



SOCIAL JUSTICE POLICY

Adopted: xxxx 2018

TRIM: 093657.2018



SOCIAL JUSTICE POLICY

1. LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

There are separate legislative requirements that govern Councils in providing services in an accessible and equitable manner, particularly in reference to disadvantaged groups within the community. A full list of these documents can be found in Appendix 1 of this Policy.

2. PURPOSE

- 2.1 The purpose of the Social Justice Policy is to provide a foundation and guiding principles for Council's commitment and actions to protect human rights and promote key social justice values of freedom, respect, equity and dignity for all people in the City of Liverpool. The Social Justice Policy acts as a starting point in Council's effort to redress the impact of social and economic inequalities have on both the people experiencing it and on the wider community.
- 2.2 Council will promote a community that has high levels of social capital and that values diversity and ensures people are not discriminated against regardless of race, faith, ability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity or economic status. Council will meet these commitments through the principles outlined in this document, ensuring all members of the community have appropriate and equitable opportunities in accessing Council's full range of services, activities and information.

3. DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 **Social Justice:** In its simplest form, Social Justice is the equal distribution of resources and opportunities, in which outside factors that categorize people are irrelevant. It is about building a society that is based on the principle of fairness for all, that understands and values human rights, and that recognises the dignity of every person.
- 3.2 **Social Inclusion:** Diversity is seen as a core strength of the community. The opportunity for people to participate fully in economic and community life, to form and foster healthy, meaningful relationships and to develop their full potential, and be treated with dignity and respect.
- 3.3 **Social Sustainability:** Communities that are equitable, diverse, connected and democratic, and which actively support the capacity of current and future generations to create healthy and liveable communities.

SOCIAL JUSTICE POLICY

- 3.4 **Social Infrastructure:** Processes, programs, events, services, networks and activities that support individuals and families to meet their social and personal needs.
- 3.5 **Social Capital:** Social relations that have productive benefits for the community. It is an outcome of community engagement and community capacity building processes. Elevated levels of social capital assists in the creation of social cohesion and reduce inequalities in communities.
- 3.6 **Human Rights:** Derived from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as adopted by United Nations in 1948. It is about recognising the inherent dignity of all members of the human family as the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world. Human rights are universal, to be enjoyed by all people, no matter who they are or where they live.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

4.1 Acknowledgment

The City of Liverpool is welcoming of Australian Indigenous people and intends to continue its support and celebration of their people and culture.

We recognise and deeply appreciate Aboriginal historic connection to this place, we also recognise the contributions of Darug, Tharawal and other local indigenous peoples have made, both in shaping and strengthening this community, our state and country as a whole.

4.2 Why do we need a Social Justice Policy?

Social justice is, in fact, the old Australian egalitarian ideal - the "*fair go*" translated into a more modern and perhaps less well understood term. The City of Liverpool is one of the fastest growing LGAs in Australia which consists of a high proportion of people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. This is a recognised unique strength for our community, however, our city as a fast-growing municipality face challenges such as but not limited to:

- Responding to social disadvantage in the context of rapid growth;
- Managing geographically large areas, both urban and rural;
- Need for capacity building in pockets of significant socio-economic disadvantage;
- Addressing issues around aging social and physical services, infrastructure in established areas and providing for requirements of new social and physical services and infrastructure in the rapidly developing parts; and
- High rates of youth unemployment.

SOCIAL JUSTICE POLICY

There is increasing recognition that we need better ways to account for the social, economic and environmental values that results from our activities. The Social Justice Policy aims to establish the systemic and structural social arrangements to improve equality, as a core social value in our city. Simply put, it involves finding the optimum balance between our joint responsibilities as a community and as individuals to foster social inclusion, strengthen the local community and increase opportunities for people who may experience barriers.

4.2.1 Who does this policy specifically support?

Council recognises that the community of Liverpool is a very diverse group and that there are several groups within our community who may be categorised as disadvantaged and/or at considerable risk due to different circumstances. These circumstances may have led to issues around social isolation, financial difficulties, access and representation. Council acknowledges and seeks to support adequate delivery of programs, services, information and opportunities to these groups. A full list of these groups can be found in Appendix 2 of this document.

4.3 Social Justice Principles

4.3.1 Following principles are informed by United Nation's direction on Social Justice in an Open World and by examples of best practice in the field of social justice. These principles underpin Council's approach on social justice and are applied in its activities and decision-making, accounting for Liverpool's diverse and rapidly changing social and natural environment.

- a) **Recognition of Aboriginal Australians:** Council recognises and acknowledges the traditional owners of the land on which Liverpool now stands and pays respects to Elders both past and present. It supports and celebrates the rich culture and strong community values of the Aboriginal community;
- b) **Equity:** Council is committed to fairness in providing services, making decisions and distributing resources equally, particular consideration given for those in need to ensure an increased collective benefit for the whole community;
- c) **Access:** Council is committed to providing and advocating for services and facilities that are available to all regardless of background, ability or capacity. To ensure this, social justice principles help guide council's urban design and social infrastructure planning protocols;
- d) **Human Rights and Advocacy:** Council recognises and supports the basic rights and freedoms to which all humans are entitled. This includes civil and political rights, economic, social and cultural rights; and the right to be treated with dignity and respect, free from discrimination. Council is committed to carrying out advocacy campaigns aiming to reduce discrimination and disadvantage;
- e) **Participation and partnership:** Council recognises the rights of people to contribute

SOCIAL JUSTICE POLICY

to decisions that affect their lives and is committed to supporting opportunities for stakeholder engagement in planning and decision making processes;

- f) **Sustainability:** Council is committed to assessing social, cultural, environmental and economic impacts of its decisions and actions on our community today and on future generations;
- g) **Community strengths:** Council values and acknowledges the strengths of our community such as diversity and community connections in pursuit of improving our communities. Council recognises the benefits of working towards empowerment and capacity building in the community;
- h) **Safe and healthy communities:** Council is committed to creating a city which is safe and healthy and recognises that a safe and healthy community improves wellbeing for all;
- i) **Evidence based approach:** Council recognises the importance of evidence based solutions. It is committed to being informed of the changing trends based on scientific research and consultation processes. Council is also committed to monitoring and evaluating actions and strategies to ensure continuous improvement and effective and efficient service delivery;
- j) **Biodiversity & Environmental Protection:** Council is committed to protect and enhance the variety of life in all its forms, recognise and conserve the intrinsic value of biodiversity and natural ecosystems in its LGA. Council recognise social and environmental justice issues are undeniably linked and that groups who are socially, economically, culturally or otherwise marginalised are especially vulnerable to environmental degradation; and
- k) **Compliance:** Council is committed to upholding the relevant national and international legislative documents relating to human rights and social justice in all decision making processes.

4.3.2 By applying social justice principles, opportunities are created for individuals and groups who experience disadvantage to improve their wellbeing and quality of life.

4.4 Council's Role and Responsibilities

4.4.1 Council has a key role in creating a socially just, inclusive and sustainable community. This responsibility is shared with the federal and state governments, the non-government sector, the business community and the general community. Creating a socially just, inclusive and sustainable community is one of the key determinants that guide Council's work.

4.4.2 Council applies the social justice principles and other relevant guiding documents to directions it takes and allocate resources. Council has a long and rich history of actively working with the community towards social justice. Some of this work has been done directly, and some through advocacy and lobbying to other levels of government.

SOCIAL JUSTICE POLICY

4.4.3 Compared to the Greater Sydney metropolitan area, overall, the Liverpool LGA has a higher proportion of people who:

- a) Are young and aged under 24 years;
- b) Are born overseas and speak a language other than English at home;
- c) Have a lower income and higher housing stress;
- d) Do not hold formal qualifications and / or have not completed;
- e) Experience domestic related assault;
- f) Live in a one parent household;
- g) Are unemployed;
- h) Living in social housing;
- i) Are in need of assistance due to disability; and
- j) Are working families with children.

4.4.4 The Social Justice Policy assists Council to meet the requirements of the Local Government Act 1993. The Act states that “Council’s long term community strategic plans must be based on social justice principles and address social issues along with civic leadership, environmental and economic issues”.

4.5 Application of Social Justice Principles

4.5.1 The social justice principles are applied when developing Liverpool, Our home 2027, Council’s 10 year Community Strategic Plan for Liverpool, and when preparing other strategy documents and programs.

4.5.2 The social justice principles are applied when planning and delivering services to the community. For example, Council assesses social impacts as part of all relevant development applications; Council provides information about waste services in different languages to local residents; and Council ensures there are community consultation processes in place as part of its road infrastructure and land use projects.

4.5.3 Council delivers targeted programs and services that directly seek to improve wellbeing and quality of life for all, and particularly for people who may face barriers in accessing opportunities. Specifically, Council’s social justice policy informs programs and services outlined below.

- a) Community Engagement Policy;
- b) Advisory committees;
- c) District Forums;
- d) Environment volunteer groups;
- e) Community development programs (Youth, Aboriginal, ageing and disability, multicultural, Community 2168 Project, 2168 Children’s Parliament, Community Safety, and Community Grants and Donations);

SOCIAL JUSTICE POLICY

- f) Community planning and policy (Social research, social impact assessment and planning, community services and social infrastructure planning); and
- g) Services to the community (Community events, libraries, and cultural programs, early childhood programs, community facilities, parks, sportsgrounds, and recreation facilities).

4.6 Review and Social Justice Principles Checklist

4.6.1 The reporting and monitoring processes ensure the social justice policy is integrated into Council's overall planning and reporting mechanisms, and informs future directions for Liverpool. The following checklist should be used as a guide.

4.6.2 Social Justice Principles Checklist:

- a) Community members, groups and organisations have been engaged as required;
- b) Strategies have been put in place to provide access for children, young people, older people, people with a disability, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people of diverse sexualities and women;
- c) The initiative does not disadvantage individuals because of their background, ability or capacity;
- d) Opportunities are available for people to contribute their views;
- e) Internal and external partners have been invited to participate where relevant;
- f) The traditional owners of the land have been recognised and acknowledged;
- g) The rights of citizens have been upheld;
- h) The short and long term social, cultural, environmental and economic impacts have been considered and addressed;
- i) Assets in the community have been considered and encouraged;
- j) Community diversity and community connections have been promoted;
- k) Personal and community safety has been addressed;
- l) Physical and psychological health is protected and promoted;
- m) There is evidence that the initiative is likely to produce a fair and just outcome; and
- n) Strategies for monitoring and evaluation are in place.

SOCIAL JUSTICE POLICY

AUTHORISED BY

Council Resolution

EFFECTIVE FROM

xxxx

DEPARTMENT RESPONSIBLE

Community Development and Planning

REVIEW DATE

This policy will be reviewed and reported on every four years in line with the review of Council's Community Strategic Plan.

VERSIONS

Version	Amended by	Changes made	Date	TRIM Number
1	Council resolution	Not applicable	23 May 2011	034883.2012
2	Council resolution	Compete review		

ATTACHMENTS

Appendix 1: Legislative requirements.

Appendix 2: Community groups that may experience disadvantage.

SOCIAL JUSTICE POLICY

REFERENCES

Adams, Bell, and Griffin, 2009, 'Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice: A Sourcebook' New York: Routledge

A Stronger, Fairer Australia. National Statement on Social Inclusion. Commonwealth of Australia, 2009

Background Issues to Addressing Disadvantage in Social Investment. The Centre for Social Impact, 2009

Catherine E, Harnois, Ifatunji, M 2010, 'Gendered measures, gendered models: toward an intersectional analysis of interpersonal racial discrimination', Ethnic and Racial Studies Vol. 34 No. 6 June 2011 pp. 1006-1028

Community Wellbeing Policy. Camden City Council, 2003

Institute for Democratic Renewal and Project Change Anti-Racism Initiative. A Community Builder's Tool Kit. Claremont, CA: Claremont Graduate University

NSW Social Justice Directions Statement: Supporting People and Strengthening Communities. NSW Govt, 2000

Planning a Sustainable Future. Planning and Reporting Guidelines for Local Government in NSW, 2010

Social Inclusion. Origins, concepts and key themes. Australian Government, 2008

Social Justice Charter. City of Ryde, 2008

Social Policy: Connecting People, Building Communities. City of Sydney, 2006

Suffolk University Center for Diversity & Inclusion, Social Justice Terminology, 2015

The GLSEN Jumpstart Guide: Examining Power, Privilege, and Oppression, New York, 2010

United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948

SOCIAL JUSTICE POLICY

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Legislative Requirements

- Age Discrimination Act 2004.
- Affirmative Action (Equal Opportunity for Women) Act 1986.
- Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986.
- Carer Recognition Act 2010.
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992.
- Disability Services Act 1993.
- Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986.
- Human Rights (Sexual Conduct) Act 1994.
- Local Government Act 1993.
- Multiculturalism NSW Act 2000.
- NSW Anti-Discrimination Act 1977.
- Privacy and Personal Information Act 1998.
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975.
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984.

SOCIAL JUSTICE POLICY

Appendix 2: Community groups that may experience disadvantage.

- Indigenous people.
- People of diverse genders and / or sexuality.
- People with disabilities.
- People from Culturally and Linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- People over 55 years.
- Children under 12 years.
- Young people 12 – 24 years.
- Unemployed people.
- Disengaged youth.
- People with mental health issues.
- People who are homeless.
- Refugees.
- Older people living alone.
- Carers.
- Single parent families.
- People in Government Housing.