also clear evidence that older people want to, and can, continue to contribute to the community well beyond their retirement from the formal workforce.

Older people currently reaching retirement age do not see retirement in the way that previous generations did. They see themselves as continuing to be active and continuing to be significant contributors in the unpaid workforce. East Gippsland has an important advantage, with volunteering rates being greater than in other municipalities.

Disability

A disability can be any physical, sensory, intellectual, cognitive or psychiatric impairment that affects a person's ability to undertake everyday activities. A disability can occur at any time in life. People can be born with a disability or acquire a disability suddenly through an accident. Some disabilities may be obvious while others are hidden[11].

People with a disability currently experience more disadvantage than other Victorians[12]. Research has found that in Victoria:

- Twenty-six per cent of people with a disability do not study beyond Year 10, compared to 18% of people without a disability;

- People with a disability are almost five times more likely to live in state-supported rental accommodation than people without a disability;

- The average weekly income of Victorians with a disability is 48% less than the population without a disability;

- In 2009, the labour force participation rate for Victorians of working age, with a disability, was 52%, compared to 83% for Victorians without a disability; and

- People with a severe or profound disability experience even greater disadvantage, with a labour force participation rate of only 32%.

Cultural Diversity

The research data indicate that most Victorians value the state's cultural diversity and believe that race-based discrimination is an unacceptable problem that requires more attention[13]. However, the research also indicates that racism is a daily event in the lives of many Victorians. Racism can include a broad spectrum of behaviour ranging from low-level incidents, such as offensive gestures or name-calling, to physical assaults[14]. Three out of every four Aboriginal Victorians and nearly half of all people from culturally diverse backgrounds are affected by race-based discrimination during their lifetimes[15]. The research found that almost every Aboriginal Victorian, who participated in a survey conducted by VicHealth, had experienced racism in the previous 12 months.

Importantly, the research also found that people's mental health can be improved if they are exposed to fewer incidents of interpersonal racism.

A project undertaken by the University of Western Sydney (UWS) identified a number of initiatives which have been found to be effective in countering racism[16]. These include:

- Celebrating cultural diversity;

- Providing information about different cultures and beliefs, using a range of people from diverse backgrounds and experience, including those who are well known and respected in local communities;

- Involving the whole community in the conversation;

- Emphasising commonality as well as diversity; and

- Using social marketing and media.

Ultimately, racism hurts us all.

Australian Human Rights Commission, 2011

GAY, LESBIAN, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER AND INTERSEX PEOPLE

It is estimated that up to 11% of the population identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex [GLBTI][17]. Despite being a sizeable minority in the population, high levels of prejudice are evident. This can have powerful negative impacts on the health and wellbeing of individuals, their families and the broader community.

The research indicates that GLBTI populations experience higher rates of depression, anxiety disorders and self-harm than the general population. A number of factors contribute to this, including discrimination, verbal and physical abuse, exclusion and prejudice[18]. Working to remove the discrimination faced by GLBTI populations will assist in improving mental health outcomes.

It is important that the GLBTI population is not perceived as a homogenous group, although there may be similarities between groups in relation to sexual orientation, sex or gender identity. However, they share the experience of being part of a minority population likely to have been subjected to exclusion, discrimination and stigma throughout most of their lives.

Some recent initiatives have produced positive changes. These include a clear recognition in health policy that sexual orientation and gender are important social determinants of health.

Outcomes of the consultation

COMMUNITY'S VIEWS OF DIVERSITY

There was considerable agreement about the key factors that define diversity in East Gippsland. These included:

- Religion;
- Physical attributes or abilities;
- Sexuality or sexual preference;
- Race, ethnicity and culture;
- Socio-economic background;
- Gender;
- Age; and
- Where one lives: rural or city.

KEY CHALLENGES

The consultation identified a number of key challenges to addressing social inclusion and access issues in East Gippsland. These included:

- **Bullying in schools and in the local community:** a number people shared their personal stories, many of which illustrated high levels of prejudice and exclusion. Numerous people indicated that they had experienced verbal and physical abuse. There was also concern expressed that more than a few public statements have been made by high profile local people and that the local media have demonstrated high levels of prejudice;

- **Lack of transport:** without independent access to transport, the capacity to engage in employment, education and community life is severely restricted;

- **Lack of adequate and reliable internet connection:** capacity for electronic communication is critical for social and business connections;

- **Lack of higher education opportunities:** this impacts on the municipality's capacity in relation to social cohesion and diversity, as well as economic development;

- **Ageing infrastructure:** there is limited capacity in the existing infrastructure across the municipality, particularly in rural townships, to accommodate people of all abilities. While Council is working to address this, it is expensive and there are limited resources; and

- **Community attitudes:** there was a clear view expressed that there are strong, entrenched negative perceptions in local communities. It is difficult to change these and just confronting prejudice will not be effective. Change will take time as well as targeted strategies and actions.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES

There was a widespread view expressed that:

- Change needed to occur so that East Gippsland became more tolerant and socially inclusive;

- While they were unsure as to the best way to make this change happen, a "softly, softly" approach was preferred; and

- Council needed to take a leadership and coordinating role in the process.

- The consultation identified a number of positive actions that could contribute to the development of positive and inclusive communities across the municipality. These included:

- Community education was seen as the single most important factor in influencing change;

- There was a widespread view that Council had an obligation to lead and coordinate strategies and actions aimed at eliminating discrimination and promoting social inclusion;

- There was strong support for developing a range of strategies to celebrate diversity in the community, acknowledging that diversity is important and valuable for all communities, including multi-cultural events and festivals to acknowledge and learn from Indigenous communities;

- There was strong support for using a range of arts programs and activities to promote diversity and social inclusion; and

- Sport was considered to be an important means of including people from diverse backgrounds and differing abilities.

- There were many suggestions relating to increasing participation of people with a range of abilities and from different backgrounds in employment in the Shire, including:

- Examining the range of opportunities to encourage newly arrived migrants to work locally, particularly in the agricultural and food industries;

- Addressing the availability of transport to enable access to employment;

- Continuing to focus on education and information for employers regarding the economic benefits of attracting customers from diverse backgrounds; and

- Finding avenues to address the need for locally-based higher education, which was identified as critical for the long term economic sustainability of the Shire.

Key themes and strategies 2014–2017

These themes, strategies, anticipated outcomes and suggested actions set the direction for achieving the vision of socially inclusive communities across East Gippsland. They have emerged from the consultation processes and build on the ideas of the community. Importantly, they link with the Reconciliation Action Plan, which is currently being developed in partnership with Aboriginal communities.

A more detailed Action Plan will be developed in collaboration with the community, local businesses and organisations. This will identify the individuals and organisations that will lead and contribute to the implementation of these actions, the anticipated outcomes and specific indicators of success. At all stages of the process, Council will encourage and support every interested person in the community to be actively involved.

COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Rationale

Council believes that we cannot achieve our vision of a municipality, where everyone has the opportunity to reach their potential and achieve their goals, through working alone. Strong working relationships with local communities, businesses, organisations and other levels of government are critical. Council will build on existing partnerships and develop new ones, working collaboratively with agencies and individuals.

Anticipated outcomes

- Strong partnership approach and commitment to facilitate change.

- Clear governance and decision-making processes to focus on achieving outcomes.

- Agreed actions and resource sharing across organisations and communities.

- Range of agencies, businesses and individuals being active leaders and participants in delivering on the outcomes.

Suggested actions

1. Identify potential partners, who are critical to achieving the outcomes of the Plan, across government, services, businesses and the community.

2. Identify how the partnership can work effectively, identifying the respective roles.

3. Map the current activities and strategies of partners in relation to inclusion of people of all abilities and backgrounds that can be built on collaboratively.

4. Develop specific activities, building on the strategic directions.

5. Identify key leaders and resources for specific actions.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, INFORMATION AND EDUCATION

Rationale

The development of this Plan is the first step to achieving communities where everyone feels valued and included. Council is committed to building on this initial work and to engage local communities in effective, relevant and meaningful dialogue. Council acknowledges the real and positive influence, past and present, which our Aboriginal communities and migrant populations have made to our region. Council will work with local communities to develop and implement a range of activities to increase understanding of the importance of valuing and respecting everyone in the community, including the positive impacts of this to economic and social sustainability in the long term.

Anticipated outcomes

- Increased understanding and awareness of the value of diversity and social inclusion across East Gippsland.

- Engagement of key community organisations and leaders

- Increased recognition of the skills and contribution of leaders with diverse backgrounds and abilities.

- Increased participation in leadership roles of people of all abilities and backgrounds.

Suggested actions

1. Develop strategies for promoting the key themes and principles of the DASIP within Council, other organisations and businesses, and across communities.

2. Assess existing resources for promoting the value of diversity in the community and adapt them to East Gippsland's needs.

3. Encourage and support local communities to explore ways in which they can engage effectively to create more inclusive communities.

4. Identify champions across communities, sporting organisations and businesses to promote the key intentions of the Plan.

5. Promote commitment to the Human Rights Commission anti-racism campaign across organisations and businesses and explore ways to engage the community in this.

6. Develop and implement strategies that empower people of all abilities and backgrounds to have a voice in the community and to develop their leadership skills.

LEADERSHIP AND ADVOCACY

Rationale

Council will take a leadership role in facilitating actions that will support all people to participate in employment, education and community life. Importantly, Council will lead by example. Actions will take account of the unique aspects of our diverse municipality, building on the strengths of local communities. Recognising that the resources and support of other levels of government, employers, service providers and communities are required to achieve our vision, advocacy strategies will be an important part of our actions, working in partnership with key local organisations and community leaders.

Anticipated outcomes

- Councillors, other community leaders and key businesses and organisations promote the principles and goals of the Plan.

- Improved approaches to inclusive practice by Council staff and staff of other key employers in East Gippsland.

- Engagement of key organisations and community leaders to advocate for change.

Suggested actions

1. Develop processes, based on best practice, to support employment practices and customer service approaches, which are welcoming and supportive of employees and customers of all abilities and backgrounds and can be used and adapted for a variety of organisations.

2. Develop resources for Councillors, Council officers and other organisations, to use in response to prejudiced public comments and educate and train people in the use of these.

3. Develop a community-wide advocacy campaign.

ACCESS AND SERVICES

Rationale
The varied nature and size of our municipality poses challenges for residents in accessing services, employment and education. Council will continue to work in partnership with local organisations, businesses and communities to build on a range of initiatives to improve the opportunities for all residents.

Anticipated outcomes
• East Gippsland's needs acknowledged by State and Federal Governments and commitments made to work in partnership with local organisations and Council to address these needs.
• Improvements in Council and other infrastructure across East Gippsland to increase access for everyone.
• Increase in the diversity of people being employed.
• Increase in the diversity of people engaged in education and training.

Suggested actions
1. Promote the benefits for employers and the community of the value of diversity in the workforce.
2. Promote good practice for creating safe places for everyone across services and businesses in East Gippsland.
3. Explore and implement strategies to encourage and support organisations to employ people of all abilities and backgrounds.
4. Advocate for improved access to education and training.
5. Advocate for improved communications access across the whole of East Gippsland.
6. Advocate for improved public transport access across East Gippsland.

ACCESS AND SERVICES

Rationale

Council will work in partnership with key agencies, local businesses and the community to monitor the progress of the actions of the Diversity, Access and Social Inclusion Plan and assess the success of the outcomes over time. This will be achieved through encouraging a range of individuals and organisations to be active leaders in developing and implementing actions, establishing measureable outcomes and involving a broad range of individuals and agencies and advisory processes to track our progress.

Anticipated outcomes

- Process, based on a collaborative framework, for encouraging and committing to the agreed actions of the Plan.

- An agreed approach across the partnership for measuring success.

Suggested actions

1. Develop a system, based on a collaborative framework, for monitoring the impact of the Plan and engage partner agencies and the community.

2. Develop performance indicators and evaluation criteria that are realistic and are achievable.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

Rationale

A collaborative approach is required to implement the vision and strategic directions of the Diversity, Access and Social Inclusion Plan. Council is committed to leading the process of developing the best approach for organisations, communities and businesses to work together to:

- Build on our current strengths and actions;
- Define what specific changes we want to see in our communities;
- Agree on a common approach; and
- Set priority actions that will assist us to achieve our objectives. This includes developing an Action Plan for 2014–2015.

Anticipated outcomes

- Members of the Disability Advisory Group and the Reference Group collaborate on defining the first year actions of the Diversity, Access and Social Inclusion Plan.

- A collaborative framework that provides a strong model for ongoing partnering in the implementation of the Diversity, Access and Social Inclusion Plan be in place.

Suggested actions

1. Explore models and approaches to collaboration that will guide and inform the progress of the Diversity, Access and Social Inclusion Plan.

2. Develop an Action Plan for 2014–15 that identifies responsible agencies and individuals, priority actions and anticipated outcomes.

3. Present the Diversity, Access and Social Inclusion Action Plan 2014–15 to Council for adoption.

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Endnotes

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