

Darebin Gender Equity Advisory Committee
Meeting minutes



Date: Tuesday 6 June 2023 (Meeting 2)

Meeting time: 5.30pm - 7.30pm

Meeting venue: In person (Darebin's Conference Room, Preston) with hybrid attendance.

Present

Chair:

Wendy Dinning, Acting Manager Equity & Wellbeing

Councillors:

Community representatives:

Megan Burke, Emily Fraresso (online), Sandra Morris, Rosa Vasseghi (online), Amanda Wilczynski, Melissa Collins (online)

Council staff:

- Jade Myconos (Gender Equity Officer)

Guest speakers:

- Philip O'Brien (Darebin's Jobs for the Future Team Leader).

Apologies:

Cr. Susan Rennie, Cr. Emily Dimitriadis, Carmen Lahiff-Jenkins, Jo Van-Dort, Felicity Rorke, Anna Scovelle, Samantha Young, Zeldia Harper-Balsmo (*submitted resignation from committee last week*), Diana Pais.

Minute taker:

Jade Myconos

1. Welcome, Acknowledgement of Country and Apologies

The Acting Chair opened the meeting at 5:35pm and welcomed everyone, acknowledged the traditional owners and custodians of the land, the Wurundjeri people, and paid respect to their Elders, past and present and emerging.

Apologies were noted.

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2. Actions arising from previous minutes

The Gender Equity Officer provided an overview of the outstanding actions from the previous minutes as follows:

Outstanding action: Find out when public toilet strategy will be developed.

Comment: The Gender Equity Officer has requested information about when the Public Toilet Strategy will be updated to prompt consultation with the Gender Equity Advisory Committee. This action is still in progress.

3. Endorsement of minutes

Minutes were circulated to members 9 March 2023.

Moved: Megan

Seconded: Emily

4. Conflict of interest

Members discussed difference between representing the organisation they may employed by externally and representing themselves only on the committee. Discussion included determining when there may be times members need to disclose a conflict of interest if matters being discussed involve the interests of their place of employment.

No conflicts of interest were declared for this meeting.

ACTION:

Circulate GEAC's 'Terms of Reference' highlighting section 4, Composition, recruitment, appointment and tenure, paragraph 5 and Darebin's Code of Conduct section 3 'Conflict of interest – general'- Jade

5. Round table check in – everyone

- No additions to the agenda were added.
- Question from member seeking an update or outcome regarding previous meeting's presentation about the Gender Equality Map.

ACTION: Contact Community Safety Officer, Joshua Williams, to seek Gender Equality Map update for members – Jade

6. Economic Development activities and events update

Philip O'Brien (Jobs for the Future Team Leader) shared information about Economic participation prioritising women at Darebin. Summary of information:

- Team focuses on working with people overcoming barriers to employment. Women are identified as one of the priority jobseeker cohorts.
- Provided leadership to [Jobs Advocates](#).
- Facilitates Darebin's Employment Network and Aboriginal Employment Network.

Recent programs and events prioritising women include:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander career development events.
- Collaborating with 'She Force' Social Enterprise to increase participation of women and girls in Trades and Labour sectors.
- Working with [NCAT](#) who provide support for young women wanting to work in Trades.
- Engaging with '[Women Can](#)' Social Enterprise program which supports women through their mentorship program to get their drivers licence, and works with Dyson's bus company to employ women drivers.
- Connecting with schools and Tafes.
- Ran a series of inclusive jobs forums and workshops in 2021-2022. Common theme emerged about gender specific issues that are occurring in workplaces. Through the process of running these workshops Philip's team developed a framework to inform their work for the next 1-2 years.

Member feedback and discussion points:

- Q. How has consideration been given to the safety of bus drivers in the 'Women Can' program? A. Not aware of details in agreement, however the program does involve skill development and ongoing mentorship - Philip
- Q. Do we only engage with suppliers from Darebin? A. No, as long as the participants of the suppliers are engaged with Darebin in some way - Philip
- Q. Has workplace safety been considered or integrated into the framework?
A. Psychological safety was a strong theme that emerged during development of the Framework. Discussion also took place around Bullying and Harassment during the forums which informed the work – Philip
- Q. Is there a financial support model to compliment the employment work, i.e. budgeting? A. Yes, when opportunities present. For example, the recent 'Wellness' event for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women focussed on how to manage your Superannuation – Philip

- Women's Health in the North (WHIN) run an award winning program called ['Let's Talk Money'](#) for migrant and refugee women, consider contacting them about the program.
- Q. Have you considered a career mentor program for women? A. Great suggestion, historically it has been challenging to recruit mentors but that can just be due to timing - Philip
- Suggestion to keep an eye on grants available through [Ecstra Foundation | Get involved — Ecstra Foundation](#)
- Q. Has there been consideration as to how to build the capacity of others in workforces to support inclusion of more women in male dominated fields- specifically understanding of gender inequality and creating a safe workplace for women? A. There have been some conversations with 'She Force' about how to enact cultural change, but this is an ongoing topic throughout the work - Philip

ACTION: Phillip to enquire if the Framework can be shared with committee members.

Break

5 minute break

7. Upcoming awareness raising campaigns Darebin will start planning for:

Jade Myconos (Gender Equity Officer) shared information about the upcoming events they are commencing planning for. Summary of information:

- Week without Violence October
- 16 days of Activism against gender-Based Violence starts 25 November

Planning resources:

- Organised by the Gender Equity Officer
- Budget anticipated \$1,500
- Focus on using existing communication channels, resources and networks
- In previous years [Safe and Equal](#) provide small grants of \$1,500 for these events or \$5,000 for consortiums.

Previous events included:

- Promotion of Walk Against Family Violence – organised by Safe Steps and held in the city.
- Respectful Relationships Storytime sessions held by Darebin libraries.
- Social media campaign raising awareness about violence against women.

- Internal communications raising awareness for staff.
- Promotion of community activity events on our website.
- Community day at East Preston Community Centre in partnership with Women's Health in the North.

Question to Committee:

1. Are there particular cohorts we should target our communication or activities to?
2. What areas of Council should we encourage to get involved / lead activities?
3. Are there events or activities happening in the community that could be promoted on Council's website?
4. Is there anything else you would like to see happen during this campaign?

Member feedback and discussion points:

- Q. Noting the small budget, does this indicate that Council does not see preventing violence against women as a priority activity? A. Historically this event has leveraged existing resources and services within Council, for example: Social Media, website, library events.
- Consider using Police/crime statistics to identify areas in the community that could benefit from targeted communications.
- Consider displaying visual imagery (e.g. keys held in hand by women as a weapon at night) to support the campaign along high Street for example. Or projecting images onto side of Northcote Town Hall.
- National Community Attitudes Survey ([NCAS](#)) findings indicate cis-gender, heterosexual men are lagging behind in understanding and attitudes of violence against women.
- Target men! Would love to see men doing the work. For example, could we show men committing to what actions they will take in their lives to counter gender inequality violence against women?
- Target men's sporting clubs.
- Proactively engage with male dominated organisations in Darebin to ask what they are doing in this space or for this event.
- Organise Active Bystander training for areas of Council with higher percentages of men employed.
- Proactively engage with smaller or Not-for-profit organisations to ask if they are organising any events they would like advertised on Council's website.
- Consider engaging [Generation Women Australia](#) for story night.
- Consider screening [Safe Home | SBS On Demand](#), noting family violence support services must also be provided in follow up to viewers.

ACTION:

1. Circulate Darebin's Gender Equality Action Plan to the committee – Jade
2. When developed, send the draft Communications Plan for 16 Days of Activism to the committee for feedback – Jade
3. Identify and invite representatives from areas of Council who are less engaged with gender equality issues to a future GEAC meetings - Jade

8. Gender Impact Assessments - overview

Jade Myconos, Darebin's Gender Equity Officer provided an update about Council's GIA process. This information noted introductory information on this topic was provided to the committee in September 2022. Summary of information:

The *Gender Impact Assessment (GIA)* is a legislative requirement under the Gender Equality Act (2020) which seeks to ensure that a gender lens is applied in any policy, program or service that directly and significantly impact the community.

The Equity Impact Assessment (EIA) is a key tool developed by Darebin that is used to ensure Council policies, programs and services that are equitable, inclusive and accessible to everyone in our community. The EIA incorporates the Gender Impact Assessment (GIA).

Examples of EIA/GIA undertaken at Darebin during the last year were presented.

Member feedback and discussion points:

- It would be good to see more examples of EIA/GIAs undertaken that have a more direct impact on women in the community.

9. General business

Item 1. Draft Council Plan and Council Plan Action Plan

Wendy Dinning, Acting Manager Equity & Wellbeing provided an update about Council's [2023/24 Budget | Your Say Darebin](#) and drew member's attention to the Draft Council Action Plan and its inclusion of gender equity goals.

ACTION: Send Draft Council Plan and Council Action Plan to committee - Jade

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11. Meeting end

- The Chair thanked everyone for their time.
- The meeting was closed at 7.30pm.

Next meeting

Tuesday 5 September 2023, 5.30pm-7:30pm, Conference Room.