

POLICY REGISTER

POLICY NO. 01.016

POLICY TITLE:

ACCESS AND EQUITY

FILE REFERENCE NO. : C13/59, O1/5/1
DATE ADOPTED : February 23, 1999
MINUTE NO. : 38220
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OBJECTIVES

To provide a framework and procedures for Council to meet its obligations under the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW) and the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992.

POLICY STATEMENT

PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY

The Broken Hill City Council is firmly committed to achieving best practice in the delivery of local government services. The Council acknowledges that this is dependent on non-discriminatory access to services and comparable outcomes for all groups in society.

The Council recognises that particular groups of people in society have experienced, and continue to experience, institutional disadvantage and unequal social outcomes. Target groups include Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders, people of non-English speaking backgrounds, people with physical or intellectual disabilities, and the long-term unemployed.

This policy aims, therefore, to assist the Council and the community to achieve best practice by promoting the establishment of strategies and processes which effectively redress past disadvantage and improve the position of all groups in society.

COUNCIL'S COMMITMENT

The Council's Management Plan, Social Plan, and Disability Action Plans give practical expression to Council's unreserved commitment to the principle of access and equity in the provision of its services.

In keeping with this commitment the Council will strive to ensure that programs and services are relevant, accessible, fair and inclusive by:

- Promoting programs and services to the Broken Hill community in a manner that includes and reflects the diverse client population, to ensure that all residents and visitors are well informed about the options available to meet their individual needs
- Providing access to Council's facilities for all residents and visitors
- Undertaking to eliminate policies, practices, structures, assumptions and behaviours that may contribute to the disadvantages suffered by under-represented groups

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Councillors and senior staff are change agents and are therefore responsible for fostering the implementation of access and equity best practice by ensuring that:

- Council's mission statement and corporate goals clearly define its role in meeting the needs of equity target groups
- Equal opportunity policies are in place, widely dispersed and understood
- Barriers to access and participation are identified and strategies developed to overcome them
- Key staff have identified responsibility and expertise in equal opportunity matters

- The equity profile of Council's existing and potential client base is defined and participation targets established
- All Council and departmental policies and procedures are non-discriminatory and inclusive
- All staff are provided with information and training about access and equity issues and Council's complaint resolution processes
- All residents are provided with information about access and equity issues and Council's complaint resolution processes
- Levels of participation by equity target groups are monitored by study and participation levels across a full range of services
- Staff are aware of progress in the participation and outcomes for equity target groups and action plans are developed and put in place to meet any deficiencies.

Staff are responsible for ensuring that they understand and implement the policy and behave in a courteous, sensitive and non-discriminatory manner when dealing with other staff and clients.

Clients are responsible for behaving in a courteous, sensitive and non-discriminatory manner when dealing with staff and other clients.