

2.2 MONASH COUNCIL SUBMISSION TO THE GENDER EQUALITY BILL

(TE)

Responsible Director: Julie Salomon

RECOMMENDATION

That Council endorses the draft submission to the Gender Equality Bill.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's endorsement of the draft submission to the Gender Equality Bill.

BACKGROUND

In 2015, the Royal Commission into Family Violence (the Royal Commission) concluded that 'family violence is a gendered crime' and that ending violence against women requires addressing gender inequality in all its forms – in the workplace, school yards, on television screens and on sporting fields.

In November 2015, as part of the Victorian Government's implementation of the 227 recommendations of the Royal Commission, the Government committed to developing Victoria's first ever Gender Equality Strategy to highlight the link between violence and attitudes towards women and to guide the state's actions for achieving equal social, civic and economic participation for women, men and gender diverse people in Victoria.

In December 2016, the Government released *Safe and Strong: A Victorian Gender Equality Strategy* that establishes a comprehensive framework for long-term action to improve gender equality in Victoria. A key reform of this strategy is to enact a *Gender Equality Act*, legislation that will promote and improve gender equality across the Government and public sector organisations.

In August 2018, the Government released the Gender Equality Bill Exposure Draft and Discussion Paper to guide the conversation on the practical considerations and issues to ensure that the legislation is implemented in a way that best supports lasting social change with submissions closing on 28 September 2018.

DISCUSSION

Council is a recognised state leader in the prevention of violence and promotion of gender equity. Between 2012-2015, the City of Monash was the lead organisation in the Generating Equality and Respect program, an innovative, place-based preventing violence against women program.

In November 2015, Monash City Council endorsed the Gender Equity Strategy (2015-2020). The Strategy builds upon and formalises Council's longstanding commitment to gender equity. The vision of the Strategy is for an inclusive and gender equitable city, where females and males are

treated with respect and have equal opportunities, decision-making power and responsibilities, regardless of their gender. Council's commitment also consists of funding a permanent full-time Gender Equity Officer and establishing a Gender Equity Advisory Committee.

In September 2018, Council has been successful for two State funded gender equity projects – *Community Leaders United by Sport (CLUB)* focusing on gender equality in sporting clubs and *Playing Fair* embedding gender equity within the setting of *Playgroups*.

The attached submission to the Gender Equality Bill draws from Council's experiences and insights in driving gender equity and preventing violence against women initiatives. The submission advocates for the critical role of local government in promoting gender equity and the sustained action required to achieve gender equality.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This report is in line with Council's *A Healthy and Resilient Monash: Integrated Plan (2017-2021)* and *Gender Equity Strategy (2015-2020)*.

SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The submissions, including the recommendations, will support the prevention of violence against women and promotion of gender equity at all levels of Government.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS

This report is in line with the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 and in particular with the following rights: freedom of expression and taking part in public life.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications resulting from this recommendation.

CONCLUSION

In 2015, the Royal Commission into Family Violence (the Royal Commission) concluded that 'family violence is a gendered crime' and that ending violence against women requires addressing gender inequality in all its forms – in the workplace, school yards, on television screens and on sporting fields.

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In August 2018, the Government released an Exposure Draft – Gender Equality Bill and Discussion Paper to guide the conversation on the practical considerations and issues to ensure that the legislation is implemented in a way that best supports lasting social change with submissions closing on 28 September 2018.

This report seeks the endorsement of Council to make a submission to the Gender Equality Bill. This submission (Attachment 1) builds upon Monash City Council's commitment to and leadership in the prevention of violence against women and promotion of gender equity.

ATTACHMENT 1: Monash City Council Submission to the Gender Equality Bill.