

# Women's Charter Checklist Tool

## VICTORIAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT WOMEN'S CHARTER CHECKLIST TOOL a resource to chart your Council's progress

The Women's Participation in Local Government Coalition (WPILGC) distributed a checklist in April 2010 to assist local governments implement the Victorian Local Government Women's Charter by developing 3 x 3 Action Plans – 3 actions for each of the 3 principles of the Women's Charter: gender equity, diversity, and active citizenship.

WPILGC requested Councils to endorse the Women's Charter and by February 2011, 49 Councils in Victoria officially endorsed it. Please check the status of your Council and reply to WPILGC **ASAP** with your Council's endorsement.

Many local governments undertook activities and events during the 2010 Year of Women in Local Government. The Women's Participation in Local Government Coalition are keen for information on these activities to be recorded as actions related to women's participation.

THIS IS A TOOL TO ASSIST YOU DEVELOP 3 X 3 ACTION PLANS.

Indicate yes or no to see where your Council is at currently. If there are mainly 'no' in the responses raise this with your Council and suggest actions to focus on.

The 2012 local government elections are not far away. Take action now.

CONTACT: WPILGC Secretariat on 9349 7904 or email [linda@vlga.org.au](mailto:linda@vlga.org.au)

### KEY GENERAL ACTIONS

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| 1. Council adoption of the Victorian Local Government Women's Charter  |  |
| 2. Display the Women's Charter at the civic centre / town hall, libraries, community centres, neighbourhood houses and other Council venues  |  |
| 3. Distribute the Women's Charter to community groups and invitation to comment and feedback on local ideas and priorities for action  |  |
| 4. Appoint Charter Champion(s)   |  |
| 5. Ensure governance and participation matters are prominent on Council's website and newsletters including information encouraging women's leadership, active citizenship and the process for membership of Council committees  |  |
| 6. Utilise the Women's Participation in Local Government Coalition (WPILGC) publications, resources and website and the Australian Local Government Women's Association (ALGWA) National Framework local level strategic proposals in designing Council & community actions to implement the Victorian Local Government Women's Charter. |  |

<b>ACTIONS FOR GENDER EQUITY (Principle 1)</b>	
1. Conduct regular (perhaps annual) Women Matter in Local Democracy workshops encouraging women's leadership and participation in political, civic and community decision-making processes	
2. Plan and host pre-election workshops for women that are scheduled well in advance of the 2012 elections	
3. Publicise and widely distribute existing material for women candidates, eg A Gender Agenda, Now You're A Councillor	
4. Designate a Council committee with responsibility for increasing women's participation or create a Women's Portfolio to be led by a Councillor and resourced / supported by Council Officers	
5. Audit Council policies and funding allocations to identify gender gaps and develop strategies to rectify deficits, eg women's participation in sport	
6. Establish and resource / fund a mentoring program for newly elected women Councillors, senior women Executives and women officers	
7. Offer gender-specific training for Councillors	
8. Review Council policies, and entitlements to ensure they are family and carer friendly	
9. In scheduling Council and committee meetings strive to avoid clashes with peak times for family commitments and ensure high quality child care is available and accessible for Councillors with parental responsibilities	
10. Review women's representation on Council and Council committees and establish annual targets and timelines for achieving gender equity.	
11. OTHER –	
<b>ACTIONS FOR DIVERSITY (Principle 2)</b>	
1. Develop community inclusion and communications policies that invite the participation of and recognise the equal rights of all citizens / community members to participate in public life	
2. Audit political and civic participation according to the LGA demographics profile / atlas and identify gender barriers to participation associated with Indigenous status, ethnicity, disability, age, income or location	
3. Undertake a gender impact analysis and rectify under-funding of women's groups and issues of specific interest to women that could hinder their participation in the life of the community, eg women's sport, children's services, health, community safety, life long learning, violence against women	

<b>ACTIONS FOR DIVERSITY (Principle 2) continued</b>	
4. Establish high level and cross portfolio links with women leaders / representatives of Aboriginal groups and agencies, and women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (CALD) to encourage their participation and their ongoing political and civic action	
5. Invite schools to participate in a Growing Local Democracy program with Councillors and officers visiting schools and students identifying key future issues, including ideas of how to increase diversity in political participation and women's leadership	
6. Ensure women with disabilities have the opportunity to participate on Council and community decision-making bodies by identifying and rectifying any exclusion barriers eg meeting times, lack of child care, expenses, inaccessible venues, transport, lack of aides, etc.	
7. Resource local retired and older women to develop a program and kit for life-long political, civic and community participation	
8. Fund an ongoing and regular Women in Local / Community Leadership program targeting women from diverse backgrounds	
9. Recruit Councillors and senior officers as mentors for women from diverse backgrounds interested in taking on greater roles and civic and political leadership	
10. Establish a funding pool for employment of interpreters and language aides, and the use of Auslan, at civic and community events to encourage participation of women from CALD backgrounds and women with disabilities	
11. OTHER –	
<b>ACTIONS FOR ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP (Principle 3)</b>	
1. Publicise Council support for the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities highlighting Section 18, the right of all persons to take part in public life	
2. Develop a local Charter of Active Citizenship which includes the right of women to participate equally with men in public life	
3. Ensure Council's governance and administrative policies, processes and practices are open and transparent and emphasise the public's right to know so as to encourage the participation of all citizens	
4. Ensure active women citizens have opportunities and resources to participate in the formation, implementation and evaluation of local public policies	

<p><b>ACTIONS FOR ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP (Principle 3)</b> continued</p>	
<p>5. Provide gender specific training for women about active citizenship</p>	
<p>6. Avoid overly bureaucratic processes and procedures and meeting times that create barriers and make it difficult for women to participate</p>	
<p>7. Provide resources and in-kind support that facilitates women's involvement as active citizens eg child care, transport, meeting expenses, photocopying</p>	
<p>8. Publicise and promote the Women's Charter with local groups and invite their input on ideas for Charter implementation</p>	
<p>9. Create an annual award for women in the community who have demonstrated excellent community leadership</p>	
<p>10. Nominate a local active citizen for inclusion on the Victorian Women's Honour Roll and nominate a young women community activist for the Sally Isaac Award in the 2012 Local Government Women's Charter Awards.</p>	
<p>11. OTHER –</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Your Council's activities and events during the 2010 Year of Women in Local Government</b></p>	
Empty space for council activities	

Prepared for WPILGC by Jenny Wills, 2008 inductee onto the Victorian Honour Roll of Women  
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