

AGENDA ITEM 9.1 (B) ATTACHMENT

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Community Consultation - Diversity Equitable Access and Inclusion Policy - Draft</b>		
<b>Content of consultation, details of timeframes and responding address.</b>	<p>Dear Community Members</p> <p>George Town Council invites and welcomes members of the community to view Diversity Equitable Access and Inclusion Policy - Draft, offering you the opportunity to provide feedback and/or ask questions regarding its content, purpose, direction or any omissions or suggestions.</p> <p>We encourage the community to share this document and make it readily available to those in our community who will benefit from this policy.</p> <p><i>"It is really important to Council that as many people as possible have the opportunity to read this draft, this will minimise the risk of missing those people who have the most to benefit from having this policy, and who are potentially the best people to give us guidance".</i>  <i>Manager Development &amp; Environment</i></p> <p>For more information and to view this policy  <a href="https://georgetown.tas.gov.au/community-consultation">https://georgetown.tas.gov.au/community-consultation</a> or the attached PDF.</p> <p>The consultation period will commence on Friday 19th February at 5pm 2021 and conclude on the <b>Friday the 19th March 2021</b> at 5pm.</p> <p><b>All submissions are to be submitted in writing, addressed to the General Manager, George Town Council via email at <a href="mailto:council@georgetown.tas.gov.au">council@georgetown.tas.gov.au</a> or via post PO Box 161, George Town, TAS 7253.</b></p>		
Comments from Council's Manager – Liveable and Connected Communities	Staff researched and found contact details for numerous all-ability service providers and employers and sent them the draft Diversity Equitable Access Consultation asking for feedback, but have yet to received responses from those contacted.		
<b>Details of submissions received and draft comments and actions taken/recommended</b>			
NO	FROM	SUBMISSION	COMMENTS
1	Disability support services provider	<p>We have received the above today via email and would like to offer our support and insights where required.</p> <p>It is so good to hear the region is looking at such a policy and the team who work daily with people living with a disability in this region are in a great position to aid the facilitation of co-creative conversation to take place around the proposals that this policy will hopefully enable. I have requested that the coordinators working in this region also circulate the draft policy to their participants and families that they support,</p>	<p><b>Action required:</b>            Acknowledgement email sent on 29/6/21  <i>Thank you for responding to our public consultation for the draft Diversity, Equitable, Access and Inclusion Policy.</i>  <i>We have received some very beneficial responses from our community, some of which have contributed to improving</i></p>

		<p>better enabling as much outreach for you as possible.          We ourselves maybe in a position to submit some information by submission date, for our observations, conversations already had with the community.          If there is in any way we can support George Town Council in the this process moving forward, please do hesitate to contact me.          Regards</p>	<p><i>the readability and clarity of our draft.</i></p> <p><b>Comments:</b>          Good positive feedback. We need to work on how to build our communication channels with our community members for these specific areas</p> <p><b>Recommendations:</b>          Develop a database of groups and individuals (with their consent) for inclusion in any consultation processes regarding this policy.</p>
2	Local resident	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to comment upon this draft policy. I have read the document and make the following comments.</p> <p>Please note I have a particular interest and past experience in this area. I am willing and able to volunteer my time to assist in the development of the policy or strategy if that would assist.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>OBJECTIVES:</b> — I should like to see specific reference to the Council receiving guidance that includes keeping Council abreast of current and changing community needs and expectations, emerging trends in demographics and cultural diversity, and changes to relevant legislation, regulations, etc. Embracing diversity, promoting inclusion and avoiding discrimination is a dynamic exercise, which requires being alert to, and responding to, changes as they emerge.</li> <li>• <b>WHO IS INCLUDED</b> — I understand that Council is required to comply with federal and state legislation relating to diversity and the avoidance of discrimination, thus any specific reference as to who is included needs to ensure that this is</li> </ul>	<p><b>Action taken:</b>          This was responded to by phone and thanked on 23/6/21</p> <p><b>Comments:</b>          The first dot point is considered relevant and a necessity.          The second dot point is also a good point, of which we can fine tune as suggested.          The third dot point is very relevant, with really well worded aims for use within the policy.</p> <p><b>Recommendations:</b>          1/ Include the objective of this into the heading 'Develop formal and informal networks between Councils and other agencies', with the 'and other agencies' included as a result of this point.</p>

		<p>recognised. The opening sentence of the draft refers to "... ability, literacy, numeracy and language limitations, age, race, religions or other, within all aspects of Council services and facilities." The use of "other" is unclear and the sentence appears to be incomplete. Further along in the document there are references to 'people with disabilities', 'other perceived and real differences', 'mobility issues', and 'different cultural backgrounds'. This does not assist with clarity. It would be useful to make a single statement as to who is included, or provide a separate definition as to who the policy applies, or use a definition from legislation or similar. For example the Tasmanian Office of the Anti-Discrimination Commissioner refers to "... a particular characteristic, such as their age, race, sex or disability." (<a href="https://equalopportunity.tas.gov.au/html_version/disability_discrimination">https://equalopportunity.tas.gov.au/html version/disability discrimination</a>). It may be simpler for Council to, in policy at least, refer simply to age, race, sex or disability, and leave the expansion of these legal definitions (eg. mobility, literacy, etc) to explanatory communications.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DESCRIPTION OF AIMS — I found the wording of the first five of the seven aims to be hard to read, in some instances overlapping, and, in parts, confusing. They do not gel to provide a comprehensive whole 'picture'. As a stated aim is for inclusion of people with literacy difficulties then the document needs to reflect this; the whole needs to be edited with a view to ensuring simpler, clarifying language. I suggest: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Encourage people to participate in the community by having fair and inclusive opportunities, including appropriate and equal access to facilities, services and activities.</li> <li>○ Have communication tools that include access for people who may require assistance to access or contribute, and which</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>2/ reword the general list of potential contributors to access and inclusion barriers.</p> <p>3/ replace the existing dot points with those as recommended in full</p> <p>4/ Include a dot point to cover this in the policy 'aims'.</p>
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		<p>recognises the value of their contribution.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ensure all people are treated with dignity and respect, without prejudice, and have fair and reasonable access to all Council services and facilities.</li> <li>○ Raise awareness of the diverse needs of the community, and enhance the skills and confidence of Council officers in meeting the access and inclusion needs of each person.</li> <li>○ Ensure the Council meets its legal obligations to avoid direct or indirect unlawful or unfair discrimination.</li> <li>○ Implement strategies that reduce or remove barriers that may prevent a person from participating fully in the community.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● STRATEGY — I should like to see included in the policy a statement that the development of policies, programs and strategies will explicitly include meaningful opportunities for people of diversity to be consulted, contribute to, and participate in the development and implementation. (I do note that it is embodied in the draft Strategy, but I believe it should be explicit in policy.)</li> </ul> <p>Thank you again for the opportunity to comment. I would be happy to discuss my comments further.</p>	
3	Local resident	<p>To Whom It May Concern:</p> <p>Recent Grant activity has brought some questions to mind with respect to governance in the wording of these legal documents. I believe the following is relevant because of the 'DIVERSITY' of knowledge held by Executives of Clubs and Associations in the area with respect to the wording of the Grant Deeds. In my recent experience, I have drawn attention to –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Referral of specific dates in an Application document and a Grant Deed that refers to a different timeline.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Action completed:</b> The following response was sent. <i>I have finally got back to reviewing the feedback from our public consultation for this policy. In reviewing the respective feedback, we will be using as much as we can to fine tune the policy, with the aim of making it clearer and of</i></p>

2. A Grant Deed that has already been dated, but with no dating space on the Execution of the Deed page. Once again, timelines are a critical problem – lost months of use of the funds due to lack of provision of Deeds with date spaces for acceptance of the funding and the signing off on the Deeds. A Grant Deed is a contractual arrangement and therefore a legal document. If the Council is to build strong partnerships with community organisations and service providers (one of the listed Objectives) then these bodies need to be looked after. In the case of a Grant Deed, the Executives need to be conversant with what the document is for and what they must do to cover all the bases to ensure they do what is required without error. A session with Grant Applicants would be of assistance and thus improve communication between all parties. If the Council shows it cares and welcomes these Applications then there will not be a ‘them and us’ attitude in the Community.

Thank you for allowing me to voice my opinion on a small part of what the Council is endeavoring to do. Everyone needs to feel that the Council has each person’s interest at the forefront of its’ operations.

*better use in guiding us with our respective roles. While I note that your representation (about grant deeds) is not directly relevant to the wording of the policy, it will be important in driving outcomes from the policy, including ensuring our processes are considered to be suitable for all, and that we have clear guidelines for our forms and the like. It is practical examples that give us teeth when we are considering if a document or communication is suitable – or not. So, thank you very much for taking the time to submit your representation.*

**Comments:**  
While this rep is a very relevant rep, it is not relevant to the policy at this stage. It will, however be relevant once we adopt the policy, as given the concerns, it will be necessary to consider the wording on the deed forms, and if we can include plain English, explanatory notes, or similar, when the forms are up for review.

**Recommendations:**  
Investigate opportunities to develop ‘plain English’ options, or alternatively clear and concise explanatory notes to assist with managing

			legal documents as these are reviewed
4	Local resident	<p>I disagree with the above policy draft for the following reasons.</p> <p>Firstly I do not find anything objectionable with the current statement to require change.</p> <p>Secondly, the language of of the policy draft is entirely a dog whistle to dangerous ideologies, including, intersectionality, post modern theory, and critical race theory. These ideologies are unpopular among common people, and increasingly, known and recognized as such. They have recently been heavily seen as responsible for the recent riots and deaths in the United States, and rioting in the UK, and marching during covid in Australia.</p> <p>I do not see why George Town council would seek to align with these heavily charged ideologies.</p>	<p><b>Action taken:</b> The following email response was sent on 24<sup>th</sup> June. <i>Thank you for your representation to Council's public consultation for our draft Diversity, Equitable Access and Inclusion Policy.</i> <i>While it has been some time since the consultation period has closed, I have now commenced the review process.</i> <i>Your representation will be considered as part of that process, including us looking closely at the language.</i> <i>Once again, thank you for your input.</i></p> <p><b>Comments:</b> It is noted that the representor has raised some concerns about the need to change, and made some points they consider relevant. What we can take from this is the need to work on the 'language'.</p> <p><b>Recommendations:</b> Consider the language within the policy to insure it is inclusive and does not categorise groups or individuals</p>
5	Local resident	Thank you for the opportunity to provide some feedback.	<p><b>Action required:</b> <i>Thank you for your representation to Council's public</i></p>

		<p>Firstly I think that its shows the maturity and forward thinking of the GTC in ensuring we have a policy which aspires to be transparent, welcoming and inclusive by proposing a Diversity, Equitable Access and Inclusion policy.</p> <p>As we continue to grow and our community becomes much more culturally diverse, this will ensure we can be adaptable, responsive, respectful and equitable.</p> <p>As an adjunct to the policy it is my proposal (feedback) that Council establish a panel of both community and professionals members who could act as an advisory board when significant projects or events are considered to ensure they meet or exceed councils Diversity, Equitable Access and Inclusion policy aspirations. This advisory evidence could then form part of any report or consultation data council may collate for these significant projects and events.</p> <p>The panel could consist of;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council officer</li> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Health</li> <li>• Members (2) of the Community who demonstrated diverse cultural awareness</li> <li>• Councillor</li> <li>• Sports advocate (Healthy GT??)</li> <li>• Representative from an NGO or other social services IE Anglicare, City Mission, Neighbourhood House</li> <li>• Aged Care</li> </ul> <p>I believe also, and for the same reasons, Council should form an Aboriginal Community Diversity, Equitable Access and Inclusion Panel</p> <p>This panel could consist of;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aboriginal community members</li> <li>• Specifically an Aboriginal elder</li> <li>• Council officer</li> <li>• Councillor</li> </ul> <p>I believe both groups would deepen councils connection to community and greatly assist with connections and networks etc. These could also prove valuable for other consultation processes...</p>	<p><i>consultation for our draft Diversity, equitable access and inclusion policy.</i></p> <p><i>While it has been some time since the consultation period has closed, I have now commenced the review process.</i></p> <p><i>Your representation will be considered as part of that process, specifically noting your desire to see a 'panel' for the benefit of ensuring the best possible outcomes.</i></p> <p><i>In consideration of your feedback, we are including the development of a 'reference' group in the latest draft of the policy and strategy, as the need to improve our awareness of the community's diverse needs can only be fulfilled with the free flow of information, experiences and opportunities from our community.</i></p> <p><i>Once again, thank you very much for taking the time to submit your representation.</i></p> <p><b>Comments:</b>  Establishing a 'community panel' as an outcome of the 'policy'. This is really relevant feedback, as there does tend to be differing views</p>
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			<p>on 'access' type committees/panels. Benefits include the direct access to persons living with, or aware of needs, or have skills in specific areas, to guide us in sound decision making. There are often concerns around the perceived / actual complications that can result in involving committees, but to really understand our communities needs and have the best chance of meeting the aspirations of the policy, there will need to be some form of community involvement in our processes. To what level and detail will be a matter for future determination.</p> <p><b>Recommendations:</b> Include in the policy and strategy to develop a 'reference' group that can be involved in planning and decisions to varying degrees, depending on needs. This reference group would involve a large range of community members and organisations that could be pulled together in full, or in part, as needs presented. Eg: We are working on a particular idea, whom in the reference group would like to participate?, or whom has the necessary knowledge/skills to best guide us. Alternatively we distribute a particular project or</p>
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			document review and seek feedback from anyone whom has something beneficial to add that results in a better outcome for all.
6	Local resident	<p>In response to the community consultation plan, I have written the following. However, I would still love to arrange a meeting as per my previous email.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· To promote fair and inclusive opportunities enabling all people to have equitable, appropriate, and obtainable access to facilities, services, features and activities that enhances their independence, and participation in the community throughout the municipality.</li> </ul> <p>It is to my understanding that there is only one Aboriginal family worker in George Town who works at the children’s community hub. The hub is for families with children 5 years and younger, what about families who are new to the area with children older than 5 years? I moved from the mainland in May and am yet to connect with another Aboriginal family here in George Town because of the lack of Aboriginal services, including health services. When I suggested a TAC be introduced to George Town at a community event I was laughed at. However, the Circular Head organisation services the town of Smithton which has half the population George Town has. I think George Town has the numbers to service an Aboriginal organisation especially with its growing population.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· To promote positive inclusive communications platform for people with disabilities and other perceived or actual differences, as valuable contributing members of the community who expect and are entitled to safe movement, equitable access, and inclusion to services, facilities, features and activities without prejudice.</li> </ul> <p>My son, who is severely Autistic, gets over excited and then forgets all sense of road safety. When I e-mailed council and asked for safe fencing to be put around the new park in Anne</p>	<p><b>Action taken:</b>  <i>Thank you for your representation to Council’s public consultation for our draft Diversity, Equitable Access and Inclusion Policy.</i>  <i>While it has been some time since the consultation period has closed, I have now commenced the review process.</i>  <i>Your representation will be considered as part of that process, specifically noting the need to improve communications in response to customer requests, and the need to fully understand and appreciate the situations of others prior to determining a course of action.</i>  <i>While I note that your representation is not directly relevant to the wording of the policy, it does give us an insight into the work that we need to do, so will be important in driving outcomes from the policy, including ensuring our processes are considered to be suitable for all, and that we have clear guidelines for developing our understanding, needs, education and processes.</i></p>

		<p>street to prevent road accidents when we use the area, I was told he is my responsibility. Of course, he is my responsibility, but accidents happen and when the community asks for services to help those who require additional supports they should be at least heard with some respect.</p>	<p><i>It is practical examples that allows us to understand the needs in the community.</i>  <i>So, once again, thank you very much for taking the time to submit your representation.</i></p> <p><i>I will call you to have a chat about your concerns further, including your interest in local aboriginal connections and opportunities.</i></p> <p><b>Comments:</b>  This is the type of feedback that we need to better understand how we can build better outcomes.</p> <p><b>Recommendations:</b>  While this is very good feedback, there is no direct actions for the 'policy', but the concerns should be used for the development of actions coming out of the policy and strategy.</p>			
7	George Town Safety Committee	<table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="427 1402 517 1733">18.</td> <td data-bbox="517 1402 963 1733"> <p>disabled.  Disability Policy does not include Gay people</p> </td> <td data-bbox="963 1402 1082 1733">Rex</td> </tr> </table>	18.	<p>disabled.  Disability Policy does not include Gay people</p>	Rex	<p><b>Action required:</b>  Nil, as this concern has been dealt with above</p> <p><b>Comments:</b>  The policy has been intentionally drafted to be 'inclusive', avoiding categorising groups or individuals. Listings and wording will be refined to ensure we meet this expectation</p>
18.	<p>disabled.  Disability Policy does not include Gay people</p>	Rex				