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| POLICY NUMBER:       | 39 (C)   |
| NAME OF POLICY:      | ACCESS and INCLUSION POLICY  |
| DATE OF NEXT REVIEW: | August 2022  |
| DATE APPROVED:       | 19 June 2018   |
| RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: | Manager, Aged and Disability Services  |
| REFERENCES:          | Disability Discrimination Act (1992)<br>Victorian Disability Act (2006)<br>Equal Opportunity Act (2010)<br>Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act (2006)<br>Hepburn Shire Council - Council Plan 2017/2021 |

### Best Value Principles

Hepburn Shire Council has the responsibility to provide its ratepayers with best value, with all services provided by Council meeting the expectations in terms of quality and cost. In providing this, all services need to be accessible, responsive to the needs of the community, considerate of the natural environment and subject to continuous improvement.

To achieve the best over life outcome for Council's expenditures, which meets quality and service expectations, there will be periodic review of services against best on offer in both the public and private sectors.

All Council staff members are responsible for supporting best value principles in their normal day to day actions to ensure services are recognised by the community as delivering best value.

## INTRODUCTION

Hepburn Shire Council acknowledges that people with disabilities are valuable members of our community who are entitled to equal access to services and facilities.

Hepburn Shire Council also acknowledges that it is a key planner, developer and provider of physical and social infrastructure and services and is committed to the responsibilities determined by the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1992.

Accordingly, Hepburn Shire Council is committed to ensuring that all members of our community are able to fully participate in community life and access Council services. By ensuring that infrastructure and services are inclusive and accessible for all, the needs of the whole community are met including, but not limited to, people with a disability, parents with prams, and older people.

## SCOPE

This policy applies across all Council services and facilities. Access and inclusion is a whole of Council responsibility and applies to all business activities of Council including governance arrangements, customer service, communications, direct service provision, and advocating for communities.

## POLICY

### 1. Principles of Access and Inclusion

- Council recognises that the following principles underpin our commitment to improving and ensuring access and inclusion for the whole community.
- People with disabilities have the same fundamental rights as every other citizen of Hepburn Shire
- A person with a disability is an individual first and foremost and is not defined by their disability
- People with a disability have the same right as every other citizen to access services provided by Hepburn Shire Council, thus providing them with opportunities to fulfil their individual potential

- Changes to the physical and social environment, which create access and equity, are key to the inclusion of people with a disability in the community
- Quality service rests on being flexible in responding to individual needs
- Hepburn Shire Council will work towards providing accessible Council services and facilities for the entire community.

## 2. Access and Inclusion Plan

Council will develop and maintain a Disability Access and Inclusion Plan. This plan will contain strategies to make Hepburn Shire a more accessible and inclusive place to live, work and visit. It articulates clear ways Council can work to create a more inclusive community for people with a disability, their families and carers while helping meet its legal obligations to remove barriers to discrimination.

It identifies key actions that will be implemented to identify, reduce and eliminate barriers within the Shire and to advocate equity of access for all in our community.

Relevant Council officers will review the Access and Inclusion Plan every 6 months. An annual review of the plan with involvement of community representatives will be conducted each February.

This timeline will ensure the review aligns with the development of the Council plan and budget.

## DEFINITIONS

The following terms are referred to in the policy.

| Term          | Definition  |
|---------------|---|
| Council       | Hepburn Shire Council   |
| Council Staff | Includes permanent and temporary full-time and part-time council employees, and contractors and consultants while engaged by Council. |

| Term       | Definition  |
|------------|---|
| DDA (1992) | <i>Disability Discrimination Act (1992)</i>   |
| Disability | <p>As per the DDA:<br/>Disability, in relation to a person, means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Total or partial loss of the person’s bodily or mental functions; or</li> <li>b) Total or partial loss of a part fo the body; or</li> <li>c) The presence in the body of organisms causing disease or illness; or</li> <li>d) The presence in the body of organisms capable of causing disease or illness; or</li> <li>e) The malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of the person’s body; or</li> <li>f) A disorder or malfunction that result in the person learning differently from a person without the disorder or malfunction; or</li> <li>g) A disorder, illness or disease that affects a person’s thought processes, perception of realty, emotions or judgment or that results in disturbed behaviour;</li> </ul> <p>And includes a disability that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>h) Presently exists; or</li> <li>i) Previously existed but no longer exists; or</li> <li>j) May exist in the future (including because of genetic disposition to that disability) or</li> <li>k) Is imputed to a person.</li> </ul> |

### FURTHER INFORMATION

Any enquiries about the Access and Inclusion Policy should be directed to Council's Manager, Aged and Disability Services.

### IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation of this policy will be supported by the establishment of an Access and Inclusion Working Group consisting of Council officers across all Departments.

The Access and Inclusion Policy and Plan will also be included within all Staff Inductions.

## REVIEW

The Access and Inclusion Policy will be reviewed every 4 years or sooner if required by legislation or organisational changes.

The officer responsible for the review of this policy is the Manager Aged and Disability Services.