

POS	ACCESS & EQUITY	PSCS1
------------	----------------------------	--------------

POSITION STATEMENT CODE:	PSCS1
DIRECTORATE:	Governance & Community Services
BUSINESS UNIT:	Community Development Services
SERVICE UNIT:	Family & Community Development
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Manager, Human Services
FILE NO.:	182/002
DATE FIRST ADOPTED:	1997
DATE LAST REVIEWED:	8 September 2016
ATTACHMENTS:	N/A
VERSION NO.	4

Dates of Amendments / Reviews:		
DAPPS Meeting:	26 July 2012 28 August 2014	25 August 2016
OCM:	9 April 2009 9 August 2012	11 September 2014

BACKGROUND:

The introduction of various forms of legislation relating to disability services, equal opportunity and anti-discrimination have made it essential for public authorities to clarify how they are addressing these issues

PURPOSE:

The City of Cockburn aims to maintain and improve the quality of life of its residents by creating an accessible and inclusive community in which information, services, facilities, decision-making processes and other activities are open and available to all residents, and in which resources are distributed equitably according to need.

POSITION:

(1) The City of Cockburn acknowledges its leadership role in the community by demonstrating its commitment to social justice principles. (Definitions of the concepts referred to in this Position Statement are provided in Section 2 of this document).

1. Planning and Development

- (a) Supports the inclusion of social justice principles into its strategic plan and all other planning and development processes and activities.
- (b) Supports local area needs based planning which reflects community needs and priorities.

POS	ACCESS & EQUITY	PSCS1
------------	----------------------------	--------------

- (c) Recognises that while some services may be provided for all residents, they may not be equally accessible if they are uniformly designed and delivered. The Council therefore supports an approach which reflects community diversity when planning for social, physical and economic infrastructure.
- (d) Recognises the need to plan and develop services in a way which counters racist, ageist, sexist and other discriminatory role stereotyping, eg. women as carers, the aged and disabled as passive and dependent.
- (e) Recognises that certain groups in the community have specific needs and, therefore, may allocate resources according to need to reduce inequalities amongst its residents.
- (f) Supports representation of residents, reflecting community diversity, in planning and development processes.

2. Participation

- (a) Endeavours to ensure that all residents have equal opportunity to participate in Council activities and decisions that affect their lives.
- (b) Recognises the value of creating opportunities for all residents to participate in Local Government elections, as voters and candidates, and in all other political processes.
- (c) Endeavours to minimise physical, attitudinal, social, economic and institutional barriers that prevent participation by individuals and groups in community life.

3. Information and Communication

- (a) Endeavours to provide universally accessible information to members of the community which is appropriate to the culture, language, and ability of residents.
- (b) Endeavours to provide information to residents about their rights and mechanisms for addressing grievances and concerns.
- (c) Supports community education in relation to the role of Local Government and electoral procedures.
- (d) Supports training of staff in the use of translating and interpreting services, both internal and external, to assist staff communicate with residents.

POS	ACCESS & EQUITY	PSCS1
------------	----------------------------	--------------

- (e) Encourage multi-lingual and other staff to use and develop their communicating skills, in accordance with Council guidelines, to assist Council in its activities.

4. Community Relations

- (a) Promotes harmonious community relations and is committed to the elimination of all forms of racism and other discrimination within its community.
- (b) Supports cultural maintenance and development as a way of enhancing personal growth, quality of life and community diversity.
- (c) Promotes self-development of its residents by creating and enhancing opportunities for independence, choice and self-determination, aimed at maintaining and improving quality of life.

5. Training and Development

- (a) Supports the training of Council representatives to improve understanding of the requirements of groups with additional needs , and enhance service delivery.
- (b) Encourages Council representatives at all levels to be aware of community diversity and the subsequent implications for policy information, program design and service delivery.

(2) DEFINITIONS

1. Access

Equal opportunity for all residents to participate in Council activities. This includes access to services, programs, facilities, decision-making processes, and entitlements.

2. Equity

Fair distribution of resources and opportunities according to need and access to decision-making processes.

3. Participation

Participation in decision-making about matters affecting people's lives.

4. Rights

Relates to the entitlement to justice for all individuals and includes freedom of assembly, speech, beliefs, and information.

POS	ACCESS & EQUITY	PSCS1
-----	-----------------	-------

5. Community Relations

Is concerned with how people interact and relate to each other as individuals and as a community.

6. Culture

Ideas, beliefs, values, knowledge, and experiences which influence the way in which people behave and relate.

7. Ethnicity

Refers to a person's racial, cultural, and/or linguistic heritage. It has become commonly used to refer to someone from a background other than English-speaking, although everyone has an ethnic background.

8. Social Justice

Refers to the right of all people to equality of treatment and opportunity and the removal of barriers preventing access and equity.

Four main principles underpin the concept of Social Justice. These are: Access, Equity, Participation and Rights.

9. Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP)

The Disability Services Act 1993 (amended 2004) requires that all public authorities develop and implement a DAIP. The City of Cockburn's DAIP, available at <http://www.cockburn.wa.gov.au>, outlines how the City will work to enable persons with disabilities to have equal access to its facilities and services.

10. Inclusion

The concept that individuals and groups in a community make accommodation to include people with additional needs in everyday social and economic life, without qualification.

NOTE: These definitions are based on definitions provided by State and Federal Government Departments and the Western Australian Local Government Association.