

# Leadership Statement for the Prevention of Violence Against Women

<b>Version:</b>	1
<b>Date Adopted:</b>	June 2020
<b>Service Unit</b>	Active Ageing and Diversity
<b>Directorate:</b>	Community Strengthening
<b>Review Date:</b>	June 2022

## 1. Purpose

To enable Moorabool Shire Council to become a leader in the prevention of violence against women.

## 2. Our Vision

Moorabool Shire Council leads the municipality in preventing violence against women by creating safe, respectful, inclusive, and equitable communities, thereby allowing all women and children to enjoy their lives free from the threat of violence.

## 3. Context

Gender-based violence is entirely preventable. Violence against women is an abuse of power and control that manifests in many forms including physical, sexual, emotional, spiritual, social, and financial<sup>1</sup>. Violence against women is predominately perpetrated by men towards women and their children, often by an intimate partner<sup>2</sup>.

One in three Australian women, from the age of 15, will experience physical abuse from a male, and one in five Australian women will experience sexual assault by a male<sup>3</sup>. It is also acknowledged that one in four Australian women, from the age of 15, will experience both physical and sexual assault by a current intimate partner<sup>2</sup>. The risk of violence against women is typically higher for women of indigenous and multicultural backgrounds, women with a disability, elderly women, and women living in regional/rural communities<sup>4</sup>.

Violence against women has severe health, economic and social ramifications. For Victorian women aged 15-44 years, intimate partner violence remains the leading cause of premature illness, disability and death, over any other risk factor including obesity, hypertension, smoking, high cholesterol, physical inactivity, and substance abuse<sup>5</sup>. The cost of violence against women to the Australian economy is an estimated \$21.7 billion (2014)<sup>6</sup>.

Australian and international research indicates gender inequality as the key determinant of violence against women<sup>7</sup>. The Oxford Dictionary defines gender inequality as *a social process by which people are treated differently and disadvantageously, under similar circumstances, on the basis of gender*. Alcohol and illicit drug use, social isolation, socio-economic status, marital discord, poor mental health, financial stress and poor parenting can be contributing factors but using violence is an individual choice<sup>7</sup>.

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## 4. Our Commitment

Moorabool Shire Council is committed to ensuring a violence-free society that all women and children can positively and safely participate in. Through promoting respectful and equal relationships, Council is influencing cultural and social norms within a range of community settings including community services, sport and recreation, workplaces, corporate, arts, media and popular culture, health, justice, and education.

**Council will demonstrate leadership and participation in the following:**

### 4.1. Advocacy

Through its involvement with the Grampians Regional Plan to Prevent Violence Against Women: Communities of Respect and Equality (CoRE), Council will embed gender equitable best practice initiatives in its workplace and community to promote a culture and expectation of women and men being equally respected and valued.

Council will consult with all levels of government to access funding, resources and programs that promote a whole of community approach for preventing violence against women.

Council will raise the importance of primary prevention when addressing violence against women, achieved through communication with its communities, within Moorabool's Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan, within Council departments and teams, and with Council's organisational partners and stakeholders.

### 4.2. Participation

Council will organise and/or participate in community events and campaigns, raising awareness of the prevention of violence against women, including International Women's Day and the 16 Days of Activism.

Council will encourage and support local community members, groups and organisations to be leaders in challenging sexism, gender stereotyping, discrimination and violence against women.

### 4.3. Building Capacity

Council will provide ongoing opportunities for staff and Councillors to receive training in the prevention of gender-based violence.

Council will facilitate a working group from across the organisation to develop and implement a gender equality action plan.

Council will apply a gender equality lens to all current and future policies and procedures.

Council will support role models from a broad cross-section of staff to champion the cause and will encourage local organisations to become a signatory to CoRE.

Council will attend forums, events and symposiums to increase staff skills and knowledge, to become active bystanders to prevent, as well as respond to, family violence.

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## 4.4. Informing the Community

Council will facilitate actions to increase community awareness of the importance of speaking out about violence against women and being active bystanders.

Council will disseminate family violence information including available services to the community, victims and perpetrators.

Council will advocate for improved services within Moorabool to support women and children experiencing violence, and to enable behavioral change within the community.

## 5. References

<sup>1</sup> Department of Justice & Regulation 2008, *Family Violence Protection Act 2008*, Victorian Government, Melbourne, [http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol\\_act/fvpa2008283/](http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/fvpa2008283/).

<sup>2</sup> OurWatch 2015, *Change the story: a shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and their children*, Australian Government, Canberra.

<sup>3</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics 2006, *Personal safety survey (Reissue)*, retrieved December 21, 2015, from:  
[http://www.ausstats.abs.gov.au/Ausstats/subscriber.nsf/0/056A404DAA576AE6CA2571D00080E985/\\$File/49060\\_2005%20\(reissue\).pdf](http://www.ausstats.abs.gov.au/Ausstats/subscriber.nsf/0/056A404DAA576AE6CA2571D00080E985/$File/49060_2005%20(reissue).pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Amanda George & Bridget Harris 2014, *Landscapes of violence: women surviving family violence in regional and rural Victoria*, Deakin University, Melbourne.

<sup>5</sup> VicHealth 2004, *The health costs of violence: measuring the burden of disease caused by intimate partner violence: a summary of findings*, Victorian Health Promotion Foundation, Melbourne.

<sup>6</sup> KPMG 2013, *Cost of violence against women*, White Ribbon International Conference, Sydney, Australia, retrieved 12 November 2015,  
[http://www.whiteribbon.org.au/uploads/media/Conference\\_2013/The\\_cost\\_of\\_violence\\_in\\_Australia\\_Liz\\_Forsyth\\_KPMG.pdf](http://www.whiteribbon.org.au/uploads/media/Conference_2013/The_cost_of_violence_in_Australia_Liz_Forsyth_KPMG.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> VicHealth 2004, *Preventing violence before it occurs: a framework and background paper to guide the primary prevention of violence against women in Victoria*, Victorian Health Promotion Foundation, Melbourne.

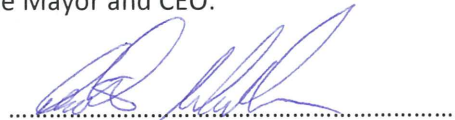
## 6. Approval

This document will come in effect once signed by the Mayor and CEO.



Cr David Edwards  
Mayor

Date: 01 / 07 / 20



Derek Madden  
Chief Executive Officer

Date: 01 / 07 / 20