

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SOCIAL INCLUSION SUB-COMMITTEE

Meeting to be held in the Committee Room, Level Four of Civic Centre, 10

Watson Terrace, Mount Gambier, on Monday 27th April 2015 at 5.30pm

AGENDA

PRESENT:
Cr Lovett
Cr Persello
Cr Richardson
Caroline Hill
Rob Foggo
Emma Hay
John Amoroso

COUNCIL OFFICERS:
Chief Executive Officer, Mark McShane
Manager Community Services & Development, Barbara Cernovskis
Library Manager, Vicki Hutchinson
Community Development Officer, Alison Brash

COUNCIL MEMBERS

AS OBSERVERS:

WE ACKNOWLEDGE THE BOANDIK PEOPLES AS THE TRADITIONAL CUSTODIANS OF THE LAND WHERE WE MEET TODAY. WE RESPECT THEIR SPIRITUAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE LAND AND RECOGNISE THE DEEP FEELINGS OF ATTACHMENT OUR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES HAVE WITH THIS LAND.

MINUTES:
moved that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 25th August 2014 and the 23rd February 2015 be taken as read and confirmed.

seconded

QUESTIONS:
(a) With Notice - nil submitted.
(b) Without Notice -

1. GOVERNANCE – Comprehensive Assessment Tool (CHAT) Tool

The Environmental Sustainability Officer reported:

- (a) The development and purpose of the CHAT tool and the context in which it is applied
- (b) The application of Community Engagement and the Social Inclusion Charter within the assessment parameters of the tool.

moved it be recommended:

- (a) The report be received.
- (b) The Environmental Sustainability Officer be thanked for his presentation.

seconded

Community Engagement & Social Inclusion Sub-Committee Agenda, 27th April 2015 cont'd...

2. REFUGEE WELCOME ZONE

The Manager Community Services & Development reported:

- (a) A proposal for the City of Mount Gambier to subscribe to the Refugee Welcome Zones was received from Jacob Lynagh in February;
- (b) The committee resolved to have the correspondence tabled at the next meeting for consideration, noting that Refugee Week commences on Saturday, 14th June 2015 and concludes on Refugee Day 20th June 2015;
- (c) The submitted proposal and background information on the Refugee Welcome Zones are attached.

moved it be recommended:

- (a) The proposal be received.

seconded

3. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE – Community Engagement & Social Inclusion Sub Committee Report No. 2/2015, Ref. AF11/2284

Goal: Building Communities

Strategic Objective: (vi) Develop an improved means of communication and engagement between Council and the community (including vulnerable communities) in the building of community capacity.

Goal: Diversity

Strategic Objective: (vii) Develop the capacity of Council to effectively communicate and engage with our communities, other agencies and service providers.

Goal: Community Well-being

Strategic Objective: (v) Advocate for support programs which increase the level of community engagement in healthy lifestyle activities and which encourage our community to make quality health decisions.

moved it be recommended:

- (a) Community Engagement & Social Inclusion Sub-Committee Report No. 3/2015 be received;
- (b) Committee review the Great South Coast Strategy to Prevent Violence against Women & Children

seconded

4. RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN – Community Engagement & Social Inclusion Sub Committee Report No. 3/2015, Ref. AF15/78

Goal: Building Communities

Strategic Objective: (vi) Develop an improved means of communication and engagement between Council and the community (including vulnerable communities) in the building of community capacity.

(vii) Support the community's development through nurturing collaborative relationships and partnerships and through direct access to Council for recognition, funding, facilitation, and in kind support.

Community Engagement & Social Inclusion Sub-Committee Agenda, 27th April 2015 cont'd...

- Goal: Diversity*
- Strategic Objective:*
- (iii) Celebrate the positive contributions of all members of our communities, to our collective social, economic, cultural, health and overall well-being.*
 - (vi) Facilitate the community's active involvement in meeting the varied aspirations, diverse needs and special services that are required (including those for marginalised and vulnerable groups).*
 - (vii) Develop the capacity of Council to effectively communicate and engage with our communities, other agencies and service providers.*

moved it be recommended:

- (a) The Reconciliation Action Plan report be received;
- (b) Conversations and research with Reconciliation Australia begin;
- (c) Exploration of the appropriate Cultural Governance model to be used occurs;
- (d) CESI Sub-Committee workshop occurs to develop the RAP planning process direction and time line.

seconded

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SOCIAL INCLUSION SUB-COMMITTEE KEY FOCUS AREAS

The Manager Community Services & Development reported:

- (a) The key focus areas for the Community Engagement and Social Inclusion Sub-Committee identified at the last meeting were:
 - Reconciliation Action Plan
 - Prison expansion - effect on community
 - Local Unemployment
 - Community Accessibility/Communications for Sub-Committee
 - Advocacy ⇒ State and Federal Members/Ministers
- (b) The sub-committee prioritise the key focus areas noting that the Reconciliation Action Plan is an outstanding action that has a considerable resource requirement.

moved it be recommended:

- (a) The key focus areas be prioritised as follows:
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
 - e.

seconded

Community Engagement & Social Inclusion Sub-Committee Agenda, 27th April 2015 cont'd...

6. LIMESTONE COAST COMMUNITY SERVICES ROUNDTABLE - UPDATE

Caroline Hill, Chair of the Limestone Coast Community Services Roundtable (LCCSRT) reported:

- (a) Provided a verbal update on the LCCSRT Planning day held on Tuesday, 14th April 2015

moved it be recommended:

- (a) The report be received.

seconded

OTHER MATTERS

MOTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

The meeting closed at _____ p.m.
BJC/TLG

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SOCIAL INCLUSION SUB-COMMITTEE

Minutes of Meeting held at the Committee Room, Civic Centre, 10 Watson Terrace, Mount Gambier on Monday, 25th August, 2014 at 5.30 p.m.

PRESENT: Cr Richardson
Cr Persello
Cr Shearing
John Amoroso
Rob Foggo
Emma Hay
Caroline Hill

APOLOGIES: Cr Persello moved that the apology from Rob Foggo be received.

Caroline Hill seconded

Carried

NOT IN ATTENDANCE: Nil

COUNCIL OFFICERS: Barbara Cernovskis, Manager - Community Services and Development
Alison Brash, Community Development Officer

COUNCIL OFFICER

APOLOGIES: Mark McShane, Chief Executive Officer

COUNCIL MEMBERS

AS OBSERVERS: Nil

OTHER GUESTS

IN ATTENDANCE: Nil

WE ACKNOWLEDGE THE BOANDIK PEOPLES AS THE TRADITIONAL CUSTODIANS OF THE LAND WHERE WE MEET TODAY. WE RESPECT THEIR SPIRITUAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE LAND AND RECOGNISE THE DEEP FEELINGS OF ATTACHMENT OUR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES HAVE WITH THIS LAND.

MINUTES: Cr Persello moved that the minutes of the previous meeting held 28th July, 2014 be taken as read and confirmed.

Cr Shearing seconded

Carried

1. FUTURE DIRECTION AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE

The Presiding Member raised for discussion the future of the Community Engagement and Social Inclusion Sub-Committee and reflect on the outcomes achieved.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 1:

Emma Hay moved it be recommended at the verbal report and discussed be received.

Caroline Hill seconded

Carried

2. SOCIAL GATHERING

The Presiding Member provided details of the social gathering invitation to Sub-Committee Members to thank them for their contributions on the Community Engagement and Social Inclusion Sub-Committee.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 2

Cr Persello moved it be recommended:

- (a) the report be received;**
- (b) the social gathering occur on the 24th September, 2014 in the Reception Area and an invitation to the Lifelong Learning Sub-Committee be extended.**

John Amoroso seconded

Carried

3. ATSI FLAGS

The Presiding Member reported on the approaching Special Meeting of Council which will see the unfurling of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flags for permanent display in the Council Chamber and the Commitment being made following a smoking ceremony in the Civic Centre Courtyard. At the special meeting the statement of commitment will be made by the Mayor to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders and Community.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 3

Cr Shearing moved it be recommended the report be received.

Cr Persello seconded

Carried

4. RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

The Presiding Member invited feedback from Sub-Committee Members on their reading of LGA Reconciliation Action Plans, and invited an update on the visit of Mark Waters to Mount Gambier.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 4

John Amoroso moved it be recommended:

- (a) the report be received;**
- (b) a Reconciliation Action Plan be initiated (as a matter of priority) within the next 12 months using a Cultural Governance model.**

Emma Hay seconded

Carried

5. ADVOCACY

The Presiding Member provided an update on the meeting to occur with Federal Member Tony Pasin MP.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 5:

Cr Shearing moved it be recommended:

- (a) the report be received.**

Emma Hay seconded

Carried

6. STANDING ITEM: TERMS OF REFERENCE

Objective:	Project	Current Status
9.1		
Review Council's current community engagement and social inclusion practices and policies	Revised Policy P195 Community Engagement Process Audit	Revised Policy adopted 19 th November 2013 Internal Audit in development
Investigate relevant practices in other Councils.		Achieved
Develop a community engagement and social inclusion strategy	Draft Strategy for Member Engagement Community Engagement Framework	In development In development
Reflect community needs		In development
Embed community engagement and social inclusion practices in Council's operations	Community Engagement Framework Community Engagement Process	In development
9.2		
Develop an organisational and operational framework to achieve Objective 4.1	As above	In development

RECOMMENDATION NO. 6:

Cr Persello moved it be recommended the standing item Terms of Reference table be amended as discussed.

Caroline Hill seconded

Carried

MOTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

7. MOUNT GAMBIER SUICIDE PREVENTION ACTION PLAN REPORT CARD JANUARY - JUNE 2014

Cr Persello provided a report on the outcomes achieved by the Mount Gambier Suicide Prevention Network as detailed in their Action Plan 2013 - 2016 - Report Card for the January - June 2014 period.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 7:

Emma Hay moved it be recommended that the report be received.

Cr Shearing seconded

Carried

8. ADVOCACY FOR YOUTH SERVICES

Caroline Hill provided a verbal report on funding changes impacting locally on the Youth Connections Program, and provided an update on the Limestone Coast Community Services Round Table support for a Head Space Facility update.

RECOMMENDATION NO. 8:

Emma Hay moved it be recommended:

- (a) the report be received;**
- (b) Council endorse support for the Headspace Facility bid;**
- (c) Council continue advocacy support for local community services.**

Cr Persello seconded

Carried

9. CLOSING STATEMENT

In her closing statement the Presiding Member, Cr Penny Richardson thanked all community volunteers, Councillors and Administration Staff for their work and commitment to the Community Engagement and Social Inclusion Sub-Committee.

10. NEXT MEETING: to be advised.

Meeting closed at 7.15 p.m.

26th August, 2014
MJT

CONFIRMED THIS DAY OF 2014.

.....
PRESIDING MEMBER

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SOCIAL INCLUSION SUB-COMMITTEE

Minutes of Meeting held in the Committee Room, Level Four of Civic Centre, 10 Watson Terrace,
Mount Gambier, on Monday, 23rd February 2015 at 5.30pm

PRESENT:
Cr Lovett
Cr Persello
Cr Richardson
Caroline Hill
Rob Foggo
Emma Hay
John Amoroso

COUNCIL OFFICERS:
Chief Executive Officer, Mark McShane
Manager Community Services & Development, Barbara Cernovskis
Library Manager, Vicki Hutchinson
Community Development Officer, Alison Brash

COUNCIL MEMBERS
AS OBSERVERS:

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The Chief Executive Officer took the Chair for the following business:

1. **GOVERNANCE - Committees - Election of Community Engagement & Social Inclusion Sub-Committee Presiding Member - Ref. AF13/486**

Goal: Governance
Strategic Objective: (i) Demonstrate innovative and responsible organisational governance

The Chief Executive Officer reported:

- (a) Council, at its meeting of Tuesday, 19th August 2014 adopted the Community Engagement & Social Inclusion Sub-Committee Terms of Reference (Attachment 1: Terms of Reference);
- (b) Terms of Reference 5.4 states "The Sub-Committee will appoint a Presiding Member". It is suggested that the Committee appoint the Presiding Member using the same process recently adopted by Council for its two (2) Standing Committees and as set out in the following parts;
- (c) the term of office for the position of the Community Engagement & Social Inclusion Sub-Committee Presiding Member be one (1) year commencing 23rd February 2015;
- (d) the Community Engagement & Social Inclusion Sub-Committee determines that the method of choosing a Presiding Member be by an election process undertaken by secret ballot;
- (e) the successful candidate will be the candidate with the highest number of votes;

Community Engagement & Social Inclusion Sub-Committee Minutes, 23rd February 2015 cont'd...

- (f) where two or more candidates have an equal number of votes one of those candidates will be determined as successful from a drawing of lots by the Returning Officer;
- (g) the Chief Executive Officer be appointed the Returning Officer for the election;
- (h) upon the completion of the election, the Returning Officer be authorised to declare the successful candidate elected to the position of the Community Engagement & Social Inclusion Sub-Committee Presiding Member;
- (i) upon declaration of the Returning Officer the candidate be appointed to the position of the Community Engagement & Social Inclusion Sub-Committee Presiding Member for the term of office determined by this resolution.

Cr Richardson moved it be recommended:

- (a) the report be received;**
- (b) the above process to appoint the Presiding Member for the Community Engagement & Social Inclusion Sub-Committee be adopted.**

Caroline Hill seconded

Carried

2. GOVERNANCE - Committees – Community Engagement & Social Inclusion Sub-Committee - Call for Nominations - Ref. AF13/486

Goal: Governance
Strategic Objective: (i) Demonstrate innovative and responsible organisational governance

- (a) The Chief Executive Officer called for nominations for the position of Presiding Member for the Community Engagement & Social Inclusion Sub-Committee;
- (b) The following nominations were received:
 - 1. Cr Richardson nominated Cr Persello to be the Community Engagement & Social Inclusion Sub-Committee Presiding Member.

The Returning Officer declared Cr Persello be elected to the position of Presiding Member for the Community Engagement & Social Inclusion Sub-Committee.

Cr Persello took the Chair for the following business:

APOLOGIES: Cr Lovett moved the apology received from Emma Hay be accepted.

Rob Foggo seconded

Carried

QUESTIONS:
(a) With Notice - nil submitted.
(b) Without Notice – nil submitted

2. GOVERNANCE – Committees – Scheduling of the Community Engagement & Social Inclusion Sub-Committee Meetings - Ref. AF13/486

- Goal:* Governance
Strategic Objective: (i) Establish measures for Council's performance and continually compare against community expectations
(ii) Engage with national, state, regional and local forums and partnerships to provide solutions and options to continually improve Councils service deliver and performance

The Manager Community Services & Development reported:

- (a) The Sub-Committee is requested to consider the time and schedule of meetings.

John Amoroso moved it be recommended:

- (a) that the Community Engagement and Social Inclusion Sub-Committee meet on the fourth Monday of the month at 5.30 p.m.

Cr Richardson seconded

Carried

4. GOVERNANCE - Committees – Sub-Committee Terms of Reference and Purpose – Community Engagement & Social Inclusion Sub Committee Report No 1/2015, Ref. 15/78

Caroline Hill moved it be recommended:

- (a) Community Engagement & Social Inclusion Sub Committee Report No. 1/2015 be received and key achievements noted;
- (b) the key focus areas for the Community Engagement and Social Inclusion Sub-Committee to be:
- Reconciliation Action Plan
 - Prison expansion - effect on community
 - Local Unemployment
 - Community Accessibility/Communications for Sub-Committee
 - Advocacy ⇒ State and Federal Members/Ministers

Cr Lovett seconded

Carried

OTHER MATTERS

Proposal to subscribe to the Refugee Welcome Zone to be considered at the next meeting.

MOTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

5. APPRECIATION – Community Engagement and Social Inclusion Sub-Committee – Ref. AF15/78

John Amoroso moved that the efforts and contributions to the Sub-Committee by the previous Presiding Member, Cr Penny Richardson be acknowledged and the new Presiding Member, Cr Hanna Persello be congratulated.

Community Engagement & Social Inclusion Sub-Committee Minutes, 23rd February 2015 cont'd...

Rob Foggo seconded

Carried

The meeting closed at 6.30 p.m.
BJC

CONFIRMED THIS DAY OF 2015.

.....
PRESIDING MEMBER

Jacob Lynagh
0481101712
jakelynagh@hotmail.com
20 Birkalla Terrace, Plympton
5038

City of Mount Gambier, Refugee Welcome Zone Proposal.

My name is Jacob Lynagh, I grew up in Mount Gambier and have lived in Adelaide for the past two years.

I currently live in the City of West Torrens; one of Adelaide's most inclusive local governments, and one of SA's few Refugee Welcome Zones, where I have recently started volunteering in the English lessons provided by my council for asylum seekers and new arrivals.

I am filled with immense pride whenever I return to Mount Gambier and see the growing diversity of population, and hear of the multiculturalism of events such as the recent Australia Day celebrations.

Mount Gambier is known for a lot of things; the Blue Lake, the pine industry, Jazz music, and diving – to name a few. My goal is for Mount Gambier to be known first and foremost as *the* crusader for refugees and asylum seekers in South Australia, and I would like for the District Council of Mount Gambier to make that a priority as well.

Mount Gambier has a strong commitment to multiculturalism, shown through the local Harmony Day celebrations of the past few years, it is demonstrated by the Baptist church on North Terrace who have run a weekly service for Karen refugees for at-least five years, and by St Paul's Catholic Church who, for even longer, have maintained a Muslim prayer room for the community.

It is shown by Anglicare and the Limestone Coast MRC, who provide accommodation for new arrivals, and by the local real estate agents who work with them to allocate a percentage of their housing to refugees.

If I attempted to cover everything we would be here all day, the key point of this is to show that Mount Gambier is a wonderfully inclusive community. I want that trait of the city to be proudly represented across the nation – the name 'Mount Gambier' should become synonymous with multiculturalism.

Mount Gambier's refugee population began to sharply rise when the city was selected for the government-funded Regional Humanitarian Settlement Pilot in 2008. The state government was impressed by the "ongoing desire of the region to host refugees" after a Population Through Prosperity forum was hosted in Naracoorte, and a Mount Gambier delegation traveled to Warrnambool to learn more about how their local government supported the growing migrant populations.

The state government noted that while, in other locations competing for a place in the program, interest was initiated largely by the government, in Mount Gambier, momentum came from the local population; "with local stakeholders presenting a strong case that they [were] interested in participating".

In 2002 the Refugee Council of Australia formed the Refugee Welcome Zone initiative; there are currently 112 Refugee Welcome Zones in Australia, with 10 in South Australia.

Declaring a local government a Refugee Welcome Zone is a largely symbolic gesture, with no policy or financial impact. However it represents a commitment toward working even harder to provide for the needs of new arrivals, to defend the rights of refugees, and to improve the national standing of the local government.

Becoming a Refugee Welcome Zone would commit the City of Mount Gambier to welcome refugees into the community, defend their human rights, and show compassion and diversity to enhance ties between cultural groups in the community. Becoming a Refugee Welcome Zone acknowledges the contribution refugees make in Australian society, and indeed the part refugees have played in forming this great nation.

I would like for the City of Mount Gambier to be known as guardians of refugees and asylum seekers, I would like for the city to defend the rights of refugees who are being mistreated, whether in the community, or at the hands of our federal government.

The way asylum seekers and refugees are treated today will become *the* human rights fight of our generation. It is in your hands to make sure Mount Gambier is on the right side of history.

I believe that declaring the city a Refugee Welcome Zone is an important first step in this process, and that sending a council delegation to an off-shore processing center is an important second step – though I believe that is a discussion for another time.

I have attached a Refugee Welcome Zone information sheet for your convenience, contact information for the Refugee Council of Australia is included.

Thank you for your time, I hope to see Mount Gambier become the 11th Refugee Welcome Zone in South Australia in the near future.

Sincerely,
Jacob Lynagh.



REFUGEE WELCOME ZONES

An initiative of the Refugee Council of Australia

Who is the Refugee Council of Australia?

The Refugee Council of Australia (RCOA) is the national peak body for refugees and the organisations and individuals who support them. RCOA promotes the adoption of flexible, humane and constructive policies towards refugees and asylum seekers through conducting policy analysis, research, advocacy and public education on refugee issues.

What is a Refugee Welcome Zone?

A Refugee Welcome Zone is a Local Government Area which has made a commitment in spirit to welcoming refugees into the community, upholding the human rights of refugees, demonstrating compassion for refugees and enhancing cultural and religious diversity in the community.

This public commitment is also an acknowledgment of the tremendous contributions refugees have made to Australian society in the fields of medicine, science, engineering, sport, education and the arts. By making this Declaration it is hoped that local government will be encouraged in their continuing efforts to support the men, women and children who make the difficult journey to Australia to seek our protection.

The Refugee Welcome Zone initiative began in June 2002 as part of Refugee Week celebrations. At the time, 15 local Councils in Victoria, New South Wales and South Australia were declared Refugee Welcome Zones. Today, with more than 100 Local Government Areas having declaring themselves Refugee Welcome Zones, the initiative has proven to be a great success in connecting local governments with the issues facing refugees and asylum seekers.

What is the process for becoming a Refugee Welcome Zone?

The majority of Refugee Welcome Zones have been declared after an initial proposal by a community or church-based organisation that is subsequently supported by an approach from RCOA. If you would like your local Council to become a Refugee Welcome Zone, here are some suggested steps:

- Write a letter of proposal to your Mayor and Councillors. It is important to highlight the level of community support for refugees and asylum seekers, the benefits of becoming a Refugee Welcome Zone and opportunities to work with local groups and organisations and support groups. You should also enclose a copy of the Refugee Welcome Zone information sheet for Councils.
- If you work for a local organisation or are part of a community support group which provides assistance to refugees invite your Mayor and Councillors to visit you. This provides a great opportunity to showcase the work you do.
- Request an opportunity to present the proposal at a Council meeting.
- Contact RCOA to let us know about your proposal. We can provide further information and advice and approach your Council to support the proposal.

The process for becoming a Refugee Welcome Zone is very straightforward. It simply involves the Council signing the Refugee Welcome Zone Declaration, which is “a commitment in Spirit to welcoming refugees into our community, upholding the human rights of refugees, demonstrating compassion for refugees and enhancing cultural and religious diversity in our community”. However, the decision to become a Refugee Welcome Zone often takes some time and is voted upon according to Council policy and procedure which can vary from Council to Council.

To mark the occasion of becoming a Refugee Welcome Zone, many Councils choose to hold public signing ceremonies. These provide an opportunity to highlight the initiative and acknowledge the work of local groups and individuals that support refugees and asylum seekers. If possible, a representative from the Refugee Council of Australia will attend the ceremony to present a Certificate of Appreciation.

Why become a Refugee Welcome Zone?

Local Government has historically played an important role in assisting refugee settlement and promoting community harmony. Since Federation in 1901, Australia has become home to over 800,000 refugees and we have a proud history of settling refugees from all over the world who have gone on to make an enormous contribution to our economic, social and cultural life. Becoming a Refugee Welcome Zone is a way to continue this proud tradition of supporting the settlement of refugees.

Signing the Declaration can also promote harmony, social cohesion and respect for human rights in your local community. It is a great way to demonstrate support for refugees and take a strong stand against racism and discrimination. It can help to raise awareness about the issues affecting refugees, foster a culture of mutual respect and promote an appreciation of cultural diversity.

Becoming a Refugee Welcome Zone can also encourage the development of a more coordinated approach to supporting refugee settlement. It can motivate Local Government and local organisations and support groups to work together more effectively so as to improve settlement outcomes for refugees.

What are the obligations and responsibilities of Refugee Welcome Zones?

The Refugee Welcome Zone Declaration does not confer any formal obligations and Refugee Welcome Zones are not required to uphold any statutory responsibilities or financial commitments. The signing of the Declaration is simply a way of demonstrating broad support for the principles it contains. Any actions or activities undertaken by Refugee Welcome Zones to implement the Declaration are voluntary.

However, while signatories to the Refugee Welcome Zone Declaration are not required to undertake any specific activities, any initiatives which help to create a welcoming atmosphere and assist the settlement of refugees and their communities are welcomed and encouraged.

How can Refugee Welcome Zones support refugees?

There are many simple things that your Local Government Area can do to welcome refugees to your community:

- Develop a Local Government policy relating to refugees and asylum seekers or review existing policies.
- Offer funding for community-based projects which support the settlement of refugees.

- Hold community picnics and gatherings to encourage families from different backgrounds and community organisations to meet.
- Build partnerships and work collaboratively with local community groups and service providers to enhance support for refugees settling in your area.
- Organise an event during Refugee Week, such as a street fair or festival.
- Host a community meeting with newly arrived refugees and guest speakers from refugee support organisations to find out how your Council can best support refugees in your community.
- Hold a multicultural film festival.
- Coordinate with local libraries in the area to develop an English tutoring program for newly arrived refugees.
- Liaise with the Red Cross to run information sessions for newly arrived refugees who have been separated from family members and relatives.
- Hold a public forum to enable guest speakers from refugee backgrounds to share their stories.

How has your organisation, community or council welcomed refugees?
Send in your past and upcoming events and initiatives to media@refugeecouncil.org

We'd like to hear about program or event, big or small!

Current Refugee Welcome Zones

There are currently 112 Refugee Welcome Zones in Australia.

New South Wales: Armidale Dumaresq Council, Ashfield Council, Auburn City Council, Bankstown City Council, Bathurst Regional Council, Bega Valley Shire Council, Blacktown City Council, Blue Mountains City Council, Burwood Council, Campbelltown City Council, City of Canterbury, Coffs Harbour City Council, Cowra Council, Dubbo City Council, Fairfield City Council, Gosford City Council, Goulburn Mulwaree Council, Griffith City Council, Hawkesbury City Council, Hornsby Shire Council, Kiama Municipal Council, Kogarah City Council, Ku-ring-gai Council, City of Lake Macquarie, Leeton Shire Council, Leichhardt Council, Lismore City Council, Liverpool City Council, Manly Council, Marrickville Council, Moree Plains Shire Council, Mosman Council, North Sydney Council, Palerang Council, Parkes Shire Council, Penrith City Council, Port Macquarie-Hastings Council, Randwick City Council, Rockdale City Council, City of Ryde, Sutherland Shire Council, City of Sydney, Wagga Wagga City Council, Warringah Council, Waverley Council, Willoughby City Council, Wollongong City Council

Northern Territory: City of Palmerston

Victoria: City of Ballarat, Banyule City Council, Bass Coast Shire Council, Brimbank City Council, Shire of Campaspe, Cardinia Shire Council, City of Casey, City of Darebin, City of Greater Bendigo, Colac Otway Shire, City of Greater Dandenong, Greater City of Greater Geelong, Hepburn Shire Council, Hindmarsh Shire Council, Hobsons Bay City Council, Horsham Rural City Council, Hume City Council, Maribyrnong City Council, Maroondah City Council, City of Melbourne, Mildura Rural City Council, Moira Shire Council, City of Monash, City of Moonee Valley, Moreland City Council, Mornington Peninsula Shire, Mount Alexander Shire Council, City of Port Phillip, Borough of Queenscliffe, Greater Shepparton City Council, Surf Coast Shire, Swan Hill Rural City Council, City of Whittlesea, Wyndham City, City of Yarra, Yarra Ranges Council

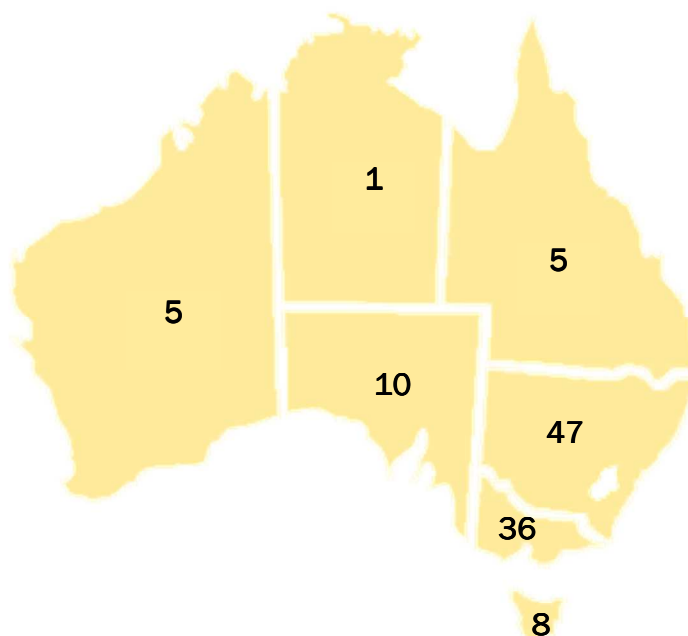
Map of Refugee Welcome Zones in Australia

South Australia: Adelaide City Council, Campbelltown City Council, Town of Gawler, City of Marion, City of Mitcham, Rural City of Murray Bridge, City of Norwood, Payneham and St Peters, City of Port Adelaide Enfield, City of Prospect, City of West Torrens

Queensland: Brisbane City Council, Diamantina Shire Council, Flinders Shire Council, Toowoomba Regional Council, Townsville City Council

Tasmania: Break O'Day Council, Clarence City Council, Derwent Valley Council, Hobart City Council, Kingborough Council, La Trobe Council, Launceston City Council, West Tamar Council

Western Australia: City of Fremantle, Shire of Katanning, City of Subiaco, Town of Victoria Park, City of Vincent



The Refugee Welcome Zone Declaration

(Council crest/logo)

The _____ Council,

Declares the Council of _____ a

Refugee Welcome Zone

This Declaration is a Commitment in Spirit to

Welcoming refugees into our community,

*Upholding the **Human Rights** of refugees,*

*Demonstrating **Compassion** for refugees and*

*Enhancing cultural and religious **Diversity** in our community.*

[name and title of signatory]

Date: _____

This Declaration is proudly supported and endorsed by the



**Refugee Council
of Australia**

The Refugee Council of Australia is a national umbrella organisation representing over 900 organisational and individual members. The aim of the Refugee Council is to promote the adoption of flexible, humane and constructive policies toward refugees and asylum seekers by the Australian and other Governments and their communities.

To obtain an editable copy of the Declaration for signing by your Council, please contact us on (02) 9211 9333 or media@refugeecouncil.org.au

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SOCIAL INCLUSION SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 2/2015

SUBJECT: DOMESTIC VIOLENCE POLICY

REF: AF11/2284

- Goal: Building Communities*
Strategic Objective: (vi) Develop an improved means of communication and engagement between Council and the community (including vulnerable communities) in the building of community capacity.
- Goal: Diversity*
Strategic Objective: (vii) Develop the capacity of Council to effectively communicate and engage with our communities, other agencies and service providers.
- Goal: Community Well-being*
Strategic Objective: (v) Advocate for support programs which increase the level of community engagement in healthy lifestyle activities and which encourage our community to make quality health decisions.

BACKGROUND

Susie Smith, Manager Limestone Coast Domestic Violence Service and Mark Thompson, Limestone Coast Regional Manager Housing SA met with Council and SELGA administration representatives to discuss Local Government leadership in the area of preventative action against Domestic Violence in late 2013.

This request was taken to the Community Engagement and Social Inclusion sub committee in 2014 for consideration and action has been undertaken by the administration to commence discussion and drafting of a workplace Domestic Violence policy which is still in progress.

A number of best practice resources and links have been provided to the administration for consideration in the development of a Domestic Violence policy and whilst informative, they clearly illustrate the need for a broader context or framework that either governs Council or Council subscribe to.

DISCUSSION

Concurrent to this activity, a considerable amount of work has been undertaken to develop a Regional Health Plan for the City of Mount Gambier. This process has involved a gap analysis of Councils Strategic and Corporate Plans, and a number of workshops with members and administration. Domestic violence has been identified as one of the 11 priority areas for the City of Mount Gambier Regional Health Plan.

It would seem appropriate that when Council adopts the Regional Health Plan that the plan would provide the platform to consider the broader context and underlying issues associated with Domestic Violence in our community. The Regional Health Plan and its identified areas of priority is also likely to influence Councils Strategic & Corporate Plan review. Council could then consider undertaking a piece of work similar to that of the Great South Coast Strategy to Prevent Violence Against Women & Children as an example (*attachment 1*) which would provide direction and Local Government leadership in the area of preventative action against Domestic/Family Violence.

Community Engagement & Social Inclusion Sub-Committee Report No. 2/2015 cont'd...

RECOMMENDATION

- (a) Community Engagement & Social Inclusion Sub-Committee Report No. 3/2015 be received;
- (b) Committee review the Great South Coast Strategy to Prevent Violence against Women & Children



Barbara CERNOVSKIS
MANAGER – COMMUNITY SERVICES & DEVELOPMENT

Sighted:



Mark McSHANE
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

23rd April 2015
BJC

Attachment 1 – Great South Coast Strategy to Prevent Violence against Women & Children

Great South Coast Strategy to Prevent Violence Against Women and Children



- Strengthening Leadership
- Working Together
- Working Better

A joint commitment to promote non-violence, gender equity and respect



2013 – 2017

Great South Coast Strategy to Prevent Violence Against Women and Children

The ‘Great South Coast Strategy to Prevent Violence against Women and Children’ (the Strategy) is the result of many people and organisations working together over a hundred people from 52 organisations contributing to its development. The Strategy is based on committed partnerships, sound research and diverse input, all of this has informed our understanding of how to prioritise and progress action over the next five years.

Funding to support the development of this Strategy was provided by:

- Women’s Health and Wellbeing Barwon South West, with funding from the Victorian Department of Health
 - Regional Development Australia Barwon South West
-

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Executive summary

About this Strategy

The Great South Coast Strategy to Prevent Violence against Women and Children 2013–2017 is a joint commitment made by councils, health and community organisations, state government departments and regional networks across the Great South Coast.

Through this Strategy, we aim to work together to address the impact of violence against women and children, and to promote peaceful, equitable and inclusive communities, organisations and relationships.

Policies for the prevention of violence against women and children already exist at a national and state level. The Strategy brings the Great South Coast into synergy with this work, and positions us well to access potential funding opportunities and the support that would provide.

As we implement this Strategy we have a wealth of good practice examples and existing initiatives to build on, both within the region and elsewhere. This Strategy is based on committed partnerships, sound research and valuable diverse input – over a hundred people from 52 organisations were involved in its development.

Who are the Strategy partners?

The Strategy partners are:

- The five councils of the Great South Coast: Glenelg, Corangamite, Moyne, Southern Grampians and Warrnambool
- Women's Health and Wellbeing Barwon South West
- Regional health and community services
- Regional family violence and sexual assault services
- Regional and local organisations working with Aboriginal communities, people with disabilities, or other population groups
- Regional networks, such as Primary Care Partnerships
- Victorian government departments
- Victoria Police

Violence against women and children: the issue

Violence against women and children is prevalent, serious and preventable. Most violence against women and children occurs in the home or in private, and is not reported.

- More than half of Australian women have experienced a form of physical or sexual violence since the age of 16.
- Intimate partner violence – including physical, emotional and sexual violence – is the leading contributor to death, disability and ill-health in Victorian women aged 15-44.
- One in four young people have witnessed violence against their mothers or step-mothers.

- Research shows the profound and long-term toll violence takes on women and children's health, on families and communities, and on society in general.
- Apart from the immeasurable cost to those affected, violence against women and their children cost the Australian economy \$13.6 billion in 2009, including \$3.4 billion in Victoria alone – much of this borne by local and regional services.
- The incidence of violence across the Great South Coast is higher than Victoria in some local government areas and is rising across the whole catchment.

How can violence be prevented?

The Strategy focusses on preventing violence before it occurs, that is, by addressing its underlying causes.

VicHealth research has identified the underlying causes of violence against women as:

- **Unequal power between men and women**
- **Adherence to rigid gender stereotypes**
- **Broader cultures of violence**

The Strategy addresses these factors through a strengths-based approach that promotes positive, gender-equitable and respectful attitudes, behaviours and practices. We will begin by building the capacity of our own organisations to implement and model such positive change, and work across a number of settings in our communities including workplaces, schools and early year's services.

Working together. Working better

Councils, organisations and networks in the Great South Coast already do a great deal with limited resources.



Preventing violence against women and children requires long-term effort, working sustainably and efficiently over the years to come to achieve change. Through this Strategy, we commit to working better with what we've got: to build prevention into our existing work, to use our growing knowledge and capacity to refine our policies and programs, and gain more leverage from our existing resources. We also want to work better together: coordinating efforts between Strategy partners, harnessing the strengths of individual agencies and others working in the prevention sector, sharing practice and experience, and, where possible, scaling up effective interventions across the region.

Our vision

Our vision is for a Great South Coast where women and children are valued, respected, and live free from violence, and where our homes, communities, schools, sporting clubs and workplaces are inclusive, equitable and safe.

Our five-year goals

At the end of the five-year period of the Strategy, we want to see:

1. An increase in awareness, among partner organisations and within the settings and population groups with whom we work, of the factors that contribute to violence against women and children and how to prevent it.
2. An increase in the number of partner organisations that are recognised as leaders in the prevention of violence against women and children, developing innovative programs.
3. An increase in the number of Great South Coast schools, sporting clubs, workplaces, and other settings and organisations that promote gender equality and non-violence.
4. A substantial knowledge base to assist us to plan for the next stage of work and sustainability.

Our strategic areas for action

Our strategic areas for action over the next five years are:

1. Strengthening leadership and internal capacity (Years 1 - 2)
Partner organisations will show leadership by embedding gender equity and promoting non-violent norms in our own organisations. Our workforces will understand the causes of violence against women and how to build prevention into our core business. We will strengthen existing partnerships and build new ones to drive a coordinated and staged approach. We will also 'build the case' – collecting data and establishing methods to measure our progress and demonstrate the importance of primary prevention activity.
2. Working with our communities (Years 1 - 5) We will support our local communities to promote gender equity, inclusion and non-violence. We will begin by developing, implementing and evaluating innovative programs with first time parents, women with disabilities, and in workplaces and schools. As our knowledge builds and we secure further resources, we will expand initiatives to other settings such as sporting clubs, or emergency management.
3. Building the evidence for future planning (Years 1 - 5) We will address the underlying causes of violence against women and children through an evidence-based approach, evaluate the process and outcomes of our initiatives and share the learnings.

Our immediate actions

A range of actions have been identified that we can undertake with existing resources and capacity, including:

- Engage Ambassadors in each council and partner agency as champions for non-violence, respect and gender equity.
- Develop and endorse organisational policies that promote and improve gender equity.
- Continue to build the knowledge, commitment and capacity within our organisations and across the community through professional development and social marketing.
- Implement and evaluate the Baby Makes 3 Plus program for first time parents.
- Deliver and embed Living Safer Sexual Lives program and Enabling Women leadership program, by and for women with disabilities.
- Deliver the Take a Stand bystander program in selected partner workplaces.
- Pilot a respectful relationships education program in selected Great South Coast secondary schools.
- Form prevention of violence against women and children action teams in partner agencies to develop community-based activities for key events such as White Ribbon Day.
- Investigate ways to increase more equitable access to and participation of women and girls in diverse sports.
- Acknowledge and link the work from this Strategy with other initiatives focused on improving health and wellbeing of our communities.

Monitoring and evaluation

Because the prevention of violence against women and children before it occurs requires long-term sustained effort we will monitor and evaluate our progress, measuring shifts in attitudes, behaviours and practices that we know contribute to violence.

A Performance Monitoring Framework will guide our work. Annual reports on the progress of the Strategy against selected indicators will be submitted to the Great South Coast Board, Great South Coast Regional Justice Committee and other relevant networks and alliances.

Governance and accountability

Implementation and monitoring of the Strategy will be overseen by a Great South Coast Prevention of Violence against Women and Children Working Group, co-chaired by a senior representative from a nominated Council and Women's Health and Wellbeing Barwon South West.

A member of the Great South Coast Strengthening our Communities Pillar Group will be a member of the working group, ensuring regular communication to the Pillar and Great South Coast Board. A schematic of the Proposed Governance Structure and Relationship Map can be found on page 22.

Strategy partners

- Five councils
- Women's Health & Wellbeing Barwon South West
- Health and community services
- Family violence and sexual assault services
- Organisations working with Aboriginal communities, people with disabilities, or other population groups
- Regional networks, such as Primary Care Partnerships
- Victorian Government Departments
- Victoria Police

Vis
A Great South Coast
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- Intimate partner violence – including physical, emotional and sexual violence – is the leading contributor to death, disability and ill-health in Victorian women aged 15-44.
- Domestic violence is the most commonly recorded parental characteristic in substantiated child protection cases. One in four young people have witnessed violence against their mothers or step-mothers.
- Research shows the profound and long-term toll violence takes on women and children's health, on families and communities, and on society in general.
- Apart from the immeasurable cost to those affected, violence against women and their children cost the Australian economy \$13.6 billion in 2009 including \$3.4 billion in Victoria alone – much of this borne by local services.

How can we prevent violence?

International and Victorian research has shown that violence can be prevented by addressing its underlying causes. For violence against women, these are:

- Unequal power between men and women
- Adherence to rigid gender stereotypes
- Broader cultures of violence

SOURCE: VicHealth (2007) Preventing Violence before it Occurs: A Framework and Background Paper to Guide the Primary Prevention of Violence against Women in Victoria

Strategic Area

1. Building Leadership and Internal Capacity

- Leadership and Governance
- Workforce Development
- Information Systems
- Partnerships
- Financing

2. Working with Our Communities

- School
- Workplaces
- Emergency Services
- Sporting Clubs
- Women with Disabilities
- First time Parents

3. Building the Evidence for Future Planning

- Collect Data
- Define Progress
- Evaluate
- Analyse & Report

Time

Overview

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t where women and
respected, and live
nd where our homes,
s, sporting clubs and
ve, equitable and safe.

Our communities

- First time parents
- Women with disabilities
- Employers and employees
- Students and teachers
- Sporting club members and officials
- Emergency management professionals and volunteers
- Indigenous communities
- Young people
- Arts and culture audiences
- Service users

Areas for Action

Goal 1

An increase in awareness, among Strategy partner organisations and the settings/population groups with whom we work, of the factors that contribute to violence against women and children and how to prevent it.

Goal 2

An increase in the number of Strategy partner organisations that are recognised as leaders in prevention of violence against women and children, developing innovative programs for adoption by other regions.

Goal 3

An increase in the number of Great South Coast schools, sporting clubs, workplaces, and other settings and/or organisations that promote gender equality and non-violence.

Goal 4

A substantial knowledge base to assist us to plan for the next stage of work and sustainability.

About this Strategy

The Great South Coast Strategy to Prevent Violence against Women and Children 2013–2017 is a joint commitment to promote nonviolence, gender equity and respect, made by councils, state government departments, organisations and regional networks. The Strategy is based on committed partnerships, sound research and valuable diverse input – over a hundred people from 52 organisations were involved in its development.

Policies for prevention of violence against women and children already exist at national and state levels, and in other regions and local government areas across Victoria. We have a wealth of good practice examples and support to draw on as we implement this Strategy.

Our immediate actions

A range of actions have been identified that we can undertake with existing resources and capacity, including:

- Engage high-profile people in each council and partner agency as champions for non-violence, respect and gender equity
- Implement and evaluate the Baby Makes 3 Plus program for first time parents
- Deliver and embed Living Safer Sexual Lives program and Enabling Women leadership program, by and for women with disabilities
- Deliver the Take a Stand bystander program in selected partner workplaces
- Develop and pilot a respectful relationships education program in selected secondary schools
- Form prevention of violence against women and children action teams in partner organisations to develop community-based activities for events such as White Ribbon Day
- Investigate ways to increase more equitable access to and participation of women and girls in diverse sports

About the Strategy

What is this Strategy?

The Great South Coast Strategy to Prevent Violence against Women and Children 2013-2017 is a joint commitment to promote nonviolence, gender equity and respect, made by councils, state government departments, organisations and networks across the Great South Coast.

This regional commitment enables us to take advantage of economies of scale in the sharing of knowledge and practice models, to coordinate effort, jointly measure progress, and see real results for our communities. It contributes to the *Great South Coast Regional Strategic Plan*, particularly to the objective of strengthening our communities so that everyone can feel safe.

Who are the Strategy partners?

The Strategy partners are:

- The five councils of the Great South Coast consist of Glenelg, Corangamite, Moyne, Southern Grampians and Warrnambool
- Women's Health and Wellbeing Barwon South West
- Regional health and community services
- Regional family violence and sexual assault services
- Regional and local organisations working with Aboriginal communities, people with disabilities, or other population groups
- Regional networks, such as Primary Care Partnerships
- Victorian Government Departments
- Victoria Police

We commit to this Strategy as partners in leading and coordinating prevention of violence against women and children across our catchments. To do this we will work with schools, workplaces, sporting clubs and other groups and settings.

Why is it important?

Violence against women and children has a profound and devastating effect on families and communities.

The seriousness and prevalence of such violence is significant; across Australia, a woman is killed almost every week by a male partner or ex-partner, often post-separation, and thousands are injured every year. In addition to death and physical injuries, intimate partner violence alone contributes more to depression, anxiety and other mental health issues in young and middle-aged Victorian women than any other factor. Domestic violence is also the most commonly recorded parental characteristic in substantiated child protection cases. The social, psychological and economic effects of violence can become entrenched across generations and communities.

Reported rates of family violence and sexual assault across the Great South Coast are high and increasing but most violence against women and children is not reported: it is a largely hidden abuse that occurs at devastating rates. An estimated one in three women has been a victim of intimate partner violence, and one in four young people have witnessed it. While there is a continued need to improve our response to those reporting violence,

Violence against Women

The United Nation's Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women 1993, defines violence against women as:

any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion, or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.

The *Family Violence Protection Act 2008* defines 'family violence' as behaviour that is physically or sexually abusive, emotionally or psychologically abusive, threatening or coercive, or in any other way controls or dominates the family member and causes that family member to fear for his or her safety or wellbeing or for the safety or wellbeing of another person.

Sexual assault is any unwanted sexual behaviour that causes humiliation, pain, fear or intimidation, and includes verbal sexual harassment. Violence against women can be both criminal and non-criminal in nature and it is, in the main, behaviour intended to exercise power and control over women.

we must also work to stop this violence before it starts.

We now know that violence can be prevented. Research has shown that just as levels of smoking and drink driving have been reduced by public health-based strategies to change attitudes and behaviour, such action can prevent violence.

Councils, community and health sector organisations are the key drivers of such change – we are the closest organisations to our communities and provide the most immediate contexts for the expression of attitudes and behaviours that support or challenge violence in people’s daily lives. We can tailor initiatives to meet local needs and demographics, and promote healthy, equitable relationships through existing policies and programs, in areas such as early year’s services, sports and recreation, youth and disability services, planning and infrastructure.

How will it lead to action?

The Strategy sets out our vision, objectives and key strategic areas for action aiming to reduce levels of violence against women and children and ultimately prevent it.

Through this Strategy we aim to influence social norms, promote community leadership and embed a much stronger culture of equal and respectful relationships between men and women, boys and girls across the Great South Coast.

Having an agreed regional framework helps us work together to prioritise what we need to do first, in order to achieve our vision. Clear identification of these priorities will help us secure local, State and Federal government resources and funding to strengthen implementation. What we can achieve over the longer, five-year period, will depend on the outcomes of our activities over the first two years, as well as future resourcing. For this reason, we are beginning with a Two-Year Action Plan that will set out exactly what activities we are committing to in the shorter-term, and how we will

Prevention

Prevention means identifying and addressing underlying causes of a problem, rather than focussing on its results or ‘symptoms.’

This Strategy takes a public health approach to prevention, which entails an evidence and population-based way of identifying various ‘determinants’ of violence: the range of behavioural, attitudinal, socio-economic / socio-political and environmental factors that determine – contribute to or mitigate against – the occurrence of violence.

Actions and strategies are then developed to address these contributing factors and promote protective factors; as well as evaluate and monitor the effectiveness of interventions for continuous improvement.



measure progress. The Strategy and the action plan are not rigid, but will remain ‘living documents’ capable of continuously improving as we develop our commitment, skills, practice and evidence base and secure further resources.

What do we want to see for our communities?

Our ultimate aspiration is for women and their children across

the Great South Coast to live free of violence and the threat of violence, in their homes, communities, schools, sporting clubs and workplaces.

The Great South Coast Strategy to Prevent Violence against Women and Children is based on sound research that has informed our understanding of where to start and how to prioritise and develop our action over the next five years.

We know from the research that to achieve this vision we need to address the underlying causes of violence, identified as *unequal power between*



men and women, adherence to gender roles and stereotypes, and broader cultures of violence. We also understand that we will not achieve this vision of violence-free communities without also addressing other forms of discrimination and stereotyping, such as that on the basis of (dis)ability, Aboriginality, sexual orientation, immigrant or refugee status, socio-economic class or age.

In the Great South Coast we want to take a strengths-based approach, and work to promote gender equity, inclusiveness, peaceful communities

in the school yard and staff room. We want our daughters and our sons to learn how to treat everyone fairly and equally, and to build skills in communication and non-violent conflict resolution.

As they get older, we want them to understand how to create healthy, respectful relationships for themselves, how to recognise and respond to the signs of violence, and how to identify and reject sexist, discriminatory or violence-supportive messaging that they might encounter, whether among peers, in popular culture, social media

be able to play the sports they choose, regardless of gender or age. We want the sports that our daughters choose to be valued as highly as the sports that our sons choose.

We want our sporting clubs to welcome girls and boys, women and men equally, for them to be equally represented in coaching, officiating and leadership, and to have equal and fair access to facilities such as change rooms, equipment and playing fields. We want our communities to be places where neighbours, colleagues and friends have the courage and skills to intervene when they hear sexist or discriminatory attitudes expressed. We want our public spaces to feel inclusive and safe, and to be accessible to everybody.

We want our families to be places where love and support is never shadowed by the threat of violence.

and respectful relationships. Our aspiration for a Great South Coast community free of violence is, first and foremost, one where women and men are treated equally, where everyone's thoughts, ideas and opinions are heard and respected, and where discrimination and stereotyping is a thing of the past.

We want our schools to model and promote gender equity and non-violence, not just in the classroom, but

or from other sources.

We want our workplaces to be places where women and men are equally valued and represented in leadership positions, where they receive equal pay for equal work, where both men and women are able and willing to take time off to be with children and enjoy family-friendly arrangements, and where everyone can work free from any form of gender-based harassment, bullying or discrimination. We want our daughters and sons to

We want our relationships and families to be places where each person's thoughts, ideas and opinions are heard and respected, and where their choices and goals are celebrated and supported. We want intimate partners to make decisions together, allow each other to be independent and have separate interests, and to reject rigid gender roles in their relationships. We want parents to take equal roles in childcare and housework, and for children to learn about equality and respectful relationships by watching the

adults in their lives. Above all, we want our families to be places where love and support is never shadowed with the threat of violence.

Violence against women and children has been present in our community for a long time and is embedded in many of our attitudes, behaviours, and social structures – addressing these requires long-term effort. But it can be done, and with this Strategy, we are making a start. The Strategy aims to get us to the point where we have the skills and organisational capacity to prevent violence through our core work areas, and with our partners across the community, health, education and business sectors. We are not starting from nothing.

Behind this document lies the work of local and regional organisations and individuals who are already beginning to drive prevention of violence against women and children in their own work areas. Their effort has given us models to draw from and a base upon which to build this shared vision, objectives, and strategic areas for action.

Violence against Children

Violence against children is defined by article 19 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child as:

all forms of physical or mental violence, injury and abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse.

Children and young people may directly experience physical, sexual and psychological violence in their homes, schools or communities. Children and young people can also witness violence (especially domestic violence) against their mothers or other female caregivers. *The Family Violence Protection Act 2008* recognises the vulnerability of children to forms of violence against women: it includes: *causing a child to hear or witness, or otherwise be exposed to the effects of, family violence as an example of family violence in itself.*

Working together. Working better

Strategy partner organisations across the Great South Coast, like many in regional Victoria, already do a great deal with limited human and financial resources.

Activities aiming to create equitable and inclusive organisational or community environments, challenge discrimination and harassment (especially on the grounds of sex), and promote healthy and respectful relationships, all address the underlying causes of violence and contribute to its prevention. Councils and organisations and the Great South Coast Regional Justice Committee have prioritised work to prevent violence against women and children.

But we can do more. With this Strategy, we commit to working better with what we've got: to 'build prevention in' to our existing work – use our growing knowledge and capacity to refine our policies and

programs, and gain more leverage from our existing resources. One-off programs and 'add-ons' are not enough to achieve sustainable change for such a deeply-entrenched problem. We also need to implement mutually-reinforcing strategies and messages across the many environments where attitudes and behaviours are influenced, such as schools, sporting clubs, workplaces and media.

We also want to work better together: coordinate efforts between Strategy partners, harnessing the strengths of individual agencies and others working in the prevention sector, sharing practice and experience, and, where possible, scaling up effective interventions across the region.

The role of Strategy partners

This Strategy provides the framework through which many organisations and networks commit to working together toward the shared goal of preventing violence against women and children, while also acknowledging that to do so, we each have many and different roles.

Councils

The five councils will take the lead in driving and coordinating the Strategy's activities across local government areas.

Councils can work externally with our communities through services and settings such as youth services,

What is gender equity?

Gender equity means the equal distribution of opportunities, of access to resources and of decision-making power between women and men, boys and girls in society.

Gender equity goes beyond formal provisions that ensure women and men are accorded equal treatment (such as sex discrimination legislation), and aims to achieve substantive or 'on the ground' equality between men and women in everyday life.

This is an important goal of prevention activity, as it addresses one of the key underlying causes of violence against women, namely unequal power between the sexes.

libraries, and sports clubs – supporting prevention activity through policy and programming. As major employers, councils can also work internally, promoting gender equity in the workplace, and embedding prevention of violence against women in policies and plans.

- Raise the profile of primary prevention
- Share the learning
- Develop the workforce
- Normalise workplace discussion about gender equity
- Influence and adapt council business

The Municipal Association of Victoria's Promoting Gender Equity: MAV Prevention of Violence against Women Leadership Statement identifies the following strategies that councils can implement, in order to fulfil their responsibility to their communities in preventing violence:

- Build relationships
- Stimulate and nurture leadership

Councils will link this work with their existing Health and Wellbeing governance structures to develop a multi-stakeholder prevention work plan for each local government area, coordinating implementation of the immediate actions of the Strategy, monitoring progress and identifying next steps.

Guiding Principles

- Everyone has the right to safe and respectful relationships and to live free from violence.
- Violence can affect anyone, but factors such as class, Aboriginality, sexuality, ethnicity and disability shape women and children's experience of violence.
- To prevent violence against women and children we will address its underlying causes, particularly unequal power relations, gender stereotyping and broader cultures of violence.
- Non-violent men play a positive and essential role in shaping respectful, gender-equitable attitudes and behaviours among peers, colleagues, children and friends.
- Everyone is responsible for developing a culture of non-violence, respect and equity. Community consultation, ownership and meaningful participation are central to our initiatives.
- Our work is informed by research and practice wisdom, and we will evaluate our efforts to contribute to the evidence base.
- Prevention of violence against women and children is a long-term endeavour: our initiatives are designed for sustainability of impact and future action.
- Our prevention initiatives are accompanied by accessible and appropriate systems of support for those already experiencing violence, guided by the expertise of the crisis response sector.
- The engagement of new partners across all sectors in which we live, work, learn and play are critical to our success
- Work to prevent violence against Aboriginal women cannot be separated from efforts to address racism, dispossession and intergenerational trauma. We are guided by the learnings and the principles of Strong Culture, Strong Peoples, Strong Families 10-year plan and the Indigenous Family Violence Prevention Framework.

Women's Health and Wellbeing Barwon South West

Women's Health and Wellbeing Barwon South West promotes women's independence, health and wellbeing by working in partnership with communities to deliver a range of evidence-based initiatives.

Providing support for the prevention of violence against women and children through this Strategy is an inaugural priority for the organisation. This will be achieved through:

- Delivering training and capacity-building opportunities
- Partnering to develop and implement evidence based practice
- Supporting partners with advice on prevention policy and program development and delivery, and brokering specialist assistance where necessary

Regional networks

Regional networks include Primary Care Partnerships, the Regional Justice Group, Indigenous Family Violence Regional Action Group, Regional Aboriginal Justice Advisory Committee, and other networks such as those for early years, sports and leisure, youth and disability services.

These networks all have primary goals that are distinct from, but related to, prevention of violence against women and children. Their role is to identify where the primary goal of the network aligns with particular activities or objectives of the Strategy, and integrate these into their planning, coordination and implementation processes.

State Government regional offices

Regional offices of Victorian Government departments will play an important role in the Strategy's implementation, for example through:

- Advising other Strategy partners on alignments with state government policy and initiatives
- Identifying opportunities for funding the Strategy's activities through State and Federal government funding streams
- Considering where the Great South Coast could lead on or pilot relevant state government-led initiatives

"The Strategy should be implemented by partner organisations best able to deliver on particular activities, in consultation with target populations".

Community member



We want the sports that our daughters choose to be valued as highly as the sports that our sons choose.

Community and health services

Health and community services are key entry points for direct interaction with communities, families and individuals.

Health and community services in the partnership will work to integrate prevention into strategic planning, organisational development and community outreach programs. Like councils, they will play a role in identifying opportunities to integrate gender equity, respectful relationships and prevention of violence into existing and planned programs and, where appropriate and possible, initiate new programs in settings or with population groups that have not previously been engaged.

Community and health services are also among the best placed to identify

We want our schools to model and promote gender equity and non-violence. Not just in the classroom, but in the school yard and staff room.

and intervene early with families and individuals at risk of violence, providing psycho-social support, referrals and social protection. For example, next to a friend, women are most likely to disclose their experience of violence to a health professional. These services will therefore work to ensure that prevention activity is supported by a health and community sector with the capacity and skills to respond to

disclosures of violence or its early-warning signs.

Crisis response sector

Our crisis response services, South Western Centre against Sexual Assault and Emma House, have long-standing experience in issues relating to violence against women and children.

Their expertise and commitment communicating issues of violence against women and children, creating and strengthening partnerships with generalist agencies, and translating specialist knowledge into 'mainstream' models of practice, will be an invaluable contribution to the Strategy's implementation.

Priority work areas and settings

Strategy partner organisations have a reach across many of the settings where prevention activity has been shown to be most effective, such as sporting clubs, schools, and workplaces.

We also work with people at different stages of life, and with groups such as first-time parents or people with disabilities. This means we are well-placed to implement prevention activities across multiple settings in a coordinated way, and also develop tailored initiatives for different populations. Our priority work areas and settings for the Strategy, and their different roles, are outlined in the following.





We want our public spaces to feel inclusive and safe, and to be accessible to everybody.

Workplaces

Workplace environments that are safe and inclusive of women and encourage their participation and leadership are essential for the prevention of violence against women in the workplace itself, and can create and reinforce broader social norms of non-violence and equity.

Initiatives encouraging organisations to develop and implement respectful relationships and gender equity policies and programs are key to prevention work in this setting.

Disability services

Women with disabilities experience violence at a significantly higher rate, and in different forms, than other women, and they may have greater difficulty in accessing support services.

Further, many women with disabilities are isolated and marginalised from participating in various mainstream

settings (e.g. educational institutions, workplaces and sporting clubs) and so it is vital that agencies and clients of disability services, specialist schools, and residential facilities are also engaged in developing and implementing prevention strategies.

Education, training and youth services

Programs aimed at building children and young peoples' skills in the development of respectful and equitable relationships, and to help teachers and other school staff recognise and respond to violent behaviour are key to preventing violence against women and children.

While we will prioritise work with secondary schools in the initial stages of this Strategy, partnerships with other educational institutions such as primary schools, TAFE and universities, youth transitions and youth work settings, specialist education settings and Adult and Community Education will also be explored later in the Strategy's implementation

Maternal and child health and early childhood

Maternal and Child Health and early childhood services provide various entry points for both primary prevention of violence and early intervention.

There is a focus on respectful relationships already included in the service models with referrals to outside agencies where appropriate. The Maternal and Child Health 4-week Key Age and Stage visit includes a question to women on their feelings of safety, designed to identify potential family violence and provide referrals for women. Enhanced Home Visiting Services of Maternal and Child Health are also designed to provide services to vulnerable families, including support and referrals in cases of family violence and child abuse/neglect.

An existing initiative already being implemented across the Great South Coast is the Baby Makes 3 Plus program. This program is focused on supporting men and women during the transition to parenthood and encouraging equal and respectful relationships.

Men as partners in prevention

Primary prevention of violence against women and children requires changes in culture, society and social norms: it involves everyone. Working with men is a critical part of the Strategy.

Non-violent men have a positive role to play in helping end men's violence against women, and shaping the attitudes and behaviours of children and other men, including peers, colleagues and friends.

Sports and leisure facilities

Participation in sports can help build skills and positive behaviours such as teamwork and cooperation, but the existence of sexist peer cultures in some male team sports has been associated with violence-supportive attitudes and behaviours.

Prevention of violence against women and children activities led by sporting clubs can potentially reach large numbers of adults and young people, particularly men and boys, and build a positive and violence-free sporting (and wider) culture. Promoting women's and girls' access and participation in diverse sports is central to building equitable and non-discriminatory sporting cultures.

Emergency management

Recent research in Australia and internationally suggests that violence against women (and potentially children) increases in the aftermath of natural disasters such as bushfire or flood.

Services are stretched in disaster recovery periods, and family violence risks being ignored, excused (on the basis of the pressure men are also under) and unrecorded. Emergency management teams therefore have a key role to play in ensuring that the different ways in which risk is experienced by women and men during and following disasters is taken into account.

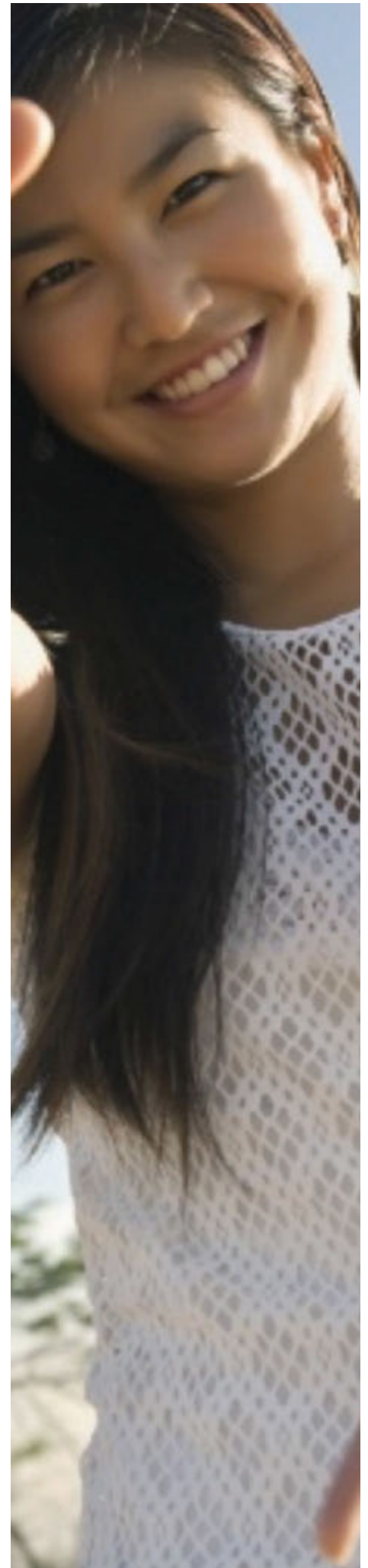
Media, Arts and Culture

Because the media, arts and popular culture can both reflect and challenge the society in which they are based, they can either reinforce or undermine the attitudes and norms that contribute to violence against women.

The representation of women and girls in popular culture, for instance in billboard and television advertising, can powerfully influence the way the role of women is viewed (particularly in relation to men). The media, arts and popular culture can also raise awareness of violence against women, its consequences and underlying causes. From community arts to mainstream media, new technologies and advertising, there is enormous potential to promote respectful relationships and build non-violent and equitable norms.

“Prevention of violence should be in across all council Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plans with a well-defined goal that can be evaluated within the four-year time frame”.

Community member



Strategic framework 2013–2017

Our vision

A Great South Coast where women and children are valued, respected, and live free from violence, and where our homes, communities, schools, sporting clubs and workplaces are inclusive, equitable and safe.

Our five-year goals

At the end of the five-year period, we want to see:

1. An increase in awareness, among partner organisations and the settings and population groups with whom we work, of the factors that contribute to violence against women and children and how to prevent it.
2. An increase in the number of partner organisations that are recognised as leaders in the prevention of violence against women and children, developing innovative programs for adoption and dissemination.
3. An increase in the number of Great South Coast schools, sporting clubs, workplaces, and other settings and organisations that promote gender equality and non-violence.
4. A substantial knowledge base to assist us to plan for the next stage of work and sustainability.

Our Strategic Areas for Action

Our strategic areas for action over the next five years are:

1. **Strengthening leadership and internal capacity (Years 1 - 2)** The first two years of the Strategy will focus on starting our leadership journey, establishing the organisational mandate and systems to support prevention, building internal capacity, and sourcing finances for the next stage. This Strategic Area of Action will comprise the 'lion's share' of our initial activities, as much future activity will depend on us demonstrating the necessary leadership and capacity. Strategy partner organisations will model a strengths-based approach to prevention by embedding gender equity and promoting non-violent norms in own organisations. We will develop the knowledge and skills of our own workforces on underlying causes of violence, and build prevention into our core business. We will strengthen existing partnerships to drive a coordinated and staged approach. We will also 'build the case', collecting sex-disaggregated data, and establishing methods to measure progress.

2. **Working with our communities (Years 1 - 5)** We will support our local communities to promote gender equity, inclusion and non-violence, in the settings where people live, work, learn and play. Existing resources will allow us to begin piloting and evaluating a limited number of innovative programs in the first two years of the Strategy, specifically with first time parents, women with disabilities, and in workplaces and schools. However we also recognise the need to establish a solid base of leadership and capacity internally (through Strategic Action Area One) to progress and 'build in' this work in a sustainable way. As our knowledge builds and we secure further resources, external work with our communities will grow. We will aim to develop and implement new initiatives in settings such as emergency management, or with sporting clubs, as well as expand the models piloted earlier across the Great South Coast.
3. **Building the evidence for future planning (Years 1 - 5)** We will address the underlying causes of violence against women and children through an evidence-based approach, evaluate the process and outcomes of our initiatives and share the learnings, in order to aid planning for the next phase and for ongoing sustainability.

Incorporating diversity and inclusion

Violence against women and children occurs across the Great South Coast community, however, some groups are less likely to be reached by whole-of-population strategies; have limited access to services or settings; and/or have specific needs that 'general' strategies do not account for.

The Strategy aims to prevent violence against all women and children, including those who are marginalised or in hard-to-reach groups. Prevention will only be effective for certain groups when it includes tailored strategies to address their specific contexts and risks. We will also ensure that all our strategies incorporate diversity, and are based on consultation, participation and consideration of the needs of different groups.

The issues faced by certain groups reinforce the need for community-led approaches to prevention. Many women with disabilities, for example, are isolated and marginalised from participating in various mainstream settings (e.g. educational institutions, workplaces and sporting clubs) and so it is vital that agencies like disability business services, specialist schools, community centres and neighbourhood houses are also engaged.

This Strategy is guided by the human rights principles of participation and empowerment, meaning that its actions and strategies will be applied in a way that supports and promotes self-advocacy and capacity building of marginalised groups rather than treating them as passive recipients of initiatives. We need to consider ways that power relationships and forms of discrimination operate for different women and children, and find solutions for them. Our prevention activities must:

- promote not only respectful relationships and gender equity, but also challenge negative stereotypes based on disability, sexuality, socio-economic class or ethnicity;
- identify population groups with specific needs or contexts within all initiatives developed to prevent violence against women and children;
- ensure representation of different population groups on steering structures and at key planning forums concerned with preventing violence against women and children; and
- help women from diverse groups to be involved in leadership roles.



Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring of the overall impact of the Strategy, and of its specific activities, will be critical for accountability and the process of continuous review and improvement.

Because prevention of violence against women and children requires long-term, generational change, we would not expect to see reductions in actual levels of such violence over the five-year term of the Strategy. Nor will we seek to measure progress by decreases in reporting of family violence or sexual assault to the police, as we know decreased reporting may in fact indicate decreased confidence in the system response rather than decreases in actual levels of violence. Instead, we will seek to measure our progress by shifts in attitudes, behaviours and practices that we know contribute to violence. For example, we would like to see:

- Greater levels of gender equity and inclusion/participation, more women in leadership positions, and greater satisfaction with responses to violence or discrimination, in organisations such as sporting clubs and workplaces (including our own);
- Shifts in community attitudes, behaviours and social norms away from gender stereotyping and the tolerance, excusing or justifying of violence; and
- Demonstrable improvements in interpersonal skills, family and gender relations that support respectful and non-violent relationships among community members participating in prevention programs.

Annual reports on the progress of the Strategy against the selected indicators will be developed by Strategy partners through the mechanism of Great South Coast Prevention of Violence against Women and Children Working Group (see next section), and submitted to the Great South Coast Board, Great South Coast Regional Justice Committee, Family Violence Regional Committee and Indigenous Family Violence Regional Action Group.

A Performance Monitoring Framework will help us not only monitor our own progress, but also show how our work in the Great South Coast supports broader state and national efforts, and thus help secure resources for future implementation. In order to measure change against such indicators, we will need to ensure that all our activities are robustly and evaluated, which is why a Strategic Action Area has been dedicated to building the evidence base.

Governance and accountability

Implementation and monitoring of the Strategy will be overseen by a *Great South Coast Prevention of Violence against Women and Children Working Group*, tasked with:

- Continuously reviewing the Two-Year Action Plan;
- Reviewing the performance monitoring framework and Strategy progress;
- Providing advice on annual Strategy work plans developed for each local government area;
- Seeking resources for and endorsing proposed regional initiatives;

- Hosting an annual Community of Practice Forum sharing learnings and initiatives;
- Providing regular updates to the Great South Coast *Strengthening our Communities Pillar Group*;
- Providing an Annual Report to the Great South Coast Board, Great South Coast Regional Justice Committee, Family Violence Regional Committee and Indigenous Family Violence Regional Action Group.

The working group will be co-chaired by a senior representative from a nominated Council and Women's Health and Wellbeing Barwon South West. A member of the Great South Coast *Strengthening our Communities Pillar Group* will be a member ensuring regular contemporary communication to the Pillar and Great South Coast Board.

A schematic of the Proposed Governance Structure and Relationship Map, and its links to other regional and statewide structures, can be found on the following page (page 22).

Women and children in the Great South Coast live from workplaces, schools and sporting clubs

Strategic Area One (years 1 - 2)
Building leadership & internal capacity

Situation

Violence against women and children is prevalent and serious in the GSC. Reducing levels of future violence and ultimately preventing it is an achievable goal, but requires sustained efforts to create cultural change at every level, across many organisations and settings.

Initial Inputs

- Existing expertise of Strategy partner staff in own work areas
- PVAW&C expert advice, tools and assistance: WHWBSW MAV, VicHealth
- Existing PVAW&C research base and promising practice models
- Time dedicated to collaboration among Strategy partners, and integration of PVAW&C into core business
- Existing financial resources

Outputs	
Activities	Reach
<p>Leadership & Governance Engage senior executives and elected officials as champions and establish governance mechanisms</p> <p>Workforce Development Build skills of staff in partner organisations to better integrate PVAW&C into core business</p> <p>Information Systems Strengthen sex-disaggregated data collection and information systems to track progress</p> <p>Partnerships Strengthen or build partnerships with response sector organisations and across key settings</p> <p>Financing Identify opportunities to strengthen resource allocation</p>	<p>Senior executives of Strategy partner organisations</p> <p>Councillors and mayors</p> <p>Staff in different work areas of Strategy partner organisations</p>

Strategic Area One Outcomes / Next Stage I

- Increased expertise of Strategy partner organisations on PVAW&C and how to prevent it
- Mandate for work on PVAW&C through organisation policies and senior leadership
- Sex-disaggregated data and information on progress on PVAW&C to be tracked
- High-functioning organisational processes for PVAW&C at LGA and regional level
- Increased financial resources for PVAW&C and demonstration of capacity and capability



Assumptions

- That senior executives in partner agencies and elected officials will support efforts to PVAW&C
- That GSC organisations demonstrating leadership and organisational investment in PVAW&C during Stage One will attract further funding for Stage Two work

ee from violence, and our relationships, communities,
ubs are inclusive, respectful and safe.

Strategic Area Two (years 2 – 5) Working with our communities

Inputs	Outputs	
	Activities	Reach
Partner staff on causes of	Workplaces Deliver and evaluate the Take a Stand bystander program in at least one GSC workplace	Employers and employees Women with disabilities
through prioritisation in partner executive support	Women with disabilities Deliver and embed Living Safer Sexual Lives and Enabling Women leadership programs	Students and teachers Sporting club members and officials
Information systems enabling	Schools Develop, implement and evaluate a respectful relationships education program (e.g. SAPPSS) in at least one GSC Secondary School	First time parents Emergency management professionals and volunteers
Used	Sports Identify avenues to increase equitable access to and participation of women and girls in diverse sports	Arts and culture audiences Young people
Partnerships to progress	Emergency Services Incorporate a gender equity and PVAW&C approach into emergency management	Local communities Service users
Levels	Other settings/ populations PVAW&C initiatives delivered with other settings and populations as identified through Strategic Action Area One	Indigenous communities
PVAW&C secured through commitment	First Time Parents Continue implementation and evaluation of Baby Makes 3 Plus program and advocate for the adoption of its approach by mainstream stakeholders	

Five Year Goals

1. An increase in awareness of the factors that contribute to VAW&C among Strategy partner organisations, and among the settings/ population groups with whom we work.
2. An increase in the number of Strategy partner organisations that are recognised as leaders in PVAW&C, developing innovative programs for adoption by other regions
3. An increase in the number of GSC schools, sporting clubs, workplaces, and other settings/ organisations that promote gender equality and non-violence
4. A substantial knowledge-base created to assist us to plan for the next stage of work and sustainability.

Evaluate

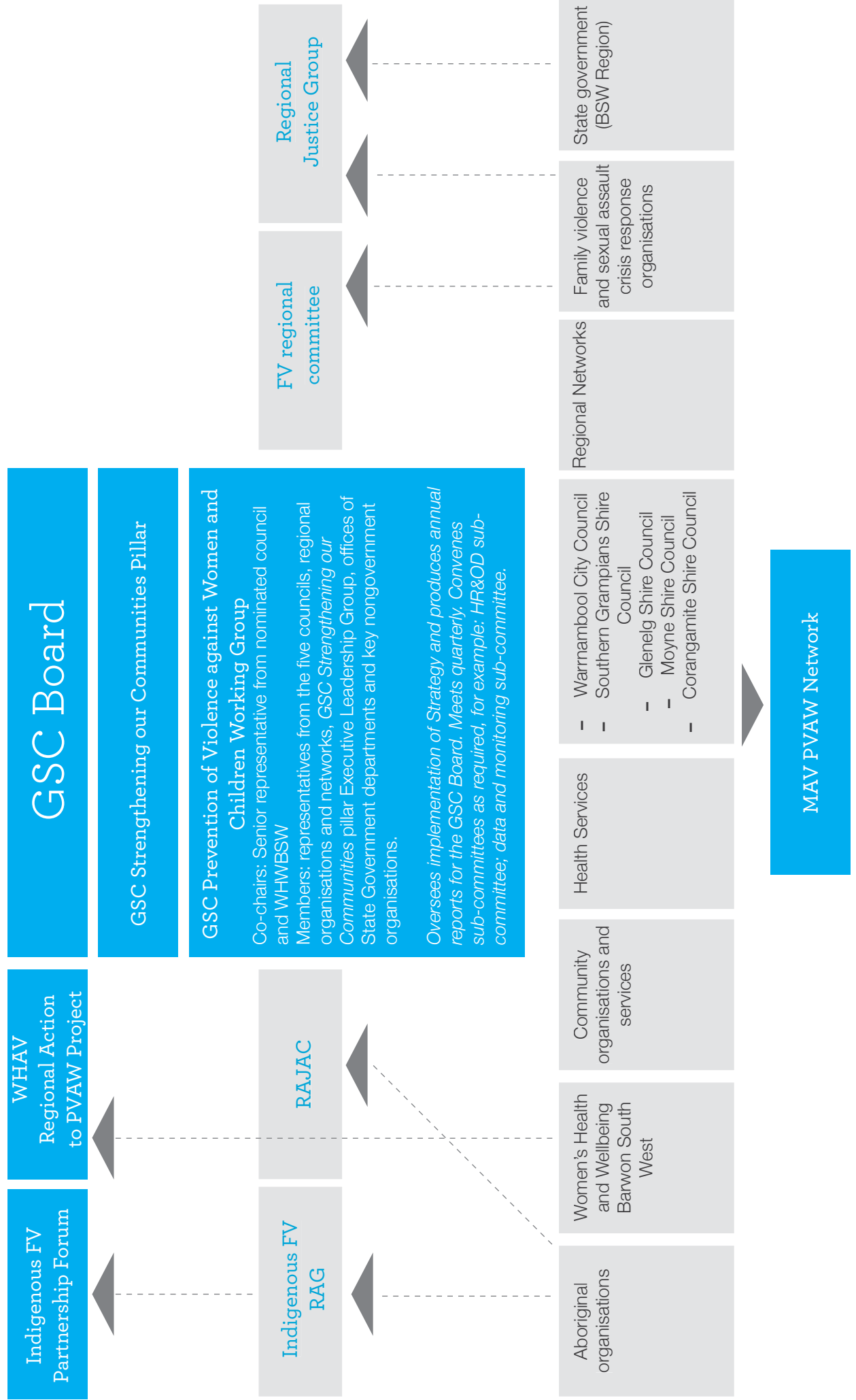
Analyse and Report

Using the evidence for future planning

External Factors

- Factors contributing to VAW&C beyond the influence of Strategy partners (eg broader media, popular culture) with impacts on attitudes, behaviours and perpetration trends
- Shifting political leadership at local, regional, or state levels

Proposed Governance Structure and Relationship Map





References

1. VicHealth (2007) Preventing Violence before it Occurs: A Framework and Background Paper to Guide the Primary Prevention of Violence against Women in Victoria
2. This figure is calculated from the total number of female homicides divided by the percentage of those homicides listed as having a 'domestic' motive in the Australian Institute of Criminology's National Homicide Monitoring Program reports
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4. Department of Human Services, Division of Community Care (2002), An Integrated Strategy for Child Protection and Placement Services, Department of Human Services, Melbourne
5. Mouzos, J. and T. Makkai (2004) Women's Experiences of Male Violence: Findings of the Australian Component of the International Violence against Women Survey, Australian Institute of Criminology
6. National Crime Prevention (2001) Young People & Domestic Violence: National research on young people's attitudes and experiences of domestic violence, Crime Prevention Branch, Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department.
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Great South Coast
Strategy to Prevent
Violence Against
Women and Children



- Strengthening Leadership
- Working Together
- Working Better

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SOCIAL INCLUSION SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 3/2015

SUBJECT: RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

REF: AF15/78

- Goal: Building Communities*
Strategic Objective:
- (vi) *Develop an improved means of communication and engagement between Council and the community (including vulnerable communities) in the building of community capacity.*
 - (vii) *Support the community's development through nurturing collaborative relationships and partnerships and through direct access to Council for recognition, funding, facilitation, and in kind support.*
- Goal: Diversity*
Strategic Objective:
- (iii) *Celebrate the positive contributions of all members of our communities, to our collective social, economic, cultural, health and overall well-being.*
 - (vi) *Facilitate the community's active involvement in meeting the varied aspirations, diverse needs and special services that are required (including those for marginalised and vulnerable groups).*
 - (vii) *Develop the capacity of Council to effectively communicate and engage with our communities, other agencies and service providers.*

INTRODUCTION

It was moved at the meeting of Council on Tuesday, 16th September 2014 that the Community Engagement & Social Inclusion Sub-Committee initiate the development of a Reconciliation Action Plan:

4. RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

- (a) *the report be received;*
- (b) *Reconciliation Action Plan be initiated (as a matter of priority) within the next 12 months using a Cultural Governance model.*

The purpose of this report is to provide members of the Community Engagement & Social Inclusion Sub-Committee with a background to discussions which have occurred in the lead up to developing a Reconciliation Action Plan.

BACKGROUND

On the 28th of August 2014 representatives of the Community Engagement & Social Inclusion (CESI) Sub-Committee met with Mark Waters, State Manager of Reconciliation South Australia to gain his insight into how organisations develop successful Reconciliation Action Plans (RAP's). At this stage it had not been determined if Mount Gambier would commit to developing a RAP. One Member voiced caution about developing a RAP during the meeting, due to the risk of community division if not developed sensitively and concerns a RAP may result in unexpected additional bureaucracy.

Community Engagement & Social Inclusion Sub-Committee Report No. 3/2015 cont'd...

Mark Waters agreed that a RAP is not the only way to go identifying South Australia does not have many Councils currently committed to these. Port Augusta City Council, Salisbury and Campbelltown have them in place, Adelaide Hills and Playford are in development.

Port Adelaide Enfield are doing great things towards reconciliation, but they do not have a RAP. It is also understood that the LGA may be going down the road of developing a RAP. We were advised that RAP's must be developed in partnership with Reconciliation Australia, and a number of resources can be accessed at their website <http://www.reconciliation.org.au/raphub/>

This website is very clear on the RAP process, advocating the RISE model

- Reflect
- Innovate
- Stretch
- Exercise

If developing a RAP it was stated clearly that words without actions are meaningless. The RAP tool sharpens an organisations focus beyond good intentions – to actions. A RAP provides a public responsibility for measurements and outcomes. It's an organisations commitment to reconciliation- within a publicly transparent encounter.

In 2008 State Government were really focussed on RAP's but there was no reporting against the public statement. This is what has changed in developing them now. Being conscious of what can be achieved, and not being overly ambitious is important. It was highlighted that a RAP would take approximately 12 months to draft and recommended that it be part of the 4 year Business Plan.

Identifying what issues Council wish to address through the RAP is crucial. It is important to look at and consider the context of what is Council's business, and to address this through the RAP. For example, Social Justice Commissioner Mick Gooda in 2012 named lateral violence one of the key issues which continues to impact Aboriginal social exclusion. In S.A one of the biggest issues currently facing Indigenous people, is the incarceration rates of people under 18 years of age. Identifying what local issues Council wish to address through the RAP, through consultation, is key to developing an effective local reconciliation action tool.

There are 3 key planks to the Reconciliation Action Plan;

1. Relationships

RAPs start with community engagement. Knowing the community, knowing who our key links are and recognising the external community relationships are crucial.

2. Respect

Understanding history, and recognising this is often vexed.

Additional respect factors for consideration include;

- How the organisation deals with and responds to racism
- Consideration on how to build cultural competency within an organisation
- Strengthening successful Aboriginal engagement, and,
- Promoting cultural celebration

Community Engagement & Social Inclusion Sub-Committee Report No. 3/2015 cont'd...

3. Opportunities

A RAP will have some key planning benchmarks that naturally sit well with Council, such as;

- Land use
- Cultural tourism
- Employment etc.

In concluding the meeting Mark Waters explained that Reconciliation SA are a small team, and only have capacity to provide one-off free advice. Any further engagement can only be offered within a fee for service arrangement and whilst he is happy to respond to questions by email he is not able to travel to Mount Gambier.

Following the August meeting with Mark Waters, a special meeting of Council was held on the 1st of September 2014 to mark the auspicious occasion of the unfurling the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flags for permanent display in the Council Chamber. There was strong public attendance at this meeting, and recognition it was an important step.

Later that month it was moved at the meeting of Council held on Tuesday, 16th September that the Community Engagement & Social Inclusion Sub-Committee initiate a Reconciliation Action Plan as a matter of priority within the next 12 months using a Cultural Governance model.

RECOMMENDATION

- (a) The Reconciliation Action Plan report be received;
- (b) Conversations and research with Reconciliation Australia begin;
- (c) Exploration of the appropriate Cultural Governance model to be used occurs;
- (d) CESI Sub-Committee workshop occurs to develop the RAP planning process direction and time line.



Alison BRASH
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

Sighted:



Mark McSHANE
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER