

Darebin Women's Equity Strategy 2012-2015

# Gender Equity Annual Action Plan 2013-2014

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*City of*  
DAREBIN

ACTION PLAN

## 1. Introduction

The Darebin Gender Equity Annual Action Plan is one of two plans (the other being the *Preventing Violence Against Women Action Plan*) that Darebin City Council has developed as part of the Darebin Women's Equity Strategy 2012-2015.

Evidence shows that in many areas of life, women do not always have the opportunity and ability to access and enforce their rights on the same basis as men. Due to certain social structures, traditions, stereotypes and attitudes about women and their role in society, women's ability and capacity to enjoy the same privileges and rights as everyone in our community continues to be affected.<sup>1</sup>

Gender equity between men and women is a principle that lies at the heart of a fair and productive society. As a local government Council plays a critical role in creating and supporting environments that enable everyone in our community to achieve optimal health and wellbeing. As the closest level of government to the community, we have capacity to influence many of the determinants of gender inequity through our social and strategic planning, environmental management, economic development, urban design and community service provision.<sup>2</sup>

As a local government, we play a critical role in creating and supporting environments that enable everyone in our community to achieve optimal health and wellbeing. This role is legislated under the Victorian *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 (section 24)*, as well as the Victorian *Local Government Act 1989 (3c) (3d)*, which mandates councils to:

- ensure that services "best meet the needs of the local community" and are "accessible and equitable" and
- to "foster community cohesion and encourage participation in community life."

This means responding to the interests and needs of both women and men across all aspects of council activity. Councils are also bound by legislation such as the Victorian *Equal Opportunity Act 2010* and Commonwealth *Sex Discrimination Act 1984*, which aim to eliminate discrimination and sexual harassment and promote greater equity in our community. Finally, compliance with the *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* requires councils to uphold human rights, including the rights of women, as an essential component of a democratic, equitable and inclusive society.

Darebin City Council is committed to supporting and valuing women's full and equal participation in community life as a priority in achieving an equitable and just society. The implementation of an annual action plan to support this work will help us achieve this goal.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.humanrights.gov.au/sex\\_discrimination/publication/CEDAW](http://www.humanrights.gov.au/sex_discrimination/publication/CEDAW)

<sup>2</sup> Women's Health in the North, *Building a Respectful Community: Preventing Violence Against Women – A strategy for the Northern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne 2011-2016*

## 2. Related policy frameworks and strategies

### 2.1 Darebin City Council

- **Darebin Council Plan 2009-2013**

“We will work to support the right of women to fully and equally engage and participate in the life of the community”.

- **Darebin Equity and Inclusion Policy 2012-2015**

The Women's Equity Strategy (and Preventing Violence against Women and Gender Equity Action Plans) cascades from the Darebin Equity and Inclusion Policy. Under this policy, women, particularly women experiencing or at risk of domestic violence, are identified as a priority group.

The Darebin Gender Equity Action Plan revolves around three strategic goals contained within the Darebin Equity and Inclusion Policy.<sup>3</sup> The Equity and Inclusion goals are:

1. To build an **organisation within Council** that is inclusive and reflective of Darebin's diverse communities
2. To build **services and programs** that are inclusive, responsive, accessible and equitable
3. To contribute to building inclusive and empowered Darebin **communities**

- **Darebin Community Health and Wellbeing Plan 2009-2013**

Gender, as a determinant of health, is included in the Community Health and Wellbeing Plan.

- **Darebin Leisure Strategy 2010-2020**

“Continue to support the role of women in sport and leisure through the development of policy, facility design and programs.”

Actions include respect and responsibility programs, involvement in the White Ribbon Campaign, encouraging women's participation and using a gender lens to assess programs.

- **Darebin Women's Advisory Committee**

“Aims to support the right of women to fully and equally engage and participate in the life of the community”, as stated in the Council Plan.

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<sup>3</sup> [http://www.darebin.vic.gov.au/Files/Equity\\_and\\_Inclusion\\_Policy\\_2012-2015.pdf](http://www.darebin.vic.gov.au/Files/Equity_and_Inclusion_Policy_2012-2015.pdf)

## 2.2 State

- **The Victorian Local Government Women's Charter**  
Darebin City Council is one of 64 out of Victoria's 79 local governments to have endorsed the Charter, developed by the Women's Participation in Local Government Coalition established in 1996. The principles of the Charter are:  
**Gender equity:** That women and men have an equal right to be representatives in local governments, committees and decision-making positions.  
**Diversity:** The inclusion of different experiences and perspectives in local government and community decision-making strengthens local democratic governance and helps build cohesive communities. Councils and communities welcome and encourage the participation of all women.  
**Active citizenship:** Local governments will work with the community to increase the numbers and participation of women in public life, so that decision-making more clearly represents and reflects the interests and demographics of communities.
- **The Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities**
- **Women's Health Matters: A 10 Point Plan for Victorian Women's Health 2010-2014**
- **Safe, Well and Connected: Victorian Local Government Action Plan for Women's Health 2008-2012**

## 2.3 Federal

- **Gender Equality Blueprint**, Australian Human Rights Commission 2010
- **CEDAW Action Plan for Women in Australia**, Women's Legal Service/YMCA Australia 2011

## 2.4 International

- **The Full Picture, Guidelines for Gender Analysis**, Ministry of Women's Health Affairs, Government of New Zealand 1996
- **Exploring Concepts of Gender and Health**, Women's Health Bureau, Health Canada 2003
- **The UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)**

### **3. Evaluation and Monitoring**

Council will monitor and evaluate the Gender Equity Action Plan on an annual basis to measure short and longer term outcomes and impacts. Monitoring will be supported through Council annual reporting cycles across each department and annual reports required back to Council and community. Annual plans will be updated every twelve months with opportunity to review progress. The Darebin Equity and Inclusion Policy 2012-2015 will also see reporting requirements which will include the Women's Equity Strategy 2012-2015 and associated plans.

## Equity and Inclusion Goal 1:

To build an organisation within Council that is inclusive and reflective of Darebin's diverse communities.

**Objective:** To achieve an organisational culture that is welcoming, inclusive and respectful of women, that strives for equal opportunity and builds the skill and confidence of Darebin women to advance women's leadership opportunities at all levels across the organisation.

No.	Action	Timeline	Responsibility	Partnership opportunities	Measure
<b>Organisational action area: Leadership and training opportunities for women</b>					
1.1	Promote leadership and training opportunities for women employees across the organisation	Ongoing	People & Development	LGPro; Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV); Victorian local government association (VLGA); Northern region Local Government Areas	50% of participants per annum in leadership/management training and professional development are women.
1.2	Seek a gender balance across internal Council committees and working groups	Ongoing	Corporate Governance	Community Planning, Partnerships & Performance	Gender balance on all committees

No.	Action	Timeline	Responsibility	Partnership opportunities	Measure
1.3	Ensure organisational planning and development takes into account gender diversity and equity	Ongoing	People & Development	Local Government Gender Equity Working Group	Findings from staff census and other internal profiling used to inform organisational planning and development in relation to gender diversity and women's equity
<b>Organisational action area: Pay equity</b>					
1.4	Organisation supports wage equity for women across banding levels and at SEO levels	Ongoing	People & Development		Darebin compares positively across LGA sector in the area of wage equity.

No.	Action	Timeline	Responsibility	Partnership opportunities	Measure
<b>Organisational action area: Employment and recruitment</b>					
1.5	Recruitment policies include diversity and equity principles and are compliant with legislative frameworks around EEO (equal employment opportunity)	Ongoing	People & Development		Workforce diversity including gender diversity across banding levels and job type
1.6	Selection panels are gender balanced and comply with diversity requirements	Ongoing	People & Development	Across Council	90% of interview panels are gender balanced
<b>Organisational action area: Work conditions</b>					
1.7	Organisational policy reflects best practice in relation to parental/carers' leave/family friendly conditions such as 48/52 leave options	Ongoing	People & Development		Refer to People and Development
1.8	Adequate space allocated for a women's prayer room	2013/14	People & Development		Prayer room set up and promoted to staff
1.9	Adequate space allocated for breast-feeding room	2013/14	People & Development	Breast-Feeding Associations of Victoria	Council recognised with Family Friendly Breast-Feeding accreditation.



## Equity and Inclusion Goal 2:

To build services and programs that are inclusive, responsive, accessible and equitable.

**Objective:** To ensure Darebin Council services, programs and policies are gender equitable, inclusive of strategies around prevention of violence against women and actively encourage women's full and equal participation.

No.	Action	Timeline	Responsibility	Partnership opportunities	Measure
<b>Service and program action area: Embedding of gender equity into departmental plans and activities of Council</b>					
2.1	Sustain and promote the commitment gender equity in the Council Plan 2013-2017	ongoing	Community Planning, Partnerships & Performance; Executive Management	Whole-of-Council	Gender equity commitment in Council plan 2013-2017 is known and referenced
2.2	Coordinate provision of Gender Analysis training for Council staff in consultation with People & Development	Bi-annual	People & Development; Community Planning, Partnerships & Performance	Women's Health in the North; Across council	Key areas of council trained on how to apply the Gender Audit tool to their planning. Gender Audits conducted across program areas and key policies. 80% participation rate

No.	Action	Timeline	Responsibility	Partnership opportunities	Measure
2.3	Embed Gender Equity Audit Tools as part of implementation of the Equity and Inclusion Planning and Audit Tool (EIPAT) which incorporates women's equity into Council policies and strategies	Ongoing	Community Planning, Partnerships & Performance;	People & Development; EIPAT Support Group; EIPAT management group	All areas of council trained on how to apply EIPAT in their planning. EIPAT Audits.
2.4	Participate in the Gender Equity in Local Government Project to develop sector capacity to deliver gender inclusive services	Ongoing Bi-monthly	Women's Policy Community Planning, Partnerships & Performance	Local Government Gender Equity Working Group	4 meetings a year
2.5	Promote and support use of Local Government Gender Equity Fact Sheets across Council departments	Ongoing	Community Planning, Partnerships & Performance	Communication & marketing; Local Government Gender Equity Working Group	Factsheets promoted to key areas of Council and available via Equity and Inclusion Tool.
2.6	Advocate and advise on the embedding of gender equity into departmental plans and activities of Council	Ongoing	Community Planning, Partnerships & Performance	Women's Health in the North; Municipal Association of Victoria	Resources available via Equity and Inclusion Tool and gender analysis training.

No.	Action	Timeline	Responsibility	Partnership opportunities	Measure
<b>Service and program action area: Community settings including sports and recreation facilities, parks, community facilities, customer services and libraries</b>					
2.7	Sports and Recreation: Implement Darebin Leisure Strategy, direction 5: "Continue to support the role of women in sport and leisure through the development of policy, facility design and programs"	Ongoing	Leisure & Public Realm	Sports & leisure clubs, facility managers, etc. Community Planning, Partnerships & Performance; Darebin Women's advisory Committee; Staff Women's Network	Leisure Strategy reporting requirements
2.8	Implement a gender and Preventing violence against women (PVAW) VAW facility audit of all existing Council buildings	See Building condition audit cycle	Facilities maintenance	MAV <sup>4</sup> ; Darebin Women's advisory Committee; Preventing violence against women officer; Staff Women's Network; Community Planning, Partnerships and Performance	Council buildings are made accessible, safe and women friendly

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<sup>4</sup>Platform to access resources such as the Preventing violence against women Facility Audit Tool developed and used by Maribyrnong Council.

No.	Action	Timeline	Responsibility	Partnership opportunities	Measure
2.9	Consider gender equity and Preventing violence against women in any redevelopments or new council buildings & work area layouts	In line with EIPAT roll-out	City Development	Darebin Women's advisory Committee; Preventing violence against women officer; Staff Women's Network; Community Planning, Partnerships & Performance	All new developments take into account gender equity principles in planning and design
2.10	Investigate consideration of gendered planning principles so that there might be suitable and safe spaces for women and their families in any new developments of community spaces (e.g. Preston Market, Reservoir Village, Lancaster Gate)	To be reviewed	City Development	Darebin Women's advisory Committee Community Planning, Partnerships & Performance	Scoping of options undertaken with recommendations back to Darebin Women's Advisory Committee
<b>Service and program action area: Communication and marketing</b>					
2.11	Regularly promote key messages to the Darebin community through Council communications outlets such as the Mayor's message, media releases, website and social marketing in relation to Council commitments and actions regarding gender equity and prevention of violence against women	Ongoing	Communication & Marketing	Community Planning, Partnerships & Performance	Darebin Community News contains 4 x features per annum with ongoing branding Council website contains current information and links Mayor's message 2 per annum

No.	Action	Timeline	Responsibility	Partnership opportunities	Measure
<p><b>Service and program action area: Groups at risk of disadvantage - work with local service providers, community advisory committees and peak bodies to support women identified as being particularly at risk of disadvantage and exclusion through the Equity and Inclusion Planning and Audit Tool.</b></p>					
2.12	<p><b>Aboriginal women</b>                      Work with community to foster leadership opportunities, participation and economic development for Aboriginal women in the community through:                      - activities at the Darebin Intercultural Centre,                      - Darebin Community Grants Program,                      - WHIN Financial Literacy Program for Aboriginal Women and                      - activities of the Darebin Women's Advisory Committee and Darebin Aboriginal Advisory Committee</p>	Ongoing	Community Planning, Partnerships & Performance	Darebin Aboriginal advisory committee; Darebin Women's advisory Committee; Intercultural Centre; Aboriginal community-controlled organisations; Women's Health in the North; Koorie Women Mean Business Women's Participation in Local Government Coalition (WPILGC)	Annual Report

No.	Action	Timeline	Responsibility	Partnership opportunities	Measure
2.13	<p><b>Women from migrant and refugee backgrounds</b></p> <p>Participate in and support Spectrum MRC's Let the Cultures unite event</p> <p>Support further engagement through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the Darebin Intercultural Centre,</li> <li>- Darebin Community Grants,</li> <li>- local area settlement programs,</li> </ul> <p>as they relate to the needs of women and their families.</p> <p>Support increased collaboration between Darebin Ethnic Communities Council and Darebin Women's Advisory Committee</p>	2013/14	Community Planning, Partnerships & Performance	Intercultural Centre; Darebin Ethnic Communities Council; Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre; Women's Health in the North; Darebin Interfaith Council; Victorian Immigrant and Refugee Women's Coalition; Darebin Women's Advisory Committee	Annual Report
2.14	<p><b>Women with disabilities</b></p> <p>Engage with Disability officers in promoting gender equity and inclusion for women across their programs and activities</p>	ongoing	Metro Access / Disability Officer (Social Policy)	Darebin disability advisory committee (DDAC)  Internal Disability Advisory Group	Annual Report

No.	Action	Timeline	Responsibility	Partnership opportunities	Measure
2.15	<p><b>Women at risk of homelessness</b> Work with Community Planner around strategies to address disadvantage for women wishing to access affordable, secure and safe housing. Continue participation in the annual Women's Car Sleep Out activity</p>	ongoing	Darebin Community Planner; Family Services	Women's Information, Support and Housing in the North (WISHIN) Darebin Emergency Relief Network (DERN) PVAW officer	Annual Report
2.16	<p><b>Same Sex Attracted and Sex and Gender Diverse (SSASGD)</b> Identify priorities and platforms for advocacy for same-sex attracted and sex and gender diverse communities as they relate to gender equity/inclusion including linkage with HACC Diversity Plan (internal)</p>	Ongoing	Community Planning, Partnerships and Performance	Sexuality and Sex and Gender Diversity Advisory Committee; Women's Health in the North	Annual Report
2.17	<p><b>Economic participation</b> Explore how Council can support increased economic participation of women in partnership with community, local networks and regional organisations. Provide workforce gender equity information to local businesses via Women in Business Network</p>	ongoing	Business Development	Darebin business networks	On the agenda for one meeting

No.	Action	Timeline	Responsibility	Partnership opportunities	Measure
<b>Service and program action area: Research and development</b>					
2.18	Council data collection is disaggregated by gender.	Ongoing	Community Planning, Partnerships & Performance		ID data disaggregated Council website updated
2.19	Continue to support the dissemination of the Gender Equity Fact Sheets Gender (Equity in Local Government Project). Link to Equity and Inclusion toolkit internally.	Fact sheets finalised August 2012 Dissemination ongoing	Community Planning, Partnerships & Performance	Municipal Association of Victoria Preventing Violence Against Women network; Northern Region Local Governments; Local Government Gender Equity Working Group	Fact sheets promoted internally (notably through gender analysis training) and externally
2.20	Women's Health In the North Data Book and other resources linked to EIPAT information resources	Ongoing	Community Planning, Partnerships & Performance	Women's Health in the North	Up-to-date info in EIPAT Data provided to staff in gender analysis training



## Equity and Inclusion Goal 3:

To contribute to building inclusive and empowered Darebin communities.

**Objective:** To actively support sector and community partnerships and projects that foster a Darebin community culture that is inclusive, promotes women's leadership and respects women's full and equal participation in community life.

No.	Action	Timeline	Responsibility	Partnership opportunities	Measure
<b>Community action area: Women's leadership and participation</b>					
3.1	Provide Council support to the Darebin Women's Advisory Committee (DWAC) and identify and support joint DWAC/Council advocacy on issues relating to gender equity such as joint submissions.	Ongoing	Community Planning, Partnerships & Performance	Darebin Women's Advisory Committee; Staff Women's Network; Women's Participation in Local Government Coalition	Increased participation and engagement with 4 meetings a year Evidence of impact around Council decision making and policy development
3.2	Support Darebin Women's E-List	ongoing	Community Planning, Partnerships & Performance	Darebin Women's advisory Committee	E-list circulated quarterly

No.	Action	Timeline	Responsibility	Partnership opportunities	Measure
3.3	Continue to monitor commitment to Victorian Local Government Women's Charter	Ongoing	Council	Community, Planning, Partnerships & Performance; Councillors; VLGA	Annual monitoring
3.4	Diversity inclusion – apply a gender lens: consider intersections between women portfolio and others (Aboriginal, newly arrived, refugee communities, lesbian, socially isolated, CALD...) to identify women's priorities and issues in these portfolio/policy areas.	ongoing	Community, Planning, Partnerships & Performance	Key program and service areas; Council committees; Service providers	Women's issues considered in a variety of portfolios
3.5	Develop and promote annual calendar of International women's day events across Darebin.	Annual	Community, Planning, Partnerships & Performance; Communication & Marketing	Darebin Women's advisory Committee; Women's Health in the North; Across Council	Calendar produced and promoted through Council media/networks

No.	Action	Timeline	Responsibility	Partnership opportunities	Measure
<b>Community action area: Strategic advocacy and sector development</b>					
3.6	Strengthen strategic networks, partnerships and collaborative opportunities with affiliated bodies to foster stronger connection between Council and women in the community	Ongoing	Community Planning, Partnerships & Performance; Darebin Women's Advisory Committee	Women's Health in the North; Women's specific services/agencies; Community; Other local governments and LG organisations	Partnerships with northern regions networks and agencies active and robust
3.7	Support strategic advocacy at the local, state and federal levels that supports women to fully and equally participate in community life, including Council life.	Ongoing	Community Planning, Partnerships & Performance	Women's Health in the North; Darebin Women's advisory Committee; Staff Women's Network; Municipal Association of Victoria Preventing Violence Against Women network	Increased collaboration between Council, peak bodies and Women's Advisory Committee, including advocacy



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