



Shire of Lake Grace

Disability Access and Inclusion Plan

(DAIP)

2024-2029



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Prepared By:	Chris Paget, Deputy Chief Executive Officer
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CHANGE HISTORY

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1	1995	Shire of Lake Grace	Original Implementation
2	9 September 2008	Shire of Lake Grace	Review
3	28 May 2014	Shire of Lake Grace	Outcome 7 & 5 Year Review
4	19 June 2019	Shire of Lake Grace	5 Year Review
5	17 September 2024	Shire of Lake Grace	5 Year Review

INTRODUCTION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Western Australian Disability Services Act (1993) requires all local governments to develop a Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP). The purpose of the DAIP is to provide strategic direction and framework for the Shire to plan and implement improvements to access and inclusion across seven outcome areas. The Shire's DAIP has been prepared in accordance with these requirements and reflects our intention to partner with the community to achieve the improvements captured in the Plan.

The Shire will continue to explore and investigate opportunities to remove or reduce barriers to participation in a wide range of activities and functions, with the intention of making a difference in the quality of life for people with a disability who live, work and spend time in our community. We encourage you to read the Shire of Lake Grace Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2024-2029.

The Shire acknowledges the initial input received from many individuals, groups and other stakeholders within our communities, which has been invaluable in the original implementation and ongoing reviews of this Disability Access and Inclusion Plan. In particular, thanks are given to Shire staff and individual community members for their time, involvement and commitment.

Contents

Background.....	4
The Shire of Lake Grace.....	4
Functions, facilities and services (both in-house and contracted) provided by the Shire of Lake Grace	4
People with disability in the Shire of Lake Grace	4
Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) - Framework	5
Progress since 1995.....	5
Access and Inclusion Policy Statement.....	5
Development of the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan.....	7
Responsibility for the planning process.....	7
Community consultation process	7
Access Barriers	7
Review and evaluation mechanisms.....	8
Monitoring and Reviewing	8
Reporting on the DAIP.....	8
Communication the DAIP	8
Strategies to Improve Access and Inclusion.....	9
Appendix 1	12
Progress since 1995 under the Disability Service Plan and DAIP	12
Shire of Lake Grace Disability Access and Inclusion Plan.....	14
Implementation Plan 2024 – 2029.....	14
Implementation Plan 2024-2029	14

Background

The Shire of Lake Grace

The Shire of Lake Grace is located 354km south east of Perth in Western Australia's Southern Wheatbelt and covers an area of 10,747 square kilometres. It incorporates the towns of Lake Grace, Newdegate, Lake King, Varley and part of Pingaring.

Major industries are agriculture including wheat/grains/legumes, sheep and beef cattle, industrial manufacturing and allied services, and tourism.

In 2023 the Shire of Lake Grace had a population of approximately 1301 people according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics. In past years this has increased considerably with the influx of seasonal farm workers as well as tourists during the wild flower season, but statistics show that tourism numbers are now generally sustained all year round.

The town of Lake Grace was founded in the 1911 and has retained some heritage-listed public buildings from this period.

Functions, facilities and services (both in-house and contracted) provided by the Shire of Lake Grace

The Shire of Lake Grace is responsible for a range of functions, facilities and services including:

Services to property: construction and maintenance of Shire owned buildings, roads, footpaths and cycle facilities; land drainage and development; waste collection and disposal; litter control and street cleaning; planting and caring for street trees; numbering of buildings and lots; street lighting; and bush fire control.

Services to the community: provision and maintenance of sports fields, playgrounds, parks, gardens, reserves and other facilities for residents, youth, sporting and community groups; management of recreation centers, pools, public libraries, Visitor Centre/information services, community events, attendance at Development and Progress Association, Recreation Council and community group meetings.

Regulatory services: planning of road systems, sub-divisions and town planning schemes; building and development approvals for construction, additions or alterations to buildings; environmental health services and ranger services.

General administration: the provision of general information to the public and the lodging of complaints and payment of fees including rates and dog/cat licenses.

Processes of government: Ordinary and special Meetings of Council and its Committees, Electors' Meetings and election of Council Members; community consultations; compliance and public advertising.

People with disability in the Shire of Lake Grace

As identified in the figures from the 2021 Census, it is estimated that there are 21 (2.1%) persons who have need for assistance with core activities living within the Shire, compared with 2.4% in 2016. The influx of retirees will increase this number as according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics 2022 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers, 52.3% of people aged over 65 identified themselves as having a disability. Based on 2022 ABS numbers there are now 324 persons over the age of 60 living within this Shire, with the median age of the whole population being 41.5 years. The influx of tourists to this region, including those with a disability, must also be considered in the context of this Plan.

Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) - Framework

The DAIP is a legislative requirement set out in the *Disability Services Act* 1993 (amended 2004 – WA), while also being informed by the:

- *Equal Opportunity Act* 1984 (WA)
- *Disability Discrimination Act* 1992 (Commonwealth); and
- Disability (Access to Premises Buildings) Standards 2010 (under the *Disability Discrimination Act*).

The *Disability Services Act* requires the Shire to:

- Lodge a plan that covers a period of maximum five years with the Department of Communities;
- Include actions that address seven outcome areas listed under the Act;
- Consult with internal and external stakeholders when reviewing the objectives and actions within the plan; and
- Report annually to the Department of Communities on the progress of the plan.

The DAIP is also supported by the State Government's 'State Disability Strategy 2020 - 2030', a vision to protect, uphold and advance the rights of people with a disability in Western Australia. Annual DAIP reporting includes alignment of the Shire's DAIP strategies with the State Disability Strategy outcomes.

Progress since 1995

The Shire of Lake Grace is committed to facilitating the inclusion of people with disability through the improvement of access to its information facilities and services. Towards this goal the Shire adopted its first Disability Service Plan (DSP) in 1995 as it was known then, to address the access barriers within the community.

Since the adoption of the initial DSP, the Shire has implemented many initiatives and made significant progress towards better access. Some of these are highlighted in Appendix 1 under the relevant key outcome headings.

Access and Inclusion Policy Statement

The Shire of Lake Grace is committed to ensuring that the community is accessible for and inclusive of people with disability, their families and carers.

The Shire of Lake Grace interprets an accessible and inclusive community as one in which all Council functions, facilities and services (both in-house and contracted) are open, available and accessible to people with disability, providing them with the same opportunities, rights and responsibilities as other people in the community.

The Shire of Lake Grace:

- Recognises that people with disability are valued members of the community who make a variety of contributions to local social, economic and cultural life;
- Believes that a community that recognises its diversity and supports the participation and inclusion of all its members makes for a richer community life;
- Believes that people with disability, their families and carers should be supported to remain in the community;
- Is committed to consulting with people who have disability, their families and carers and disability organisations in addressing barriers to access and inclusion;
- Will ensure its agents and contractors work towards the desired outcomes in the DAIP;
- Is committed to supporting local community groups and businesses to provide access and inclusion of people with disability; and
- Is committed to achieving the seven desired outcomes of its DAIP.

The seven desired outcomes of the DAIP are:

1. People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organised by, the Shire of Lake Grace.
2. People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the buildings and other facilities of the Shire of Lake Grace.
3. People with disability receive information from the Shire of Lake Grace in a format that enables them to access the information as readily as other people.
4. People with disability receive the same level and quality of services from the staff of the Shire of Lake Grace as other people receive.
5. People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to the Shire of Lake Grace.
6. People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation by the Shire of Lake Grace.
7. People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to obtain and maintain employment with the Shire of Lake Grace.

Development of the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan

Responsibility for the planning process

The Chief Executive Officer has responsibility to oversee the development, implementation, review and evaluation of the plan. Council endorses the final plan and it is the responsibility of all officers to implement the relevant actions.

Community consultation process

In 2006, 2010, 2014, 2019 and 2024 the Shire undertook a review of its Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) to guide further improvements to access and inclusion within our operations and region.

The process included:

- Examination of the initial DAIP and subsequent progress reports to see what has been achieved and what still needs work;
- Consultation with key staff; and
- Consultation with the community

The *Disability Services Regulations (2004)* set out the minimum consultation requirements for public authorities in relation to Disability Access and Inclusion Plans (DAIPs).

Local Governments must call for submissions - either general or specific - by notice in a newspaper circulating in the Local Government area and on any website maintained by or on behalf of the Local Government. Other mechanisms may also be used. In accordance with the regulations an advertisement was taken out in the local newsletter and the community was advised of the consultation through the Shire's notice board, website, and social media.

Access Barriers

The access barriers identified in previous iterations of this Plan and the consultation processes were:

- Processes of the Shire may not be as accessible as possible.
- Suitable parking for people with disability may not be meeting the needs of this diverse demographic.
- Elements of the Shire's website require improvement to best meet the needs of people with disability.
- Ongoing staff training is required to adequately provide the same level of service to people with disability.
- People with disability may not be aware of all consultation opportunities with the Council.

Responsibility for implementing the DAIP

Implementation of the DAIP is the responsibility of the Chief Executive Officer. The Disability Services Act (1993) requires all public authorities to take all practical measures to ensure that the DAIP is implemented by its officers, employees, agents and contractors.

Review and evaluation mechanisms

The Disability Services Act (1993) requires that DAIPs be reviewed at least every five years. Whenever the DAIP is amended, a copy of the amended plan must be lodged with the Department of Communities. The Implementation Plan can be updated more frequently if desired.

Monitoring and Reviewing

The Chief Executive Officer will analyse progress in implementing the DAIP and provide a report to management and Council on progress and recommended changes to the implementation plan annually.

- The Shire's fully reviewed updated DAIP will be submitted to the Department of Communities prior to the end of 2024.

Evaluation

- A broad evaluation will occur as part of the five-yearly major review of the DAIP.
- The community, staff and Elected Members will be consulted as per the endorsed consultation strategies, as part of any evaluation.

Reporting on the DAIP

The Disability Services Act requires the Shire to report on the implementation of its DAIP in its annual report outlining:

- progress towards the desired outcomes of its DAIP;
- progress of its agents and contractors towards meeting the seven desired outcomes; and
- the strategies used to inform agents and contractors of its DAIP. Agents and contractors are informed of the DAIP through reference in their contract and tender documentation.

Communication the DAIP

Once the DAIP is finalised the community will be advised through an advertisement in the local newsletter and on the Shire's website.

The Shire is also required to report on progress in the prescribed format to the Department of Communities by 31 July each year.

Strategies to Improve Access and Inclusion

The following overarching strategies have been developed to address each of the seven desired outcome areas of the Disability Services Act from feedback gained in the consultation process. These will form the basis of the Implementation Plan.

Outcome 1: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any event by, the Shire of Lake Grace.

Strategy	Timeline
Monitor Shire services to ensure equitable access and inclusion.	Ongoing
Monitor access to the information in all Shire libraries.	Ongoing
Develop the links between the DAIP and other integrated Shire plans and strategies.	Ongoing
Ensure that events, whether organised or funded, are accessible to people with disability.	Ongoing

Outcome 2: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the buildings and other facilities of the Shire of Lake Grace.

Strategy	Timeline
Ensure that all buildings and facilities meet the standards for access and any demonstrated additional need.	Ongoing
Ensure that all new or redevelopment works provide access to people with disability, where practicable.	Ongoing
Ensure that ACROD parking meets the needs of people with disability in terms of quantity and location.	Ongoing
Advocate to local businesses and tourist venues the requirements for and benefits flowing from the provision of accessible venues.	Ongoing
Ensure that all recreational areas are accessible.	Ongoing

Outcome 3: People with disability receive information from the Shire of Lake Grace in a format that enables them to access the information as readily as other people.

Strategy	Timeline
Ensure that the community is aware that Shire information is available in alternative formats upon request.	Ongoing
Improve staff awareness of accessible information needs and how to provide information in other formats.	Ongoing
Ensure that the Shire's website and social media sites meet contemporary good practice.	Ongoing

Outcome 4: People with disability receive the same level and quality of services from the staff of the Shire of Lake Grace as other people receive.

Strategy	Timeline
Ensure that all employees, existing and new, and Elected Members are aware of disability and access issues and have the skills to provide appropriate services.	Ongoing
Improve community awareness about disability and access issues.	Ongoing

Outcome 5: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to the Shire of Lake Grace.

Strategy	Timeline
Council will ensure that information is available in clear and concise language on how residents can participate in decision making processes, public consultation and grievance mechanisms.	Ongoing
Council will advise the community that this information can be made available in alternative formats upon request.	Ongoing
Council will also undertake to support people with disability to attend meetings of Council.	Ongoing

Outcome 6: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation by the Shire of Lake Grace.

Strategy	Timeline
Council will ensure public consultation is available to all people.	Ongoing
Council will ensure the information available for public consultation is clear and concise so all people can be involved in the consultation.	Ongoing

Outcome 7: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to obtain and maintain employment with the Shire of Lake Grace.

Strategy	Timeline
Council will include an Equal Employment Opportunity statement in advertisements for staff – “Promotes a workplace that actively seeks to include, welcome and value unique contributions of all people. Encourages people with disability, Aboriginal Australians, young people and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to apply for this job”.	Ongoing
Council will ensure that the interview is held in an accessible venue. (HR to check this when inviting people to attend for an interview by asking if the candidate requires any assistance.	Ongoing
Council to use inclusive recruitment practices. Ensure job advertisements are in an accessible format.	Ongoing

Appendix 1

Progress since 1995 under the Disability Service Plan and DAIP

1. Existing functions, facilities and services are adapted to meet the needs of people with disability.

- Talking books were relocated to one specific, clearly signed location in each of Council's three (3) public libraries.
- Provision of Shire information through alternative formats; website (in line with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines and DDA standards), large print upon request.

2. Access to buildings and facilities has been improved.

- Council's renovated Administration Centre is "accessible friendly" with the upgrade including convenient street parking adjacent to the entrance at one level, self-opening entrance doors, wheelchair friendly counter, wide doorways for ease of movement within the building and a separate accessible toilet and shower.
- Lake Grace Visitor Centre (located in a restored heritage building) has renovated its toilet to meet the standards for access and the Management Committee has worked to establish a customer service procedure which will ensure wheelchair visitors have access to the same materials and resources as other people. Ramp has been installed to enable access to building.
- Bankwest has installed an access ramp with railing.
- Lake Grace and Newdegate have built new school/community library buildings all of which are accessible.
- Unisex accessible public toilets are available in Lake Grace, Newdegate, Lake King and Varley and are available 24hrs, 7 days per week.
- Footpaths in the main streets of Lake Grace and Newdegate have been upgraded and kerb ramps installed in Bennett Street, Absolon Street and side streets within townsites.
- Dual use paths installed in majority of streets in Lake Grace.
- Lake Grace Shire Hall entrances were raised to footpath level.
- Renovations to the toilets and change rooms at the Lake Grace Swimming Pool include accessibility and the parking area upgraded to allow wheelchairs and those with walking frames ease of access.
- The Lake Grace Medical Centre was opened in 2000 and provides facilities and services for people with disability. Accessible parking was marked in parking area.
- The Newdegate Medical Centre was opened in 2013 and provides access for people with disability.
- Three over 55's Independent Living Units were opened in Lake Grace in 2014 and provides access for people with disability. Three more units opened in 2016 providing access for people with disability.
- IGA Shopping Complex installed disability access bays at the entrance of the facility in rear carpark.
- Lake King improved parking access to public toilets.

- A Stylus for EFTPOS machine at Shire offices was purchased and implemented to make the 'touch-screen' machine easier to use for clients
- Asphalting around Lake Grace Pavilion has increased accessibility to building
- Braille Male and Female signs installed at Newdegate swimming pool
- Lake Grace - new ramp with rails installed at rear of CWA hall to improve access to the toilet
- Newdegate Skate Park and nature playground has;
 1. a transfer bench to allow disabled children to slide down into play areas.
 2. a stool for disabled people and
 3. a wheelchair picnic table
- Renovations to Newdegate Hall including the installation of a ramp with rails to improve access
- Major rebuild/renovations to the Newdegate Country Club to include entry ramp and unisex accessible toilets
- Construction of All Abilities Playground and Pump Track in Lake Grace that incorporates inclusive swings, carousel, trampolines, play forts, flying fox and accessible barbeque units and picnic tables
- Installation of additional new unisex accessible toilets in Lake Grace (Playground) and Lake King

3. Information about functions, facilities and services is provided in formats which meet the communication needs of people with disability.

- Information is made available in alternative formats upon request.
- The availability of alternative format information promoted via local newspaper and Health Services; continually promoted via Shire website.

4. Employee awareness of the needs of people with disability and skills in delivering services is improved.

- Key Shire employees received disability awareness training.
- Ongoing training for front line employees utilising the Department of Communities Disability Services online resources

5. Opportunities are provided for people with disability to participate in public consultations, grievance mechanisms and decision-making processes.

- Information on consultations was simplified and made available in alternative formats upon request.
- Local Government election polling is held in accessible buildings and some voting booths were modified to suit people using wheelchairs.

Shire of Lake Grace Disability Access and Inclusion Plan Implementation Plan 2024 – 2029

Implementation Plan 2024-2029

The Implementation Plan details the task, timelines and responsibilities for each broad strategy to be implemented in 2024-2029 to progress the strategies of the DAIP.

It is intended that the Implementation Plan will be updated annually to progress the achievement of all the strategies over the duration of the five-year plan.

Outcome 1: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the services of, and any events organised, by the Shire of Lake Grace.

Strategy	Task	Task Timeline	Responsibility
Ensure that people with disability are consulted on their need for services and the accessibility of current services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct reviews of the accessibility of services. • Rectify identified barriers and provide feedback to consumers 	Ongoing 2024-2029	Executive Team / Community Engagement Coordinator
Monitor Shire services to ensure equitable access and inclusion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor consultative process to ensure correct process includes people with disability 	Ongoing 2024-2029	Executive Team
<p>Develop links between the DAIP and Shire of Lake Grace Strategic Community Plan Aspire 2033.</p> <p>Environmental Objective - Protect and enhance our natural and built environment</p> <p>Social Objective – A valued, healthy and inclusive community and life-style</p> <p>Leadership Objective – Strong Governance and leadership, demonstrating fair and equitable community values</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate the objectives and strategies of the DAIP into the Shire's existing planning processes <p>Links to Aspire 2033 – Shire of Lake Grace Strategic Community Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4.1 – Maintain, rationalise, improve or renew buildings and community infrastructure • 6.1 - Maintain and enhance services and infrastructure that meets the needs of the community • 7.1 - Improve access to sport, leisure and recreation facilities, services and programs • 9.1 - Maintain accountability and financial responsibility through effective planning • 9.2 - Comply with statutory and legislative requirements • 9.3 - Provide a positive and safe workplace 	Ongoing 2024-2029	Executive Team

Ensure that events, whether provided or funded, are accessible to people with disability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all events are planned ensuring accessibility 	Ongoing 2024-2029	All staff
Improve access to the information in the Shire libraries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of large print and audio books for relevant community members 	Ongoing 2024-2029	Library staff

Outcome 2: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to access the buildings and other facilities of the Shire of Lake Grace.

Strategy	Task	Task Timeline	Responsibility
Ensure that all buildings and facilities meet the standards for access and any demonstrated additional need.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify access barriers to buildings and facilities. • Prioritise and make submissions to Council for works on rectifying identified barriers as a part of the budgetary process. 	Ongoing 2024-2029	Manager Infrastructure Services
Ensure that all new or redevelopment works provide access to people with disability, where practicable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the legal requirements for access are met in all plans for new or redeveloped buildings and facilities. • Ensure that no development application is signed off without a declaration that it meets the legal requirements. • Ensure that key staff are trained and kept up to date with the legal requirements. 	Ongoing 2024-2029	EHO/Building Surveyor & Town Planning Consultant
Ensure that ACROD parking meets the needs of people with disability in terms of quantity and location.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake an audit of ACROD bays and implement a program to rectify any non-compliance. • Consider the need for additional bays at some locations. 	Ongoing 2024-2029	Manager Infrastructure Services

<p>Advocate to local businesses and tourist venues the requirements for and benefits flowing from the provision of accessible venues.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information (available on the DSC website), on the needs of people with disability and of legal requirements and best practice. • Promote access to business • Make access information available on the Shire's website 	<p>Ongoing 2024-2029</p>	<p>Executive Team & Visitors Centre Manager</p>
<p>Ensure that all recreational areas are accessible</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor all facilities as they are upgraded. 	<p>Ongoing 2024-2029</p>	<p>Executive Team</p>

Outcome 3: People with disability receive information from the Shire of Lake Grace in a format that will enable them to access the information, as readily as other people are able to access it.

Strategy	Task	Task Timeline	Responsibility
Ensure that Elected Members and employees are aware of access needs and can provide appropriate services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine training needs of employees and conduct training as required 	Ongoing 2024-2029	Executive Assistant
Improve community awareness of disability and access issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote on the Shire of Lake Grace web page, Facebook page and community newspapers (Lakes Link, The Gatepost etc) 	Ongoing 2024-2029	Community Engagement Coordinator

Outcome 4: People with disability receive the same level and quality of service from the employees of the Shire of Lake Grace as other people receive

Strategy	Task	Task Timeline	Responsibility
Ensure that the community is aware that Shire information is available in alternative formats upon request.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicise the availability of other formats in the local newspaper and the Shire website 	Ongoing 2024-2029	Executive Assistant & Community Engagement Coordinator
Improve employee awareness of accessible information needs and how to provide information in other formats.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make State Government Access Guidelines for Information, Services and Facilities guidelines available on the Shire employee shared network. • Train employees in providing accessible information. 	Ongoing 2024-2029	HR / Executive Assistant
Ensure that the Shire's website meets contemporary good practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure website complies with contemporary good practice guidelines. 	Ongoing 2024-2029	Executive Assistant

Outcome 5: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to make complaints to the Shire of Lake Grace.

Strategy	Task	Task Timeline	Responsibility
Council will ensure that information is available in clear and concise language on how residents can participate in decision making processes, public consultation and grievance mechanisms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review current decision making processes, public consultation and grievance mechanisms and implement any recommendations 	Ongoing 2024-2029	Executive Team
Council will advise the community that this information can be made available in alternative formats upon request.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote accessible complaints mechanisms to the community and their availability in alternative formats. 	Ongoing 2024-2029	Executive Team
Council will also undertake to support people with disability to attend meetings of council.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all Council meeting venues are compliant for access 	Ongoing 2024-2029	Executive Team

Outcome 6: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to participate in any public consultation by the Shire of Lake Grace.

Strategy	Task	Task Timeline	Responsibility
Council will ensure public consultation is available to all people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote public consultation information to the community and their availability in alternative formats. 	Ongoing 2024-2029	Community Engagement Coordinator
Council will ensure the information available for public consultation is clear and concise so all people can be involved in the consultation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure agendas, minutes and other documents are available on request in alternative formats and are published on the Shire's website. 	Ongoing 2024-2029	Executive Assistant

Outcome 7: People with disability have the same opportunities as other people to obtain and maintain employment with the

Shire of Lake Grace.

Strategy	Task	Task Timeline	Responsibility
Council to use inclusive recruitment practices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job advertisements to be in an accessible format 	Ongoing 2024-2029	HR / Executive Assistant
Council will include an Equal Employment Opportunity statement in advertisements for staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To include in employment packs “Promotes a workplace that actively seeks to include, welcome and value unique contributions of all people. Encourages People with disability, Aboriginal Australians, young people and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to apply for this job”. 	Ongoing 2024-2029	HR / Executive Assistant
Council will ensure that the interview is held in an accessible venue.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HR to check this when inviting people to attend for an interview 	Ongoing 2024-2029	HR / Executive Assistant
Improve methods of attracting, recruiting and retaining people with disability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess the support required for employees with disability • Seek assistance from disability employment service providers 	Ongoing 2024-2029	HR / Executive Assistant