

Fair Access Policy

COUNCIL POLICY NO. 150

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Fair Access Policy is to address barriers women, girls, and people of all cultures and socio economic demographics experience in accessing community sports infrastructure, in response to the Victorian Government's Fair Access Policy Roadmap.

The Policy aims to enhance Gannawarra Shire Council's capacity to identify and eliminate systemic gender inequality in policies, programs, communications and services. It promotes gender equality and ensures a place-based response for equitable use of community sports infrastructure.

An accompanying Action Plan is a commitment that Council will continually work towards ongoing implementation steps for this Fair Access Policy.

2. BACKGROUND/LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

In 2015 an Inquiry into Women and Girls in Sport and Active Recreation was conducted by the Victorian Government. This inquiry included 9 recommendations which now form part of a Victorian Government reform agenda *Change the Game*, which includes addressing the traditional structures and way community sport and recreation organisations operates in Victoria.

Recommendation 6 from the inquiry is to: *Deliver female friendly built environments and equitable facility usage policies.*

Recommendation 6 also includes the following actions:

"...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] that will drive change further"

The policy also enables effective and efficient integration of the requirements of the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, the *Local Government Act 2020*, the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*, the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*, and other legislative frameworks.

3. SCOPE

To support Gannawarra Shire Council to take positive action towards achieving gender equity in the access and use of community sports infrastructure.

This Policy applies to all Gannawarra Shire Council owned and/or managed community sports facilities and recreation reserves, which includes the following:

- Cohuna Recreation Reserve
- Leitchville Recreation Reserve
- Kerang Swimming Pool
- Cohuna Swimming Pool
- Leitchville Swimming Pool
- Kerang Indoor Exercise Pool

This Policy applies to sport and recreation groups and local recreation reserve committees seeking Victorian Government and Council funding for facilities and programs.

4. PRINCIPLES

This Policy and action plan are based on the six Fair Access Principles of inclusivity, full participation, equitable access, equal representation, encouraging and supporting user groups, and prioritising user groups committed to equality.

Council considers that these principles provide clear direction, while also enabling adaption to the specific environment of the Gannawarra Shire municipality.

No.	Principle
1	Community sports infrastructure and environments are genuinely welcoming, safe, and inclusive.
2	Women and girls can fully participate in all aspects of community sport and active recreation, including as a player, coach, administrator, official, volunteer and spectator.
3	Women and girls will have equitable access to and use of community sport infrastructure: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. of the highest quality available and most convenient b. at the best and most popular competition and training times and locations c. to support existing and new participation opportunities, and a variety of sports
4	Women and girls should be equitably represented in leadership and governance roles.
5	Encourage and support all user groups who access and use community sport infrastructure to understand, adopt and implement gender equitable access and use practices.
6	Prioritise access, use and support to all user groups who demonstrate an ongoing commitment to gender equitable access and use of allocated community sport infrastructure.

5. POLICY

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

Gannawarra Shire Council has identified specific actions to progress gender equitable access and use of community sports infrastructure in its Fair Access Action Plan (refer Appendix A).

6. RESPONSIBILITY

Gannawarra Shire Council is responsible for implementing this Fair Access Policy. Council's management and staff, volunteers, and other stakeholders (for example State Sporting Associations and Regional Sports Assemblies) have a shared responsibility to support the policy.

7. POLICY REVIEW

Council will review this Policy and action plan as required, but always within twelve months of a general election of Council.

8. FURTHER INFORMATION

Members of the public may inspect all Council policies at Gannawarra Shire Council's Kerang and Cohuna offices or online at www.gsc.vic.gov.au.

Any enquiries in relation to this policy should be directed to the Director Community Wellbeing on (03) 5450 9333.

Records –	
Originally adopted:	2024
To be reviewed	2025

