

## Frequently Asked Questions – Preparing a Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) for Local Government

### ***What is the difference in preparing a stand-alone DIAP or a DIAP that is fully integrated into our integrated planning and reporting (IP&R) framework?***

Both a stand alone DIAP or fully integrated DIAP will:

- identify strategies and actions that address the disability principles and disability focus areas outlined in the *Disability Inclusion Act 2014 (DIA 2014)*
- be provided to the Disability Council NSW, including documentation of how people with a disability were consulted.
- be reported on in their council's Annual Report and a copy of the relevant sections forwarded to the Minister.

A standalone DIAP provides an opportunity to include additional information about the profile of people with disability in the community or to report on strategies and actions identified as important by people with disability that may not be currently within the scope of council to influence or implement. A standalone DIAP provides a focused and clear public message of intent by council to address disability inclusion in the community. LGNSW has provided a *How to guide* and template to assist councils in developing a standalone DIAP.

A fully IP&R integrated DIAP provides a targeted and fully resourced action strategy to address disability inclusion in the community and ensures that council is accountable for the implementation of all identified disability inclusion strategies and actions. An integrated DIAP should also assist in facilitating cross-council buy-in as the IP&R process provides a platform for the involvement of all council service areas. LGNSW has provided a *How to guide* and template to assist councils in developing an integrated DIAP.

### ***Council has only recently completed a comprehensive Disability Access Plan (DAP), will this need to be redone in order to meet our commitments under DIA 2014?***

LGNSW has prepared a *How to guide– Adapt an Existing Disability Action Plan* which sets out the requirements for a DIAP (see above) and how council should review its existing plan. If council has undertaken a comprehensive process in developing its DAP, including consulting with people with disability to inform strategies and actions, it is likely that only minor amendments will be required. Following any required revisions the DAP should be rebadged as a DIAP prior to submission to the Disability Council NSW.

### ***Council has been designated for amalgamation but this has not been determined yet, how should we proceed with a DIAP in the face of this uncertainty?***

Regardless of whether council is amalgamated before July 2017, all councils are required to have a DIAP in place by this date. The majority of the operational, administrative, program and policy functions of council will be unchanged for a significant period of time so the [NSW Disability Inclusion Action Planning Guidelines for Local Government](#) remain relevant and the steps to develop a DIAP should be followed according to the needs and resources of your council.

It may be useful to approach the identification of DIAP strategies and actions as a shared regional vision for inclusion. A collaborative approach provides opportunities to pool resources in respect to preparation and implementation of the DIAP. A number of regional councils are working collectively on disability inclusion.

***Our council has amalgamated and we don't need to review our Community Strategic Plan until September 2017. Does this mean we have to do a standalone DIAP rather than a DIAP integrated with our IP&R framework?***

It is not possible to do a fully IP&R integrated DIAP as council's IP&R documents – Community Strategic Plan/ Delivery Program and Operational Plans - will not be revised at the same time as the DIAP is being developed. It will not be possible for council to integrate the public statement of commitment to inclusion with their CSP or review their vision/mission statement to ensure it incorporates a vision for inclusion.

Council will need to undertake consultation with people with a disability outside of the CSP engagement program. Councils can subsequently integrate the DIAP consultation and actions into their IP&R framework and review implementation of strategies and actions in line with their Annual Reporting process.

***Our council recently amalgamated with another council, what is the best way to incorporate our draft DIAP from our former council into the new entity?***

Developing a shared vision and approach to the development of a new DIAP is an important first step. The new organisation's executive management should lead this vision and provide endorsement of the approach.

It is likely that many of the strategies and actions from the draft DIAP will be common and/or relevant across the amalgamating councils. Existing plans can be revised or amalgamated. Revision provides an opportunity to identify common issues and differences in plans, policies and operations as well as focusing on shared priorities.

It may not be necessary to undertake additional extensive consultation if previous consultation was comprehensive. At a minimum, publicly exhibiting the draft DIAP prior to finalisation provides an important opportunity to highlight a new unified approach to creating an inclusive community for the new organisation.

***The DIAP has been delegated to me (I only work 3 days), how can I complete this on time if I have my other work to do?***

Allocation of sufficient resources to develop this plan is the responsibility of council management. Early project planning based on the clear steps identified in the [NSW Disability Inclusion Action Planning Guidelines for Local Government](#) will clarify the time and resources required and allow clear reporting to management on progress.

Local Government NSW (LGNSW) and FACS (Department of Family and Community Services) have a number of other resources to assist council staff to prepare a DIAP, including new *How to guides* and *templates*.

It is also important to gain help and support from other council staff. The DIAP will require inputs from staff across council, in particular, working with the staff/ team reviewing the Community Strategic Plan (CSP). Linking DIAP community and council consultation activities with the CSP process will allow for a sharing of management and budget resources.

If the task is unclear or unworkable please ask for advice.

### ***How can the Community Services team gain senior management buy-in for the DIAP?***

Support of the Mayor, Councillors and/or the Chief Executive of council is necessary if effective outcomes are to be achieved. Councils have been informed of the requirements for this work by the relevant Ministers and NSW Government Departments.

There are a number of actions that you can do within councils to keep this work as a priority which include:

- Developing papers or presentations to executive and senior management that clearly outline the legislative requirements, the business case for disability inclusion and the profile of disability in the community. Include information such as:
  - Percentage of people in the community who require assistance / people with disability and the number of people who they are connected to (employers, carers, family and friends)
  - The impact of this work on others in the community such as older people, carers, visitors, and businesses.
  - The economic and social benefits of this work and the positive community messages it sends.
  - The importance of council being a community leader in access and inclusion.
- Invite people with disability to council to discuss issues or seek input from access or diversity advisory group members
- Tap into the direct experience of people within council who are living with disability or caring for someone with disability.

### ***How can we prepare a DIAP if we don't get any funding subsidy (our council has no extra budget)?***

Council does not need an extensive budget to prepare a DIAP. In-house resources can be used to write a plan and undertake consultation with people with disability. There are multiple ways that consultation can be undertaken:

- Invite written or emailed submissions through the local paper
- Visit shopping centres, libraries community events, schools, churches
- Conduct a survey linked to the council website through free survey software or the NSW government's *have your say* website
- Send out a survey with rate notices
- Contact disability service providers, FACS district offices.