

# Disability Advisory Committee, Moonee Valley City Council (MVCC)

## Terms of Reference

October 2025

Moonee Valley City Council is committed to promoting a community where all people have access and feel welcome. Council recognises that community representatives have valuable knowledge and expertise and can contribute to Council's MV2040 vision for Moonee Valley. Community can participate in Council decision-making, as defined in Council's Community Engagement Policy.

## Type of Committee

Citizen Advisory Committee as defined in Council's Community Engagement Policy.

## Purpose and scope

The purpose of a Citizen Committee is to inform Council decision making by providing formal pathways for community input and providing regular, formal feedback to Council.

The Disability Advisory Committee provides Council with a forum to consult with key stakeholders and seek specialist advice around access, equity and inclusion of people with disability and neurodivergent people, to guide the implementation of Moonee Valley's Disability Action Plan and other Council strategies.

## Objectives

The Disability Advisory Committee objectives are to:

- Consult people with disability, neurodivergent people and Carers to ensure advice is provided to Council on issues relating to the active participation of people with disability and neurodivergent people. These issues or barriers may be existing and/or emerging, such as access, inclusion, communication (including digital), advocacy and support Council with promoting an awareness and understanding of these experiences within Council and the community.
- Provide Council Officers with support and advice around the operational aspects of service delivery, future initiatives and overarching action plans and policies that relate to people with disability and neurodivergent people and Council's MV2040 strategy as required.
- Support and advise Council on the development and implementation of the Disability Action Plan.

- Assist with the coordination, planning and implementation of the annual International Day of People with Disability project/event for Council.

## **Extent of Authority**

The Committee is not a decision-making body; it is an Advisory Group. As such it does not require voting protocols.

The Committee has no power to commit Council to any decision or action, or to direct Council Officers in their duties.

Any formal advice provided by the Committee will be reached by consensus of 50% of the committee membership at that time (excluding Council Officers).

## **Responsibilities**

### **Committee member responsibilities**

The Committee is accountable to Council.

All members must be willing to participate in a strategic framework and serve a term of 2 years.

Once the two year term has concluded, members can nominate to serve a further term, via the Expression of Interest process.

In order to fulfil the Committee's objectives, it is helpful if members keep informed of current issues and developments relating to access and inclusion of people with a disability and actively participate in regular Committee meetings.

Committee members are invited to contribute to creating an individual profile on Council's YourSay Advisory Committee page: <https://yoursay.mvcc.vic.gov.au/dac>

Committee members are required to participate in an induction session.

The Committee will nominate a member to act as Chairperson at each meeting.

If a Committee member resigns within their two-year term, the Committee shall assist to seek a suitably qualified nominee as replacement, subject to Council Officer approval.

Members participating in meetings, events and communications will:

- Show our respect for other members
- Show our respect to visitors to meetings and external partners in joint activities
- Direct our questions and statements through the Chair during meetings
- Be transparent in our role within the committee and focus on serving the interests of the Moonee Valley community, rather than our personal interest or interest of our agency. Any potential conflict of interest or benefit to business is to be disclosed as required during discussions.

If a committee member fails to attend the minimum of 5 meetings in the calendar year, they will be provided with a warning and may be asked to step down from the Committee.

### **Council responsibilities**

Council Officers will manage the membership responsibilities of the Committee (i.e. membership recruitment, rotation of term, representation of community, induction of new members, etc.) and provide administrative support as required (i.e. meeting minutes).

Council Officers will provide an induction and orientation for Committee members (outline the role of the Committee and Council, an overview of how Moonee Valley City Council works, and provide relevant Committee documentation such as Terms of Reference, recent minutes, and explanation of how meetings will be run).

Council Officers will discuss and provide support to remove barriers for Committee members to participate in Committee activities. These may include transport to meetings, visual aids, audio loop and interpreters.

Council will provide an MS Teams group for all Committee members to access. Records of the Committee's activities will be stored in this location (i.e. meeting minutes, feedback provided to Council Officers, Terms of Reference). The chat function of MS Teams is also available for Committee to use, following the responsibilities of this Terms of Reference.

Council can discuss and address barriers to participation with individual Committee members i.e. provide support for online participation, transport to meetings, meet one on one, etc.

Council Officers will monitor behaviour of Committee members and address any concerns directly with the member/s involved.

When Committee vacancies occur, Council Officers will advertise to fill these as promptly as possible. Please refer to Appendix 1 for further details.

### **Membership and Eligibility**

Up to twelve (12) community representatives consisting of people with living experience of disability, neurodivergent people, their family or Carers, are selected to represent the local community. This process takes into consideration a diverse representation of views, experiences and backgrounds.

These committee members will be selected through an expression of interest process and appointed based on merit, skills and expertise.

Ideally, the Committee will consist of both new and previous or existing members to ensure a transfer of knowledge and experience as well as creating new opportunities to participate.

Two of these twelve positions will be made available to people with living experience of disabilities who work and / or volunteer in Moonee Valley.

**Membership selection will consider a diverse representation of people with disability who are from:**

- a variety of life stages (all ages)
- culturally, religiously and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- Gender spectrum (male, female, gender diverse)
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer/Questioning, Asexual (LGBTQ+) community
- those who are unable to live at home
- each of the 9 wards of Moonee Valley
- and importantly disability, including psychosocial disability (mental illness) and/or caring experiences.

**Membership selection will also consider:**

**Connection to the community:** demonstrated links to local groups or communities, evidence of engagement on a local level, emerging research, policies and legislative issues (specific knowledge)

**Skills:** a mix of skills e.g., comprehension, community engagement, advocacy, volunteer, program design and delivery, arts projects, budgeting, events, organisational management

**Understanding of sector/ local issues:** a broad understanding, uses multiple methods to understand issues and shows interest (what are the opportunities and challenges)

**Industry membership:**

The 12 membership positions are exclusive of representatives of key disability service provider and partner organisations, who may also be invited onto the committee at Council Officer discretion.

These members will also be asked to participate in the Expression of Interest process.

The number of key disability service providers is at the discretion of the committee and Council Officers.

## **Committee Guests**

Council staff are excluded from membership of the Advisory Committee due to the potential conflict of interest with their role.

Suitably skilled persons including key Council Officers may be invited to join the Committee in an advisory capacity for their specialist area, for a specified purpose or period of time. These co-opted members have limited roles and do not participate in group decisions unless specified.

Mayor and Councillors are invited to attend as guests in an observational role (\*subject to availability).

Members of Council's other Citizen Advisory and Reference Committees and Groups are invited to attend as guests to provide a report on the activities of their Group and otherwise attend in an observational role.

## **Period of Membership**

Disability Advisory Committee participants will serve a term of two years and generally serve a maximum of two consecutive terms on the Committee. They may reapply through the expression of interest process to either continue their appointment or re-join the Committee. However, preference will be given to new members where possible, to ensure that the opportunity to participate is shared. Membership is at the discretion of Council Officers.

## **Reporting requirements**

The minutes of each meeting will be confirmed at the following meeting, and where corrections are made, minutes will be reissued.

There is no reporting requirement to Council.

## **Frequency of Meetings and Attendance**

Meetings will be held 10 times a year (between February to November).

Meetings will be held in person and an online where possible.

Extraordinary meetings may be called in addition to this.

Minimum participation in 5 two-hour meetings annually (i.e. 6 out of 10 meetings per year).

Committee members are invited to participate in relevant additional related events throughout their term.

Meeting time of day and day of the week will be determined by Council Officers in consultation with Committee members annually for the following year.

The location of meetings will be rotated around Council facilities in Moonee Valley for the purpose of Committee members to have first-hand experience of any accessibility barriers at the venue and be able to then inform Council of any barriers to inclusion.

## **Leave of Absence**

Members who are unable to attend meetings for a period of time may wish to apply for a Leave of Absence for up to six months, by submitting a request in writing to the Access and Inclusion Officer. At the end of a Leave of Absence, a committee member will be deemed to have resigned if they do not attend the next Committee meeting. The Access and Inclusion Officer will confirm this in writing. If the member requires an extension of the agreed Leave of Absence, they must contact the Access and Inclusion Officer for this to be discussed.

## **Working Groups**

The Committee can establish working groups to look into a specific issue in more detail and assist with progressing advice between meetings.

Working groups must be time limited and action oriented.

Members can opt into these working groups and additional non-committee members (guests) may be invited to join the working group thereby further strengthening input into advice.

Working group members will nominate a Convenor who will be responsible for reporting to Committee meetings.

Council staff will work with working group members to manage agendas and meeting timeframes for the Committee meetings.

## **Quorum and Voting**

Quorum for a meeting is 50% of the committee membership at that time (excluding Council Officers).

A meeting may be cancelled if it does not have quorum.

The Committee is not a decision-making body but rather an Advisory Group. As such it does not require voting protocols.

Any formal advice provided by the Committee will be reached by consensus of 50% of the committee membership at that time (excluding Council Officers).

## **Conflict Resolution**

All DAC members will behave in a courteous and professional manner.

In the first instance any complaint of serious dispute should be brought to the Chairperson who will bring the parties together to seek a resolution. Where the dispute involves the Chairperson, the issues will be brought to the Council Officer in attendance.

If appropriate, and with the agreement of those involved, the matter may be presented to the Committee for consideration.

Mediation through an agreed mediator can be undertaken with the consent of all parties.

Council at its discretion will take appropriate action in the event of gross misconduct by a Committee member.

## Conflicts of Interest

Committee members must disclose any general or material conflicts of interest prior to their appointment and on an ongoing basis in accordance with the Local Government Act 2020 and the Moonee Valley City Council Governance Rules.

Committee members must absent themselves from discussions in relation to matters which they have disclosed a conflict of interest.

## Confidentiality

Members must treat information they receive as confidential unless otherwise advised. The documents presented to the Committee will often be in draft format and not ready for wider community distribution.

Members must not use confidential information other than for the purpose of performing their function as a member of the Committee.

## Relevant information and references:

View [Policies, Laws & Codes - Moonee Valley City Council](#) for reference documents listed below.

- <https://yoursay.mvcc.vic.gov.au/dac>
- Moonee Valley City Council Disability Action Plan, Council Plan and Health Plan
- MV2040 Strategy - Community vision
- Moonee Valley City Council Community Engagement Policy
- Moonee Valley City Council Governance Rules
- Inclusive Victoria: State Disability Plan 2022-2026 (Inclusive Victoria)
- Victorian Carer Strategy 2018-2022 – Extended while new Strategy developed
- Australian Disability Strategy 2021-2031
- *(Aust) Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA)*
- *Victorian Disability Act 2006*
- *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*
- *Victorian Carer Recognition Act 2012 / (Aust) Carer Recognition Act 2010*
- *Gender Equality Act 2020*
- *Local Government Act 2020*

## Review of Terms of Reference

Recommendations for amendments to the Terms of Reference can be made at any time. However, amendments to the Terms of Reference must be endorsed by the Committee and then approved by Council Officers.

These Terms of Reference will be reviewed every year or as required.

**Approval date:** 28 October 2025

**Next scheduled review date:** September 2026

## Agreement

By signing this document, I hereby agree to abide by the Disability Advisory Committee Terms of Reference (October 2025).

| Disability Advisory Committee Member: |  | Authorised Council Officer Representative: |                                               |
|---------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| <b>Name:</b>                          |  | <b>Name/Title:</b>                         | Kelly Armstrong, Access and Inclusion Officer |
| <b>Signature:</b>                     |  | <b>Signature:</b>                          |                                               |
| <b>Date:</b>                          |  | <b>Date:</b>                               |                                               |



## Appendix 1: Process to fill membership vacancies

When Committee vacancies occur, Council Officers will advertise to fill these as promptly as possible through an open expression of interest process.

### Example text for recruitment:

Council is seeking Expressions of Interest to fill up to twelve committee member positions on the Disability Advisory Committee. Two of these positions are designated for people with disability and Neurodivergent people who work and/or volunteer in the Moonee Valley area. The remaining ten positions are for people who live, work, recreate or play in the Moonee Valley area. All current members of the Committee are required to nominate through this process if they wish to remain on the Committee. These positions are for a term of two years with the possible extension for another two-year term (at Council Officer discretion).

### Application and Selection Process

Committee representatives must demonstrate an ability or willingness to participate in a strategic framework, work collaboratively and be respectful of diverse views. As far as possible, members of the committee will reflect the full range of issues relating to inclusion of people living with disability in Moonee Valley, their families and Carers and be representative of the nine wards of Moonee Valley.

Applicants should fill in the Expression of Interest form and submit it by **the due date**. Should anyone require the application form in an alternate format or assistance with completing the application form please contact the Access and Inclusion Officer on tel. 9243 8781 or email [disability@mvcc.vic.gov.au](mailto:disability@mvcc.vic.gov.au).

Final selection will be by the nominated Council Officers in the Young, Inclusive and Ageing Communities Department.