

Report for Cooloola Human Services Network Annual General Meeting

April 2021

Access Advisory Committee – Gympie Region

The Access Advisory Committee – Gympie Region’s vision is:

‘A community that is universally accessible and accepting of all its members.’

The Committee continued to progress this vision throughout 2020 by:

- promoting the importance of access issues within the Gympie Region.
- providing an independent forum for discussing and investigating issues related to access and inclusion for all members of the Gympie Region.
- encouraging strong community involvement in identifying and resolving access related issues.
- making recommendations to Gympie Regional Council, business and community agencies on how best to improve access within the region for all members of the community, in order to enable better planning of new facilities, and develop appropriate modifications to existing facilities.

Highlights for 2020 included:

- Working with Gympie Regional Council to:
 - Provide advice on accessibility improvements needed for the Civic Centre.
 - Provide advice on accessibility improvements needed at Gympie Aquatic and Recreation Centre.
 - Request shade to be installed over hoist at Tin Can Bay pool.
 - Lobby for accessible toilet facilities at Amamoor Station.
 - Provide feedback on location and prioritisation of new footpaths across the region.
 - Provide feedback on accessibility concerns with Upper Mary Street landscaping works.
 - Lobby for improvements to pedestrian safety at Smithfield Street landscaping works.
 - Provide information on need for accessibility upgrades for public toilets across the region.
 - Review Our Towns accessibility upgrades at Rainbow Beach.
 - Lobby for signage to be installed at All Abilities Playground recognising the contributions of community groups to the building of the playground. The playground will celebrate its 10 year anniversary in 2021 and plans are underway for a community celebration.
 - Provide advice on improvements needed to Gympie Region’s Tourism Strategy.
 - Lobby for development of an updated list of accessible public toilets throughout the region.
 - Continue to request improvements to content and accessibility of Council’s website.
 - Lobby for signage improvements for accessibility of River Walk.
- Provided submissions to Gympie Regional Council on Development Applications referred by Council as a Third Party Advice Agency, advising of relevant conditions for development approvals in the area of access for people with a disability.

- The Committee also conducted many site visits, access audit and provided free audit reports to a range of businesses to encourage them to incorporate accessible design features.
- Provided advice to Rattler Railway Company leading to the successful launch of a fully wheelchair accessible carriage as part of the Rattler experience.
- Provided advice on accessibility requirements to builder at Victory College Equestrian Centre.
- Provided ongoing advice to Gympie Show Society on improving the accessibility of the Gympie Show.
- Continued lobbying efforts to Queensland Minister for Transport to provide a wheelchair accessible Queensland Rail bus to Gympie North Station.

I wish to thank all our volunteer members who made great personal contributions to the work of the Committee throughout the year. Without their tireless contributions, none of our important work would be possible.

We also continue to strengthen our working relationships with key staff within Gympie Regional Council. This greatly assists the Committee's work within our community and our expertise in providing advice to Council on creating and sustaining an inclusive, accessible community is highly valued by Council.

In addition, I would like to acknowledge the support of Cooloola Human Services Network as our auspicing organisation, Councillor Dan Stewart, Councillor Warren Polley and Gympie Regional Council staff.

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