
Fair Access Policy

June 2024






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Fair Access Policy



Council Policy

Responsible director	Director Strategy, Property and Engagement
Responsible officer	Manager Strategic Planning and Prosperity
Functional area	Prosperity
Date adopted by Council	3 June 2024
Review date	June 2029

Purpose

The Fair Access Policy seeks to address known barriers experienced by people who do not experience equal access and opportunity to participate and/or face greater barriers to participation in sport and active recreation. This includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, women and girls, people with disability, people from different cultural backgrounds, low-income earners, people from LGBTIQ+ communities, those living in regional and rural areas, older adults and young people not engaged in education or employment.

The policy aims to progressively build the capacity and capabilities of Northern Grampians Shire Council in the identification and elimination of systemic causes of inequality, in particular gender inequality in policy, programs, communications, and delivery of services in relation to community infrastructure and public spaces.

Background

Sport and recreation are a highly visible and valued feature of Northern Grampians Shire Council's culture and identity. The sport and active recreation sector provide opportunities for enriching our communities through the promotion of respect and fair mindedness for all people while also supporting the physical and mental wellbeing of all Victorians. Northern Grampians Shire Council is well positioned to design and implement place-based, integrated action plans that progress gender equality in community sports and activities.

The Victorian Government is committed to developing an environment for all Victorians to live in a safe and equal society, have access to equal power, resources, and opportunities, and are treated with dignity, respect, and fairness. A reform agenda has been developed to change the systems that have perpetuated gender inequality by designing an enduring structure that requires implementation and tracking of progress over time.

This reform agenda includes addressing the traditional structures and way community sport and recreation organisations operate through the implementation of all 9 recommendations from the 2015 Inquiry into Women and Girls in Sport and Active Recreation. This includes recommendation 6:

“...encourage facility owners and managers to review access and usage policies to ensure women and girls have a fair share of access to the highest quality facilities at the best and most popular times”

and

“facilitating a universal adoption of [policies, strategies and audit tools] will drive change further”

As a defined entity under the Gender Equality Act 2020, Northern Grampians Shire Council is required to conduct Gender Impact Assessments on all new policies, programs, communications, and services, including those up for review, which directly and significantly impact the public. The access and use of community infrastructure is an example of a policy that has a direct and significant impact on the public.

Scope

The scope of this policy is to support the Northern Grampians Shire Council to take positive action towards achieving gender equity in the access and usage of community infrastructure. This complies with the *Gender Equality Act 2020* and aligns with our Council Plan and council strategies.

Reform Agenda	Objectives
To support Northern Grampians Shire Council to take positive action towards achieving gender equity in the access and use of community sports infrastructure	<p>Build capacity and capabilities of Northern Grampians Shire Council in the identification and elimination of systemic causes of gender inequality in policy, programs, communications, and delivery of services in relation to community sport and recreation.</p> <p>Ensure an effective place-based response for the gender equitable use and access of community sports infrastructure.</p> <p>Promote gender equality in policies, programs, communications, and services as they relate to community sports infrastructure.</p>

This policy applies to all Northern Grampians Shire Council owned and/or managed community facilities and recreation reserves.

Policy Objective

The policy aligns the Council Plan's Goal, Outcome and Strategy - Enhance Lifestyle and Community, Through Wellness and Welfare.

Policy Principles

The policy and action plan are based on six principles of inclusivity, full participation, equal representation, encouraging and supporting user groups, and prioritising user groups committed to equality.

- i. Northern Grampians Shire Council recognises that gender equality is the attainment of equal rights, responsibilities, and opportunities of women, men, trans and gender diverse people. Equality does not mean that women, men, trans and gender diverse people will become the same but that their rights, responsibilities, and opportunities will not depend on their gender.
- ii. Northern Grampians Shire Council recognises that gender equity is the provision of fairness and justice in the distribution of benefits and responsibilities based on gender. The concept recognises that people may have different needs and power related to their gender and these differences should be identified and addressed in a manner that rectifies gender related imbalances.

The Fair Access Principles were developed by the Office for Women in Sport and Recreation, Sport and Recreation Victoria and VicHealth, in consultation with representatives from local government and the state sport and recreation sector.

Northern Grampians Shire Council considers that these principles provide clear direction while also enabling adaptation to the specific environment of the Northern Grampians Shire Council's municipality.

This policy establishes the expectation that gender equality is considered and prioritised in all current and future Northern Grampians Shire Council's planning, policy, service delivery and practice as they relate to community infrastructure.

Actions

Northern Grampians Shire Council commits to undertake a Gender Impact Assessment on all current community infrastructure access and use policies and processes and to consider opportunities to strengthen gender equitable access and use of community facilities in alignment with the Fair Access Principles.

If the process of assessing current policies and processes identifies opportunities to develop or strengthen gender equitable access and use of community facilities in alignment with the Fair Access Principles, Northern Grampians Shire Council commits to developing and adopting a locally relevant gender equitable access and use policy and action plan.



Northern Grampians Shire Council acknowledges that, from 1 July 2024, the requirement to have a gender equitable access and use policy and action plan (or equivalent) in place and the ability to demonstrate progress against that policy and action plan (or equivalent) will form part of the eligibility criteria for Victorian Government funding programs relating to community infrastructure.

Northern Grampians Shire Council will identify specific actions to progress gender equitable access and use of community infrastructure in its Fair Access Action Plan.

Legislation and Standards

This policy includes addressing the traditional structures and way community sport and recreation organisations operate through the implementation of all 9 recommendations from the 2015 Inquiry into Women and Girls in Sport and Active Recreation.

This policy also abides by the following legislation:

- *Local Government Act 2020*
- *Local Government Act 1989*
- *Gender Equality Act 2020*
- *Child Safety Act 2015*
- *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*
- *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*

Responsibilities

Director Strategy, Property and Engagement is responsible for implementing Northern Grampians Shire Council's *Fair Access Policy*. Management personnel, staff, volunteers at Northern Grampians Shire Council and stakeholders (for example State Sporting Associations and Regional Sports Assemblies) have a shared responsibility to support the policy, as outlined in the table below.

Role	Responsibility
Local Government - Executive Leadership Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote a gender-aware and gender-responsive culture and community championing the Fair Access Policy. • Promote, encourage and facilitate the achievement of gender equality and improvement in the status of women and girls in sport and active recreation.
Local Government - Manager Active Communities/Strategic Planning Prosperity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead the review of sport and recreation policies and processes. • Develop and adopt gender equitable access and use policies. • Communicate policy updates to all staff and members. • Monitor compliance and issues. • Promote, encourage and facilitate the achievement of gender equality and improvement in the status of women and girls. • Support the undertaking of Gender Impact Assessments and submission of progress reports as per the Gender Equality Act 2020 obligations.
Local Government – accountable Officer for the Gender Equality Act or similar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the review of sport and recreation policies and processes. • Support the formal adoption process of new or revised gender equitable policies. • Undertake Gender Impact Assessment and submission of progress reports as per the Gender Equality Act 2020 obligations.
Local Government – Recreation, Placemaking & Open Space Planning Officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate to and educate sport and recreation infrastructure user groups and users.
Local Government – all staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adhere to and communicate the policy when required. • Attend training/awareness programs. • Undertake Gender Impact Assessments where required

Review

Assessment of the policy will be undertaken every four years to align with the council term to ensure it remains current with the council's goals, processes, aims and requirements and as a means by which to reduce Council's exposure to risk. Triggers for an earlier assessment include legislative changes and introduction of new systems or procedures.

Communication and implementation

The policy will be made available on council's website, social media and intranet and at relevant staff and team meetings.

The policy to be distributed to community groups and sporting clubs accessing Northern Grampians Shire owned and/or managed facilities.

References

Gender Impact Assessment template

Fair Access Action Plan

Equal opportunity discrimination and harassment policy

Act@Work Action Plan

Compliance

Local Government Act 2020

Local Government Act 1989

[Gender Equality Act 2020](#)

Child Safety Act 2015

Equal Opportunity Act 2010

[Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006](#)

Privacy and Data Protection compliance

This policy has considered the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* and the *Victorian Protective Data Security (VPDSS) Framework*, which adopts a risk-based approach to protective data security.

Gender Equality compliance

Council has considered if gender equality principles, workplace gender equality of rights, opportunities, responsibilities and outcomes and the promotion of gender equality in the development of this policy. These have been incorporated into the policy.

Charter of Human Rights compliance

It is considered that this policy does not impact on any [human rights](#) identified in the *Charter of Human Rights & Responsibilities Act 2006*.

Definitions

Term	Meaning
Policy	What we will do and why (eg legislation governs Council actions)
Procedure	Step by step instructions as to how we will complete Council actions
Community Infrastructure	Publicly owned local, rural, municipal, regional, or state level infrastructure operated and maintained primarily for the purpose of facilitating community activities, including sporting grounds, surfaces, facilities, and pavilions.
Gender	How you understand who you are and how you interact with other people. Many people understand their gender as being a man or woman. Some people understand their gender as a mix of these or neither. A person's gender and their expression of their gender can be shown in different ways, such as through behaviour or physical appearance.
Gender diverse	An umbrella term for a range of genders expressed in different ways. Gender diverse people use many terms to describe themselves. Language in this area is dynamic, particularly among young people, who are more likely to describe themselves as non-binary.
Gender equality	The equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women, men and trans and gender-diverse people. Equality does not mean that women, men and trans and gender diverse people will become the same but that their rights, responsibilities, and opportunities will not depend on their gender.
Gender equity	The provision of fairness and justice in the distribution of benefits and responsibilities based on gender. The concept recognises that people may have different needs and power related to their gender and these differences

	should be identified and addressed in a manner that rectifies gender related imbalances.
Gender Impact Assessment	A requirement under the Gender Equality Act 2020 to be carried out on policies, programs and services that have a direct and significant impact on the public. The assessment must evaluate the effects that a policy, program or service may have on people of different genders.
Public land management groups	For the purposes of this document, are the Committees of Management appointed under the Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978 and responsible for the management of recreation reserves where community sport training and games are held.
Transgender or trans	Someone whose gender does not only align with the one assigned a birth. Not all trans people will use this term to describe themselves.

Review History

Date	Review details	Action
March 2024	Draft Policy	For review following stakeholder engagement
June 2024	Council Meeting	Adopted 3 June.