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1. PREAMBLE

Council has a responsibility to ensure its decisions and actions meet the needs of the community, which is diverse in its needs and aspirations.

1.1 Background

The City of Holdfast Bay is Kurna land. The area includes a number of spiritually and culturally significant locations, which continue to be important to the Kurna people today. These areas include burial grounds, historic gathering areas and dreaming places.

The city is also important to the European history of the State, as it includes the site of the first settlers’ arrival and South Australia’s first Vice-Regal Proclamation, which was read on 28 December 1836.

The term ‘multiculturalism’ was introduced in the early 1970s, when the final vestiges of the ‘White Australia’ policy were removed and an understanding of the value of diversity, rather than assimilation, grew throughout the community.

In more recent years, appreciation for other forms of diversity has also grown. Equal Opportunity legislation and policy seeks to ensure that Australia embraces diversity and welcomes all people irrespective of culture, faith, sexual orientation, gender identity, or ability.

1.2 Purpose

This policy articulates Council’s commitment to creating a welcoming place for all, regardless of background, age, religion, sexuality, gender identity, or abilities.

1.3 Scope

This policy applies to the whole of council.

1.4 Definitions

Access – refers to equitable access to Council’s services, information, programs, facilities, built environments and employment opportunities.

Equity – refers to fairness in a social justice context. Principles of equity recognise that policies or practices which are the same for everyone can appear to be neutral and fair but actually disadvantage people who share a particular attribute. Equity aims to prevent discrimination based on gender, cultural background, disability, age, sexual orientation,

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beliefs or various other grounds, and to facilitate people's participation in life and the community.

Inclusion – refers to a state where differences are respected and people feel they belong and are valued, and can live in dignity and participate as they choose in line with their rights as an equal member of society, free from discrimination and disadvantage.

Human Centred Design – refers to a problem-solving technique that puts people at the centre of the development process. It is an iterative practice that makes feedback from the intended users of the solution a critical part of how a solution evolves.

Multiculturalism – refers to the idea that cultural, linguistic and religious differences within society should be accepted and celebrated.

Universal Design - refers to the design and composition of an environment so that it can be accessed, understood and used to the greatest extent possible by all people regardless of their age, size, ability or disability. (*National Disability Authority, Centre for Excellence in Universal Design*).

1.5 Strategic Reference

Council's vision for 2050+ is, in part, to create "a welcoming and healthy place for all in South Australia's most sustainable city".

Furthermore, Council's Strategic Plan includes the following aspirations:

- Holdfast Bay is internationally recognised as a leader in inclusion and participation
- The Kurna people's cultural and spiritual relationship to the area is honoured in meaningful, collaboratively agreed ways.

Council's strategic plan is aligned to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, which were developed as an urgent call for action by all countries. The goals recognise that ending injustice and inequality must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education and spur economic growth, while tackling climate change and working to preserve the natural environment.

Goals relevant to this policy include:

Goal 5 – Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

Goal 16 – Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

2. PRINCIPLES

- 2.1 Council recognises "the inherent dignity and worth and the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family" and acknowledges its responsibilities to the principles of human rights, as articulated in a number of International Conventions and related legislation.

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- 2.2 Council recognises that we all benefit from the diversity of our society and that all people have a right to contribute to the social, environmental, political, economic and cultural fabric of our city, regardless of their background, age, religion, sexuality, gender identity, or abilities.
- 2.3 Council is committed to planning, decision-making and service delivery that:
- supports the rights of all people to have dignity and autonomy
 - is non-discriminatory
 - is inclusive for all
 - is collaboratively developed, using participatory methods
 - encourages all possible opportunities for participating in and contributing to life in this city and community
 - encourages a sense of belonging
 - respects, celebrates and proactively welcomes diversity
 - values contributions made by everyone
 - focusses on equity of opportunity and participation.
- 2.4 Council acknowledges its leadership role in inclusion and commits to model behaviours and actions that enable equity, access and inclusion. In particular, Council acknowledges the importance of recognising indirect discrimination as well as direct discrimination and commits to addressing both.
- 2.5 Council will apply principles of universal design and human centred design at every opportunity in planning and delivery of projects and services. Council also acknowledges the importance of tailoring communications and access to ensure inclusion, noting that people living with a disability, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex or queer (LGBTIQ+) can face unique challenges and disparities in access to services.
- 2.6 Council acknowledges that the status quo inadvertently disadvantages and excludes some members of our community and commits to innovating in order to increase participation and inclusion.
- 2.7 Council commits to ensuring its facilities and services are inclusive, as well as accessible, where possible.
- 2.8 Council acknowledges that inclusion must be a joint and collaborative endeavour, undertaken in a spirit of *Tiati Wangkanthi Kumangka* (truth-telling together) and openness to new perspectives and ideas.
- 2.9 Council commits to and requires all Elected Members and staff to commit to applying a curious mindset to difference, with the intention of building empathy and understanding. Council invites community members to do the same.
- 2.10 Council supports Elected Members, staff and the community in proactively suggesting ways that our city and our organisation can be more inclusive.
- 2.11 Council commits to seeking opportunities to support and invest in activities that increase diversity and inclusion in the city.

3. REFERENCES

3.1 Legislation

The Equal Opportunity Act 1984

The Disability Inclusion Act 2018

Local Government Act 1999

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women

Conventions on the Rights of the Child.

3.2 Other References

Strategic Plan – Our Holdfast 2050+

Disability Action and Inclusion Plan

Customer Feedback and Complaints Policy

Employee Code of Conduct

Code of Conduct for Council Members

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.