

***MAKING MY
COMMUNITY
INCLUSIVE***

**2024 Local Government
Election Advocacy Kit**



2024 Local Government Election Advocacy Kit for QDN Members and Supporters

The **2024 Local Government elections** are on **16th March 2024**, so we need to make sure our collective voices and the concerns of the disability issues are put firmly on the agenda across all local government electorates.

QDN has developed a Local Government Policy Platform outlining QDN's Priority areas and what we are asking local members to consider as their disability priorities. The Local Government Policy Platform represents the important issues for members. We encourage you to take this platform and the tool kit resources and visit your local candidates.

QDN is calling upon local government candidates to adopt the recommendations in this platform, to lead with vision, to listen and act together and, if successful, to begin the job of acting on inclusion on a range of key disability issues immediately.

QDN's Local Government Policy platform identifies several key areas of priority commitment we are seeking from candidates in the Local Government Elections. These asks for commitment are informed by our 2,000-strong membership and support base, our Local Peer Support Groups across the state, and our projects and work across the key areas that impact upon the lives of people with disability.

Local Government Election Platform and Priority Areas

QDN is seeking commitments from all candidates running in the 2024 Queensland local government elections on 16 March 2024 to:



Make sure 100% of Councils have a Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIPs).

Establish data and impact measurements for implementing DAIPs, including engagement with people with disability.

Ensure Councils deliver disability awareness training to employees across the diverse range of their business areas.



Increase accessibility and inclusion of Council communication across all channels including digital inclusion of people with disability.

Co-design and include people with disability from the beginning in the planning, design, delivery and evaluation of services, products, and policies.



Allocate funding to deliver accessibility upgrades to existing footpaths.

Have spoken announcements on buses.

Ensure regulations and enforcement of E-Scooter parking delivers safe environments for people with disability.



Make sure 100% of Councils have Accessibility and Inclusion Advisory Committees and other ways for people with disability to be represented and included through working groups.



Review and report on implementation of Local Housing Action Plans with regards to delivery of inclusive, accessible and affordable housing.

Work with key stakeholders to increase accessible, affordable housing and regulations for innovating zoning to increase inclusion.



Set targets for employment of people with disability.

Establish or expand paid work experience programs within Council workplaces.

Ensure Council workplaces and systems are accessible and inclusive.



Establish targets for Council budgets, programs and procurement allocations that are focused on disability inclusion and report on this.



Develop and implement disability inclusive procurement strategies for local Government services and infrastructure.



Conduct and publicly release a review into the number of on-street disability parking spots in each local Government area.



Develop agreements with private shopping centres to allow council inspectors to monitor disability parking spaces.



Involve people with disability in all phases and decision-making processes relating to disaster planning, management and recovery.



Deliver inclusive and accessible Council events that are co-designed with people with disability to deliver inclusion standards.

Deliver actions to be a premier accessible and inclusive tourist destination.

Let's Make Our Voices Heard!

There are several ways you can help make sure that the candidates at this election know that our disability vote counts and what we want them to act for to deliver on inclusion for people with disability within your local community. You can:



Email your local candidates a letter and copy of QDN's 2024 Local Government Policy Platform.



Call to talk with your local candidate.



Meet with your local candidate to talk about what is important to you.

You may also see candidates out campaigning on street stalls and this can be a good time to talk to them.



Take a photo with the Local Government Policy Platform and QDN's Priority Areas when meeting candidates.



Email a photo to QDN or post it on social media.



Record yourself on video saying what is important to you and what actions for inclusion you want your local candidates to take.



Your voice is powerful - it only takes a handful of local people speaking up about an issue to make local candidates take notice.



By contacting your local candidate, you can make sure they know disability issues are important to their community.

We are asking all candidates to commit to taking action on the important issues outlined in our policy platform. Some members may have never met with politicians or their local candidate previously, so we have put together some tips to make it easier.



How to Find Your Local Candidate

When you are getting ready to vote you will need to find who your local candidates are, how to vote and where you can vote.

You can look online on the [Electoral Commission Queensland website](#) to:

- Check your enrolment.
- Find your nearest polling booth.
- Apply for a postal vote and other voter assistance.
- See who has nominated.
- Learn how to vote.
- Read about election facts.
- Find resources and videos.

To find out which local Government area you are in, you can enter your address online [here](#) at The Electoral Commission Queensland Website.



Meet Your Local Candidates

Visit their office, write to them or call them to arrange a meeting. You can also catch them when they are out campaigning on street stalls. If you can organise a group of QDN members, supporters or family to come with you, great!

Remember to ask how much time they will give you for the meeting and who will be there. Once the meeting has been arranged, write an email confirming the details, who will be attending with you and what you want to talk about.



Writing to Your Local Candidate

Write a short letter or email to your local candidates. We've included a letter template below if you would like to use it. A short well written letter or email is better than a long one. Politicians get lots of emails, so focus on the important message or story you want them to hear. Make sure you give them your name and details too. An important part of your letter or email is to call for action. Ask the candidate for a reply and an interview. Ask for a commitment to explore your issues.

Get Prepared: Meeting Your Local Candidate

Background Information

Prepare some background information on the issue if you can. There are talking points further on to help. You don't have to know everything; the most important thing is letting them know what issues are important to you.

Talking from the heart – the power of sharing your story

Politicians want to hear about your lived experience and the lived experiences of people you know. Don't underestimate how powerful your story is!

Know what the main things you want to talk about are

Before you speak to your local candidate, think about two or three stories you want to tell them. Also, write down two or three key messages you want them to hear and remember. Be clear and focused about why you are meeting with them. Ask them for a commitment.

Tips for Meeting with Local Candidates

A summary of a good approach for your meeting

1. Tell them why you are there.
2. Tell them the issues that are important to you and people with disability.
3. Talk about the solutions and what you can do to help them, like directing them to QDN for more information.
4. Don't forget to follow up – write a letter or email or phone to say thanks for meeting with you.

Explain who QDN is

Something like: QDN is a network of, for, and by people with disability. QDN regularly brings members together to discuss the most important issues that impact upon their lives. QDN has over 200 members and supporters across the State.

Be positive and call for action

Encourage your candidate to take up the issue of addressing QDN's Local Government Policy Platform areas and recommendations to help bring about the change required. Share a story or your lived experience, which relates to one of the priority areas (this helps to make the issue real to the candidate). Explain the benefits for the candidate and their electorate. Be clear on the issue and its importance.

Establish yourself as a resource

Let your candidate know that you have lived experiences on this particular issue and that you can provide more information if they need it. Also explain why the issue is important to you and your local community.



Useful Statistics for Talking about Disability

The [2018 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers \(SDAC\)](#) by the Australian Bureau of Statistics has a number of interesting facts about people with disability in Queensland.

- Queensland has a population of approximately 5 million people, of which over 1 in 5 Queenslanders have a disability – more than approximately 900,000 people¹.
- An estimated 306,400 Queenslanders of all ages have a profound or severe disability².



Electoral Voting

For information on voting click [here](#) for the Electoral Commission Queensland website, call them on 1300 881 665 or email them at ecq@ecq.qld.gov.au

The Electoral Commission will also have people at polling booths that can assist with some tasks involved in voting. There are a range of services available to give people opportunity to vote and have your say. You can find out about Assisted Services for voting by clicking [here](#).

¹ Given data collection constraints as well recognising many people with chronic illnesses who have functional impairment and may or may not self-identify with having a disability.

<https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/disability/people-with-disability-in-australia/contents/key-data-gaps/what-can-be-done-to-improve-the-evidence>; <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/australias-health/chronic-conditions-and-multimorbidity>; [Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings, 2018 | Australian Bureau of Statistics \(abs.gov.au\)](#)

² [Disability statistics | People with disability | Queensland Government \(www.qld.gov.au\)](#)



Sample letter

Sample letter or email about disability issues requesting a meeting with a local candidate.

Dear [Candidate name],

I am writing to you as a resident of [suburb] and as person with a disability to highlight key issues important to my friends, family and I when we go to vote in the Queensland Local election in 2024.

Queensland has a population of approximately 5 million people, of which over 1 in 5 Queenslanders have a disability – more than approximately 900,000 people¹. An estimated 306,400 Queenslanders of all ages have a profound or severe disability².

ADD IN SOME PERSONAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOURSELF IF YOU WANT TO

We, along with our families, support workers and friends are a significant group in your electorate. Our *Disability Vote Counts* and this election, we ask every political party to work towards *Making my Community Inclusive*.

In this election, it is important to me that the next local candidate in my local area understands that my disability vote counts and that Queenslanders with disability want to see action and progress on the key issues that impact us locally.

I would like to learn more about your policies on these and other issues affecting people with disability. This information will assist me to make a decision about which candidate to support.

I am also a member of [Queenslanders with Disability Network \(QDN\)](#) a network of, for, and by people with disability. QDN regularly brings members together to discuss relevant policy issues that impact upon our lives. I have attached a copy of the Queensland Local Government Policy Platform for your feedback.

I am seeking an opportunity to meet with you to hear your view on these important issues and share my perspective on how they affect local families, carers and our community.

¹ Given data collection constraints as well recognising many people with chronic illnesses who have functional impairment and may or may not self-identify with having a disability.

<https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/disability/people-with-disability-in-australia/contents/key-data-gaps/what-can-be-done-to-improve-the-evidence>; <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/australias-health/chronic-conditions-and-multimorbidity>; [Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings, 2018 | Australian Bureau of Statistics \(abs.gov.au\)](#)

² [Disability statistics | People with disability | Queensland Government \(www.qld.gov.au\)](#)

I believe that if we work together, we can improve outcomes for people with disability in our area, and within our community and show the 900,00 Queenslanders with disability and their families that disability does matter at this election.

I look forward to speaking to you or a member of your staff soon to organise a convenient time to meet.

Yours sincerely

[Your full name]

[Your Address].