

# NATIONAL DISABILITY INSURANCE SCHEME (NDIS) STRATEGY



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*Rockhampton*

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## MAYOR'S MESSAGE

It's not often we see the introduction of a reform that has the potential to dramatically improve the lives of some of so many vulnerable and valued residents.

The NDIS is a reform which has the potential to change and improve many lives. Where the system works as it should, the potential positive result for our community is very exciting.

By delivering individual and direct funding, it gives participants the choice and control over how, when and where their supports are provided.

Giving NDIS participants more control gives independence and, with that independence, more opportunity to play an active role in the community.

The number of participants in our region alone is expected to almost double. Funding per year will increase above that and up to a thousand new jobs could be created to meet that increased service.

This strategy is about how we as a Council can augment the NDIS to support participants, create a more inclusive community and maximise opportunities.

It outlines ways in which Council can add value and help fill in the gaps. How we do that will vary from case to case.

One of our key actions will be to advocate and elevate issues on behalf of participants where there is an identified gap in the service.

Another is to host forums to inform potential participants and the wider community of the opportunities the NDIS presents.

Another still is promoting workforce development to help businesses build the workforces required to support the NDIS.

Whatever the action is, it will be done collaboratively with all stakeholders to ensure we make the most of the opportunities the NDIS presents for participants and the community.

# OUR VISION

Rockhampton will be the benchmark Region that maximises the opportunities presented by the NDIS for our residents, service providers and community.

Our people with a disability will be supported to reach their goals, we will have a stronger and more inclusive community and we will harness economic opportunity for a vibrant future.

*"The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is the new way of providing support for Australians with a disability, their families and carers."*

*"The NDIS will provide all Australians under the age of 65 who have a permanent and significant disability with the reasonable and necessary supports they need to enjoy an ordinary life."*

(Source: "Working with the NDIS" ndis.gov.au)

The NDIS has begun rolling out across Central Queensland. From November 2017 existing Queensland Government clients with a disability living in the Rockhampton Region started to enter the NDIS. Other eligible people began to enter the NDIS from January 2018. Under NDIS the number of participants is expected to increase from 2,500 to 4,900 in the Central Queensland NDIS Region (Rockhampton, Gladstone and west to the border). Funding per annum will increase from \$90 million to \$220 million. Estimates are the workforce will need to increase from 800 to up to 1,800 full time equivalent (FTE) jobs. (Source: NDIA Market Position Statement [Qld] – May 2016).



Rockhampton Regional Council (RRC) has recognised the significance of the NDIS reform in providing increased service provision and supports for some of our most vulnerable and valued residents. Just as significantly, the NDIS roll out also provides great economic opportunity for the Rockhampton Region.

The Rockhampton Region is the primary service centre for the Health Care and Social Assistance Services sector in Central Queensland. The Advance Rockhampton Region Economic Action Plan (2016-2020) has identified this sector as being a major area for growth and economic opportunity. Within the Action Plan, Council has committed to the adoption of an NDIS Strategy as a key platform for growth in the sector.

Primary responsibility for the provision, regulation and management of health care and social assistance services (including NDIS) rests with Commonwealth and Queensland Governments. However, as the community lead, Rockhampton Regional Council has a key role to play in supporting and enabling a successful roll out of a major reform such as the NDIS and to maximise the economic opportunities.

This NDIS Strategy outlines how Rockhampton Regional Council will work in partnership with key agencies and stakeholders to maximise outcomes for participants, our community and businesses.

The strategy identifies three key areas of opportunity:

- Supporting an Effective NDIS Roll Out
- Harnessing Economic Opportunity
- Strengthening Community Capacity, Access and Inclusiveness

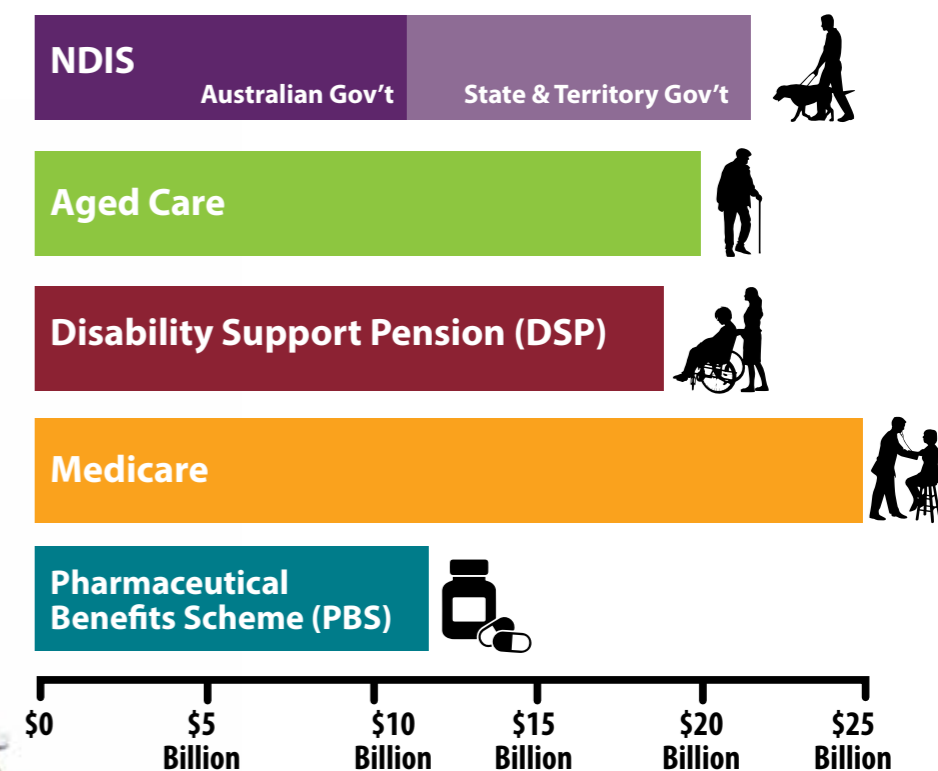
# SUPPORTING AN EFFECTIVE NDIS ROLL OUT

THE NDIS IS A SIGNIFICANT REFORM COMPARABLE IN NATIONAL IMPACT AND EXPENDITURE LEVELS TO MEDICARE, DISABILITY SUPPORT PENSION, AGED CARE AND THE PHARMACEUTICAL BENEFITS SCHEME.

The NDIS is managed nationally by the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA). The roll out across Australia including Central Queensland involves transitioning existing participants in the disability sector as well as providing opportunities for new eligible participants.

As previously outlined, the NDIS will provide supports to a greatly increased number of participants. The NDIS will also inspire innovation and growth in the disability sector with new business opportunities as well as a greatly increased sector workforce.

Rockhampton Regional Council will work with NDIA, NDIS Local Area Coordinator (LAC), Partners in The Community (PITC), NDIS Early Childhood Early Intervention (ECEI) Partner, NDIS providers, disability sector stakeholders and resident advocacy groups to support an effective and comprehensive NDIS roll out in the Region.



Projected NDIS expenditure compared with selected Australian Government programs (2019-20)

(Source: "Opportunities Under the NDIS" NDIA 29 November 2017)

Council's support measures for an effective NDIS roll out will include:

## NDIS ACTION 1: Active Participation in the NDIS Transition Group

Council will have representation on the NDIS Transition Group to monitor and respond to transition and roll out issues for agencies servicing or intending to service NDIS participants. The group also adopts a Community of Practice approach to agencies learning from each other to build overall capacity in the sector.

Council will be an active participant in the NDIS Transition Group to:

- / contribute and to be informed on NDIS roll out issues and opportunities arising; and
- / to identify scope for advocacy or elevation of issues that contribute to an effective NDIS roll out in the Region (next page).

## NDIS ACTION 2:

### Advocacy and Elevation of Issues Impacting on NDIS Roll Out

In its local government capacity, as well as having a regional capital role in the broader Central Queensland service area, Rockhampton Regional Council will, where appropriate, elevate and advocate on issues identified as impacting on an effective NDIS roll out. This may include issues on:

- / Access
- / Engagement with providers
- / Service provision
- / Workforce development
- / Service transition
- / Support coordination
- / Market readiness
- / Market interventions (e.g. for Indigenous participants)

Council will work closely with NDIA, NDIS LAC and ECEI, local agencies and stakeholder groups (e.g. NDIS Transition Group) to define issues that are systemic (rather than individual in nature) and identified as requiring appropriate elevation or advocacy by Council.

Elevation or advocacy action would necessarily and appropriately only be initiated by informed engagement with key stakeholders as outlined. As well, it would always be motivated by the objective to maximise the effectiveness of the NDIS roll out in Central Queensland and may include contacts or collaborative submissions to NDIA, through industry peaks, local Commonwealth and State Members, appropriate Ministers or others.



## NDIS ACTION 3:

### Host and Promote Forums Adding Value to NDIS Rollout

Council will work with NDIA, NDIS LAC and ECEI and other stakeholders to formulate, host and / or promote key forums to help in NDIS establishment and rollout. Council will consider hosting opportunities (e.g. through Council's libraries or other facilities) and / or the promotion of forums conducted by other stakeholders that better inform local residents, community agencies and businesses on NDIS opportunities.

Examples may include:

- / Networking and self-help groups to help provide advice to Rockhampton residents, potential NDIS participants, families and carers on NDIS opportunities, services and how to connect.
- / Networking and information sharing sessions for not-for-profit community associations and agencies on how to better engage with NDIS providers and participants and offer community based supports.
- / Information sessions for business development opportunities such as sole person providers (e.g. assisting with daily activities) or businesses (e.g. vehicle modifications). Refer also to **Harnessing Economic Opportunity** (next page).
- / Education / awareness sessions on community accessibility, including for Council's venues and facilities. Refer also to **Strengthening Community Capacity and Inclusiveness** (Pg19).

Throughout, Council will work closely with NDIS LAC and all relevant stakeholders in considering opportunity to enable, add value or fill gaps in the conduct and promotion of forums and information sessions that assist an effective NDIS roll out.

# HARNESSING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

The roll out of the NDIS provides enormous economic opportunity on both a national and regional level.

The NDIS rollout in Central Queensland will greatly increase disability supports, participant numbers and the size of the disability workforce and thus offer direct economic opportunity for the Rockhampton Region.

As previously outlined, in Central Queensland participant numbers are forecast to increase from 2,500 to 4,900 (growth of 96%), value of supports from \$90 million to \$220 million (growth of 144%), workforce from 800 FTE (full time equivalent) to 1,800 FTE (growth of 125%). Much of this growth will be within Rockhampton as the major population and service centre within Central Queensland.

The roll out of the NDIS is expected to inspire innovation and growth in the disability sector:

**“The NDIS has also triggered growth for sole traders and Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs). Across Australia, new providers have also emerged in NDIS trial sites to fill gaps in the market, for example delivering new community participation offerings to young people in areas where supports have not historically been located.”**

(Source: NDIS Market Position Statement, Queensland May 2016)

Economic and workforce opportunities are emerging for participants and their carers as well as the broader community. NDS (National Disability Services) has released a report showing the potential scale of the

economic benefits of the NDIS in Australia. The report's economic modelling is based on data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics and forecasts the following important impacts within the sector itself:

## NDIS WILL SUPPORT:

- / 25,000 TO 40,000 PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY TO FIND WORK
- / 34,000 CARERS TO RETURN TO THE WORKFORCE
- / INCREASED ADDITIONAL TAXES AND / REDUCED INCOME SUPPORT TO SAVE THE COMMONWEALTH BUDGET \$1.5B TO \$1.9B PER ANNUM IN 2015 DOLLARS

**GDP gain from additional employment of people with a disability and carers to be \$18B to \$23B in 2015 dollars”**

(Source: NDS Fact Sheet, Economic Benefits of the NDIS 13.07.16)

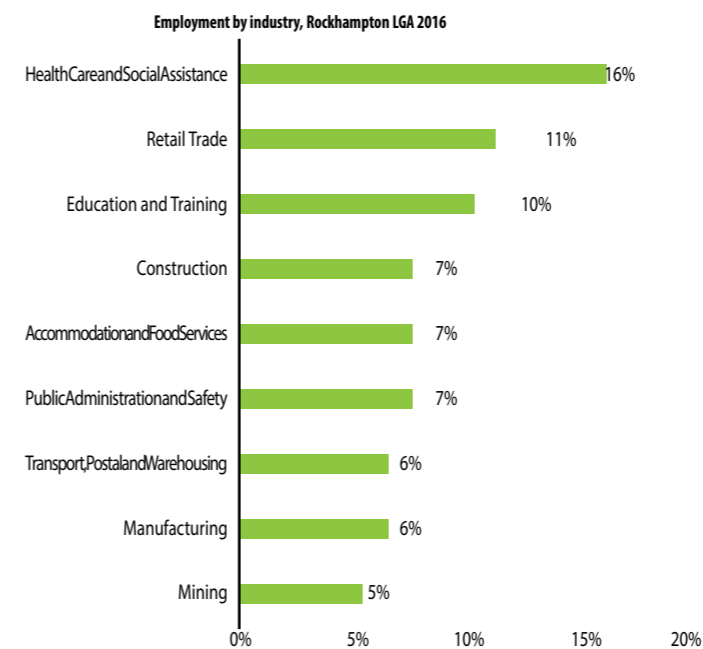
NDIS also provides significant economic opportunity for industry types outside of healthcare and disability support services, including building, construction, transport, maintenance and personal services.

RRC will work with NDIA, NDIS agencies, service providers, businesses and other stakeholders to maximise the economic advantages to the Rockhampton Region.

Council has identified opportunities to harness economic opportunity from the NDIS roll out in some key areas as outlined on the next page.

## NDIS ACTION 4: Promote Workforce Development

With a projected sector workforce growth from 800 to 1,800 FTE, the NDIS roll out will add an extraordinary number of workers to what is already the Region's largest employing industry: Health Care and Social Assistance.



(Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing 2016).

Council recognises that this projected workforce growth will provide great economic benefit to the Rockhampton Region. A growing workforce brings potential population increase (new workers and their families), the injection of extra wages and the resultant flow-on growth effect through other industry sectors (retail, education and training, accommodation and food services etc.). Council welcomes this major economic development opportunity and will proactively support and enable NDIS workforce development.

Council's NDIS workforce development measures will include:

- / RRC has membership on the NDIS Workability Workforce Action Plan working group to develop and implement an NDIS Workforce Action Plan for the Central Queensland area. The aim of the working group is to support and build the existing and emerging workforce to meet the expected NDIS demand. Council's participation in the working group will encourage the development and implementation of strategic actions that attract, engage, support and sustain a NDIS workforce that meets the future needs of the sector in Rockhampton and the broader Central Queensland region.

- / Council will continue to position the Rockhampton Region as an established specialist health care and social services centre to support an expanded NDIS workforce. Council will maintain and implement integrated marketing campaigns that reinforce this positioning; with key stakeholders across industry, marketing and events to build awareness and further industry take-up.
- / In association with NDIS agencies, providers, recruitment agencies and others promote Rockhampton as a great place to work and live.
- / Distribute material relating to local housing, education, recreation and community infrastructure to inform and support new workers and their families in relocating to the Region.
- / Support and partner with key agencies in the conduct of jobs expos to build awareness of jobs associated with the NDIS rollout. Examples include the Gear Up Rocky Jobs Readiness Expo in November 2017 and the Workability Careers in Disability Expo in March 2018.
- / Look for opportunities for cross-industry workforce development, recruitment and relocation activity. For example: target a whole-of-family / partners approach to promoting Rockhampton Region job opportunities in sectors including resources, manufacturing, construction, education and training, health etc. with NDIS job opportunities in mind.
- / Directly build NDIS related workforce in the Rockhampton Region through business development strategies that encourage a greater range of businesses operating in the NDIS sector (see **Business Development**, next page).
- / Council has an Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Policy that applies to all employees. In part the policy states:

*Council is an equal opportunity employer and takes its EEO responsibilities under legislation and moral obligations seriously. Council recognises that EEO principles and control measures benefit Council as a whole by creating an environment where employees are treated with dignity and respect, and the talents and skills of all employees are valued.*

Council also adopted an Equitable Access Policy on 13 December 2016. In part the policy includes the following on employment:

*As a major regional employer, Council will continue to set an example as an organisation which rejects discrimination, acknowledges the benefit of diversity among its employees and promotes equality of opportunity in all aspects of employment including recruitment, promotion and development.*

Council has a wide range of job opportunities, actively encourages workplace diversity and welcomes applications from all sectors of the community including people with a disability.

## NDIS ACTION 5: Support Business Development

***“The NDIA would like to see a competitive, self-sustaining market with a diverse range of providers.”***

***“People with disability will choose the providers they engage and can change providers at any time.”***

*(Source: Working With the NDIS factsheet ndis.gov.au)*

***“The NDIS offers a new way of providing individualised support for people with a disability, their families and carers by giving them more choice over the providers they work with.”***

*(Source: National Disability Practitioners Factsheet: How to Set Up Your Own Business April 2016)*

The NDIA envisages a market with a diverse array of providers that maximises choice and control for participants but also enables strong links with mainstream services and family and community support to help achieve the overall NDIS aspirations of increased social and economic participation for people with disability.

NDIS participants will have choice and control over their plan and the providers they engage with. Registered providers, small business operators and sole traders will have greatly increased business scope. This can include delivery of a range of supports and services directly to participants or, for example in the supply of assistive technology or modifications to help participants live an ordinary life and achieve their goals, as approved in their plan.

***“The NDIS has also triggered growth for sole traders and Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs). Across Australia, new providers have also emerged in NDIS trial sites to fill gaps in the market, for example delivering new community participation offerings to young people in areas where supports have not historically been located.”***

*(Source: NDIS Market Position Statement, Queensland May 2016)*

As previously stated, as well as growth in service delivery the NDIS will inspire increased innovation in the disability sector. For instance a worker in the disability sector could consider setting up a small business or working in a private practice. Another example is the opportunity for



“boutique” tourism operators for those with a disability to be established. As well, people with expertise in building modifications, mobility aids or automotive modifications could increase their customer base and become chosen by NDIS participants as “preferred suppliers” with disability specific customer service and products.

Council will work closely with NDIA, NDIS LAC PITC, existing and potential disability sector business operators and other stakeholders to help develop an understanding of the NDIS market environment and emerging business potential.

Council will proactively support and enable NDIS related business development through the following measures:

- / Council will host workshops for potential businesses including sole operators. Council will use its successful **Gear Up Rocky** style of business readiness campaign with information sessions and workshops to raise business awareness of opportunities related to NDIS and potential access points.

- / As previously outlined there is great scope for business diversity including delivery of services related to transport, home and vehicle modifications, tourism, cleaning and maintenance etc. The workshops to explore this scope will be developed and delivered in partnership with NDIA, NDIS LAC PITC, business lead agencies (e.g. Capricornia Chamber of Commerce) and other stakeholders.
- / Council will develop and / or host information sharing and networking sessions for the Not For Profit (NFP) sector, charities, community groups and sporting clubs to examine scope for service provision under NDIS arrangements. Again, Council will work with NDIA NDIS LAC PITC and other relevant stakeholders to develop and deliver these sessions.
- / Council will plan and conduct developer forums to introduce developers to NDIS specialists, share information on NDIS related programs (e.g. Specialist Accommodation for those with a disability) to encourage and support NDIS related developments (see Developer Forums on page 15).

- / Through its involvement in forums and stakeholder groups related to NDIS roll out, Council will be alert to emerging issues, impacts and impediments to business development opportunities related to NDIS. For example through participation in the NDIS Transition Group, membership of the Capricornia Chamber of Commerce and ongoing engagement with NDIA, NDS, NDIS LAC, PITC and others. Council will consider opportunities to raise awareness of impediments and lobby for action where necessary and appropriate. Elevation or advocacy action would necessarily and appropriately only be initiated by informed engagement with key stakeholders as outlined above.

## NDIS ACTION 6: Provide Planning and Development Incentives

Council's Development Incentives Policy seeks to attract and support projects that will deliver significant economic benefits to the Rockhampton Regional Council Local Government Area. The policy provides tangible financial and non-financial support for projects with land use in targeted industry areas including medical, health and community services. NDIS related developments would be eligible for consideration under the policy which can include the following supports:

### Infrastructure Charges Reimbursements

- / Infrastructure charges reimbursements up to a maximum of 75% of the infrastructure charges for an eligible project;
- / This is done as an incentive for developments in targeted sectors (including NDIS) that have the scale and standard to significantly increase employment in the Rockhampton region and attract residents, visitors and participants from outside the Local Government Area.

### General Incentives

It is recognised the process of obtaining development approvals for significant projects can be complex. Council is committed to facilitating development that meets the requirements of this policy. Council's facilitation includes:

- / Access to Council's Economic Development team to provide advice on applicability and incentives that may be available under this policy;
- / Access to Council Planning Officers through the Duty Planner to provide advice in preparing development applications;



- / Pre-lodgement meetings with all relevant Council officers free of charge; and
- / Assistance with identifying and facilitating contact with State Government agencies with a view to facilitating the development.

To qualify for support under this policy there must be a separate application to Council. Developers who believe they may be eligible for assistance under the policy are encouraged to apply and assistance will be provided to complete the application if required. All relevant application forms and information is available on Council's website at: [www.rrc.qld.gov.au](http://www.rrc.qld.gov.au)

## NDIS ACTION 7: Host Developer Forums

As identified in the Planning and Development Incentives Policy, Council seeks to attract and support projects in the broad medical, health & community services sector. Council sees great potential for development projects associated with the NDIS rollout including specialist disability accommodation and general service provision.

Council will work with potential developers, NDIA, NDIS agencies and stakeholders and others to encourage and support such developments.

Council will work in partnership with NDIA specialists, NDIS stakeholders, developers, property agents and other stakeholders to plan and conduct Developer Forums to:

- / Introduce developers to NDIS specialists, Council's Economic Development Team and Planners;
- / Outline the Planning and Development Incentives Policy as it applies to NDIS developments; and
- / Examine NDIS opportunity and potential demand for service provision and participant accommodation (e.g. specialist disability accommodation).





## NDIS ACTION 8: Development Facilitation

Council offers a free Duty Planner service to provide information on development matters. The Rockhampton Region Planning Scheme is supportive of developments that further strengthen Rockhampton as a leading regional health and social services centre.

The scheme supports the development of NDIS related projects in proximity to commercial areas, public transport, and areas with community / recreational facilities. Creating walkable communities is a primary aim of the planning scheme, providing accessibility to all residents.

Council will work directly with developers, property agents and project proponents to facilitate specific NDIS related projects including to:

- / Identify specific sites for development;
- / Provide advice in preparing development applications;
- / Provide access to Council's Economic Development Team and planners to facilitate and support developments.

Council will also carefully consider the potential for specific NDIS projects to deliver significant economic benefits to the Rockhampton Region and any scope to further incentivise development, expansions or relocations that will deliver this scale of economic benefit.



# STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY CAPACITY, ACCESS AND INCLUSIVENESS

ROCKHAMPTON REGIONAL COUNCIL VALUES EACH AND EVERY MEMBER OF OUR COMMUNITY AND WILL WORK PROACTIVELY WITH NDIS AGENCIES, SERVICE PROVIDERS, ADVOCACY GROUPS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS TO HELP PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY LEAD FULFILLING LIVES.



## NDIS ACTION 9: Champion Equitable Access Policy

Council adopted an Equitable Access Policy on 13 December 2016. This policy applies to Council facilities, services and programs to provide a framework to support Council's commitment to promoting inclusiveness and equitable access in the design, development and operation of Council facilities, services and programs.

### In part the Policy states:

**"Council values the contribution that residents and visitors make to the area and is committed to improving accessibility and inclusion for all, with practices that respect the diversity of backgrounds, abilities, values, beliefs and lifestyles of people within the community.**

**Recognising that equitable access maximises participation and social inclusion in the community, Council will seek to achieve the following outcomes:**

### / ACCESS TO FACILITIES, SPACES AND AMENITIES

*Council endeavours that all relevant standards are applied to planning and development within the area, encouraging proactive processes that promote universal design. Wherever possible, Council will strive to go beyond the minimum standards to improve access to its buildings, facilities, public spaces and streetscapes.*

### / ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND SERVICES

*Council will deliver information in clear and accessible formats and media and will provide services that are inclusive and responsive to community needs. It will provide training for employees to enhance their capacity to identify and remove any barriers to equitable access in the planning and delivery of services.*

### / ADVOCACY AND ENGAGEMENT

*Council will seek to influence public policy and resource allocation advocating for equitable funding, service delivery and planning to address the needs of diverse groups and individuals. It will engage with the diverse community to seek guidance in identifying issues for planning and advocacy.*

### / EMPLOYMENT

*As a major regional employer, Council will continue to set an example as an organisation which rejects discrimination, acknowledges the benefit of diversity among its employees and promotes equality of opportunity in all aspects of employment including recruitment, promotion and development.*

### / CELEBRATION AND PARTICIPATION

*Council will seek to create an inclusive community that celebrates and values diversity by supporting local events, festivals and activities that promote pride, harmony and respect for all. It will provide meaningful and inclusive capacity building opportunities to create pathways for people to connect, learn and enhance their strengths, overcome disadvantage and foster a cohesive community.*

Council has committed to developing an Equitable Access Action Plan to specify the actions it will take to implement the intent of its adopted policy.

Council already considers equitable access with a number of services it delivers, for example:

- / CQ Home Assist program to assist aged and people with a disability to remain living independently (see further information below).
- / Library services, including the Home Delivery Service. Library services provide free access and membership for all ages and abilities. Libraries also offer free computer access, as well as a range of resources specifically catering for people with a disability, sight impairment, literacy or language development issues, or learning English as a second language or who are housebound.
- / Free computer training is also provided at the Technology Centre in the Rockhampton Regional Library.
- / Facility renewals.
- / Community Development services to assist people to participate in community life, including activities and events providing opportunities for people from diverse cultural backgrounds to connect and learn about each other and local services and practices.
- / Occasional care places at the City Child Care Centre to allow for some time out for appointment, work or study.
- / Council also meets with the Rockhampton Community Access and Equity Group, where specific problems concerning access are identified and resolved.

Council also through its **Community Grants and Minor Sponsorship Policy** is committed to supporting eligible community organisations undertaking projects or events that contribute to building:

- / A safe, caring and healthy community;
- / A healthy and liveable environment; and
- / A strong, resilient and diversified economy

Council has already funded a number of projects designed to address accessibility and inclusion issues.

## NDIS ACTION 10: Promote and Facilitate Access & Inclusiveness for NDIS Participants

The Equitable Access Policy will underpin Council's approach to strengthening community capacity and inclusiveness in this NDIS Strategy.

A central principle of the NDIS is that participants have choice and control over their NDIS plan to help them lead fulfilling lives and take part in everyday activities. Participants are given flexibility to choose how to spend their funds to live the life they want.

An NDIS plan has three support budgets: Core, Capital and Capacity and participants receive reasonable and necessary funding under the relevant budget depending on their support needs. The Core support budget is made up of support categories including **daily activities and social, community and civic participation**. The supports funded under a participant's NDIS plan are further complemented by informal supports (support from family and friends), mainstream supports (mainstream health, education or therapeutic supports) and community supports (sports clubs, recreational and other community supports).

**RRC will work closely with NDIS agencies and stakeholders to promote and facilitate access and inclusiveness for NDIS participants in a range of activities and civic participation including Council's own community facilities, venues and attractions.**

Measures to promote and facilitate access and inclusiveness will include:

- / Council will be an active member of the **Community Capacity Building and Inclusion Group**. The Group will guide and assist the NDIS LAC and PITC to target services, businesses and groups in the community that are considered important with respect to economic and social opportunities for people with disabilities and support strategies that aim at building capacity within the community. Council's membership in the group will demonstrate a commitment from Council as a lead community entity to contribute to the two way exchange of information, communication and consultation between community members and the NDIS LAC and PITC. Council will also work with the group to encourage access and inclusiveness of NDIS participants across Council's community facilities, venues and attractions (refer below).
- / Council will also engage with local advocacy and advisory groups (e.g. Rockhampton Community Access & Equity Group, Capricorn Citizens Advocacy) and participate in meetings and forums that promote and facilitate access and inclusiveness for all residents including NDIS participants.

- / Council will seek to celebrate and value diversity and facilitate access and inclusiveness for all residents (including NDIS participants) in the planning and conduct of events, festivals and activities that promote pride, harmony and respect for all.
- / Council will consider appropriate activities that promote inclusiveness and access for NDIS participants in Council's facilities, venues and attractions. For example, for participants impacted by Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Council could consider offering activities such as ASD Hour in libraries, Art of Autism displays in the Art Gallery and animal therapy engagement sessions at the Rockhampton Zoo. Council will work closely with agencies and stakeholders to consider the development and conduct of appropriate activities for this and other targeted NDIS participant groups.

## NDIS ACTION 11: Host Education and Awareness Sessions to Promote Access and Inclusiveness for Council and Community Facilities

As previously outlined, Council owns and operates a variety of community facilities, venues and attractions throughout the Region including libraries, Mount Morgan and Archer Park Rail Museums, Rockhampton Art Gallery, Pilbeam Theatre, Rockhampton Zoo, Rockhampton Heritage Village, Walter Reid Cultural Centre, Rockhampton Showgrounds, parks, gardens and recreation facilities.

There is great scope for increased access to these and other community facilities for NDIS participants through supports under NDIS funded and the complementary support arrangements outlined above.

Council will work in partnership with NDIA, NDIS LAC, PITC, advocacy and advisory groups, providers and other stakeholders to develop and conduct information sessions that promote and facilitate access and inclusiveness for NDIS participants, their carers and families to Council and community facilities, venues and attractions.

Examples of information and awareness raising sessions may include:

- / Education / awareness sessions on general community accessibility, including Council's venues and facilities. Refer also to **Supporting an Effective NDIS Roll Out**.
- / Promotion and awareness sessions for NDIS participants, family carers and interested persons. The sessions could outline the range of Council's facilities, venues and attractions with a focus on accessibility and inclusiveness for NDIS participants.
- / Connection and networking sessions to assist in the connection of NDIS funded and community based supports to access community facilities including Council's venues and attractions. For example community agencies, not for profits, business operators, NDIS providers and participants could work together on coordinating transport, personal support, mobility, assistive technology and other supports to access museums, parks, art gallery, sporting facilities etc. This connected approach would assist participants achieve their goal to improve social, community and civic participation and lead an ordinary life.
- / Council will conduct internal information and awareness sessions (in partnership with NDIA, NDIS LAC PITC and others) for Council personnel and community facility staff with a focus on accessibility and inclusiveness (both in terms of physical, opportunity etc.).

## NEXT STEPS: Acting Now and in the Future

Council will collaborate with the key agencies and stakeholders outlined in the delivery of this strategy. We will adjust the delivery of our actions by listening to stakeholders and the community including NDIS participants and their representatives. We will ensure actions remain focused on maximising opportunity presented by the NDIS for our residents, service providers and our community.

Council will review our achievements against this strategy and the need for further actions by October 2019.



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