

Title:	Fair Access in Sport Policy
Type of policy:	Council
Adopted:	22 May 2024
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Attachments:	Fair Access in Sport Action Plan – 24/39382

Acknowledgement of Country

Murrindindi Shire Council is proud to acknowledge the Taungurung and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people as the traditional owners of the land we now call Murrindindi Shire.

We pay our respects to First Nations leaders and elders, past, present, and emerging, who are the keepers of history, traditions, knowledge, and culture of this land.

We commit to working in collaboration with traditional owners of this land in a spirit of reconciliation and partnership.

1. Purpose

The Fair Access in Sport Policy (the Policy) seeks to address known barriers experienced by women and girls in accessing and using community sports infrastructure. The Policy aims to progressively build capacity and capabilities of Murrindindi 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 sports infrastructure. Council will undertake the necessary and proportionate steps to implement the Fair Access in Sport Policy.

2. Rationale

Sport is a highly visible and valued feature of Murrindindi's culture and identity. The sport and active recreation sectors provide opportunities for enriching our community through the promotion of respect and fair mindedness for all people, while also supporting the physical and mental wellbeing of our community.

The 2015 *Inquiry into Women and Girls in Sport and Active Recreation* instigated a Victorian Government program of reform to change the systems that have perpetuated gender inequality in the community sport and recreation sector. Concurrently, the legislative framework around gender equality and local government has changed with the adoption of the *Gender Equality Act 2020* and the *Local Government Act 2020*. The Victorian Government's Fair Access Policy Roadmap commenced in 2022 with the intention of building capacity and capabilities within Councils through the adoption of gender equitable access and use policies. The roadmap sets the target for Councils to have the policy in place by 1 July 2024 to be eligible for community sport infrastructure funding and for all Councils to have a policy in place by 1 October 2024.

This Fair Access in Sport Policy has been developed to meet the requirements of the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, the *Local Government Act 2020*, the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* and the Fair Access Policy Roadmap.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, and contractors of Council and elected Councillors.

The policy is relevant to:

- Community sports infrastructure that is Council owned or managed and/or delegated to others to manage. It does not include private landowners or Committees of Management managing land on behalf of other entities such as the State Government. For a full list, please see appendix 1.
- Any policy, program, service, or project as they relate to community sports infrastructure.

4. Definitions

Reference Term	Definition
Community Asset Committees	For the purposes of this document, refers to committees appointed by Council under the Local Government Act 2020 to manage recreation reserves where community sports infrastructure is located and utilised for community sport activities.
Committees of Management	For the purposes of this document, refers to committees appointed by the Department of Land, Water, Environment and Planning under the <i>Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978</i> to manage recreation reserves where community sport training and games are held.
Community sports infrastructure	Council owned or managed local, rural, regional, or state level sport and recreation infrastructure operated and maintained primarily for the purpose of facilitating community sport activities, including sporting grounds, surfaces, facilities, and pavilions. This includes that which is delegated by Council to others to manage such as through Community Asset Committees.
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, or GIA	A requirement under the <i>Gender Equality Act 2020</i> 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.
Intersectionality	The concept that an individual's identity consists of multiple, intersecting factors, including but not limited to gender identity, gender expression, race, ethnicity, class (past and present), religious beliefs, sexual identity, and sexual expression.
Transgender, or trans	Someone whose gender does not only align with the one assigned at birth. Not all trans people will use this term to describe themselves.

5. Policy

The Policy supports Council to take positive action towards achieving gender equity in the access and usage of community sports infrastructure. It sets an expectation that gender equality is considered and prioritised in all current and future planning, policy, service delivery and practice as they relate to community sports infrastructure.

It aims to build capacity and capabilities of 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. To ensure an effective place-based response for the gender equitable use and access of community sports infrastructure.

Council is well positioned to design and implement place-based, integrated action plans that progress gender equality in community sport.

We acknowledge 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.
- 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.
- All people should be treated with dignity, respect, and fairness regardless of their gender and other intersecting identities and everyone should have equitable access to the resources they need to thrive.
- Achieving gender equality will require diverse approaches for women, men, trans, and gender diverse people to achieve similar outcomes for people of all genders.
- Some individuals have experienced disadvantage in the sport and recreation sector because of their gender.

We commit to:

- Engage fairly and equitably with all staff, governance working groups, state sporting organisations, regional sport assemblies, and members of our sport and recreation community, regardless of their gender, in a positive, respectful, and constructive manner.
- Engage in the process of gender impact assessments to assess the implications for women, men, trans, and gender diverse people of any planned action, including policies and communications relating to community sports infrastructure.
- Identify opportunities to develop or strengthen gender equitable access to community sports infrastructure which will be documented into the Fair Access Action Plan (appendix 2).
- Promote a gender-aware and gender-responsive culture and community.
- Promote, encourage, and facilitate the achievement of gender equality and improvement in the status of women and girls in sport and active recreation.
- Communicate and educate sport and recreation infrastructure users.

Fair Access Principles

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. Council considers that these principles provide clear direction, while also enabling adaptation to the specific environment of Murrindindi.

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:
 - 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.

6. Related Policies, Strategies and Legislation

- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)
- Gender Equality Act 2020 (Vic)
- Local Government Act 2020 (Vic)
- Gender Equality Action Plan 2021-2025 (Murrindindi Shire Council)
- Fair Access in Sport Action Plan 2024/25 (Murrindindi Shire Council)

7. Council Plan

The development of this policy is consistent with strategy 1.6 of the *Council Plan 2021-2025* which is to provide and promote safe, passive, and active recreational opportunities that will enhance the

health, and wellbeing of residents and visitors. The development of a Fair Access in Sport Policy is identified within the *2023/24 Priority Action Plan*.

8. Management and Review

This policy is managed by the Manager Community Wellbeing who will (either directly or through delegated authority) coordinate the implementation and operation of the policy and its review.

The implementation of the policy will have impacts on a number of areas within Council and the broader community at which time engagement with these areas will be coordinated by the Manager Community Wellbeing.

This policy will be reviewed and updated by June 2028.

9. Consultation

The development of this policy has been informed by community engagement with sporting clubs and the community undertaken in 2023 and 2024.

10. Human Rights Charter

This policy has been developed with consideration of the requirements under the [Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities](#). This Policy contributes to the rights of all people in our community to be recognised and treated with equality before the law (section 8).

11. Gender Impact Assessment

This policy has been developed with consideration of the criteria which inspires equality under the *Gender Equality Act 2020*.

APPENDIX 1 – VENUES THAT THIS POLICY APPLIES TO

	Facility	Location
1	Buxton Recreation Reserve	Buxton
2	Eildon Bowls Club	Eildon
3	Eildon Recreation Reserve	Eildon
4	Eildon Tennis Courts	Eildon
5	Gallipoli Park	Marysville
6	Kinglake Memorial Recreation Reserve	Kinglake
7	Leckie Park	Alexandra
8	Strath Creek Pioneer Park	Strath Creek
9	Terip Terip Recreation Reserve	Terip Terip
10	Thornton Recreation Reserve	Thornton
11	Yea Bowling Club	Yea
12	Yea Showgrounds and Recreation Reserve	Yea
13	Alexandra Swimming Pool	Alexandra
14	Eildon Swimming Pool	Eildon
15	Marysville Swimming Pool	Marysville
16	Yea Swimming Pool	Yea