

GREATER SHEPPARTON CITY COUNCIL

SPORT & RECREATION FACILITIES FAIR ACCESS POLICY

Effective: 1 July 2024



SPORT AND RECREATION FACILITIES FAIR ACCESS POLICY

Version:	1
Business Unit:	Parks, Sport and Recreation
Responsible Officer:	Manager Parks, Sport and Recreation
Adopted By:	Council on 25 June 2024
Next Review:	2 June 2025

1. PURPOSE

The Sport and Recreation Facilities Fair Access Policy seeks to address known barriers experienced by women and girls in accessing and using community sports facilities. The Policy aims to progressively build capacity and capabilities of Greater Shepparton City Council in the identification, and elimination of systemic causes of gender inequality in policy, programs, communications, and delivery of services in relation to community sports facilities.

Sport is a highly visible and valued feature of Greater Shepparton'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 and the connectivity of members of our community. Greater Shepparton City Council is well positioned to design and implement place-based, integrated actions plans that progress gender equality in community sport.

This Policy represents an opportunity for Council to strengthen overall sport participation in the region through creating opportunities within sports to promote and encourage female participation.

The Victorian State Government has developed a reform agenda to address the traditional structures and way community sport and recreation organisations operate to change the systems that have perpetuated gender inequality. It involves the implementation of all nine recommendations from the 2015 Inquiry into Women and Girls in Sport and Active Recreation.

The *Gender Equality Act 2020* requires Victorian organisations, including local councils, to take positive action towards achieving gender equality and to consider and promote gender equality in their policies, programs, and services.

Policies, programs and services that relate to community sport and recreation are considered to have a direct and significant impact on the public.

As such, Local Governments are required under the Gender Equality Act 2020 to complete Gender Impact Assessments and to consider and promote gender equality in these community sport policies, programs and services.

The Policy and Action Plan has been established using the six principles outlined in the Fair Access Roadmap that was developed by the Office for Women in Sport and Recreation, Sport and Recreation Victoria and the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth) and outlines the key steps on this journey and provides guidance to fulfil these requirements.

2. OBJECTIVE

This policy establishes the requirement that gender equality is considered and prioritised in all current and future planning, policy, service delivery and practice as they relate to community sports facilities.

The Greater Shepparton City Council will undertake take the necessary and proportionate steps towards the implementation of the Sport and Recreation Facilities Fair Access Policy.

2.1 Statement of Intent

This Statement of Intent establishes the expectation that gender equality is considered and prioritised in all current and future of Council's planning, policy, service delivery and practice as they relate to community sports facilities.

- a. Greater Shepparton City Council recognises that gender equality is the attainment of equal rights, responsibilities, and opportunities of women, men, and gender diverse people. Equality does not mean that women, men, and gender diverse people will become the same but that their rights, responsibilities, and opportunities will not depend on their gender.
- b. Greater Shepparton City 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.

3. SCOPE

The scope of the Policy is to support Council to take positive action towards achieving gender equity in the access and usage of community sports facilities. This complies with the *Gender Equality Act 2020* and aligns with Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plans.

The Policy applies to:

- Any Policies, programs, communication and services that relate to community sport facilities.
- All community sport facilities owned or managed by the Greater Shepparton City Council. (*List of Facilities Managed by Council – Appendix 1*)
- All community sports facilities managed by a Committee of Management on behalf of Council.

4. DEFINITIONS

Reference term	Definition
Committees of Management	For the purposes of this document, refers to committees appointed by the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action under the Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978 to manage recreation reserves where community sport training and games are held.
Community Asset Committees	Community Asset Committees, in accordance with Section 65 of the Local Government Act 2020, are established for the purpose of managing a community asset in the municipal district. Council's Community Asset Committees oversee a range of facilities on Council's behalf, including public halls, community centres, and recreation reserves.
Community Sports Facilities	Publicly owned local, rural, regional, or state level sport and recreation facilities operated and maintained primarily for the purpose of facilitating community sport activities, including sporting grounds, surfaces, facilities, and pavilions.

Reference term	Definition
Gender	Gender is generally understood as a social and cultural construction, referring to the way in which a person identifies or expresses their masculine or feminine characteristics. A person's gender identity or gender expression is not always exclusively male or female and may or may not correspond to their sex.
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 gender-diverse people. Equality does not mean that women, men 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, or GIA	A requirement under the Gender Equality Act 2020 to be carried out on policies, programs and services which 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.

Reference term	Definition
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.

5. POLICY

The Policy is designed to comply with the Gender Equality Act 2020, and the wider Victorian Government gender equality strategy.

Greater Shepparton City Council acknowledges:

- a. The disadvantaged position some individuals have had in the sport and recreation sector because of their gender; and
- b. That achieving gender equality will require diverse approaches for women, men, and gender diverse people to achieve similar outcomes for people of all genders.

Greater Shepparton City Council will:

- a. Engage fairly and equitably with all staff, governance working groups, state sporting organisations, regional sport assemblies (where applicable) and members of our sport and recreation community, regardless of their gender, in a positive, respectful, and constructive manner; and
- b. Engage in the process of gender impact assessments to assess the implications for women, men, and gender diverse people of any planned action, including policies and communications. This is a strategy for making all voices, concerns and experiences, an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring of policies and programs.

5.1 Fair Access Principles

The Fair Access Principles have been 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.

This Policy and any resultant action plan are based on six (6) principles of inclusivity, full participation, equal representation, encouraging and supporting user groups, and prioritising user groups committed to equality.

1. Community sports facilities 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 facilities:
 - 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 Facilities 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 facilities.

Greater Shepparton City Council considers that these principles provide clear direction, while also enabling adaption to the specific environment of the Greater Shepparton area.

5.2 Compliance

Greater Shepparton City Council commits to undertake a GIA on all current community sports facilities access and use policies and processes, and to consider opportunities to strengthen gender equitable access and use of community sports 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 sports facilities in alignment with the Fair Access Principles, Council commits to developing and adopting a locally relevant gender equitable access and use policy and action plan by no later than 1 October 2024.

Council acknowledges that 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 sports facilities from 1 July 2024.

Council has also identified specific actions to progress gender equitable access and use of community sports facilities in its Sport and Recreation Facilities Fair Access Action Plan.

5.3 Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Local Government - CEO and Executive Leadership Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To promote a gender-aware and gender-responsive culture and community and championing the Sport and Recreation Facilities Fair Access Policy.• To promote, encourage and facilitate the achievement of gender equality and improvement in the status of women and girls in sport and active recreation.

Role	Responsibility
Parks Sport and Recreation Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead the review of sport and recreation policies and process • Develop and adopt gender equitable access and use policies • To communicate policy updates to all staff and members • To monitor compliance and issues • To promote, encourage and facilitate the achievement of gender equality and improvement in the status of women and girls
Gender Equity Working Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the review of sport and recreation policies and processes • Support the formal adoption process of a new or revised gender equitable policies
Sporting Clubs Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To communicate and educate sport and recreation facilities user groups and users.
Local Government – all staff, or Land Management Groups – all committee members/volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To adhere to and communicate the policy when required. • To attend training / awareness programs. • Support the undertaking of Gender Impact Assessment and submission of progress reports as per the Gender Equality Act 2020 obligations

Role	Responsibility
External Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To promote, encourage and facilitate the achievement of gender equality and improvement in the status of women and girls • To promote a gender-aware and gender-responsive culture and community and championing the Sport and Recreation Facilities Fair Access Policy. • Develop and adopt gender equitable access and use policies • Be aware of the Fair Access Policy Roadmap and its applicability to non-Local Government owners and managers of community sports infrastructure. • Comply with the Roadmap to the extent that the legislation applies to said Authority. • Work in partnership with Council to promote a gender-aware and gender responsive culture and community and championing the Sport and Recreation Facilities Fair Access Policy. • To promote a gender-aware and gender-responsive culture and community and championing the Sport and Recreation Facilities Fair Access Policy. • Promote and lead new approaches to fixture preparation to ensure fair and equitable access to community sporting facilities and compliance with Council's policy. • Raise awareness of the Fair Access Policy Roadmap and its targets with clubs, leagues and associations. • Commence education of clubs, associations and leagues to advance gender equitable access and usage of community sports facilities.

9. RELATED POLICIES

- Greater Shepparton City Council – Sport 2050 Strategic Plan

10. RELATED LEGISLATION

- *Gender Equality Act 2020 (Vic)*
- *Local Government Act 2020 (Vic)*
- *Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)*

11. REVIEW

The Manager Parks, Sport and Recreation will be responsible for reviewing this Policy every two years, and/ or when required.

12. ATTACHMENTS

- Appendix – 1
 - Table 1.1: Greater Shepparton Sport Facilities - Council
 - Table 1.2: Greater Shepparton Sport Facilities - Council owned – Volunteer Committee of Management
 - Table 1.3: Greater Shepparton Sport Facilities – Crown Land
 - Table 1.4: Greater Shepparton Sport Facilities – Crown Land – Volunteer Committee of Management

Appendix – 1

Table 1.1: Greater Shepparton Sport Facilities - Council

COUNCIL OWNED & MANAGED FACILITIES		
Chas Johnson Reserve	Frank Howley Recreation Reserve	V E Vibert Reserve
Kialla West Recreation Reserve	Kialla Park Reserve	Shepparton Sports Precinct (SSP)
Shepparton Sports Stadium	SSP – Greater Shepparton Athletics Complex	SSP – Greater Shepparton BMX Track
SSP – Greater Shepparton Football Complex	SSP – Greater Shepparton Hockey Complex	SSP – Greater Shepparton Netball Complex
SSP – Greater Shepparton Regional Tennis Complex	SSP – WB Hunter Reserve	SSP - Velodrome

Table 1.2: Greater Shepparton Sport Facilities - Council owned – Volunteer Committee of Management

COUNCIL OWNED FACILITIES – VOLUNTEER COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT		
Arcadia Recreation Reserve	Bunbartha Recreation Reserve	Central Park Recreation Reserve
Congupna Recreation Reserve	Dhurringile Recreation Reserve	Dookie Recreation Reserve (includes the Showgrounds)
Karramomus Recreation Reserve	Katandra West Recreation Reserve	Lemnos Recreation Reserve
Tallygaroopna Recreation Reserve	Toolamba Recreation Reserve	

Table 1.3: Greater Shepparton Sport Facilities – Crown Land

CROWN LAND - COUNCIL OR COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT		
Cosgrove Golf Course and Clay Target Shooting Range	Deakin Reserve	Harston Tennis Courts
Kialla Raceway (Greyhounds and Harness Racing Track)	Victoria Park Lake (including Aquamoves Aquatic Centre)	Mooroopna Recreation Reserve
Pine Lodge Recreation Reserve	Princess Park	Shepparton Showgrounds
Shepparton Lawn Tennis Club	Shepparton North Reserve – Tennis Courts	Tatura Multi-Sports Complex
Tatura Showgrounds and Recreation Reserve	Frank Howley Reserve (partly owned by Council and DEECA)	Victory Park

Table 1.4: Greater Shepparton Sport Facilities – Crown Land – Volunteer Committee of Management

CROWN LAND – MANAGED BY A VOLUNTEER COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT		
Ardmona Recreation Reserve	Byrneside Tennis Courts	Caniambo Recreation Reserve
Cooma Recreation Reserve	Dargalong Racecourse & Recreation Reserve (Murchison East Golf Course)	Merrigum Park Recreation Reserve
Murchison Recreation Reserve	Tatura Public Gardens & Recreation Reserve	Tatura Racecourse & Recreation Reserve
Undera Recreation Reserve	Lions Park Tennis Courts (Murchison)	

It is noted that there are numerous other facilities throughout the municipality that provide sport capacity that are not listed in the above tables, but have nonetheless been taken into consideration as part of the overall Policy.

DOCUMENT REVISIONS

Version #	Date Adopted	Date Effective
1	25 June 2024	1 July 2024