



City of
DAREBIN

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to live

Gender Equity and Preventing Violence Against Women Action Plan 2019 – 2023

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1. Acknowledging Darebin's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community

Darebin City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people as the traditional owners and custodians of the land and waters we now call Darebin and affirms that Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people have lived on this land for millennia, practising their customs and ceremonies of celebration, initiation and renewal. Council acknowledges that Elders past, present and emerging are central to the cohesion, intergenerational wellbeing and ongoing self-determination of Aboriginal communities. They have played and continue to play a pivotal role in maintaining and transmitting culture, history and language.

Council respects and recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities' values, living culture and practices, including their continuing spiritual connection to the land and waters and their right to self-determination. Council recognises the diversity, including the diversity of views and opinions, within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Council also recognises and pays tribute to, and celebrates, Darebin's long standing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and heritage.

2. Executive Summary

Darebin City Council (Council) is committed to creating a safe and equitable community, as stated in Goal 5 of the Council Plan 2017-2021. Key to achieving this goal is ensuring that women in our community live free from violence and can participate fully in all aspects of community life.

Violence against women is not an inevitable social problem, but the combination of societal, institutional and social structures that allows violence against women to persist. These factors are rooted in gender inequality. As the level of government closest to the community, Council recognises the important role local government can play to address the underlying factors that allow violence against women to persist in our society.

Council's Gender Equity and Preventing Violence Against Women Action Plan 2019-2023 seeks to address the root causes of violence against women and improve gender equity. It also seeks to address the social and cultural conditions that enable violence against women to persist. As the second iteration of Darebin's commitment to improving gender equity and preventing violence against women, the action plan builds on Council previous work in this space and expands its focus to new actions and outcomes.

Council's vision for the Action Plan is, '*A gender equitable, safe and respectful Darebin community*'. There are four priority action areas to guide work towards this vision:

1. Organisational leadership
2. Safe, inclusive and respectful communities
3. Women's participation in community life
4. Research and advocacy

The Action Plan has been informed by frameworks and literature presented at the national, state and regional level. This includes the evidence presented in *Change the Story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia* by Our Watch, the Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence Recommendations, the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2015–2019, Free from Violence: Victoria's strategy to prevent family violence and all forms of violence against women and Building a Respectful Community Strategy 2017–2021 (Women's Health In the North).

These frameworks provide the evidence-base and context in which Council's Action Plan has been developed to address the local needs and opportunities in Darebin. This includes ensuring that Council actions acknowledge and are inclusive of the diverse experiences of women and girls in our community.

Council is committed to creating a gender equitable, safe and respectful community. This not only provides women and girls with the right to realise their full potential, but will provide better outcomes for the entire community.

3. Introduction

Violence against women* is the leading preventable contributor to death, disability and illness in women aged 15-44 years in Victoria (VicHealth, 2004). One in four Australian women have experienced intimate partner violence since the age of 15 (Our Watch, 2017).

The strongest predictor of high levels of violence against women is unequal power between men and women, as gender inequality sets the underlying social conditions which enable violence against women to persist. As the growing evidence base has established, gender inequality is the core of the problem and it is the heart of the solution to ending violence against women (Our Watch, 2015). When we address gender inequity to improve women's equal participation and prevent violence against women, we improve outcomes for the entire community.

Women represent enormous diversity across age, culture – including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures – ethnicity, race, socioeconomic and (im)migration status, geographic location, sexuality, dis/ability, and religion. Addressing gender inequity needs to be inclusive of all women and girls, including women who identify as cisgender, transgender and intersex.

*Throughout this document, *women* will be used to refer to people who identify as women. This recognises that sex and gender are not the same and that some people's gender identities may not reflect the biological sex they were assigned at birth. Moreover, this recognises that gender is not binary and that some people's gender identities may not fit into binary categories of male or female and indeed that some people may identify as neither male nor female, or both.

3.1 The gendered drivers of violence against women

Evidence shows us that violence against women arises from a complex interaction between individual attitudes towards women, and social, institutional and cultural practices and values across our society and communities. These attitudes and practices foster unequal and abusive power relations between men and women; gender stereotypes often exist in broader cultures of violence.

The following four factors are identified by Our Watch as they key drivers of Violence against women:

- Condoning of violence against women
- Men's control of decision-making and limits to women's independence in public and private life
- Rigid gender roles and stereotyped constructions of masculinity and femininity
- Male peer relations that emphasise aggression and disrespect towards women

Our Watch recommends addressing the gendered drivers of violence against women through the following essential actions:

- Challenge condoning of violence against women
- Promote women’s independence and decision-making in public life and relationships
- Foster positive personal identities and challenge gender stereotypes and roles
- Strengthen positive, equal and respectful relations between and among women and men, girls and boys
- Promote and normalise gender equality in public and private life. (Our Watch, 2015).

To be effective, these actions must be embedded in legislative, institutional and policy responses and implemented in settings such as workplaces, schools, community organisations, sports clubs, media and popular culture. The actions are designed to promote broader social equality and address structural discrimination. They are designed to be mutually reinforcing and require the coordinated efforts of multiple stakeholders, including local government.

3.2 The role of Local Government

Local government has been identified by Our Watch, VicHealth and the Victorian State government (Our Watch, 2015; VicHealth, 2012; DPC, 2016) as a key stakeholder in the prevention of violence against women. The role of local government is also enshrined in Recommendation 94 of the Royal Commission into Family Violence, which articulates that all Councils are mandated to report on “the measures they propose to take to reduce family violence and respond to the needs of victims” in their municipal public health and wellbeing plans (State of Victoria).

As the tier of government closest to the community, local government is well placed to influence the cultural and societal structures which allow violence against women to occur. Local government has the unique role of engaging with communities and individuals throughout the lifespan and across a range of settings, including public spaces, arts, leisure, recreation and maternal and child health.

The image below illustrates the various settings where Council has the opportunity to embed gender equity and primary prevention through its service delivery and planning processes.

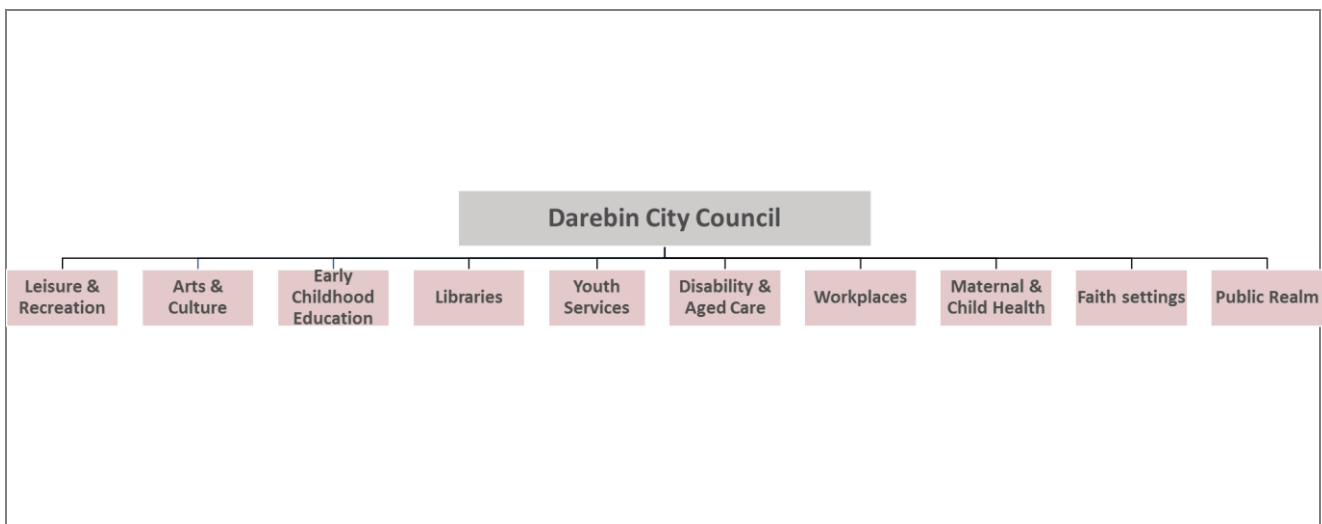


Figure 1. Diagram of key settings where Council has the opportunity to embed gender equity

3.3 The Primary Prevention continuum

A primary prevention approach recognises that violence against women occurs and is perpetuated across all levels of society including the Institutional and systemic level, Organisational and community level and Individual, family and peer group level (VicHealth, 2007).

Addressing violence against women can occur across a spectrum of strategies, from tertiary response, secondary prevention and primary prevention. Reflecting the evidence base about the role of local government in ending violence against women, this Action Plan will focus on primary prevention, with actions aimed at addressing the structures and settings where gender inequality and disrespect are shaped.

In this context, primary prevention recognises the importance of mutually reinforcing initiatives that work to promote gender equity and seek to prevent the underlying causes of violence against women. A primary prevention approach intends to support and complement early intervention and crisis response efforts by reducing pressure on these other parts of the system.

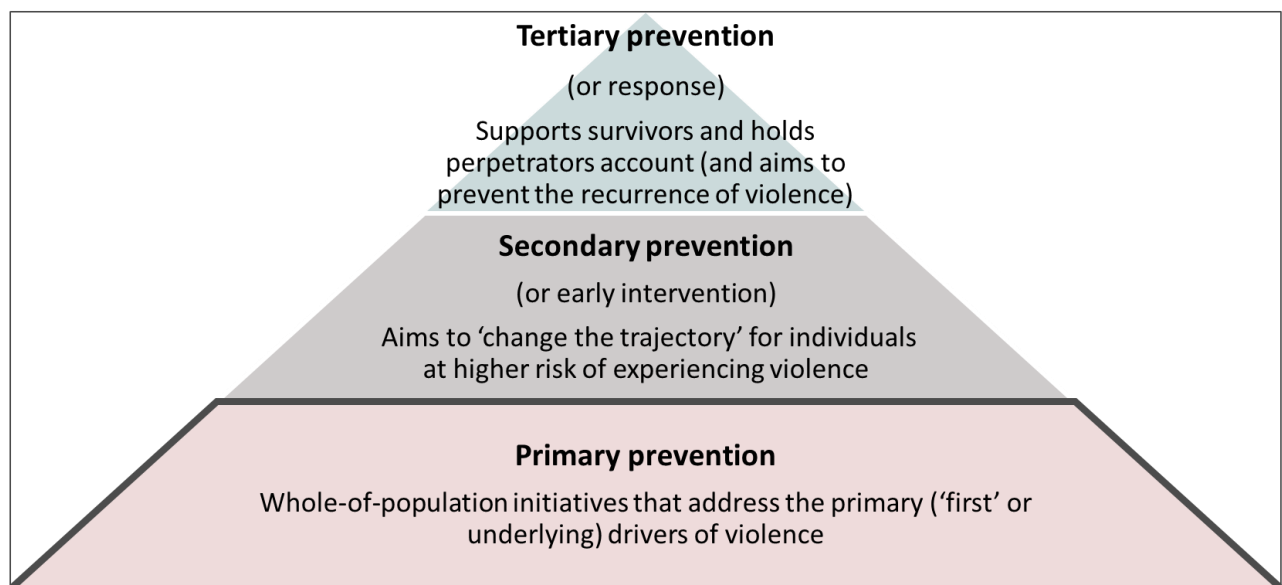


Figure 2. Prevention continuum representing the relationship between primary prevention and other work to prevent violence against women

Source: Adapted from *Change the Story: A Shared Framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia*, Our Watch, ANROWS and VicHealth (2015).

3.4 The extent of gender inequality

In Australia women continue to experience inequality and discrimination across the lifespan. While all Australians may appear to be prescribed similar levels of rights and freedoms by law, structural and social gender inequalities remain embedded across society and Australia continues to fall behind in the global context across a number of key areas:

- **The Global Gender Gap Report**, which benchmarks countries on their progress towards gender parity, ranks Australia as 39 out of 134 countries (World Economic Forum, 2018). Australia's poor performance is primarily due to low scores on economic participation (46 out of 134 countries) and opportunity for women and political empowerment (49 out of 134 countries). While Australia ranks highly on educational attainment, with women now outnumbering men in tertiary education, this is not reflected in the workforce, pointing to deeper and more pervasive structural inequalities in Australian society.
- **Women are underrepresented in senior positions.** The percentage of women on ASX 200 boards is 29.7%. The percentage of women on boards of ASX 200 companies and the

proportion of women comprising new appointments increased significantly from a low base of 8.3 percent in 2009 (AICD, 2019).

- **Women are primarily responsible for unpaid work.** Women spend, on average, 64% of their working week performing unpaid care work, which is approximately double that of men (WGEA, 2016).
- **The gender pay gap continues to persist in Australia.** At the national level, Australia's national gender pay gap is at 15.3% (ABS, 2018). This is the difference between women's and men's average weekly full-time base salary earnings, expressed as a percentage of men's earnings. The full-time total remuneration gender pay gap based on the 2017-18 WGEA data is 21.3%, meaning men working full-time earn \$25,717 on average a year more than women working full-time. The full-time base salary gender pay gap for 2017-18 is 16.2%, which means that men working full-time earned \$15,457 on average more than women (WGEA, 2018). In Darebin, 7.8% of the female population earned an income of \$1,750 or more per week while, 14.8% of the male population earned an income of \$1,750 or more per week.
- The impacts of the gender pay gap, combined with a lifetime of disruptive / part-time work, has profound implications across a woman's lifespan. In Australia, women will retire with an average of 47% less **superannuation** than men. The accrual of these social and economic disparities mean women over 65 are the fastest growing cohort of people experiencing **homelessness** (ABS, 2018).
- **Community Attitudes** towards violence against women and gender relations help illustrate the state of gender inequality in Australia. Understanding these community attitudes is essential, as research indicates a strong link between attitudes towards violence against women and attitudes towards gender equality. At the individual level, the most consistent predictor of the use of violence among men is their agreement with sexist, patriarchal, and/or sexually hostile attitudes (VicHealth, 2007).

The 2017 National Community Attitudes Survey (NCAS) revealed that while Australian attitudes to violence against women and gender equality are improving, some alarming trends remain and many Australians still hold harmful views about gender equality which do not reflect the lived experiences of Australian women (ANROWS, 2017).

3.5 The extent of violence against women

All forms of violence are unacceptable. This plan however recognises and that there are gendered patterns in the motivation, perpetration and experience of violence. The majority (95%) of all victims of violence, of all genders, experience violence from a male perpetrator (ABS, 2013). Intimate partner violence is the most common form of violence against women in Australia.

Violence against women is 'the most pervasive, yet least recognized human rights abuse in the world' (UNFPA, 1999). It exacts significant harm to individuals, families, community and society. In Australia, one woman on average is killed each week by a current or former partner. In 2017 in Darebin 1657 family violence related incidents were reported to Victoria Police (WHV, 2019).

Violence is not limited to physical or verbal expressions, but can also take place in the form of threats, coercion, and deprivation of personal freedoms. Violence against women has significant consequences on the health and wellbeing of women and children, with severe and persistent effects on physical and mental health, social isolation, economic disadvantage and enormous costs in terms of premature death and disability.

The estimated financial impact of violence against women and their children to the Australian economy each year is \$22 billion (KPMG, 2016). The underrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, pregnant women, women with disability, and women who are homeless within national prevalence estimates may add a further four billion to this figure. This cost is derived from the impact of violence on the health system, justice and services system, productivity and employment. However, the immense social implications and impact on the health and wellbeing of women and their children mean the true cost of violence against women is incalculable (KPMG, 2016).

Violence against women can take in public and private settings, and the fear of male violence significantly limits the participation of women and girls in community life. In many local government areas public parks and recreation areas are used significantly more by men than by other genders. This contributes to disparity in health outcomes, feelings of social exclusion and poor perceptions of safety for women. In Darebin's 2017-2018 Community Survey, female respondents felt significantly (11.3%) less safe in public areas of the municipality at night than male respondents.

More detailed violence against women data is available in appendix 3.

4. Improving gender equity and preventing violence against women – a public health issue

Everyone has the right to realise their full potential for health and wellbeing regardless of their gender. This plan recognises that gender equality is a critical determinant of health and wellbeing and a fundamental human right that benefits the entire community (VicHealth, 2017).

The positive impacts of gender equality on health and wellbeing has been well established in Australia and around the world, with research indicating that it is linked with a number of positive social, economic and health outcomes. These outcomes are beneficial to women and girls on an individual level, as well as the community and society more broadly.

- Gender equality is associated with lower levels of depression (Hammarström et al, 2012)
- Closing the gap between women's and men's employment rates would increase Australia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by 11 per cent (Goldman Sachs JB Were, 2009)
- Conforming to traditional constructions of masculinity is associated with poorer physical and mental health, greater risk taking, and lower help-seeking among men (Wong, Y et al, 2017)
- Gender inequality is a key driver of violence against women, which is more damaging to the health of Victorian women aged 15 to 44 than any other risk factors for chronic disease (VicHealth, 2004)

Taking action to improve gender equity and address women's rights to health and wellbeing is one of the most direct and compelling means of reducing health inequities and achieving positive wellbeing outcomes for the entire community. As such, this plan aligns with Council's Municipal Health and Wellbeing plan, which outlines Council's goal for a healthy, strong and resilient people and connected community, striving for health equity for all (DCC, 2017).

5. Intersectionality and Groups at Risk

Efforts to improve gender equity and prevent violence against women cannot be considered in isolation from other factors which reinforce disadvantage and discrimination against women. An intersectional approach identifies and transforms systems of power and privilege that negatively shape individual outcomes. It reflects on and addresses power dynamics, and centres “marginalised experiences, voices and leadership, wherever possible” (Chen, 2017).

Intersectionality considers how multiple forms of oppression can overlap and interrelate to contribute to a person’s experience of discrimination (Crenshaw, 1989). Intersectionality acknowledges that people can experience compounding impacts of discrimination and poverty, power and privilege or both. Central to an intersectional approach is the recognition that inequalities are not the consequence of a single factor or experience but an “outcome of different social locations, power relations and experiences” (Hankivsky, 2014). These include gender, aboriginality, race, age, class, socioeconomic status, physical or mental ability, gender or sexual identity, religion and ethnicity.

This document places gender at the centre of Council’s efforts to prevent violence against women, but will be implemented with the understanding that all efforts to address gender inequality and violence against women cannot be done in isolation from work to address racism, poverty and other forms of inequality, as posited in *Towards equality – Darebin City Council’s Equity, Inclusion and Human Rights Framework 2019-2029*.

This plan acknowledges that the groups specified below are not exhaustive and do not capture the breadth of experiences and nuanced discrimination that women experience. They are some of the communities who experience additional forms of discrimination in our society particularly relevant to Darebin. Furthermore, it is recognised that much like women are not a homogenous group, extensive diversity exists within the cohorts and further intersections of privilege and disadvantage may occur.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women experience multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination based on structural violence and entrenched practices of discrimination in our society.

Vital to our understanding of family violence in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities is the recognition that family violence is not a traditional aspect of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. It occurs in the historical context of the dispossession, discrimination and attempted destruction of Aboriginal culture, as a result of the ongoing impacts of colonisation.

The devastating impacts of colonisation on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, their culture and their communities is ongoing in Australia. In addition to the institutional racism and structural violence, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women are impacted by the gendered inequalities that persist in Australian society. The result of the compounding effects of these disparities in the workforce, schools, government and society mean that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women experience greater economic, employment and social disadvantage than their non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander counterparts (ABS, 2011), including much higher rates of incarceration (Walters, A., Longhurst, S., 2017). Growing inequality further risks marginalising Aboriginal women by making it more difficult to access health, housing and employment.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women are disproportionately impacted by family violence. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women are 3.1 times more likely to experience violence than non-Indigenous women and are 32 times more likely to be hospitalised as a result of family violence related assaults (Our Watch, 2018).

Women with disabilities

Women with disabilities experience a unique and heightened form of discrimination and marginalisation as a result of the compounding impacts of gender inequality and ableism, as well as intersecting forms of racism and classism. It is important to acknowledge that women with disabilities represent a diverse group which may experience sensory, physical, cognitive impairments and/or mental health conditions. The discrimination encountered by women with disabilities occurs on several levels and takes on multiple forms, limiting their ability to participate in facets of social, cultural, economic and political life. Women with disabilities experience significant disadvantage compared to men with disabilities and women without disabilities across a number of key metrics; including economic security, housing, healthcare, education and employment (WWDA, 2009).

Patterns of exclusion and disability-based discrimination combined with social isolation increase the risk of violence against women with disabilities. Women and girls with disabilities are twice as likely as women and girls without disabilities to experience violence throughout their lives, and over one-third of women with disabilities will experience some form of intimate partner violence (WWDA, 2013). Moreover, they experience significant limitations in accessing services and justice in response to their experiences of violence, (Healy, 2013) including environmental and attitudinal barriers.

Newly arrived, immigrant and refugee women

In addition to gender-based discrimination, newly arrived, immigrant and refugee women experience discrimination, including disrespectful attitudes towards and stereotypical categorising of different ethnic backgrounds, races, religions and languages. Entrenched racial inequalities mean that women of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds in Australia experience structural disadvantage and face multiple barriers to information and participation in the workforce, in education, in housing and in healthcare and are underrepresented in media and politics.

CALD women from refugee and migrant backgrounds are made more vulnerable to the risk of experiencing gendered violence through the exploitation of isolating circumstances, – whether social, geographical and/or disconnection from family / community – immigration status, communication barriers, social and economic disadvantage, and other personal circumstances (Vaughan, et al., 2016). Women in these communities are less likely to report violence, experience more barriers to accessing support services and are less likely to leave a family violence situation (DSS, 2016). The complexity of leaving is driven by factors such as a potential loss of connection to women’s communities, their children and extended family, as well as financial instability (Vaughan, et al., 2016). Newly arrived and refugee women are particularly vulnerable to family violence due to the uncertainty of residency status and fear of deportation, combined with a lack of local social / familial networks and limited access to relevant community support services.

LGBTIQ+ women¹

Members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+) community experience discrimination, harassment and violence in their private, social and work lives.

The discrimination and prejudices that people in the LGBTIQ+ community encounter is largely rooted in harmful gender stereotypes and discrimination of those who are perceived as not conforming to traditional gender norms and heteronormative ideals. Challenging these stereotypes and norms by dismantling patriarchal power structures is central to ending all forms of gendered

¹ We acknowledge that language is rapidly evolving in this space and terminology at times contested. We will monitor sector-endorsed language to guide future updates or iterations of this Action Plan.

violence. This plan recognises that supporting LGBTIQ+ people and women’s equity is mutually beneficial.

The extent of intimate partner violence in the LGBTIQ+ community is largely underexplored. Evidence suggests that members of the LGBTIQ+ community experience family violence at similar rates as those who identify as cis-gender and heterosexual. The heteronormative framing of family violence, compounded with the binary categorisation of gender and sex, has led to invisibility of the LGBTIQ+ people in mainstream discourse around family violence and in policy responses. Consequently women of diverse gender and sexual identities often encounter difficulties accessing services (State of Victoria et al., 2017).

See appendix 2, for a profile of women in Darebin.

6. Policy Context

The below table outlines the policy context relating to gender equity and preventing violence against women in Darebin. It is acknowledged that there are myriad of policies, strategies and research locally, nationally and internationally that informs and guides this work.

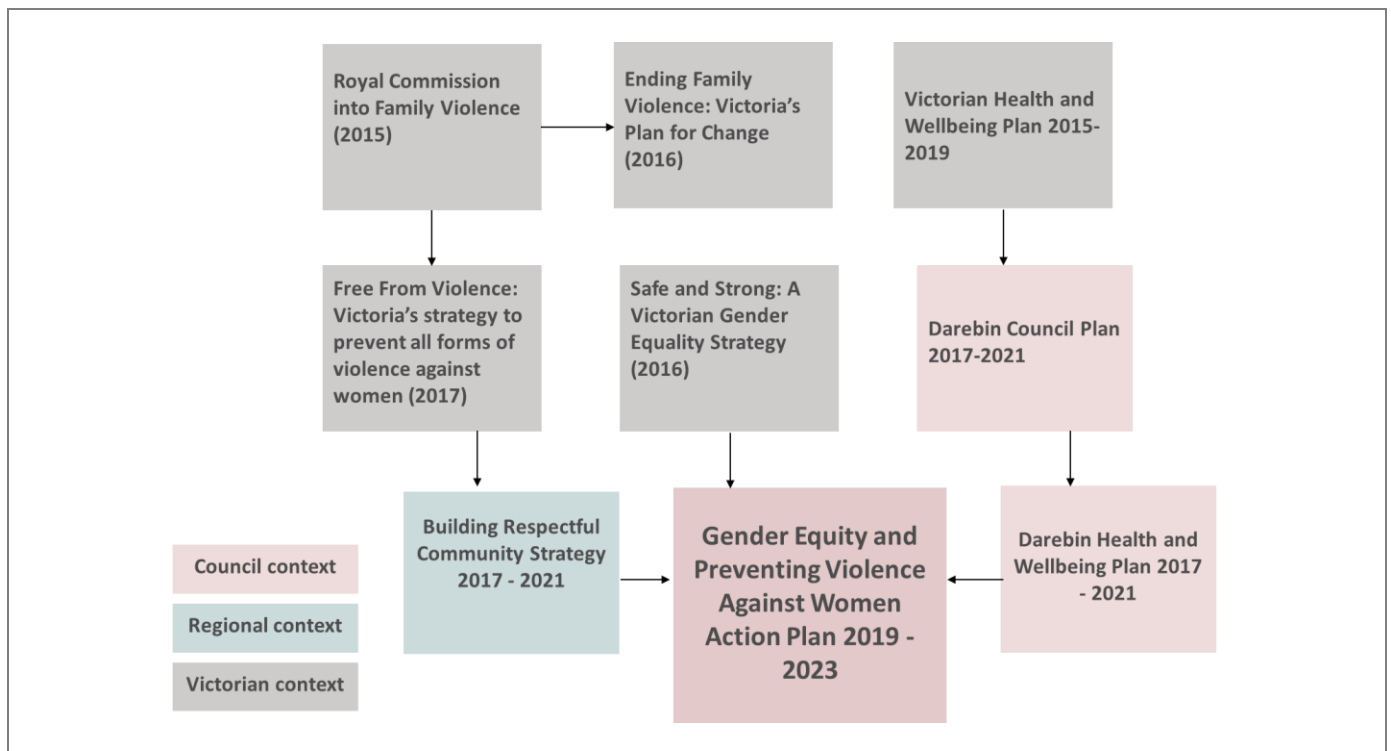


Figure 3. Policy context for Darebin’s Gender Equity and Preventing Violence Against Women Action Plan 2019 – 2023

See appendix 5 for details of the policy context

7. Vision and Principles

Vision – *A gender equitable, safe and respectful Darebin community*

Principles underpinning this work:

1. Gender equity is key to ending violence against women. The strongest predictor of high levels of violence against women is unequal power between men and women.
2. Gender inequality is not experienced the same way by all women, nor is it expressed the same way in all circumstances. This work is inclusive and recognises the complex intersections between different forms of inequality, discrimination and disadvantage.
3. Violence against women is a violation of human rights
4. Council's work to improve gender equity and prevent violence against women is led by evidence-based approaches.
5. Local government has a leadership role to play in improving gender equity and preventing violence against women
6. Working in **partnership** with community and stakeholders is key to achieving gender equality.

Priority Action Areas:

1. Organisational leadership
2. Safe, inclusive and respectful communities
3. Women's participation in community life
4. Research and advocacy

8. Data collection, monitoring and evaluation

Improving gender equity and preventing violence against women is a long-term and intergenerational process. The short term impacts of Council's efforts on a population level will not all be immediate or measurable. Therefore, Council will endeavour to monitor and evaluate its work through monitoring the progress, output and where possible outcome of actions.

Monitoring will be supported through four overarching evaluation questions. These will be measures against a number of key quantifiable indicators. The monitoring, reporting and evaluation of this Action Plan will also align with and contribute to the Building Respectful Community Strategy 2017-2021 evaluation framework, supporting the State and National evidence base.

Evaluation question	Indicators	Data source
Are principles of gender equity and respect embedded in workplace practices, policies and culture?	Number of women employed in Council's Operation and Capital division / Level of gender segregation in the workforce Number of employees who adopt flexible work arrangements	Workforce data (Chris 21) People & Development data

Is a gendered perspective being applied to Council policies?	Number of Council policies that apply a gender lens Proportion of policies and practices evaluated by the Equity, Inclusion Wellbeing Planning and Assessment Tool (EIWPAT)	Equity & Wellbeing data
Is gender equity being embedded into Council's service delivery?	Number of gender and community safety audits across Darebin at relevant consultation / project sites Number of Darebin's Early Years sites include gender equity / respectful relationships in their policies	Community Safety audit data Early Years data
Is women's diverse representation and full participation in economic, social and political life being supported?	Number of women in advisory committees who reflect diverse backgrounds and experiences Proportion of women and girls participating in sports and recreation	Community Engagement and Demographics data Darebin Household Survey

9. Action Plan

Working within the evidence base and policy context, Council's action plan will be delivered through four priority areas and will be reviewed annually to include new opportunities. The actions are intended to be evidence-based and strategic, broadly influencing Council's work.

This Plan has been designed to recognise diversity and intersectionality at the outset in order to reduce the risk, occurrence and impact of violence against women for all residents. This means prevention initiatives and services will be accessible, inclusive, non-discriminatory and responsive to diverse groups.

Council considers itself one component of a larger system of stakeholders with the responsibility to prevent violence against women and promote gender equity. Council will support and work collaboratively with key stakeholders to ensure our efforts are consistent and mutually reinforcing. We acknowledge that the complex nature of violence against women will require drawing from the expertise of specialist organisations, and in particular, organisations that understand intersectional prevention practice.

Action Area 1: Organisational leadership

Council is committed to creating an organisational culture that is welcoming, inclusive and respectful, and supports women's leadership at all levels. As one of the largest employers within the municipality, Darebin City Council can be considered an extension of the community itself. Ensuring our own workplace is gender equitable is integral to creating a respectful and equitable community. Benefits of more equitable and diverse workplaces include increased organisational performance, efficiency, productivity, innovation, creativity and improved employee engagement (Centre for Ethical Leadership, 2013). Council will lead by example, embedding principles of gender equity and respect in workplace practices, policies and culture.

Action	Lead department and partners	How will this be achieved?	Timeline
Undertake a gender equity workforce audit	People & Development; Equity & Wellbeing; Executive Management Team	Conduct a gender equity workforce audit in line with the Workplace Equality and Respect (WER) frameworks and report on key indicators, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender composition across the workforce • Remuneration between genders • Promotion and professional development between genders • Staff perceptions of gender equity WER data contributes to local government benchmarking where appropriate	2019-2020
Respond to legislative updates relevant to local government	Equity & Wellbeing; Council-wide	Implementation of the Victoria local government women's charter Implementation of relevant gender equity legislation	ongoing
Reduce gender segregation of roles in the workplace	People & Development; Council-wide	Barriers to women's participation in male dominated Operations and Capital division are identified and addressed with demonstrated outcomes Barriers to men's participation in female dominated work areas are identified and addressed with demonstrated outcomes Industry pathways for women into male dominated areas of work are established	2019-2020
Build workforce capacity and commitment to gender equity and preventing violence against women	Equity & Wellbeing; People & Development; Organisational Culture & Transformation	Strengthening of workforce knowledge and understanding of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gender equity • the link between violence and gender inequality • bystander action 	ongoing

Build workforce capacity and commitment to respond to staff experiencing family violence	People & Development	<p>Workforce knowledge and understanding of family violence is strengthened through the implementation of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family Violence Policy • Identifying family violence training • family violence policy eLearning module 	ongoing
Embed gender equity in Council's workplace policies and practices to support whole of organisational change	People & Development; Organisational Culture & Transformation Council-wide	<p>Review of relevant council workplace policies i.e. parental leave, flexible work policies</p> <p>Gender balance across internal advisory committees and reference groups is facilitated</p> <p>A gender lens is applied to Council's workplace policies and practices relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • parental leave • flexible work • succession planning • remuneration • recruitment • performance management <p>Inclusive language is incorporated in policies and practices</p> <p>Capacity for all staff to access flexible working arrangements is increased</p> <p>Council's infrastructure and facilities support a gender equitable workforce, including the provision of breastfeeding, expressing and changing facilities</p>	2019-2020
Strengthen the leadership capacity of women in the organisation	People & Development; Council-wide	Women participate in leadership training opportunities, including LGPRo Leadership programs	annual

Action Area 2: Safe, inclusive and respectful communities

Gender equity enables the creation of a safe, inclusive and respectful community. Council can realise this by ensuring a gendered perspective is applied to all Council's legislation, policies or programs and ensure that relevant services and programs support the safety and wellbeing of victim / survivors of family violence.

Action	Lead department and partners	How will this be achieved?	Timeline
Embed gender equity principles into Council's policies, practices, planning and service delivery	Equity & Wellbeing; Council wide; Aged & Disability	Integration of a gender lens into the Equity, Inclusion and Wellbeing Planning and Assessment Tool	annual
	Community Empowerment & Engagement	Gender equity is embedded in Council's Community Engagement Frameworks	2019-2020
Integrate gender sensitive design the public realm and transport	Equity & Wellbeing; City Futures, Environment & Sustainable Transport	<p>Council responds to data generated from the Gender Equality Map</p> <p>Gendered perspectives of safety and accessibility are included in infrastructure, public realm and transport works</p> <p>Gender perspectives of safety are included in Council's parking strategy</p> <p>Strategic planning and urban design initiatives are inclusive, accessible and equitable for all genders and abilities</p>	annual
Implement Family Violence and Gender Equity reforms	Equity & Wellbeing; Council-wide; Darebin Family Violence Network	<p>Council implements relevant recommendations articulated in the Royal Commission into Family Violence</p> <p>Respond to other relevant legislative updates related to gender equity / family violence</p>	ongoing
Support community members who are victim survivors of family violence in Council's capacity as a local government	Council-wide; Darebin Family Violence Network	Resources are available at Council sites for victim survivors of family violence	ongoing
	Equity & Wellbeing; Darebin Family Violence Network	Darebin Family Violence Network convened bi-monthly by Council	ongoing
	Families, Youth & Children	The capacity of service delivery staff in Council's Family, Youth and Children's services to identify and respond to family violence is strengthened	2019-2020

	Community Empowerment & Engagement; Our Watch; The Victorian State Government; The Equality Institute	Leverage off existing social marketing campaigns that raise public awareness and understanding of violence against women and support victim survivors of violence against women	annual
Engage with partners to deliver initiatives which address women's health and wellbeing	Equity & Wellbeing; Recreation & Libraries; Aged & Disability	Place-based activities, programs and services that facilitate women's participation in East Reservoir and East Preston communities are supported 'Get Active in Darebin' prioritises programs that respond to the need of women experiencing poorer health and wellbeing outcomes	2019-2020
	Equity & Wellbeing; Preston Mosque	Preston Mosque MOU and subsequent action plan considers women's health and wellbeing outcomes	2019-2020
	Council-wide; Multicultural Centre for Women's Health; Women's Health in the North	New and existing partnerships with organisations that support women experiencing disadvantage are established and strengthened	ongoing
Ensure that Council's work to achieve the Welcoming Cities Standard applies a gender lens	Equity & Wellbeing; Welcoming Cities Reference Group; AMES Australia; Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre; Multicultural Centre for Women's Health	Gender lens is applied to six standards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership • Social & cultural inclusion • Economic development • Learning & skills development • Civic participation • Places & spaces 	2019-2020
Challenge rigid gender roles and harmful stereotypes in the community	Community Empowerment & Engagement	Council's communications promote diverse gender roles and challenge gender stereotypes	annual
	Recreation and Libraries	Council's Libraries actively promotes non-traditional gender roles and stereotypes through its collections, programs, services, exhibitions and initiatives	annual
	Families, Youth & Children	Council's Youth Services address harmful gender roles through their programs and services Maternal and Child Health build the capacity to support gender equitable	2019-2020

		parenting and caring practices to respond to a diverse and changing community	
	Creative Culture	Council's arts programming promote diverse gender roles and challenge gender stereotypes	annual
Apply a gender lens to Council's procurement processes	Finance; Council-wide	Gender equity targets are embedded in the subject of contracts, including contract management and contract delivery Council's procurement policies and practices prioritise equitable representation of women, including women experiencing disadvantage Procurement criteria includes gender disaggregated data Gender equity embedded in social and sustainable procurement strategy	2019-2020
Create safe spaces for women and LGBTIQ+ people in the creative domain	Council-wide; Creative Culture; Recreation & Libraries	Arts venues cultivate an inclusive and welcoming culture through infrastructure, management, operations and staff approach	annual
	Families, Youth & Children	Council's youth music program (Decibels) supports young women and LGBTIQ+ people	annual
Apply a gender lens to Council's annual budgeting process	Executive Management Team; Finance	Gender Responsive Budgeting is adopted by Council / scoped by Council Council's service review program applies a gender lens	2019-2020
Challenge rigid gender roles and harmful gender stereotypes and promote respectful relationships across the lifespan, with a focus on Early childhood	Equity & Wellbeing	Gender equity in the early years training is available for early years educators in Darebin	2019-2020
	Recreation & Libraries	Council's library programs and collections include resources promoting gender equity, diversity and non-traditional gender roles	annual
	Families, Youth & Children Darebin's Early Years sites	<i>Creating Gender Equity in the Early Years: a Whole of Service Pilot</i> is completed in 3 Early Years Sites across the municipality	2019

Participate in and support the implementation of Building a respectful Community Strategy 2017– 2021	Equity & Wellbeing Women's Health in the North	Participation in the Northern Metropolitan Preventing Violence Against Women Committee Contribution to the Building Respectful Community Strategy monitoring and evaluation framework	annual
Strengthen the capacity of workplaces, sports clubs, arts and community organisations to prevent violence against women and promote gender equity	Equity & Wellbeing; Council-wide	Partners are supported to embed a gender equity lens in their policies and practices Participation in State and regional preventing violence against women and gender equity networks	ongoing
	Families, Youth & Children	Families and Children service providers are actively encouraged to integrate gender equitable practices in their Strategic and Quality Improvement Plans (QIPs)	annual

Action Area 3: Women's participation in community life

Council will support women's full participation in economic, social and political life, considering this a key factor in improving the health and wellbeing outcomes of our community members. Women's participation in decision-making, leadership and community is important as a right in itself, but also challenges basic and long-standing power relationships between genders. Improving women's participation will involve targeted and meaningful engagement with women, particularly women who experience multiple compounding forms of disadvantage and discrimination.

Action	Lead department and partners	How will this be achieved?	Timeline
Address issues of gendered economic and/or employment inequalities.	City Futures; Equity & Wellbeing	Implementation of initiatives that support professional leadership and networking opportunities for Women Council supports businesses led by women and/or who have a high rate of women in the workforce	annual
	People & Development; Council-wide	Council works in collaboration with local schools to offer 50% of work experience placements to young women	annual
Provide opportunities for women to participate in decision-making and	Equity & Wellbeing; Council-wide	Implementation of the Darebin Women's Leadership Network	annual

leadership positions	Equity & Wellbeing; Governance & Performance	Targets for diverse gender representation are considered as part of the review of community advisory committees	2019-2020
Encourage women's participation in leisure, recreation and the arts	Recreation & Libraries	Council's leisure facilities and infrastructure are inclusive of all genders and abilities Leisure and Recreation programs are targeted towards women and girls Partnerships with key stakeholders, agencies and networks to promote opportunities for increased physical activities for women are strengthened	annual
	Recreation & Libraries	A gendered lens is included in Darebin Libraries Event Framework	2019-2020
	Creative Culture & Events	Women are represented in their diversity in Council's arts and culture programming	annual
	Families, Youth & Children	Women, girls and non-binary people are actively encouraged to participate in Darebin's youth programs	2019-2020
Support initiatives that seek to promote gender equity with particular focus on groups of women who experience compounding forms of discrimination, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal women • Women with disabilities • Women from migrant, refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds. • LGBTIQ+ women 	Equity & Wellbeing; Finance; Council-wide	Council's grants allocation process is gender responsive and considers other forms of discrimination Council's Community Grants and Three-year Partnership grants include priorities that respond to women experiencing discrimination and disadvantage Communication and promotion of Council's grants are inclusive and gender equitable	annual

Action Area 4: Research and advocacy

Council will advocate for gender equity and the prevention of violence against women at a local, regional, state and national level and urge that action is taken of factors contributing to gender inequality and violence against women. This includes continuing to advocate that violence against women and gender inequality denies individuals of their human rights and as such, is a human rights issue. Research and evaluation informs all four action areas by improving the evidence and knowledge base for future planning and allowing efforts to be effectively targeted and monitored.

Action	Lead department and partners	How will this be achieved?	Timeline
Ensure Council's data collection, at all levels, is gender disaggregated	Community Empowerment & Engagement	Gender disaggregated data is available and informs Council planning	annual
Advocate at local, state and national levels on issues affecting gender equity, with particular focus on: -Safe, secure and accessible housing for women -Women's economic independence -Elimination of violence against women -Adequate resources to respond to the demand on family violence services	Council-wide	Departments in Council undertake and document advocacy on a local, state and national level	ongoing
	City Futures	An equity lens is applied to Council's Housing Program, particularly for policies and initiatives relating to affordable housing	2019-2020
	Environment & Sustainable Transport	Partnerships with key stakeholders, agencies and networks to ensure public transportation is safe, inclusive and accessible for all	ongoing
Gather and share new and existing data and information that contribute to and inform the gender equity and preventing violence against women evidence base	Council-wide	Participation in relevant forums and networking opportunities	ongoing
	Equity & Wellbeing; Families, Youth and Children	Evaluation of Creating Gender Equity in the Early Years: a whole of service pilot	2019
Advocate for gender equity and the prevention of violence against women through the recognition and participation in key campaigns	Equity & Wellbeing; Recreation & Libraries; Community Empowerment & Engagement	Participation in the following campaigns through events and activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Women's Day (8 March) • International day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women and 16 Days of Activism Against gender Based Violence (25 November – 10 December) 	annual

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