

Report for Cooloola Human Services Network Annual General Meeting

Tuesday 5th April 2011

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 2010 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 Shire for all members of the community, in order to enable better planning of new facilities, and develop appropriate modifications to existing facilities.

Highlights for 2010 included:

- Conducting presentations and providing advice to Sunshine Coast Regional Council, Sunshine Coast Regional Disability Council and Stanthorpe region on Gympie's Access Advisory Committee model to assist those regions in development of their own access and equity bodies. It is well worth celebrating that Gympie's access advisory committee model is now being used as a model for the Sunshine Coast Region and Stanthorpe/Warwick areas.
- Continuing the development of our website: www.aacgympie.org.au
- Providing four submissions to Gympie Regional Council on Development Applications referred by Council across the Shire as a Third Party Advice Agency.
- Providing advice to Gympie Regional Council, often at their request, on:
 - the proposed Gympie pool hoist
 - Nelson Reserve accessible toilet design issues
 - All Abilities Playground Project
 - the design of new taxi rank in Monkland St
 - recommendations for minor works to improve accessibility around the region
 - the new Town Hall lift
 - access requirements in the new planning scheme
 - the new Australian Disability Parking Permit Scheme
 - the design of the new pedestrian crossing at the old Gympie railway station
 - the design of a new public toilets at Goomeri

- importance of inclusion for people with disabilities in Council's Community Plan
 - improving Council's procedures in maintaining access to footpaths during construction projects
 - relevant conditions of approval for development applications in the area of access for people with a disability
- Liaising with Gympie Cooloola Tourism on incorporating access information in tourist publications and their website
 - Advocating for access improvements to:
 - Wide Bay Australia at Goldfields Plaza
 - Gympie Showgrounds
 - RSL Gympie
 - Gympie Clinic
 - Southern X-ray
 - Gympie Community Place
 - Gympie Nursing Centre
 - Choice Support Service
 - Gympie Hospital access from Henry St bus stop
 - Phoenix Hotel

The Committee also conducted a number of site visits, access audit and provided free audit reports to a range of businesses, community and Council facilities as well as presentations to community groups including Gympie South Lions Club.

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.

In addition, I would like to acknowledge the invaluable ongoing support of Cooloola Human Services Network, our Secretary Dianne Hughes, Councillor Rae Gâté and Gympie Regional Council staff.

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