

# Agenda

Youth Council Meeting  
Monday 8 April 2024 at 6:00 pm

You are advised that a Youth Council Meeting will be held on Monday 8 April 2024 at 6:00 pm for the transaction of the following business.

This meeting will be held in the Council Chamber at Civic Centre, 25 Ferres Boulevard, South Morang.

# Youth Councillors

Zachary Melvaine

Youth Mayor

Kaynat Virk

Deputy Youth Mayor

Angelica Banquil

Dean Connelly-Carpenter

Bavleen Kaur

Mustafa Khraim

Angela Rolevska

Masina Salesa

Esha Serai

Tanya Sharma

Sandy Tran

Emily Tricarico

Sophie Winter

# Officers

Jacinta Stevens

Executive Manager Office of Council & CEO

Bobbie-Lea Bright

Unit Manager Governance

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## **1 Opening**

### **1.1 Meeting Opening and Introductions**

The Youth Mayor will open the meeting and welcome everyone in attendance.

### **1.2 Apologies**

### **1.3 Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners Statement**

The Youth Mayor will read the following statement:

*“On behalf of Council, I recognise the rich Aboriginal heritage of this country and acknowledge the Wurundjeri Willum Clan and Taungurung People as the Traditional Owners of lands within the City of Whittlesea.*

*I would also like to personally acknowledge Elders past, present and emerging.”*

### **1.4 Youth Council Charter**

The Youth Mayor will read the following statement:

*“We, the members of the Youth Council for the City of Whittlesea, hereby agree to respect one another’s identities, perspectives and boundaries, in order to work together as a diverse team. We will ensure a safe space for all, free of judgement, to participate in healthy, constructive collaboration, as we work together to represent the young people within the City of Whittlesea Council Community. We seek to be a voice of the youth in our community now as we prepare for the future. We commit to values of responsibility, dignity, courage and kindness as we work together, united for a common good.”*

### **1.5 Acknowledgements**

## **2 Declarations of Conflict of Interest**

### **3 Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meetings**

#### **Recommendation**

**THAT the following Minutes of the preceding Youth Council Meetings as circulated, be confirmed:**

**Scheduled Meeting of Youth Council held on 5 February 2024.**

**Scheduled Meeting of Youth Council held on 4 March 2024.**

## 4 Officers' Reports

### 4.1 Sports Fair Access Policy

**Director/Executive Manager:** Director Community Wellbeing

**Report Author:** Wayne Brooker, Coordinator West Community Hubs

**In Attendance:** Wayne Brooker, Coordinator West Community Hubs  
Jacinta Ganino, Sport & Recreation Operations Officer

#### Executive Summary

This report seeks Youth Council perspective and feedback on the draft City of Whittlesea Fair Access Policy (the Policy) and draft Sporting Clubs action plan currently out for stakeholder and community consultation.

The draft Policy responds to the Fair Access in Sport Policy Roadmap developed by the Victorian Office for Women in Sport and Recreation to support gender equitable access and utilisation of community sports infrastructure in Victoria.

The state government roadmap requires all Victorian councils to have an endorsed gender equitable access and use policy for community sports infrastructure to be considered eligible to receive Victorian Government sporting infrastructure funding.

The draft Policy applies to community sports facilities where Council is the owner, land manager and/or operator of the facility.

#### Officers' Recommendation

**THAT the Youth Council:**

- 1. Reviews the draft Sporting Fair Access Policy.**
- 2. Provides feedback for consideration prior to the Policy being presented to Council for formal adoption at its 18 June 2024 Council meeting.**

## Background / Key Information

Sport participation has important individual and community benefits, including physical and mental wellbeing and creating a sense of belonging and connection with community.

The 2023 State of Play survey undertaken by the Office of Women in Sport and Recreation found that 90% of Women and 66% of men believe gender equity in sport is still an issue that needs to be addressed.

Sport participation in the City of Whittlesea reflects broader trends of lower participation by individuals identifying as female. The *Sport Participation Trends Across Victorian Local Government Areas 2019-2021* report outlines that the City of Whittlesea is ranked 73 out of 79 local government areas for women and girl's participation in organised sport.

Higher participation rates are evident in sports traditionally undertaken by women and girls, including calisthenics, softball and athletics. Across several sports, female participation in the City of Whittlesea in 2023 was significantly lower than male participation and lower than state averages, including:

- Australian Rules Football 16.91% (AFL Victoria 17%)
- Football 15.44% (Football Victoria 21%)
- Cricket 11.39% (Cricket Victoria 27%)
- Basketball 34.7%

### Guiding Principles

The directive for the Fair Access Policy Roadmap is that *“females receive a fair share of access to the highest quality facilities at the best and most popular times. Usage policies need to consider not just competition time, but training times, and the distribution between traditional competition and other participation opportunities, as well as different sports.”*

In consultation with representatives from local government and the sport and recreation sector, the Victorian Government has developed six Fair Access Principles to guide policy development:

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 and use of community sport infrastructure.
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.

### **Council Obligations**

The draft Fair Access Policy (the draft Policy) formalises Council's commitment to gender equality outcomes in sport and recreation planning, policy development, service delivery, facility allocation and programming.

The draft Policy applies to community sports facilities where Council is the owner, land manager and/or operator of the facility.

The City of Whittlesea Fair Access Policy and subsequent action plans will:

- Guide future sporting infrastructure development with a focus on access for all
- Provide safe inclusive spaces within sporting clubs where everyone feels welcomed
- Incorporate fair access principles into Council policies and strategies
- Comply with the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, and the broader Victorian gender equality strategy and action plan 2023 – 2027.

Council acknowledges:

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

Council will:

- 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.
- 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. This is a strategy for making all voices, concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring of policies and programs.
- Review and update Lease and License and Service Level Agreements and incorporate fair access practices and principles where applicable.



- Undertake actions outlined in the City of Whittlesea Fair Access Roadmap.

Council officers will provide support, education and training for sporting clubs around equity and participation requirements, responsibilities and safe environments, as well as how to undertake gender audit and develop Gender Equity Action Plans.

### **Sporting club obligations**

The draft Policy requires sporting clubs to undertake gender equity audits and develop gender equity action plans to increase sport participation by women and girls as players, coaches and committee members.

Sporting Clubs are required to:

- Outline how they comply with the Fair Access Policy as part of the seasonal or annual application process based on consultation with club members.
- Undertake a Gender Equity Audit in consultation with Council Officers.
- Incorporate actions developed through the Gender Equity Audit to develop an action plan and report annually on progress.
- Work with sporting associations to ensure fixtures comply with the Fair Access Policy.
- Comply with the Fair Access action plan timelines to ensure ongoing access to ground allocations, and infrastructure.

Sporting clubs will be required to report to Council annually on how they are responding to the Fair Access Policy and report on implementation of their Gender Equity Action Plans. Sporting clubs that cannot demonstrate progress will not receive priority for ground/facility allocations, capital works projects, funding or subsidies for facility allocations.

### **Alignment to Community Plan, Policies or Strategies**

Alignment to Whittlesea 2040 and Community Plan 2021-2025:

#### **Connected Communities**

We work to foster an inclusive, healthy, safe and welcoming community where all ways of life are celebrated and supported.

### **Considerations of *Local Government Act (2020)* Principles**

#### **Financial Management**

The cost of implementing the Fair Access Policy is included in Council's existing budget.

## Other Principles for Consideration as per the *Local Government Act (2020)*

### Overarching Governance Principles and Supporting Principles

- (b) Priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations.

### Public Transparency Principles

- (c) Council information must be understandable and accessible to members of the municipal community.

## Council Policy Considerations

### Environmental Sustainability Considerations

No implications.

### Social, Cultural and Health

The Fair Access Policy Roadmap has been developed to address one of six recommendations from the independent Inquiry into Women and Girls in Sport and Active Recreation commissioned by the Victorian Government in 2015.

The report identified extensive gender inequality in Victorian sports and recreation participation and leadership in a sector that is predominantly male-centric and dominated.

The draft Fair Access Policy links the requirements of the *Gender Equality Act 2020* with cultural and operational levers for change, to ensure that community members identifying as women and girls in the City of Whittlesea can fully participate in and enjoy the benefits of community sport, with fair opportunity and access to their local facilities.

### Economic

No implications.

### Legal, Resource and Strategic Risk Implications

Financial Sustainability - Inability to meet current and future expenditure

Service Delivery - Inability to plan for and provide critical community services and infrastructure impacting on community wellbeing

From 1 July 2024, Victorian councils are required to have an endorsed gender equitable access and use policy to remain eligible for Victorian Government funding for community sports infrastructure.

## Implementation Strategy

### Communication

Once the final Fair Access Policy is endorsed by Council, Council's existing channels will be used to inform the community and key stakeholders. The initial communication roll out will include written communication to established networks and Government partners and in person information sessions with sporting clubs and associations.

A community engagement page has been developed which includes a survey to get insight from participants and non-participants in organised sport.

### Critical Dates

30 April 2024: Community consultation closes

1 July 2024: All councils required to have an endorsed Fair Access Policy to continue to be eligible for Victorian Government sports infrastructure funding.

## Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Under Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* officers providing advice to Council are required to disclose any conflict of interest they have in a matter and explain the nature of the conflict.

The Responsible Officer reviewing this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

## Attachments

1. DRAFT FAIR ACCESS POLICY [4.1.1 - 7 pages]



## Fair Access Policy

### Policy statement

The City of Whittlesea will undertake the necessary and proportionate steps towards achieving more gender equitable access and usage of community sports infrastructure, and improved experiences for women and girls when participating in local sport.

This Policy establishes Council’s commitment that gender equality be considered and prioritised in all current and future Council planning, policy, service delivery, facility allocations and practice as they relate to community sports infrastructure.

### Purpose

The Fair Access Policy (**Policy**) seeks to:

- address known barriers experienced by women and girls in accessing and using community sports infrastructure;
- ensure solutions developed and implemented are guided by the six principles of Fair Access detailed below;
- articulate criteria for Sports Clubs allocation of Council facilities that is consistent with the Fair Access principles;
- support Sporting Clubs in education and training regarding the Fair Access Policy; and
- align with the State Government’s Fair Access Roadmap.

### Background

Sport is a highly visible and valued feature of City of Whittlesea’s culture and identity. The benefits of sport include physical and mental wellbeing, creating a sense of belonging and connection with community.

The Sport Participation Trends Across Victorian LGAS report released in April 2024 shows the City of Whittlesea ranks 73 out of 79 council areas for women and girls participating in organised sport. This figure was boosted by sports with traditionally high participation rates by women and girls including calisthenics, softball and netball. In several sports, female participation in the City of Whittlesea in 2023 was significantly lower than male participation and lower than state averages, including:

- Australian Rules 16.91% (AFL Victoria 17%)
- Football 15.44% (Football Victoria 21%)
- Cricket – 11.39% (Cricket Victoria 27%)
- Basketball 34.7%

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A reform agenda has been developed by the Victorian Government to change the systems that have perpetuated gender inequality by designing an enduring structure that requires implementation and tracking of progress over time.

This reform agenda includes addressing the traditional structures and the way community sport and recreation organisations operate through the implementation of all nine (9) recommendations from the *2015 Inquiry into Women and Girls in Sport and Active Recreation*. This includes recommendation six (6) which includes:

*“...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”.*

In response, the Council has designed a Fair Access Policy that will guide the necessary and proportionate steps towards achieving gender equitable access and usage of community sports infrastructure. This Policy establishes Council’s expectation that gender equality is considered and prioritised in all current and future Council recreation planning, policy, service delivery and practice as they relate to community sports infrastructure.

The Fair Access Policy will require sporting clubs to participate in education, consultation and undertake gender equity audits and develop gender equity action plans to increase participation by women and girls as players, coaches and committee members. Council officers will provide education and training modules which will include equity, participation, responsibilities and safe environments, gender audit and action planning.

Sporting clubs will be required to report annually on how they are aligning with the Fair Access Policy as well as provide progress reports at designated intervals on the progress of their Gender Equity Action Plans. Clubs who do not align with the Fair Access Policy or undertake and achieve progress in gender equity action plans will not be prioritised ground allocations, capital works projects, funding or subsidies on facility allocations.

**Scope**

This policy applies to Council officers, sports clubs and associations allocated Council Sporting infrastructure.

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**Alignment to Whittlesea 2040**

The Fair Access Policy primarily guides Council’s work toward the following Goal as outlined in *Whittlesea 2040: A place for all: **Connected Community***

This Policy enables effective and efficient integration of the requirements of the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, the *Local Government Act 2020* and the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*. Providing safe and connected spaces for everyone to access sporting infrastructure.

Additionally, this Policy is informed by:

- Connected Communities Strategy
- City of Whittlesea Community Plan
- Long Term Community Infrastructure Plan
- Victorian Fair Access Policy Roadmap
- Active Whittlesea Strategy 2021

**Overarching Governance Principles**

The development of this Policy considered the *Local Government Act 2020’s* Overarching Governance Principles and the following were applied:

Lawful	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Community engagement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Financially viable	<input type="checkbox"/>
Best community outcome	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Innovation & improvement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Consistent with government plans	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Sustainable	<input type="checkbox"/>	Collaboration with government bodies	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Transparent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Gender Equality, Climate Change, Human Rights and Child Safe Compliance**

All City of Whittlesea policies comply with the *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities*, *Gender Equality Act*, *Climate Change Act* and the *Child Safe Standards*.

**Definitions****Community Sports Infrastructure** means publicly owned local, rural, regional, or state level sport and recreation infrastructure operated and maintained primarily for the purpose of

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facilitating community sport activities, including sporting grounds, surfaces, facilities, and pavilions.

**Gender** means 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 Audit** means a tool to assess and check the institutionalisation of gender equality into organisations, including in their policies, programmes, projects and/or provision of services, structures, proceedings and budgets.

**Gender diverse** means 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 gender non-confirming young people, who are more likely to describe themselves as non-binary.

**Gender equality** means the equal rights, responsibilities, and opportunities for all genders. Equality does not mean that all genders will be treated the same, but that their rights, responsibilities, and opportunities will not depend on their gender.

**Gender equity** means 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** means 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.

**Club Strategic/Business Plan** means an internal sporting club document developed to guide good governance, future direction, and specific objectives for the organisation. Sporting Clubs Gender Equity action plan will sit within this document.

**Council** means the City of Whittlesea

**Council Officers** means full time, part time, casual and contractors employed by the City of Whittlesea.

**Procedures and implementation**

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**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 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

Council considers these principles provide clear direction, while also enabling adaption to the specific environment within the City of Whittlesea.

**FOCUS AREAS**

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Informed by the Fair Access Principles, Council will take action under the following key focus areas.

<p><b><u>Operations:</u></b></p> <p>Embedding the Fair Access principles into the City of Whittlesea operational documents will be a primary step in driving change in Clubs.</p> <p>To better measure success, more advanced metrics and KPI's are required to progress the way Council gathers and uses data, reporting back on the work that is undertaken over time.</p>	<p><b><u>Infrastructure:</u></b></p> <p>Sporting infrastructure is significant when providing a welcoming environment for women, girls &amp; other diverse groups. Infrastructure can remove barriers to participation in sporting clubs, increase membership and create a positive culture.</p> <p>City of Whittlesea commits to carrying out GIAs on capital works programs to consider opportunities to strengthen gender equitable access and use of community sports facilities in alignment with the Fair Access Principles.</p> <p>Council will prioritise infrastructure projects that service a greater cross section of our community and maximise sports participation amongst underrepresented groups.</p>
<p><b><u>Club &amp; Community development:</u></b></p> <p>To increase women and girls' participation in sport, clubs require support and education. City of Whittlesea will deliver programs and educational sessions to help clubs assess their current state and plan for their future state. Club consultation will also form part of how we engage with clubs and help create a targeted approach.</p>	
<p><b><u>Associations (our partners):</u></b></p> <p>We acknowledge that sporting associations play a large part in scheduling matches, data collection and networking within the community sporting sector. We will collaborate with and advocate to State Sporting Associations to reach fair access outcomes.</p>	

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The Policy is designed to:

- Guide future sporting infrastructure development with a focus on fair access for all
- Ensure the provision of safe, inclusive spaces within sporting clubs where women and girls are welcomed
- Incorporate Fair Access principles into Council policies and strategies
- Comply with the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, and the wider Victorian Government gender equality strategy, *Safe and Strong*.

Council acknowledges:

- The disadvantaged position women, girls and gender diverse people have had in sport and recreation due to structural and attitudinal discrimination.
- That achieving gender equality will require different approaches for women and girls, men and boys and gender diverse people to achieve equitable outcomes for people of all genders.

Council will:

- 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
- 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.
- Review and update lease and license and Service Level Agreements and incorporate Fair Access practices and principles where applicable.
- Operationalise the Fair Access Policy through an Action Plan that is reviewed biannually.

Sporting Clubs will:

- Outline how they comply with the Fair Access Policy as part of Council’s seasonal or annual application process based on consultation with Club members
- Undertake a Gender Equity Audit in consultation with Council Officers
- Incorporate actions developed through the Gender Equity Audit in their Strategic/Business Plan and report annually to Council on progress
- Work with State and Regional Sporting Associations to ensure fixtures comply with the Fair Access Policy
- Comply with the Fair Access Sporting Club Action Plan developed by Council in consultation with the community to ensure ongoing access to ground allocation and infrastructure.
- Provide club registration numbers as part of their annual ground application request.

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## 4.2 Youth Council Charter Review

**Director/Executive Manager:** Executive Manager Office of Council & CEO

**Report Author:** Kathyne Kasapidis, Councillor Support Officer

**In Attendance:** Bobbie-Lea Bright, Unit Manager Governance

### Executive Summary

The Youth Council Charter is the statement that is read out by the Youth Mayor at the commencement of each Youth Council Meeting.

The statement is a summary of the purpose of the Youth Council, the values it stands for and the goals the Youth Council want to achieve collectively during the term of membership.

### Officers' Recommendation

**THAT the Youth Council:**

- 1. Collaborate to re-word the current Youth Council Charter so that it aligns with the goals and aspirations of all Youth Councillors.**
- 2. Submit the new Charter to the Councillor Support Officer for inclusion and adopting at the May Youth Council Meeting.**

## Background / Key Information

The current Youth Council Charter was created by the former Youth Advisory Committee and reads as follows:

*"We, the members of the Youth Council for the City of Whittlesea, hereby agree to respect one another's identities, perspectives and boundaries, in order to work together as a diverse team. We will ensure a safe space for all, free of judgement, to participate in healthy, constructive collaboration, as we work together to represent the young people within the City of Whittlesea Council Community. We seek to be a voice of the youth in our community now as we prepare for the future. We commit to values of responsibility, dignity, courage and kindness as we work together, united for a common good."*

The Youth Council has replaced the former Youth Advisory Committee and has been established in 2024. Therefore, the current Charter requires reviewing so that it aligns with the current Youth Councillors.

The Youth Council will collaborate to come to a common understanding of what the Youth Council's purpose is and agree to a new statement that aligns with their goals and aspirations.

## Implementation Strategy

### Critical Dates

Youth Council to collaborate to create the new Charter and send via email a copy to the Councillor Support Officer no later than Wednesday 24 April 2024 for inclusion in the May Youth Council Meeting.

## Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Under Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* officers providing advice to Council are required to disclose any conflict of interest they have in a matter and explain the nature of the conflict.

The Responsible Officer reviewing this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

## Attachments

Nil

**5 Notices of Motion**

No Notices of Motion

**6 General / Urgent Business**

No Urgent Business

**7 Closure**