

Draft Fair Access Policy

Preamble

Bass Coast's Fair Access Policy (the Policy) seeks to address known barriers experienced by women and girls in accessing and using community sports infrastructure. The Policy aims to progressively build capacity and capabilities of Bass Coast Shire Council in the identification, and elimination of systemic causes of gender inequality in policy, programs, communications, and delivery of services in relation to community sports infrastructure.

As a defined entity of the Gender Equality Act 2020, Bass Coast Shire Council was required from 31 March 2021 to conduct Gender Impact Assessments (GIA) on all new policies, programs, communications, and services, including those up for review, which directly and significantly impact the public (Gender Equality Act 2020).

Starting in July 2024 the eligibility criteria for Victorian Government funding programs relating to community sports infrastructure will require that Council's have an adopted gender equitable access and use policy in order to receive funding.

Policy objective

To build the capacity and capability of Bass Coast Shire Council and its community to identify and eliminate the systemic causes of gender inequality in the areas of sport and active recreation. This will include new and existing policies, programs, communications and the access and use of community sports and recreation infrastructure.

Principles

Council will adopt the Fair Access Policy Principles which have been developed by the Office for Women in Sport and Recreation. They aims to:

1. Ensure community sports infrastructure and environments are genuinely welcoming, safe, and inclusive.
2. Women and girls can fully participate in all aspects of community sport and active recreation, including as a player, coach, administrator, official, volunteer and spectator.
3. Women and girls will have equitable access to and use of community sport infrastructure:
 - a. of the highest quality available and most convenient.
 - b. at the best and most popular competition and training times and locations.
 - c. to support existing and new participation opportunities, and a variety of sports and active recreation opportunities.
4. Women and girls should be equitably represented in leadership and governance roles.

5. Encourage and support all user groups who access and use community sport and active recreation infrastructure to understand, adopt and implement gender equitable access and use practices

6. Prioritise access, use and support to all user groups who demonstrate an ongoing commitment to gender equitable access and use of allocated community sport infrastructure.

Council considers that these principles provide clear direction, while also enabling adaption to the specific environment of Bass Coast. The details of how Council will roll out this Policy are listed within the Fair Access Action Plan.

The scope of the Policy is to support Council to take positive action towards achieving gender equity in the access and use of community sports infrastructure.

Additional documents

Bass Coast Fair Access Policy Action Plan 2024

Reference to other documents

The Policy enables effective and efficient integration of the requirements of the Gender Equality Act 2020, the Local Government Act 2020 and the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 and other legislative frameworks.

This Policy has been developed in line with and consideration of the following Guidelines, Plans, Strategies and Policies:

Gender Equality Act 2020

Local Government Act 2020

Equal Opportunity Act 2010

Bass Coast Shire Council Gender Equality Action Plan 2021

DRAFT Bass Coast Shire Council Recreation Service Agreement

Bass Coast Shire Council Community Grant Program Policy 2023

Bass Coast Shire Council Partnership Policy and Framework 2023

Bass Coast Shire Council Active Bass Coast Plan 2018-2028

Bass Coast Shire Council Leasing and Licensing Policy 2019

DRAFT Bass Coast Shire Council Sports Facility Capital Development Guide

Bass Coast Shire Council Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025

Bass Coast Shire Council Plan 2021-2025

Bass Coast Shire Council Long Term Financial Plan 2015-2025

Review process

Both the Fair Access Policy and Action Plan will be reviewed every 24 months or as any relevant legislative changes are made.

Accountability process

The Manager Recreation and Transport is accountable for the proper application of the Policy.

Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) Statement

In accordance with the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, a Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) has been undertaken when developing this policy.

Approval

For Council policies -

Adopted by Council at its meeting held on	Date day month year
Signed by the Mayor (Name)	

Bass Coast Fair Access Policy DRAFT Action Plan 2024

This Action Plan supports the implementation of the Bass Coast Fair Action Plan Policy 2024.

Fair Access objective

To build the capacity and capability of Bass Coast Shire Council and its community to identify and eliminate the systemic causes of gender inequality in the areas of sport and active recreation. This will include new and existing policies, programs, communications and the access and use of community sports and recreation infrastructure.

The Fair Access principles

1. Ensure community sports and recreation infrastructure and environments are genuinely welcoming, safe, and inclusive.
2. Women and girls can fully participate in all aspects of community sport and active recreation, including as a player, coach, administrator, official, volunteer and spectator.
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Bass Coast Shire acknowledges:

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



Bass Coast Shire Council will:

- engage fairly and equitably with all staff, working groups, state sporting organisations, Gippsport and members of our sport and recreation community, regardless of their gender, in a positive, respectful and constructive manner.
- engage in the process of gender impact assessments to assess the implications for women, men, trans and gender diverse people for any planned projects or activities, including policies and communications. This is a strategy for making all voices, concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation and monitoring of policies and programs.

Focus Areas

Bass Coast Shire Council has considered these principles when identifying the fair access actions. The actions have been split into 4 key focus areas which align with Active Bass Coast 2018 plus a new focus area to improve governance.

- Active People
- Active Places
- Active Partnerships
- Active Governance

The actions in this plan are divided into two streams:

- Council lead action
- Club based actions

A draft Fair Access Policy and Action Plan 2024 was open for community consultation during March and April 2024. Over 77 responses were gathered during this time. The key themes identified through this consultation lead to the Action Plan to be refined to focus on:

- **Leadership** and assistance to clubs via training and community grants.
 - **Data collection** to assist clubs to identify their gaps and future actions. Allow Council to identify future actions based on this data.
 - **Governance and policy updates** both Council and clubs.
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Current Actions

Previous gender inclusive initiatives lead by Council

- In 2021 Bass Coast become the first Council in Victoria to require professional sporting bodies holding events on Council Owned or managed land and facilities to award equal prize money to men and women.
- Supporting clubs to participate in the 16 Days of Activism and Orange Round.
- Hosting a VFLW match as part of its partnership with Hawthorn Football Club.
- In 2021 Council adopted an organisation wide Gender Equality Action Plan.
- In 2021 Council introduced for its employee's equal parental leave for all parents.

Section A- Council Actions

I	Active People - Actions to achieve progress	Timeframe	Measure
1.1	Provide communications and engagement that is welcoming, safe, accessible and inclusive for our community including First Nations, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD), Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex and Asexual (LGBTQIA+) peoples, people with disability and is inclusive of all ages.	Ongoing	Review key Council documents and media channels.
1.2	Support and promote clubs to host come and try days or sporting activations for women, girls and gender diverse people through Council's Community Grants Program.	Year 1	Review successful Community Grant applications to see how many clubs received funding in this area.

2	Active Places - Actions to achieve progress		Measure
2.1	Ensuring safer and more inclusive infrastructure to improve the training and playing experience for women and girls (including change rooms, bathroom amenities, sports lighting, car parks, playspaces, skate facilities, public toilets and pathways)	Ongoing	When undertaking facility design upgrades ensure there is equal representation from all impacted users (eg. women, parents, diverse user) on project working groups.
2.2	Create welcoming and inclusive parks and open spaces by promoting and nominating Women's names for the "put her name on it" program.	Year 1-2	Have one park or park feature (playspace, fitness area) renamed in honour of a woman.
2.4	Ensure completion of Gender Impact Assessments (GIA's) for; - All new sport, active recreation or open space plans, policies, strategies or the review of these documents. - All projects involving new or renewal of sport, active recreation and open space infrastructure.	Year 1	Provide additional staff training to ensure they have the skills and confidence to undertake GIA's.
2.5	Seek relevant funding and grants to support upgraded infrastructure projects that support Fair Access. Ensure Clubs complete a participation plan and gender equity audit as part of their application. - Wonthaggi Netball Pavilion - Thompson Reserve Clubrooms - Bass Netball Pavilion	Ongoing	Grant applications submitted.

3	Active Partnerships- Actions to achieve progress		Measure
3.1	Partner with Hawthorn Football Club, GippsSport and State Sporting Association's (SSA's) to provide	Year 1	Council to host a session for clubs.

	- training and mentorship opportunities for women, girls and gender diverse people to learn about leadership, officiating and coaching. - education/information sessions for clubs about how to be more inclusive to all.		Promote opportunities provided by GippSport, SSA's and Change Our Game.
3.2	Continue to ensure sporting bodies holding events within Bass Coast are offering equal prize money and trophies for men and women.	Ongoing	Monitor and include criteria in new partnership agreements.

4	Active Governance - Actions to achieve progress		Measure
4.1	a. Update Community Grants criteria for sport and recreations clubs to incorporate fair access requirements to receive grants.	Year 1	Assess uptake and adherence at the end of the grant cycle.
	b. Investigate having a Fair Access stream of quick response funding available to clubs.	Year 2	Number of grants targeted at Fair access initiatives.
4.2	Ensure the draft Reserve User Service Agreement incorporates Fair Access principles and actions.	Year 1	User agreement introduced for Winter 2025 season
4.3	Ensure Fair Access is reflected in the allocation of sports field usage on Bookable system.	Year 1	Audit usage at the end of 12 months of bookable use.
	- User to acknowledge they agree to Fair Access Policy. - Reserves use by different user groups tracked via bookable.	Year 2	Clubs to acknowledge and demonstrate internal stakeholder consultation as part of their tenancy application.



4.4	Review Active Bass Coast and further embed Fair Access principles and practices.	Year 1-2	Conduct a GIA as part of the review of Active Bass Coast.
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Section B - Club Actions

I	Active People - Actions to achieve progress	Timeframe	Measure
I.1	Ensure club's social media presence and club documents showcase the club's effort towards fairer access. Ensure inclusive language is used around the club (eg. Chair instead of Chairman).	Year 1	Survey clubs to identify if this is occurring.
I.2	Implement a flexible uniform policy and strategies that listen to what women, girls and gender diverse people prefer to help break down barriers to participation	Year 1	Survey clubs to identify if they have flexible uniform policies.
I.3	Ensure social events are welcoming, safe, accessible and inclusive to the whole community including First Nations, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD), Lesbian, Gay Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex and Asexual (LGBTQIA+) peoples, people with disability and for all ages fostering a sense of belonging and camaraderie within the club	Year 1	Survey clubs to identify if this is occurring.
I.4	Ensure prizes, awards, promotion and opportunities are fair for all players, volunteers and officials regardless of gender	Year 1	Survey clubs to identify if this is occurring.
I.5	Promote training and mentorship for all club members who want to learn, coach, officiate or join a committee	Year 1	Survey clubs to identify if this is occurring.
		Ongoing	Promote Change our Game grants.
I.6	Consider modified or participation based programs or low commitment options that may attract new people to the club	Year 1	Survey clubs to see who runs this type of program.

			Support clubs to create new programs via Council's Community Grants.
1.7	Encourage clubs to aim for gender balanced committees.	Ongoing	Survey clubs to establish current committee gender split.

2	Active Places- Actions to achieve progress	Timeframe	Measure
2.1	Ensure honour boards, images displayed and language used in club facilities and on social media is inclusive, positive and appropriate while also representing all user groups within the club equally.	Year 1	Survey clubs to identify if they have inclusive honour boards and social media.
2.2	Clubs to consider needs of all participants (players and volunteers) before allocating training/ game times for playing and change facilities. Clubs to provide evidence of consultation as part of their seasonal tenancy application.	Year 1	Survey clubs to establish if they consider all participants when allocating facilities.
		Year 2	Clubs to acknowledge consultation as part of seasonal tenancy application.

3	Active Partnerships - Actions to achieve progress	Timeframe	Measure
3.1	Educate local leagues, umpire associations and SSA's around the Bass Coast Fair Access Policy. Ensure equal recognition of all teams in the allocation of grounds, officials/umpires, trophies and match times.	Year 1	Survey leagues to establish if they consider all participants when allocating resources.
3.2	Utilise opportunities provided by GippSport, local leagues and State Sporting Associations to build awareness and promote gender equality Eg. Orange Round, Pride Round, 16 Days of Activism.	Year 1	Promote and showcase clubs holding these events.
		Ongoing	Support these events via Council's Community Grants.

4	Active Governance - Actions to achieve progress	Timeframe	Measure
4.1	Support clubs to review their inclusive practices and complete the <i>GippSport Gender Equity Audit</i> (or similar) to identify areas for improvement within their club.	Year 1	Host a Fair Access training session in conjunction with GippSport.
4.2	Encourage clubs to create an inclusive action plan for their club that focuses on equal representation in decision making roles across different aspects of the sporting club (executive committee and coaching/ officiating roles) and inclusive places.	Year 1	Host a follow-up session with clubs to assist with developing an inclusion action plan.

Note. The intention is to conduct a survey of all clubs in year 1. The findings identified will help guide future club training and support actions.

Review process

Both the Fair Access Policy and Action Plan 2024 will be reviewed every 24 months or as any relevant legislative changes are made.



Definitions

Community Sport and Active Recreation Infrastructure: Publicly owned local, rural, regional, or state level sport and active recreation infrastructure operated and maintained primarily for the purpose of facilitating community sport and active recreation activities, including sporting grounds, surfaces, facilities, playspaces, pathways and pavilions.

Gender: How you understand who you are and how you interact with other people. Many people understand their gender as being a man or woman. Some people understand their gender as a mix of these or neither. A person's gender and their expression of their gender can be shown in different ways, such as through behaviour or physical appearance.

Gender diverse: An umbrella term for a range of genders expressed in different ways. Gender diverse people use many terms to describe themselves. Language in this area is dynamic, particularly among young people, who are more likely to describe themselves as non-binary.

Gender equality: The equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women, men and trans and gender-diverse people. Equality does not mean that women, men and trans and gender diverse people will become the same but that their rights, responsibilities, and opportunities will not depend on their gender.

Gender equity: The provision of fairness and justice in the distribution of benefits and responsibilities based on gender. The concept recognises that people may have different needs and power related to their gender and these differences should be identified and addressed in a manner that rectifies gender related imbalances.

Gender impact assessment, or GIA: a requirement under the gender equality act 2020 to be carried out on policies, programs and services which have a direct and significant impact on the public. The assessment must evaluate the effects that a policy, program or service may have on people of different genders.

Transgender, or trans: Someone whose gender does not only align with the one assigned at birth. Not all trans people will use this term to describe themselves.

