

Disability Inclusion Advisory Committee (DIAC)

Friday 12 June 2026 at 10:00am

Council – Glass Room

MEETING NOTES

MEETING COMMENCED: 10:06am

IN ATTENDANCE:

Members:

Yvonne Thomson, Joel McCubben, Noal Annabel, Frank Ross (*arrived 10:11am*), Catherine Sykes (*via MS Teams*), and Brad Rossiter OAM (*via MS Teams*)

Eurobodalla Shire Council:

Councillor Amber Schutz (*Chair*), Kathy Arthur, Director CARS, and Melinda Rowell, Executive Assistant to Director of CARS (*Minutes*)

Guests:

Felicity Richards – Senior Strategic Planner (ESC)

APOLOGIES:

Danai Keir

1. WELCOME AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Presentation by the Chair, Cllr Amber Schutz

The Chair, Cllr Amber Schutz, welcomed the committee and delivered the Acknowledgement of Country.

2. INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

Presentation by the Chair, Cllr Amber Schutz

The Chair opened the meeting and noted apologies.

3. AGENDA ITEMS

3.1 Review of Meeting Notes/Actions from 13 March 2026

Presentation by the Chair, Cllr Amber Schutz

The Chair sought confirmation that the minutes from the meeting on 13 March 2026 were read and accepted as a true and accurate record.

Outstanding Action:

- **Action 3.2b:** Cllr Amber Schutz to provide the website link for the individual who conducts business accessibility reviews.

No objections were raised, and the minutes of 13 March 2026 were confirmed.

Moved: Yvonne Thomson

Seconded: Cllr Amber Schutz

3.2 Pathway Strategy

Presentation by Felicity Richards

Felicity presented a PowerPoint on the Draft Pathway Strategy, noting it was originally developed in 2017 by the Infrastructure team for Shire-wide pathway planning. The revised strategy, funded by an NSW Active grant, is being prepared by PSA Consultants (Brisbane-based), who have undertaken site visits across the Shire.

- Include a five-year review cycle
- Incorporate education and landowner considerations
- Support future grant funding opportunities (current budget: \$400,000)

Community engagement has included surveys, pop-up sessions, an interactive map, and targeted engagement with schools, bike shops, community groups, businesses, and chambers. Approximately 7,000 emails received over the past 10 years are also being reviewed, with the process around two-thirds complete. All feedback is being analysed by the consultant to inform priorities and criteria within the Strategy.

Kathy asked what a “pin” represents; Felicity explained it is used on the interactive map to mark locations and capture feedback. Councillor Schutz asked about alternative engagement options; Felicity noted that feedback was also received through calls and drop-ins.

Felicity noted that pathways require flexibility and careful planning, citing Tomakin as an example, where an alternative pathway alignment (e.g. on the opposite side of the road near cafés) may be considered.

Kathy invited Brad to speak early due to his 10:30am departure. Brad highlighted the importance of pathways in recreation areas, emphasising connectivity, inclusive access, and surface quality. He noted positive outcomes at Malua Bay

The strategy will align with grant criteria using a prioritisation framework based on factors such as safety and connectivity.

Felicity continued the presentation, noting the NSW Get Active grant as a key funding opportunity. She advised the strategy is being aligned with grant criteria, which often favour metropolitan areas, placing regional councils at a disadvantage, and that a well-prepared strategy will strengthen future funding applications.

Further discussions included:

- Kathy raised the Draft Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP), noting one submission received highlighted the need to review existing infrastructure in a consolidated manner, with a focus on ongoing maintenance. Felicity agreed, emphasising the importance of renewal and maintenance.
- Concerns were raised regarding electric scooters and pathways. Felicity noted relevant regulations (including age restrictions) and advised that Councils Road Safety Officer is reviewing the matter.
- Kerb accessibility issues for scooters and mobility users were noted, with frequent reports received.
- Frank referenced scooter bans in Queensland; Felicity confirmed non-compliant devices may be confiscated by police.

- Kathy noted examples of dedicated scooter pathways in Harvey Bay, although these would involve significant cost.
- Kathy emphasised the importance of considering the whole-of-journey experience, linking pathway planning closely with the DIAP.
- Kathy noted that demand for pathways could be identified through existing studies and strategies, and suggested works be undertaken alongside road projects where possible to support delivery. Felicity confirmed the Strategy aims to address this.
- Frank raised safety concerns regarding children crossing at the roundabout in front of Council, suggesting targeted education to encourage safer crossing locations.

Felicity advised the Draft strategy expected for exhibition in September/October, with further consultation planned.

ACTION:

- 3.2a** Committee members are encouraged to provide feedback to Felicity on the Pathway Strategy.

3.3 Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) on Exhibition – Quick Update

Presentation by Kathy Arthur

Kathy advised the Draft DIAP was on exhibition for 28 days in April, with one submission received. The submission focused on public education, and disability-positive initiatives (including a suggested target of ten sessions per year), but did not include specific actionable detail.

Discussion highlighted:

- Frank highlighted the importance of cultural change in supporting inclusion.
- Councillor noted the importance of measurable outcomes, emphasising the need for clear, tangible achievement markers to ensure actions are delivered.
- Kathy highlighted opportunities for inclusive community events and training, including expos or activation-style activities, and the need to educate event organisers to ensure events are accessible and inclusive for all.
- Examples of good inclusive practice were noted, including the Oyster Festival (providing shaded and quiet seating options) and Yuin Theatre (designated accessible seating without the need to use stairs).
- Kathy noted positive feedback on the Easy English format (developed using Copilot) and suggested opportunities to align the DIAP with the Pathway Strategy, supporting ongoing cultural change.
- Kathy noted the return to Council by **30 June 2026**.

ACTION:

- 3.2a** Kathy to contact the submitter to seek further information regarding their submission to the Draft DIAP.

4. GENERAL BUSINESS

4.1 Creative Arts Strategy

Frank requested an update on the status of the Creative Arts Strategy. Councillor Schutz advised that the Strategy has been on public exhibition. Kathy confirmed that the report for the Creative

Arts Advisory Committee, regarding the adoption of representatives, will be presented to Council for adoption on 30 June 2026. Following this, the Creative Arts Advisory Committee is scheduled to meet in July. The Strategy will then be presented to Council for formal adoption on 25 August 2026.

4.2 Transport Access for Event Participation

Frank raised questions regarding transport access for people who are unable to attend events, noting that individuals with disabilities often miss out without suitable transport options.

Kathy advised that Council operates a minibus and 13 vehicles, all of which are fully utilised, and demand is expected to grow. This may support future grant opportunities, and some individuals may be able to fund drivers through NDIS packages. Rixons will continue providing transport services through hired buses, an approach supported by Council that also benefits local businesses. Weekend transport remains challenging due to limited volunteer availability. It was suggested that local churches may assist with transport support. The need for transport to Canberra for isolated patients was also raised, with advice that some individuals may be eligible for assistance through IPTAAS programs.

4.3 Batemans Bay Masterplan

Kathy noted the Batemans Bay Masterplan will be ready in a few months and can be discussed at the next meeting. Felicity will be invited to attend the next meeting. The report is scheduled for the 30 June 2026 Council meeting.

4.4 Recreation and Open Space Strategy

Kathy noted that the review of the Recreation and Open Space Strategy is scheduled for early 2027 onwards. Council's Recreation Planner, Peta Brooks will be invited to attend the next meeting prior to finalising the plans.

4.5. Housing and Probability Strategy / Accessible Housing

Felicity advised that the Housing and Probability Strategy is coming up.

Kathy emphasised the importance of incorporating accessible housing into this process.

Councillor Schutz noted concerns regarding NDIS funding, including that changes may mean some individuals no longer qualify for higher levels of support ("gold" or "platinum") or may not qualify at all despite reduced mobility. It was also noted that NDIS packages may not adequately support access to appropriate housing.

Councillor Schutz further noted that housing delivery sits with housing providers, including social and affordable housing providers.

4.6. Business update: Access and inclusion edition

Felicity read aloud Teresa Lever's email to the Committee. A copy of the email was also distributed to Committee members by Melinda on Friday, 12 June 2026.

The Committee was invited to provide feedback and consider opportunities to support community education. It was also suggested that a draft be circulated back to the Committee for further review and input.

ACTION:

- 4.1a** Melinda to send Teresea email to committee to provide committee. Completed.

4.7 Agenda Items for next meeting

Kathy invited Committee members to suggest items for future meetings.

The Ross and Batemans Bay Masterplan to be added to the agenda for the next committee meeting.

Councillor Schutz recommended that the committee review the Creative Arts Strategy and provide feedback at the next meeting Committee meeting.

ACTION:

- 4.7** Melinda to add the Ross and Batemans Bay Masterplan to the next meeting agenda items to the agenda for the next meeting.

NEXT MEETING: TBA

MEETING CLOSED: 11:22am