

# **Accessibility Advisory Group Role, structure, membership eligibility and responsibilities**

## **Purpose**

The purpose of the Accessibility Advisory Group (AAG) is to provide a forum for people with disabilities to participate and advise in the planning of Council services, projects, and activities in order to ensure that the preferences and needs of the wider disability community are taken into account.

## **Role**

1. Advise and work with the Council on the implementation of the Equity and Access for People with Disabilities Policy, and all other related policies relevant to people with disabilities.
2. Advise on the most useful ways of communicating and consulting with the wider disability community, in specific instances.
3. Provide feedback and advice on planning, reviewing, or the implementation of Council activities (projects and services) that relate to the broad spectrum of disability and access issues.
4. Help to determine the ongoing role and functioning of the advisory group.
5. Provide lived experience and inclusive practice advice, not technical advice, to the Council. It is acknowledged that the group will not be experts on all disability and access matters and will not provide professional technical advice. However, the AAG may recommend that independent technical advice is integrated into the review and implementation of a relevant project.
6. Support the Council's community governance structure by providing advice about inclusive, resilient, and responsive communities for people with disabilities, and their families. The AAG supports the

Council's commitment to consult and network with citizens, and to involve the disabled community in decision-making.

## **Structure**

The Accessibility Advisory Group (AAG) is facilitated by the Council's Inclusive Communities Coordinator. They provide advice to managers and staff in removing barriers and expanding opportunity for active participation for disabled people in their own communities.

## **Membership eligibility**

Members should:

1. Be people with a disability, or have family members with a disability, or are an advocate/self-advocate, or people working in the disability community or sector.
2. Have knowledge and experience in working with, and advocating on, disability issues.
3. Have the ability to consult effectively with the disability community, and have strong personal networks in the sector.
4. Have skills and knowledge which will contribute to the aims of the group.
5. Have proven ability to work cooperatively and positively in a group environment.

## **Member appointments**

1. AAG vacancies will be advertised through key networks and organisations in the disability community and sector.
2. Applications should be sent to the Inclusive Communities Coordinator. Applications will consist of a cover letter, curriculum

vitae (CV), and a letter of support from within the disability community or sector.

3. Appointments are made for a two-year term, with the right of renewal for a further term.
4. Vacancies will be interviewed for and appointed by, an appointments sub-committee from the AAG itself, with Council staff.
5. There may be times when the Council and the AAG co-opt a member in order to meet a specific need in the group.

### **Personal skills preferred to contribute to the Accessibility Advisory Group**

1. Well-developed communication skills and the ability to work effectively with others.
2. Good time management skills and a commitment to attend the majority of the scheduled AAG meetings.
3. Supportive of other AAG members and a willingness to undertake tasks as required, and work cooperatively within a group setting.
4. Sound problem-solving skills and the ability to represent interests broader than those of a specific disability group or organisation.
5. Demonstrated ability to handle sensitive information with discretion and integrity.

### **Tenure of membership**

The appointment is for two years, The Christchurch City Council has the right of renewal for one further term. Completion of tenure should be on a rotational basis in order to maintain continuity and consolidation of the knowledge base.

## **Remuneration and expenses**

The AAG members receive a meeting fee of \$75 per meeting (gross). Where a member represents an organisation or agency, they may elect to waive the meeting fee as they are attending as part of paid work.

Members may also be reimbursed for additional transport costs such as taxi vouchers if required. Payment options are either direct deposit through Christchurch City Council payroll, or grocery voucher. Members are responsible for any individual taxation requirements.

## **Accountability**

The AAG is accountable to the Council through ongoing liaison with the Community Partnerships and Planning Manager, and more directly through the AAG facilitator, who is the Inclusive Communities Coordinator.

The AAG will report major issues or topics - to the Elected Member who holds the Disability Portfolio on an annual basis.

Communication between members and the disability community is through the member's contacts with the sector. It is expected that members will consult with, and provide feedback to and from the disability and community sector, on relevant issues as required.

An AAG member must inform the Council if any conflict of interest situation arises while they are on the AAG, or if any circumstance arises that could be a risk for the Council, or that could bring the AAG member, or the Council, into disrepute.

The AAG has a section on the Council's website which explains its purpose. The AAG meeting notes are available by request on the Council's website.

## **Resourcing**

The support and servicing of the group is the responsibility of the Community Partnerships and Planning Team through the Inclusive Communities Coordinator.

The AAG has a work plan, which is updated regularly. Activities within this work plan are aligned with the Council's strategic directions and any relevant outcomes of the Long Term Plan (LTP). Key issues in the sector are also included.

Meeting agendas and meeting notes are emailed to members for their records.

### **Support requirements**

Assistance to enable participation, such as a sign language interpreter, or other support that a person needs to participate in the AAG, will be provided at meetings if required.

AAG meetings are held in-person. However, if attendance online is more suitable to a members needs, this option can be provided and supported by the Inclusive Communities Coordinator.

Also, members may bring a support person to meetings as needed. Should any further support be required, members need to discuss their individual support requirements with the Inclusive Communities Coordinator.