

# Port Stephens Community Wellbeing Strategy

2023 to 2028



We are committed to disability inclusion and to building a community where everyone is able to easily access opportunities and fully participate in their community.



**PORT STEPHENS**  
COUNCIL



# GUUDJI YIIGU

(GOO-JEE IK-KOO)

We welcome you to Port Stephens – part of the Worimi Aboriginal Nation. Port Stephens Council acknowledges the Worimi people as traditional owners and custodians of the lands and waterways on which we all live, learn, work and play.

We value and respect the Worimi people and the legacy 60,000 years of Aboriginal Nation traditions and culture brings with it. As part of Council's culture of acceptance, diversification and harmony we walk alongside the Worimi people on a journey of listening and learning.

Together we will strive to make this a better place for all peoples. As guardians of these lands, we ask that you tread lightly to help preserve the biodiversity and respect those who came before as well as those who will follow.

Artwork by Regan Lilley.



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# Introduction

The Port Stephens Community Wellbeing Strategy has been designed to align the goals of social planning with the principles of liveability. The Strategy provides a roadmap for implementing measures that will improve the overall wellbeing of the community.

By bringing together directions from a number of previous strategies and policies, the Port Stephens Community Wellbeing Strategy recognises the complexity and interconnectedness of elements that collectively contribute to the wellbeing of the community. It draws on actions from the Ageing Strategy, Crime Prevention Plan, Disability Inclusion Access Plan and, Multicultural Policy to deliver an integrated approach to wellbeing.

The strategy establishes the principles and the framework for Council and the community to work in partnership to create a place where individuals, regardless of their age, background or ability can lead healthy, happy and connected lives.

## What is wellbeing?

“Wellbeing is a positive state experienced by individuals and societies. Similar to health, it’s a resource for daily life and is determined by social, economic and environmental conditions. Wellbeing encompasses quality of life and the ability of people and societies to contribute to the world with a sense of meaning and purpose. A society’s wellbeing can be determined by the extent to which it is resilient, builds capacity for action, and is prepared to transcend challenges”. – World Health Organisation





# A message from the Mayor

I am excited to present the Port Stephens Council Community Wellbeing Strategy. Our wellbeing is vital to our health and happiness. The wellbeing of individuals and communities is shaped by where and how we grow, live, work, play and age. In Port Stephens we are surrounded by a natural environment that encourages us to enjoy time outdoors, is in proximity to jobs and opportunities and have services and facilities we need to thrive.

For wellbeing to grow, it's critical that all people in our community, especially our most vulnerable, have the same access and opportunity to participate in all the things that make Port Stephens an incredible place.

Our Wellbeing Strategy represents our commitment to making Port Stephens a place where wellbeing is prioritised and people can lead happy, healthy and connected lives no matter their age, background or ability.

Thanks to everyone who contributed their time, ideas and opinions during the development of this Strategy. Through our conversations, we've learnt that wellbeing means different things to different people and ranges from fundamental basic needs such as access to food, water and shelter through to accessibility, time with family and friends and access to facilities.

Included in this strategy is our Disability Inclusion Action Plan. We're committed to disability inclusion and building a community where everyone can easily access opportunities and fully participate in their community.

We know we play a significant role in community wellbeing and recognise that collaboration and partnerships with our communities and other stakeholders are critical to our success.

We look forward to strengthening our partnerships to achieve real positive change to wellbeing across our place.



**Ryan Palmer**  
Mayor of Port Stephens



# Strategic context

We all want to live in a place that gives us the chance for the best quality of life.

While Port Stephens is incredible, our resilience has been tested locally and globally with disasters, the COVID 19 pandemic and cost of living pressures. This has demonstrated the importance of our wellbeing individually and as a community.

All levels of government have priorities and play a role in community wellbeing. The Port Stephens Wellbeing Strategy has been developed in alignment with both the national and state context in mind, aligning with the direction of other levels government but with a local lens.



Inclusion, fairness and equity

## National context

The Australian Government’s Measuring What Matters Framework (July 2023) is Australia’s First Wellbeing Framework. It helps us to better understand what matters most to Australians.

This Framework focuses on five wellbeing themes – healthy, secure, sustainable, cohesive and prosperous. Inclusion equity and fairness underpin each theme and are relevant to all. We need to pursue good outcomes in all of these themes if we’re to succeed in creating a society in which all Australians can thrive.

### Healthy

A society in which people feel well and are in good physical and mental health, can access services when they need, and have the information they require to take action to improve their health.

### Secure

A society where people live peacefully, feel safe, have financial security and access to housing.

### Sustainable

A society that sustainably uses natural and financial resources, protects and repairs the environment and builds resilience to combat challenges.

### Cohesive

A society that supports connections with family, friends and the community, values diversity, promotes belonging and culture.

### Prosperous

A society that has a dynamic, strong economy, invests in people’s skills and education, and provides broad opportunities for employment and well-paid, secure jobs.



## NSW context

The Disability Inclusion Act 2014 commits the NSW Government to creating a more inclusive community in which mainstream services and community facilities are accessible to people with a disability to help them achieve their full potential.

The Act requires the NSW Government to develop a Disability Inclusion Plan (NSW DIP) and for all public agencies in NSW to create and implement disability inclusion action plans (DIAPs). The NSW DIP established the four focus areas that are also used in DIAPs.



Positive community attitudes  
and behaviours



Creating livable  
communities



Supporting access to  
meaningful employment

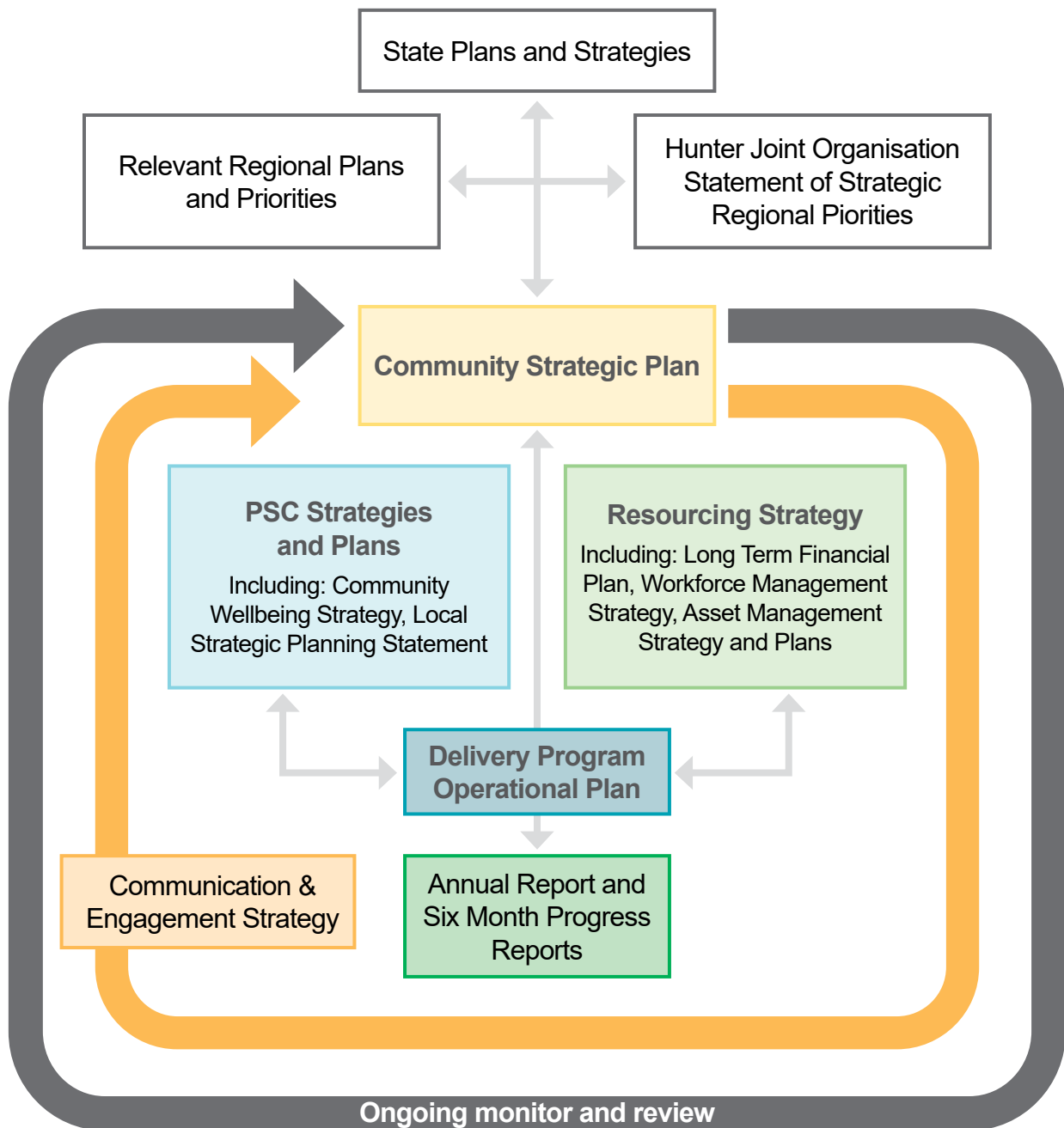


Improving access to  
mainstream services through  
systems and processes

Attached to this Strategy is our Disability Inclusion Action Plan which is a roadmap to building a community where everyone is able to easily access opportunities and fully participate in the community.

## Local context

The Community Wellbeing Strategy is key part of Council's Strategic Planning Framework. It will help Council plan and direct resources in relation to health and wellbeing outcomes. The Strategy is informed by the community vision to have "a great lifestyle in a treasured environment" and aligns strongly with the Port Stephens Council Delivery Program and Operational Plan.









# Who we are



Every aspect of your life influences  
your state of wellbeing.



## Our community

More than 75,000 people call Port Stephens home and this is expected to grow to over 87,933 by 2040.



**75,276**

people

Median age is 47 years PSC  
(median age is 36 years NSW)



**6.5%**

of our population



Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander



**72%**

of low income households  
are in rental stress



**82.4%**

born in Australia

Compared to 65% in NSW



**40.1%**

finished year 12

**33.1%**

finished year 10 or above



**48.2%**

Couples without  
children



**60 to 69**

Most common age group



**7.3%**

of people have a  
severe disability

That requires assistance  
with core activities



**\$1,338**

medium weekly  
household income

Significantly less than  
NSW (\$1,829)



**Higher**

rates of long term  
health conditions

across all categories



# What we've heard



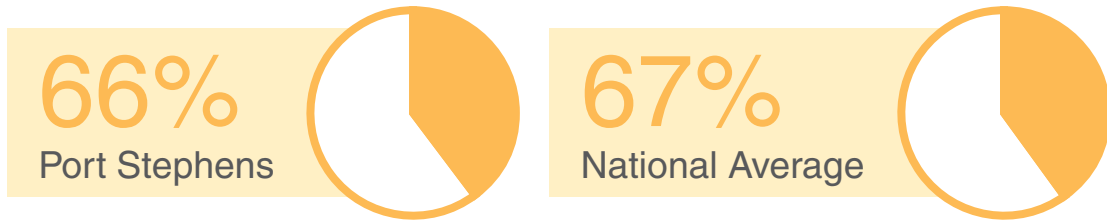
Liveability is what a place is like to live in – a liveable place is a healthy place.



## Our engagement

In 2020 we completed our first place census called the Liveability Index. During the census over 3,700 people told us what they value and how they rate their neighbourhood. The results have allowed us to understand the things most valuable to our community and what things have the biggest impact on our community's wellbeing.

In September 2020, Port Stephens scored a PX score of 66 – that's just below the national average of 67.



We found that in Port Stephens, our ideal neighbourhood has:

- Locally owned and operated businesses that provide the community with their daily needs
- A well maintained and managed public domain, like footpaths, parks, roads and other public assets
- Easy to access shared community amenities, like the local shops, on foot or bike.

 Elements of natural environment	 Locally owned and operated businesses	 Protection of the natural environment
 General condition of public open space	 Local businesses that provide for daily needs	 Walking/jogging/ bike paths that connect housing to communal amenity
 Sense of neighbourhood safety		



To build our understanding of the Liveability index data, we've been talking and listening with our community, staff, government agencies and service providers between 2021 and 2024 to find our wellbeing priorities, develop themes and test these themes to inform our Strategy.







- Wellbeing means being healthy, having a positive and happy mindset and enjoying nature.
- Community priorities for wellbeing were community safety and security, health, nature and local environment, public open space eg. parks, reserves.
- The biggest barriers for people with disability included accessibility to public and private spaces, lack of or poor condition of footpaths and ramps, discrimination and stigma.
- Improve public transport by reducing travel times to key locations, making sure services connect and increasing frequency of services available.
- Improve access to and knowledge of facilities and services available.
- Provide services and facilities for all abilities.
- It's important for everyone to have access to open spaces and outdoor recreation.
- Lack of access to community facilities and spaces made people with disabilities feel unwelcome in spaces.
- Have a community centred approach to wellbeing.
- Enable and support the community to lead wellbeing initiatives to look after each other.
- Provide the community with events, hubs and activities that are inclusive, accessible and low cost.
- Help community service providers connect with the people that need to use their services.
- Focus on supporting our most vulnerable rather than encouraging them to be more resilient to shocks and change.
- Encourage more accessible tourism.
- Focus on core Council responsibilities.
- Focus on mental health as part of overall wellbeing.
- Positive spaces and activities are required for more vulnerable people.
- Outreach services need to partner to deliver with more resources.

# Our strategy



The more we care for the happiness of others, the greater is our own sense of wellbeing.

Dalai Lama



As the closest level of government to our community, we play a key role in planning, advocating, partnering and delivering projects and services that have a lasting impact on the wellbeing of our community.

The Community Wellbeing Strategy represents our commitment to making Port Stephens a place where wellbeing is prioritised and people can lead happy, healthy and connected lives - it will help to shape the community we want to live in and guide how we can work together to improve wellbeing..

## Our purpose and vision



### Our purpose

To provide a framework that outlines our approach and priorities to enhance and support community wellbeing in our place.



### Our vision

A vibrant and liveable place where our residents lead happy, healthy and connected lives.

## Our principles

1

We will ensure **local issues are addressed with local approaches**

2

We focus on an **inclusive approach**

3

We **work together** for a collective success

4

We make decisions based on **fact and evidence**

Our Strategy focuses on inclusion for all. All population groups including young people, older persons, First Nations people, multicultural persons and persons with a disability are at the core of this Strategy. Key objectives from this strategy can be implemented specifically for key population groups depending on evidenced local need.



## Council's role in wellbeing

Supporting the wellbeing of our community is a responsibility of everyone, whether that's government, not-for-profit organisations, residents and business.

As a Council, we're well placed to understand our local issues and to coordinate or facilitate targeted local responses.

Council has three key roles in achieving community wellbeing priorities.



### Advocacy

We work with our community to understand their wellbeing priorities then provide a strong voice on their behalf to those who can make a difference.



### Partnerships

We collaborate with different levels of government, industry and community partners to ensure wellbeing outcomes are incorporated into our future planning and service delivery.



### Delivery

We use our resources to deliver infrastructure, facilities, programs and services that will have a positive impact on our community's wellbeing.





# Strategic priority 1

## Access and inclusion



I need to know I can get from A to B  
safely with improved pathways.

Participant feedback





We will create inclusive and welcoming places which encourage participation in community life.

Key objectives	Principles			
	Local approaches	Inclusive	Working together	Evidence based
Develop and improve positive attitudes of the wider community towards people with a disability.	✓	✓	✓	✓
Provide accessible and inclusive infrastructure and services that enable people to fully participate in community life.	✓	✓	✓	✓
Reduce barriers to employment and volunteer opportunities for people with a disability at Port Stephens Council.	✓	✓		
Improve access to Council services through better systems and processes.		✓		✓
Deliver communications which are accessible and inclusive.		✓		✓
Advocate for transport options that improve access and connectivity.	✓	✓	✓	✓
Deliver programs which encourage respect of our communities cultural backgrounds and traditions.		✓	✓	

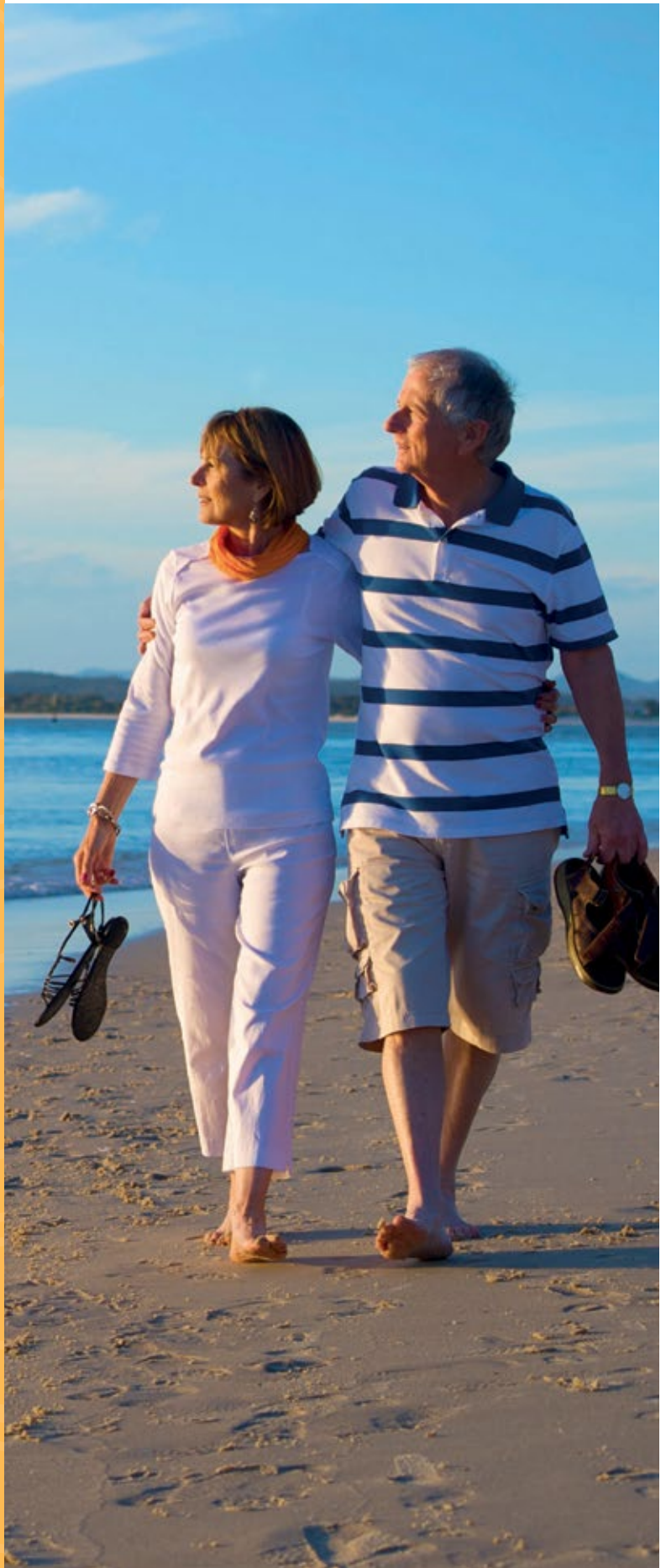
# Strategic priority 2

## Safe and secure



We need to ensure adequate services and funding are available to support our security and safety.

Participant feedback



# We will ensure our community feel safe in our public spaces.

Key objectives	Principles			
	Local approaches	Inclusive	Working together	Evidence based
Conduct a needs assessment to understand the safety concerns and priorities of our community.				
Implement the Local Housing Strategy to improve housing supply, diversity and affordability.				
Partner with emergency response agencies, local communities, businesses and residents in high risk areas to develop emergency plans.				
Support community-led programs and services to improve access to safe, healthy and affordable food and housing.				
Work with relevant stakeholders and community groups to reduce the incidence of homelessness.				
Support relevant agencies to educate and provide resources reducing domestic violence and sexual assault, alcohol and drug use				
Collaborate with relevant agencies to identify crime hot spots and deliver programs and education aimed at reducing crime.				
Foster crime prevention through continued use of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles				
Seek funding support to deliver programs that improve safety.				
Work in partnership with agencies to provide short term, low cost housing solutions for those in need.				
Develop and implement communication and education programs to raise of awareness of homelessness issues across Port Stephens.				
Support the delivery of the Port Stephens Community Connect Day.				
Coordinate the Port Stephens Homelessness Stakeholder Advisory Group.				
Continue to create and maintain opportunities to connect with the natural environment.				



# Strategic priority 3

## Connect and contribute



We need to create a sense of community (like the good old days) where people cared for one another.

Participant feedback





We will build resilience, capacity and skills to ensure our community can adapt and thrive in times of change.

Key objectives	Principles			
	Local approaches	Inclusive	Working together	Evidence based
Strengthen the ability of communities to find and access the public information they need to connect with services and participate in community activities.		✓	✓	
Coordinate the Port Stephens Community Interagency Network.		✓	✓	
In partnership with community service providers, identify gaps in service provision and develop actions to reduce the gaps.		✓	✓	✓
Co-design innovative programs and initiatives that support inclusion, community pride and a sense of place.	✓	✓	✓	
Deliver a range of inclusive celebrations and events that showcase the diversity in our community.	✓	✓	✓	
Increase awareness and encourage participation in healthy lifestyle services and facilities.	✓	✓		✓
Provide funding and support for community-led initiatives that connect people with each other.	✓		✓	
Investigate opportunities for outreach services to use Council facilities.	✓	✓	✓	✓
Support services funded for Targeted Early Intervention through Department of Communities and Justice.	✓	✓	✓	✓
Continue to know and understand the community through community engagement.	✓			✓

# Measures of success

In order to understand how we are meeting our community's needs we must have measures in place to track the effectiveness of the principles and key objectives of this strategy.

## Our targets

Supporting the wellbeing of our community is a responsibility of everyone, whether that's government, not-for-profit organisations, residents and business.

As a Council, we're well placed to understand our local issues and to coordinate or facilitate targeted local responses.

Council can show how it's achieving the community's wellbeing priorities through the:

- Port Stephens Liveability score and attributes score
- Community Satisfaction Survey
- Number of jobs in Port Stephens



### Port Stephens Liveability score

>66/  
100

This is calculated by combining our community's rating of 50 place attributes to provide an overall score for each neighbourhood and Port Stephens overall.

### Port Stephens Liveability attributes score

>7/  
10

- Sense of belonging in the community
- Access to shared community and commercial assets
- Walking / jogging / bike paths that connect housing to communal amenities (shops, parks etc.)
- Sense of neighbourhood safety (from crime, traffic, pollution, etc.)
- Sense of personal safety (for all ages, genders, day or night etc.)
- Protection of the natural environment



### Community Satisfaction Survey

>20% of our community feel they have a say on important issues

>89% of our community use sport, leisure and recreational facilities



### Employment in Port Stephens

>27,300 jobs



**PORT STEPHENS**  
COUNCIL



# Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP)

2024 to 2028



We are committed to disability inclusion and to building a community where everyone is able to easily access opportunities and fully participate in their community.



**PORT STEPHENS**  
COUNCIL



# GUUDJI YIIGU

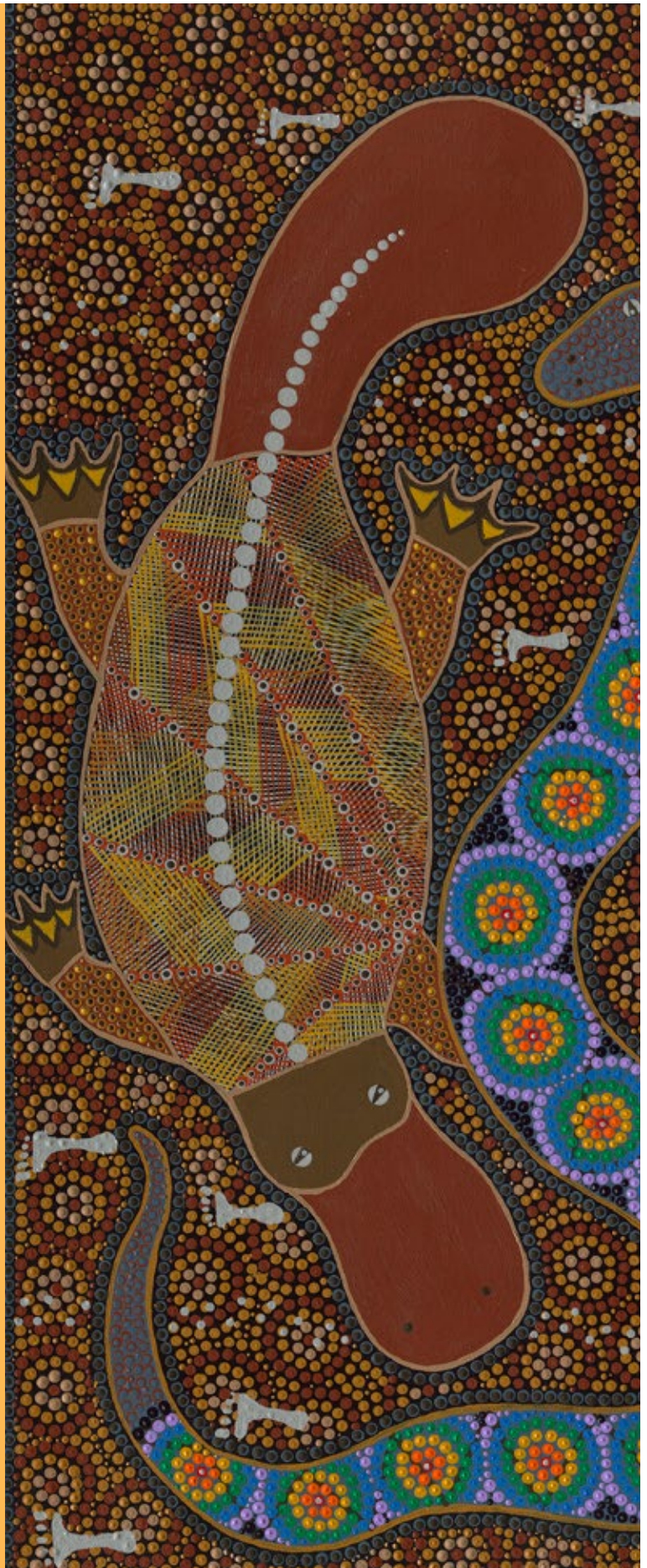
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Together we will strive to make this a better place for all peoples. As guardians of these lands, we ask that you tread lightly to help preserve the biodiversity and respect those who came before as well as those who will follow.

Artwork by Regan Lilley.



# A message from the Mayor

I am excited to present the Port Stephens Council Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2024-2028.

We are committed to disability inclusion and to building a community where everyone is able to easily access opportunities and fully participate in their community. I would like to thank everyone from our community who contributed their time, ideas and opinions during the development of this Plan, particularly those people with disability, families and carers who have been kind enough to share their own lived experiences. These connections and partnerships are vital in the ongoing development of a more inclusive community where all people are supported to participate. This Plan is critical to achieving positive change and creating an inclusive society. A more inclusive society is diverse, stronger and more sustainable. Thank you to everyone that was a part of bringing this plan to life.



**Ryan Palmer**  
Mayor of Port Stephens





# Key achievements from our 2018 to 2022 Plan

“

Disability is a physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment, that in interaction with various barriers, may hinder a person's full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

NSW Disability inclusion Act 2014



1

## Focus area – Positive attitudes and behaviours

- Awareness and education campaigns targeting business owners network, newsletters and Port Stephens Business Chambers encouraging the companion care friendly initiative.

2

## Focus area – Creating liveable communities

- A disability lift installed at the rear of the Mobile Library.
- Ongoing provision and expansion of assistive and adaptive technology including large print books and Audio books in our libraries.
- Reviewed outdoor dining policy ensuring adequate footpath space for pedestrians at all times.
- Inclusion of tactile devices in new path/ramp construction projects.
- Inclusive assessment and audits of Emergency Evacuation Centres.
- Ongoing access to children's services programs for children with additional needs.
- Ongoing provision of wheel in wheel out garbage bin service for people with a disability living at home.
- New accessible amenities at Shoal Bay Foreshore, Bettles Park Raymond Terrace, Mallabula Sports Complex and Brandon Park.
- Shared pathway connecting Mallabula to Lemon Tree Passage and along Raymond Terrace Levee Bank.

- Accessibility compliance upgrades to the Nelson Bay street stage.
- Revitalisation of Robinson Reserve, Anna Bay, transforming it into a community hub with a skate and scooter park to cater for all ages and skill types.
- Upgrades to accessible amenities at sporting facility.
- New accessible BBQs and Picnic tables at Longworth Park.

3

## Focus area – Access to meaningful employment

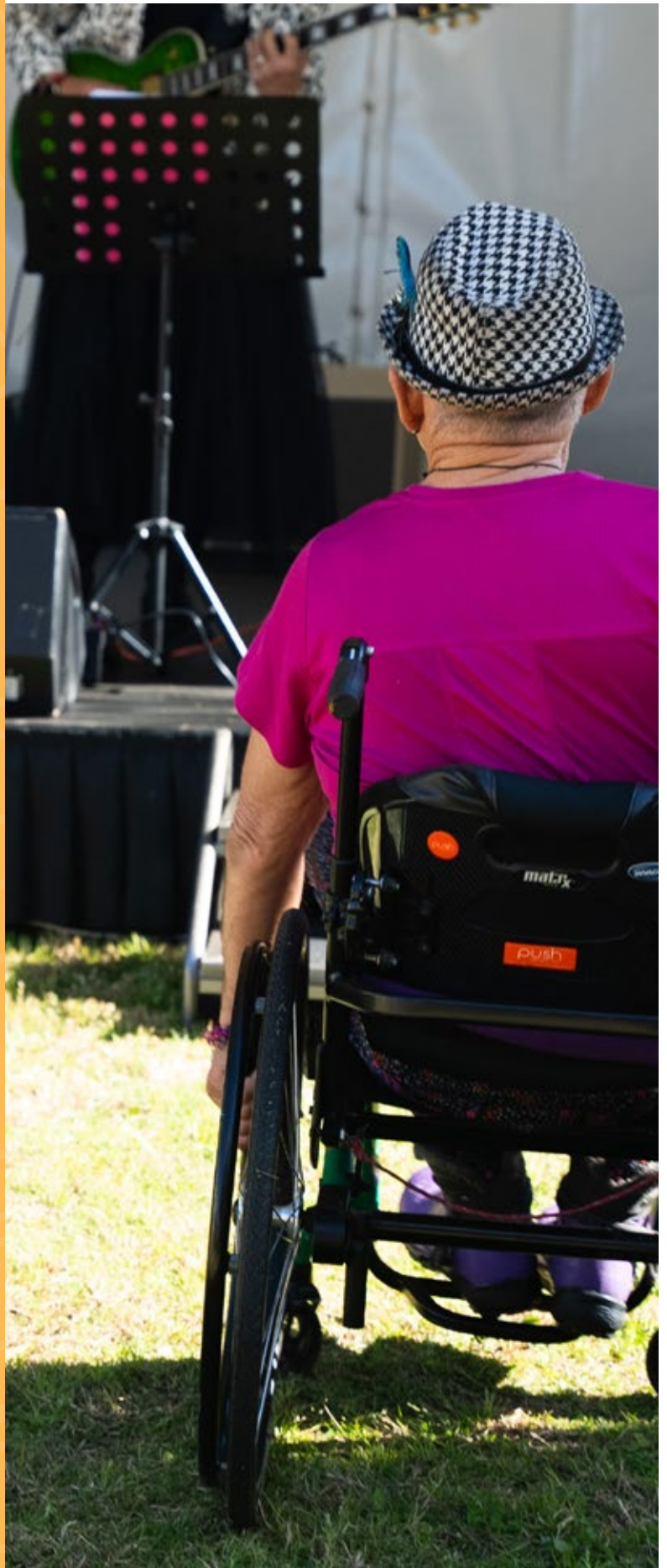
- Disclosure option for candidates with a disability enabling Council to ensure they feel supported throughout the recruitment process.

4

## Focus area – Systems and processes

- A new Council website that aligns with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 requirements.
- More self serve options on Council's website including a Read Speaker function that converts text to audio.

# Strategic context





The community vision for the Port Stephens' Community Strategic Plan is to have a "great lifestyle in a treasured environment". This vision can only truly be achieved in a place that is inclusive and accessible for people of all abilities and backgrounds.

Port Stephens Council has developed a Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) under the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014 (DIA). The plan must be developed in consultation with people with a disability and specify actions to deliver in partnership with the community.

A DIAP must identify 4 areas of focus that prioritise people with a disability. These are:



1. Developing positive community attitudes towards disability
2. Creating liveable communities
3. Increasing access to meaningful employment
4. Improving access to mainstream services through improved systems and processes.

#### International

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)

#### National

- National Disability Strategy (NDS)
- National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)
- Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA)
- Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986

#### State - NSW

- Disability (Access to Premises – Buildings) Standards 2010
- NSW Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (ADA)
- Ageing and Disability Commissioner Act 2019
- Local Government Act 1993
- Local Government (General) Regulation 2005
- Government Sector Employment Act 2013

#### Other legislation and standards

- Australian Standard (AS 1428) Design for Access and Mobility
- Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002

# Who we are



Be more inclusive and less judgemental. Disability does not mean illness.

Feedback participant



# Our community

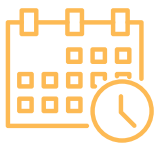
More than 75,500 people call Port Stephens home and this is expected to grow to over 87,933 by 2040.

## NATIONAL

## LOCAL



**18%**  
of all Australians  
have a disability



**1/3**  
of people with a  
disability are only working  
part time and want to  
work more hours.

People with disability are more likely to be underemployed.



**51%**  
of Australians aged  
65 years and over live  
with disability



**6.4%**  
of residents in  
Port Stephens

reported as requiring  
assistance due to a  
profound or severe disability



**7.3%**  
of Port Stephens  
residents

have reported requiring  
assistance with core activities



# What we've heard



People stare at me when [I'm] in public. Especially in coffee shops or the chemist.

Feedback participant



## Engagement findings

We listened to people from a range of backgrounds and experiences, including targeted consultation with people with a lived experience of disability, their carers, disability service providers and their staff, young people with a disability, Port Stephens Council staff, and more broadly, the Port Stephens community.

In 2020 we completed our first place census called the Liveability Index. During the census over 3,700 people told us what they value and how they rate their neighbourhood. The results have allowed us to understand the things most valuable to our community and what things have the biggest impact on our community's wellbeing.



### Improvements

We found that in Port Stephens our top liveable priority to continue to improve is access and safety of walking, cycling and/or public transport.



### Strengths

One of our strengths performing well is access to neighbourhood amenities.



Over 760 people shared their experiences and priorities for improving inclusivity and access in Port Stephens.

 <p><b>177</b></p> <p>Surveys completed</p>	 <p><b>60</b></p> <p>Workshop participants</p>	 <p><b>200+</b></p> <p>Comments from people at the Wellbeing forum</p>	 <p><b>12</b></p> <p>Staff took part in the Wheelchair challenge</p>	DATA GATHERING
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 <p><b>46</b></p> <p>Surveys completed</p>	 <p><b>18</b></p> <p>Workshop participants</p>	 <p><b>250</b></p> <p>People across 3 drop in sessions</p>	CHECK IN
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greater access to public spaces including parks, beaches and pools.</li> <li>• Expand and improve upon footpath networks and ramps.</li> <li>• Improve parking opportunities.</li> <li>• Feelings of discrimination and stigma.</li> <li>• Feeling unwelcome in private spaces like cafes and shopping centres, and public spaces like recreational areas and car parking areas.</li> <li>• Local business would benefit from employing people with a disability.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design business to be inclusive to recruit local employees and encourage visitation of tourists.</li> <li>• Inclusion training for businesses (including Council).</li> <li>• Information that is easy for everyone to read and understand.</li> <li>• Lack of health and support services.</li> <li>• Access to community events to feel welcome and included.</li> <li>• More face to face engagement and networking opportunities.</li> </ul>	WHAT YOU'VE TOLD US
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# Action plan

## Focus Areas

The plan has been developed around four focus areas. These are based on the NSW Disability Inclusion Plan and our engagement findings.

- 1 Attitude and behaviours
- 2 Liveable communities
- 3 Employment
- 4 Systems and processes

“

I have a mental disability. I find the crowded areas and extra noise in and around town hard.

Participant feedback



# Attitude and behaviours



## AIM

We will develop and improve positive attitudes of the wider community towards people with a disability.

## What we will do – our plan for action

Action	Timeline	Measure
Ensure communications represent people with disabilities.	1 to 2 yrs	Increased use of inclusive imagery used in communications internal and external of Council.
Implement programs to educate businesses on the needs of people with a disability.	1 to 2 yrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increase in accessible tourism experiences.</li><li>• Increase in accessible retail and hospitality experiences.</li></ul>
Activate the under-workers – mums, retirees, indigenous, youth and people with a disability.	3 to 4 yrs	Opportunities for people to gain experience, skills and employment in local industry.
Include disability awareness module within staff induction process.	2 to 3 yrs	Component included in staff Induction.
Deliver disability awareness and specialist training to Council staff annually.	1 to 2 yrs	Training provided.
Facilitate Councils Workplace Equity & Diversity Committee and implement road map.	1 to 2 yrs	Actions in road map implemented.
Facilitate quarterly listening sessions to understand the needs of those with a disability at Port Stephens Council.	2 to 3 yrs	Sessions completed.
Support the development of accessible tourism and business experiences.	3 to 4 yrs	Increased accessible tourism and business experiences.



# Liveable communities

2

## AIM

To provide infrastructure and services to enable people with a disability to fully participate in community life

## What we will do – our plan for action

Action	Timeline	Measure
Seek grant funding to support the further stages of the existing PAMP or an update of existing stages of existing PAMP.	3 to 4 yrs	Funding obtained
Review disability parking spaces and improve information for the community.	2 to 3 yrs	Accessible parking that is improved according to Standard
Audit footpaths and ramps in high traffic pedestrian areas to determine compliance with Australian Standards.	2 to 3 yrs	Identified footpaths and ramps not compliant
Develop a methodology for the prioritisation of footpath construction to ensure consistent and equitable outcomes.	1 to 2 yrs	Methodology put into practice to identify priority footpaths for improvement
Identify key locations for improved accessibility to pontoons, jetties and formal water access points for fishing and entry to boats.	2 to 3 yrs	Funding obtained for improvements
Identify and prioritise asset and building accessibility upgrades as part of asset management, service-level planning and strategic social infrastructure provision.	Ongoing	Upgrades included in Strategic Asset Management Plan with resourcing
Update the National Public Toilet Map.	3 to 4 yrs	National Public Toilet Map reviewed and facilities are added and updated
Manage the use of Grahamstown Aquatic Reserve for use by Sailability.	Ongoing	Positive feedback and relationship with Sailability and other users of the facility.
Deliver and facilitate more accessible and inclusive events .	1 to 2 yrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive feedback from community on accessing events.</li> <li>• Increased participation of people with a disability at community events.</li> </ul>
Undertake accessibility assessment at key indoor and outdoor event locations	3 to 4 yrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of assessments undertaken.</li> <li>• Mitigation of access barriers undertaken for events at those locations.</li> </ul>
Build the use of the Inclusion Tent into event design to create a supportive and quiet space at our event for adults and children	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of events the tent is set up and utilised by the community.</li> <li>• Positive community feedback.</li> </ul>
Ensure dog permittance signage clearly permits assistance dogs in public areas	1 to 2 yrs	Signage reviewed and changes made as appropriate.



Inclusion Tent at the Raymond Terrace Festival

Action	Timeline	Measure
Expand Event Site Inductions to include accessibility and inclusion	1 to 2 yrs	Inclusion added as regular checklist item for consideration in event design.
Facilitate and support community and cultural development programs, (including accessible arts) through the Strategic Arts Committee and Community Interagency and the Aboriginal Strategic Committee.	2 to 3 yrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of community programs implemented.</li> <li>• Community participation in programs.</li> </ul>
Ensure P-CEP (Person- Centered Emergency Preparedness) awareness information available to community members	1 to 2 yrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of information sessions undertaken.</li> <li>• Training undertaken for service providers in disaster preparedness.</li> </ul>





## Employment

3

### AIM

We will reduce barriers to employment and volunteers opportunities for people with a disability at Port Stephens Council

## What we will do – our plan for action

Action	Timeline	Measure
Review recruitment policies and procedures when required to ensure they are in line with best practice.	Ongoing	Number of Policies and Procedures reviewed and/or developed.
Actively invite candidates to request adjustments throughout the online application process, at phone screen, and when organising interviews and testing or assessment.	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of adjustments requested.</li> <li>• Reviews undertaken of implemented adjustments.</li> </ul>
Incorporate disability considerations into Councils Employee Value Proposition.	Ongoing	Person with a disability incorporated into Employee Value Proposition personas.
Review Council volunteer processes to encourage opportunities for people with a disability.	Ongoing	Process reviewed.
Develop and deliver more work, training and volunteer opportunities for people with a disability.	Ongoing	Number of work, training and volunteer opportunities.
Build systems to ensure Port Stephens Council is an accessible and inclusive place of work.	Ongoing	Increase in accessible systems.





## Systems and processes

4

### AIM

We will improve access to Council services through better systems and processes.

### What we will do – our plan for action

Action	Timeline	Measure
Implement Web Chat on the website as an additional form of contact with Council.	1 to 2 yrs	Web chat implemented.
Prepare Communication Plans that include live streaming and video where possible.	Ongoing	Communication plans developed and implemented.
Develop an engagement plan process that includes demographic analysis of stakeholders and diverse engagement method identification.	1 to 2 yrs	Engagement process developed.
Identify and convert key strategic plans that can be interpreted into easy read versions.	3 to 4 yrs	25% of identified easy read documents developed.
Implement a content experience platform for Council website.	1 to 2 yrs	Content experiment platform implements.
Implement screen reader software on Council's recruitment system.	1 to 2 yrs	Screen reader implemented.
Investigate Hearing Loop technologies and costs for installation in Council's administration building front counter and duty counter.	1 to 2 yrs	Investigation undertaken with proposal submitted to Business Improvement/Executive Leadership Team.
Review current technologies and upgrade or implement new improved solutions.	2 to 3 yrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review undertaken.</li> <li>• Number of new improved technologies integrated into the libraries.</li> </ul>

## Monitoring review and reporting

The Disability Inclusion Action Plan will be forwarded to the Disability Council NSW and it will be made available to the public in a variety of formats.



### Monitoring

We will monitor the progress of the actions listed in the Plan as part of the key performance indicators in quarterly Operation Plan reports.



### Reporting

We will report on the Disability Inclusion Action Plan items as part of the Annual Report.



### Delivery

The Disability Inclusion Action Plan will be reviewed and updated in 2028.







**PORT STEPHENS**  
COUNCIL