



POLICY
ACCESS AND EQUITY



ACCESS AND EQUITY

The City of Kwinana aims to maintain and improve the quality of life of its residents by creating an accessible community in which information, services, facilities, programmes, decision-making processes and other activities are open and available to all residents, in an effort to provide equal opportunities, rights and responsibilities, and the equitable distribution of resources according to need.

Adopted:	14/2/1996 #547
Last reviewed:	27/09/2006 #519 28/04/2010 #105 11/07/2012 #163 08/07/2015 #509
Legal Authority	Local Government Act Section 2.7 – Role of Council

Policy:

Council acknowledges its leadership role in the community by demonstrating its commitment to social justice principles. (Definitions of the concepts referred to in this policy are provided in Section 6).

1. Planning and Development:

Supports the inclusion of social justice principles into its strategic plan and all other planning and development processes and activities.

Supports local area needs based planning with reflected community needs and priorities.

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.

Recognises the need to plan and develop services in a way which counters racist, ageist, sexist and other discriminatory role stereotyping, e.g. women as carers, the aged and disabled as passive and dependent.

Recognises that certain groups in the community have specific needs and, therefore, may allocate resources according to need to reduce inequalities amongst its residents.

Supports representation of residents, reflecting community diversity in planning and development processes.

2. Participation:

Endeavours to ensure that all residents have equal opportunity to participate in City activities and decisions that affect their lives including employment opportunities with the City.

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.

Endeavours to minimise physical, attitudinal, social, economic and institutional barriers that prevent participation by individuals and groups in community life.

3. Information and Communication:

Endeavours to provide information that is accessible to members of the community which is appropriate to the culture, language and ability of residents.

Endeavours to provide information to residents about their rights and mechanisms for addressing grievances and concerns.

Supports the development of guidelines for the use of translating and interpreting services, both internal and external, to assist staff in communicating with residents.

Encourage multi-lingual and other staff to use and develop their communicating skills, in accordance with City guidelines, to assist the City in its activities.

Endeavours to advertise City activities in a way that allows all residents, as potential consumers, to know of their existence.

4. Community Relations:

Supports the need to promote harmonious community relations and is committed to the elimination of all forms of racism and other discrimination within its community.

Supports cultural maintenance and development as a way of enhancing personal growth, quality of life and community diversity.

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:

Support the training of Council and City representatives in developing skills and knowledge which will improve understanding of the requirements of special needs groups, and enhance service delivery.

Encourages Council and City representatives at all levels to be aware of community diversity and the subsequent implications for policy information, program design and service delivery.

6. Contractors:

Contractors in the City acting for or on behalf of or conducting work within the City will be expected to deliver the same commitment to Access and Equity as the City.

7. Definitions:

a) Access:

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

b) Equity:

Fair and equal distribution of resources (according to need), opportunities and access to decision-making processes.

- c) **Participation:**
Participation is decision-making about matters affecting people's lives.
- d) **Rights:**
Relates to the entitlement to justice of all individuals and includes freedom of assembly, speech, beliefs and information.
- e) **Community Relations:**
Is concerned with how people interact and relate to each other as individuals and as a community.
- f) **Culture:**
Ideas, beliefs, values, knowledge and experiences which influence the way in which people behave and relate.
- g) **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 of some sort.
- h) **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
 - Rights

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