

12.1 LATE REPORT: NOTICE OF MOTION - CR SUSAN GONTASZEWSKI – STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE PARTICIPATION AND ACCESSIBILITY BY WOMEN AND GIRLS AT CITY OF VINCENT SPORTSGROUNDS AND ASSOCIATED FACILITIES

TRIM Ref: D18/42595
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Attachments: Nil

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council

1. **RECEIVES** Administration's response to the Notice of Motion dated 22 August 2017 regarding strategies to improve participation and accessibility by women and girls to City of Vincent sportsgrounds and associated facilities;
2. **APPROVES** implementation of the following initiatives to improve sports participation by women and girls within the City of Vincent:
 - 2.1 **Expand and improve data collection, and subsequent monitoring of participation trends amongst local sporting clubs and associations, as the basis for future decision making;**
 - 2.2 **Review and amend Council Policy No. 3.10.11 – Community Funding to provide local sporting clubs with access to funding that supports targeted programs, equipment, training, and policies;**
 - 2.3 **Deliver targeted club development workshops in partnership with the Department of Local Government, Sport & Cultural Industries to assist local sporting clubs with the implementation of female friendly initiatives;**
 - 2.4 **Implement a marketing campaign that recognises local sportswomen, coaches, officials and clubs while also providing a platform for consultation with local women and girls regarding current barriers to participation; and**
 - 2.5 **Conduct an audit of sportsgrounds and associated facilities to determine the need for infrastructure improvements to support increased female participation for consideration within Council's 2019/20 capital works budget.**
3. **NOTES** that Administration will investigate a range of initiatives that may further support increased sports participation by women and girls within the City of Vincent:
 - 3.1 **Review the effectiveness of Council's sportsground fees and charges rebates, and identify any other similar mechanisms, as incentives for local sporting clubs and associations to increase participation rates by women and girls;**
 - 3.2 **Review existing programs and services at Beatty Park Leisure Centre and Loftus Recreation Centre to reaffirm and where applicable improve female friendly options;**
 - 3.3 **Liaise with the Department of Local Government, Sport & Cultural Industries regarding findings from the recent 'Come Out and Play' pilot project to identify strategies that may support increased informal sports participation by women and girls; and**
 - 3.4 **Specifically investigate opportunities to attract sporting codes with traditionally high female participation rates to Vincent through those Reserve Master Plans identified within the City's Corporate Business Plan 2018/19 – 2021/22.**

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To consider information prepared by Administration in response to the Notice of Motion regarding strategies to improve participation and accessibility by women and girls to City of Vincent Sportsgrounds and associated facilities.

BACKGROUND:

On 22 August 2017, Council endorsed the following Notice of Motion:

“That Council REQUESTS Administration obtain sporting club membership details by gender to directly inform strategies to improve participation and accessibility by women and girls, including the sportsground seasonal hire fees review currently being prepared by October 2017.”

There are nine (9) public open spaces located with Vincent that are classified as having a primary purpose as sporting grounds. Availability and access to sporting facilities can act to influence participation in sport as can facility/club operations. Participation is positively influenced by access to public sports facilities. Local governments can assist by taking a strategic approach to the provision of active recreation spaces and sporting infrastructure. Best practice planning can ensure that sporting facilities serve the widest possible participant base¹

Many sporting codes and clubs have traditionally had a player and member base that is gender imbalanced. On a national level, whilst participation in sports or physical activities is similar for boys and girls, boys are more likely to be active through club sport than girls². However, interest and participation in club sports is changing. Women and girls have demonstrated a strong interest in club sports, buoyed by the advent of the Women’s AFL and the success of Australian women’s soccer and cricket teams

Local government can play a proactive role by working with sporting clubs to understand and implement strategies to grow female participation in organised sporting activities by ensuring that access to sports facilities are available in the local setting. Local governments have developed strategies for improving female participation in club sports and improving access to sporting opportunities by considering inclusivity in the seasonal hire of sporting grounds.^{3 4}

There are many factors that contribute to an individual’s participation in sport, recreation and physical activity. These a lack of motivation, affordability, being time poor, low self-esteem issues or just a general feeling that there are no sporting opportunities available to cater for their skill levels or interests. Therefore, it was important that Administration considers all these influences, when designing programs and strategies to promote participation in sport, recreation and physical activities.

DETAILS:

Administration has completed a comprehensive review of strategies to improve participation and accessibility by women and girls to City of Vincent sportsgrounds and associated facilities. A summary of the key findings is provided below.

Eastern State local governments and the Australian Government Department of Health have commenced developing strategies to address low participation numbers for females and girls in sport and physical activity. Numerous factors can contribute towards low participation rates including lack of culturally appropriate facilities/programs; social stereotyping; fewer opportunities available for participation; lack of confidence in approaching activities alone and cultural and social pressures.

Given that local governments should be promoting and contributing to the health and well-being of local communities through the provision of services and facilities at the local level, opportunities exist for the City to provide assistance in overcoming some of the major challenges faced. In addition, as the City owns or manages the majority of sport and recreation facilities within the municipality and has the ability to influence or determine who uses them; this will assist with increasing female participation in sport.

A report released by the Australian Sport Commission (2016), AusPlay: ‘Participation data for the sports sector’ identified that the main barrier to young children’s participation in organised out of school hours sport or physical activity is their parents’ perception that they are too young to start playing. Being the wrong age, too old/too young, other commitments and affordability are also barriers. Sports clubs are the primary avenue for children to be active, with children’s participation rates peaking between the ages of 9-11 with 50% of the boys more likely to be active through club sports compared to girls at 33%.

Furthermore, a report by the Australian Sports Commission titled 'AusPlay: Focus Women and girls Participation' in November 2017 delves into the participation of Australian women and girls in sport and physical activity, and analysis the difference between male and female patterns of behaviour. The top three barriers to women 15+ participating in sport and physical activity were identified as not enough time/other commitments; poor health or injury and don't like sport/physical activity. This report also details that non-sport related physical activities tend to be less intensive than sport-related activities. 'Women could benefit from more targeted sport products, given the more intensive and longer nature of sport-related physical activity'.⁵

Given this, Administration, through the recently introduced "Community Group and Sporting Club Health Checks" (Health Check), have sought key information to better understand and monitor the current breakdown of memberships of local sporting clubs to determine if the proposed strategies will be effective.

A key component of the Health Checks was a breakdown of the total club membership base including the number of adults, juniors, males/females and social members. The information has now been distilled and the relevant sporting membership details are detailed in the following tables and this data has been used to directly inform strategies to improve participation and accessibility by women and girls.

Sporting Club Membership Breakdown

Club	Sport	Junior Male	Junior Female	Senior Male	Senior Female	Total Active Membership
WA Ultimate	Ultimate	35	35	350	250	670
Modernians Hockey Club	Hockey	170	110	120	120	520
Mt Hawthorn Cardinals Junior Football Club	AFL	432	13	0	0	445
Tennis Seniors Association of WA Inc.	Tennis	0	0	187	186	373
Phantoms Water Polo Club	Water Polo	80	70	115	68	333
Perth Soccer Club	Soccer	183	14	76	13	286
Floreat Athena Junior Soccer Club	Soccer	180	0	65	0	245
Triton Water Polo Club	Water Polo	70	78	40	44	232
Leederville Mount Hawthorn Junior Cricket Club	Cricket	154	22	0	0	176
Leederville Tennis Club	Tennis	26	9	101	34	170
University Cricket Club	Cricket	0	0	117	0	117
Leederville Cricket Club	Cricket	0	0	100	3	103
Tuart Hill Cricket Club	Cricket	0	0	100	2	102
Loton Park Tennis Club	Tennis	1	0	71	9	81
North Perth Tennis Club	Tennis	9	1	40	25	75
Forrest Park Croquet Club	Croquet	0	0	33	38	71
North Perth Bowling Club	Bowls	0	0	44	1	45
North Perth United	Soccer	0	0	40	0	40
West Coast Splash Synchronised Swimming Club	Sync Swimming	0	0	0	40	40
Floreat Hellenic Cricket Club	Cricket	0	0	24	0	24
Azzurri Bocce Club Inc	Bocce	0	0	16	6	22
		1,340	352	1,639	839	4,170

Administration is continuing to liaise with other local sporting clubs and associations to obtain complete and up-to-date membership information.

Within the City of Vincent there is a total active sporting club membership base of 4,170. Senior males have the highest participation rate of 39.30% followed by 32.14% for junior males, 20.12% for senior females and 8.44% for junior female participation. This equates to an overall male participation in sport within the City of 71.44%, whilst female participation is 28.56%.

	Total Number
Junior Males	1,340
Junior Females	352
Senior Males	1,639
Senior Females	839
Total Membership	4,170

Junior participation in sport and recreation within the City of Vincent is heavily centred on males. Currently, males account for 79.20% of the total combined active junior membership base of 1,692. In comparison, males account for 66.14% of the total combined active senior membership base of 2,478.

Membership details relating to the four (4) State Sporting Associations that are based within the City are detailed below, however it should be noted that these organisations attract participants from the broader Perth Metropolitan Area rather than solely from the local community.

Association	Sport	Junior Male	Junior Female	Senior Male	Senior Female	Total Active Membership
*.Swimming WA	Swimming	-	-	-	-	3,074
*. Volleyball WA	Volleyball	-	-	-	-	14,570
Gymnastics WA	Gymnastics	3,766	11,647	0	0	15,413
WA Ultimate	Ultimate	35	35	350	250	670

* Given the large volume of members, Administration is continuing to work with both Swimming WA and Volleyball WA to obtain full membership breakdown in respect to gender, and junior/senior age classification.

Loftus Recreation Centre

Perth Basketball Association, North Perth Basketball Club, Volleyball WA and the Filipino Australian Sports Association operate out of Loftus Recreation Centre. In addition to this, the centre has 74 netball teams, all seniors, with no junior netball competition available. Overall Loftus Recreation Centre hosts 422 teams across Netball, volleyball, indoor and outdoor soccer during their peak summer season with 310 teams during the winter months. Administration is actively working with these local sporting clubs and associations, and Belgravia Leisure, to obtain complete and up-to-date membership information.

Strategies to Improve Participation and Accessibility for Females in Sport

In 2016, the Australian Government Department of Health launched the 'Girls Make Your Move' Campaign in Australia. The campaign stemmed from concerns and evidence that young women are doing less physical activity than recommended.

This campaign was designed to engage young women (12-19 year olds) and their parents to increase girls' participation in physical activity and sport through shifting perceptions of exercise and generating intentions to be more active.

The "Girls Make Your Move" campaign was inspired by Sport England's successful 'This Girl Can' initiative which has already encouraged nearly 3 million women to be more active.

Following a detailed review of these types of campaigns, along with the data collected in the "Health Checks", Administration is intending on implementing the general principles associated with these initiatives at a local level to assist with increasing female participation in sport based within the City by implementing the following strategies:

Female Participation in Sports Grants

Participation in organised sporting activities offers many health and wellbeing benefits to our community including increasing self-esteem, networking opportunities and social inclusion. Despite these benefits, there are still low rates of participation of women and girls in the City.

Through a review and amendment of Council Policy No. 3.10.11 – Community Funding it is intended to make available female participation in sports grants of up to \$2,000 aim to assist clubs to establish activities, programs or projects that promote and encourage equal participation of women and girls in sports.

Activities, programs, projects and initiatives that will be considered eligible for grants will include (but not be limited to):

- Costs associated with the establishment of activities, programs, competitions or new teams aimed at increasing female participation in sport;
- Equipment required by female participants to take part in sport;
- Coaching accreditation;
- Umpire training; and
- Costs associated with developing gender equity strategies, policies or codes of conduct.

Gender Equity Workshops for Local Sporting Clubs

Gender equity workshops provide an opportunity for Administration to encourage local sporting clubs to develop action plans to make their clubs more female friendly. Clubs that promote and foster a culture of equality are more likely to attract members and volunteers and could be more successful in obtaining external grants.

Women remain under-represented in sport both on and off the sportsground, in participation and leadership roles so it is vitally important for local clubs to create opportunities for women's participation in all realms of sport. This in turn will assist our local sporting clubs to grow their participation and membership base, particularly by girls/women, in an environment that makes all their members feel safe and inclusive.

External consultants would be engaged by Administration to conduct workshops that provide club members with all the skills and knowledge needed to build their understanding around the importance of female friendly clubs. Administration has recently sought funding support for this initiative through the Department of Local Government, Sport & Cultural Industries 'Every Club' grant program.

Marketing Campaign – Spotlight on Female Local Athletes, Officials and Coaches

Administration is in the process of developing a local multi-faceted physical activity promotion and communication strategy to motivate, encourage and change behaviours surrounding females in sport. The campaign will involve the promotion of local female athletes and coaches/leaders within City of Vincent based sport and recreation clubs.

A complete media campaign is a component of the strategy with the City's social media platforms and website being utilised.

The campaign will serve to not only inspire local women and girls to get involved in sport and recreation but also promote activities they may not have considered previously or activities that the broader community simply did not realise were available to them within their community. The campaign will also provide Administration with the opportunity to directly consult with women and girls throughout Vincent to obtain a better understanding of barriers that may impact that sports participation.

As part of this initiative, Administration would develop a directory identifying all the sporting and physical activities available within the City which cater specifically for females in sport.

Women Specific Sporting Facilities

The majority of community sporting facilities available within the City do not adequately cater for females. This has been identified by Administration as a barrier to increased participation. Current infrastructure provides for more traditional male dominated sporting codes. In addition to this, and like many metropolitan local governments, the City's community sporting facilities are becoming outdated and do not provide the range of amenities that will attract and sustain women and girls. To encourage more women and girls to be involved in sporting activities, women friendly facilities are required.

Improving facilities that would support females such as unisex change facilities that cater for the needs of both males and females is considered an integral component of increasing female participation rates with the basic provision of change rooms to support the needs of female participants being a vital component. The standard features of female friendly change rooms usually include:

- Privacy screens at the entry to change rooms;
- Individual toilet cubicles; and
- Individual lockable shower cubicles with change seats inside each cubicle.

Administration will conduct a facility audit of all sporting pavilions and will report back to Council the findings of this audit to inform the 2019/20 capital works budget.

Community Objective Criteria – Sportsground Fees and Charges

At the Ordinary Meeting of Council on 17 October 2017, Council endorsed amendments to the Sportsground Seasonal Hire within the Schedule of Fees and Charges 2017/2018. These amendments provided Administration with the opportunity to establish participation and performance targets for sporting clubs that are incentivised through sportsground hire fee rebates. An example of some of the options are provided below:

Community Objective Criteria	Rebate (Up to a maximum of 25%)
Seasonal junior participation increase	5%
Seasonal female participation increase	5%
Seasonal alcohol revenue reduction	5%
Implementation of specific initiatives (i.e. reconciliation, accessibility)	5%
More than 50% of members reside in Vincent (senior clubs only)	5%

Administration has identified that increases in both junior and female participation across the City are key objectives and as such, will provide a 5% rebate for each community objective criteria achieved in an attempt to increase the participation numbers in these two areas. Sporting clubs will be annually assessed to determine the subsidy applicable for each season based upon the provision of financial, membership and other data. The effectiveness of the 'seasonal female participation increase' rebate will be reviewed and the need for any additional incentives through the City's Fees & Charges Schedule will also be further investigated.

Other Key Initiatives

Administration has also identified several other initiatives for investigation and subsequent implementation that may positively impact sports participation by women and girls, including the following:

- Comprehensive review of existing programs and services at both Beatty Park Leisure Centre and Loftus Recreation Centre to reaffirm female friendly options, and where applicable improve such female friendly options;
- Liaise with the Department of Local Government, Sport & Cultural Industries to determine key findings from the recent 'Come Out and Play' project and consider what strategies may be relevant to increase participation by women and girls in informal sport/recreation; and
- Investigate opportunities to attract sporting codes with traditionally high female participation rates to Vincent through infrastructure improvements within the Reserve Master Plans included in the City's Corporate Business Plan 2018/19 to 2021/22 (including Leederville Oval, Woodville Reserve and Britannia Reserve).

CONSULTATION/ADVERTISING:

Nil.

LEGAL/POLICY:

Nil.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS:

Low: Administration is currently compiling and investigating opportunities to increase female participation in sport. Locally and Australia-wide, women and girls are largely under-represented in organised sport participation when compared to males. There is concern that gender bias may be preventing women and girls from receiving the benefits that sport and physical participation can offer. The initiatives identified should assist in closing this gap.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS:

The identified initiatives align with the following actions within the City's *Strategic Community Plan 2013-2023*:

*"3. Community Development and Wellbeing**3.1 Enhance and promote community development and wellbeing**3.1.3 Promote health and wellbeing in the community**3.1.6 Build capacity within the community for individuals and groups to meet their needs and the needs of the broader community*

(a) Build the capacity of individuals and groups within the community to initiate and manage programs and activities that benefit the broader community, such as the establishment of "men's sheds", community gardens, toy libraries and the like".

*4.1.5 Focus on stakeholder needs, values, engagement and involvement."***SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS:**

Nil.

FINANCIAL/BUDGET IMPLICATIONS:

The identified initiatives are included within the 2018/19 operating budget and remain subject to the annual budget process and Administration is currently sourcing external funding opportunities to further assist with the implementation of these strategies.

COMMENTS:

Female participation within the City of Vincent is generally a lot lower than males with 21% senior female participation and 9% junior female participation rates. AusPlay data from July 2016 – June 2017 shows that women and girls are as physically active as men and boys; but less likely to participate in organised sports. In addition to this, barriers to greater women's participation in sports are often social and cultural, including the perception that sport is primarily a 'male' or 'gendered' activity.

The City of Vincent is responsible for promoting and contributing to the health and well-being of the community through the provision of services and facilities at the local level. The City of Vincent owns or manages the majority of sport and recreation facilities within the municipality and has the ability to influence or determine who uses them. Given this, the identified initiatives will greatly assist with increasing the community's awareness of the importance of female participation in sport.

Whilst sport and recreation plays an important role in supporting gender equity, women and girls are also underrepresented in leadership and governance roles within the sporting community. Females should have the same opportunities to lead and participate in our community. Given this, Administration is confident that the implementation of women specific strategies will assist in increase women and girls participation rates within the City.

Administration has identified several strategies which when implemented will greatly assist with increasing female participation rates City-wide with the results being tracked through the Health Checks.

¹ Clearinghouse for Sport (2017), Sports Facility Planning and Use

² Australian Sport Commission (2016), AusPlay: Participation data for the sports sector

³ Moreland Council (2016), Allocation of Sports Grounds and Pavilions Policy

⁴ Marrickville Council (2013), Sportsground Allocation Policy

⁵ Australian Sport Commission (2017), AusPlay: Women and Girls Participation