

Prevention of violence and gender equality Leadership Statement

The City of Ballarat has zero tolerance for violence in families and against women and minority groups. Violence is unacceptable but remains common in our municipality and across Australia. The City of Ballarat is committed to leading the way when it comes to gender equality and preventing violence against women and minority groups in our community.

Violence in the family home and against women is driven by gender inequality between women and men or by an individual or group who uses their power or control over another. Women and minority groups have historically experienced discrimination and disadvantage because of rigid gender roles and stereotypes resulting from conscious and unconscious bias.

Gender inequality may be compounded by other forms of disadvantage or discrimination that a person may experience based on either their status of being either Aboriginal, Torres Strait islander or both, age, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, race, religion, sexual orientation and other attributes.

Violence in families, minority groups and against women is a serious social justice issue. Local government plays a role in raising awareness and supporting the social change needed to prevent violence against women and to advocate for gender equality. Violence towards any person regardless of their gender, age or background requires action that is embedded in our daily operations, and reflected in key City of Ballarat documents, plans and strategies.

All Victorians should live in a safe and equal society, have access to information, resources and opportunities and be treated with dignity, respect and fairness. Gender equality benefits all Victorians regardless of gender. Gender equality is a human right and a precondition to social justice.

The City of Ballarat works in partnership with key stakeholders and organisations to prevent violence and to create a safe and equitable community for all, regardless of their gender, age or background. This is supported by the *Gender Equality Act 2020* which requires local government to take positive action towards achieving workplace gender equality and to promote gender equality in their policies, programs and services.

The City of Ballarat is working to meet its requirements in gender equality under the *Gender Equality Act 2020*. This work feeds into numerous actions in our second Gender Equality Action Plan.

The City of Ballarat will exceed our obligations under the *Gender Equality Act 2020* by:

- Advocating, promoting, showing leadership and commitment to staff and the community regarding gender equality and the prevention of violence against women
- Creating a gender-balanced workforce composition, pay equality and addressing gender equality and inclusion through embedding a gender lens into workforce policies, procedures and practices
- Promoting and building respectful relationships, bystander action and gender equality through policies, procedures and practices
- Supporting people of all genders to have the resources and opportunities they need to succeed at the City of Ballarat.

Evan King

Evan King
Chief Executive Officer