



Maribyrnong Social Justice Framework 2023-2033

Fair, equal and inclusive Maribyrnong

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge that we are on traditional lands of the Kulin Nation. We offer our respect to the Elders of these traditional lands, and through them to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples past, present and emerging.

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Executive summary

In 2017, the Maribyrnong City Council (Council) endorsed its Human Rights and Social Justice Framework 2017-2021, committing itself to championing and addressing human rights and social justice at a local level.

Council undertook a review of the Framework in 2022, to understand the changing landscape of health inequality, changes to international, national and state policy and opportunities to strengthen its role and responsibilities in upholding human rights and advancing social justice for the Maribyrnong community.

There is a growing inequality across our community, which is reflected nationally. This is in part linked to increased cost of living, as well as growing social, health and economic inequalities, impacting the community disproportionately and exacerbated existing inequalities. This is especially true for significant public health issues, such as climate change, whereby those who have typically made the least contribution to the problem, often have less capacity to respond and are often disproportionately affected by the impacts of climate change.

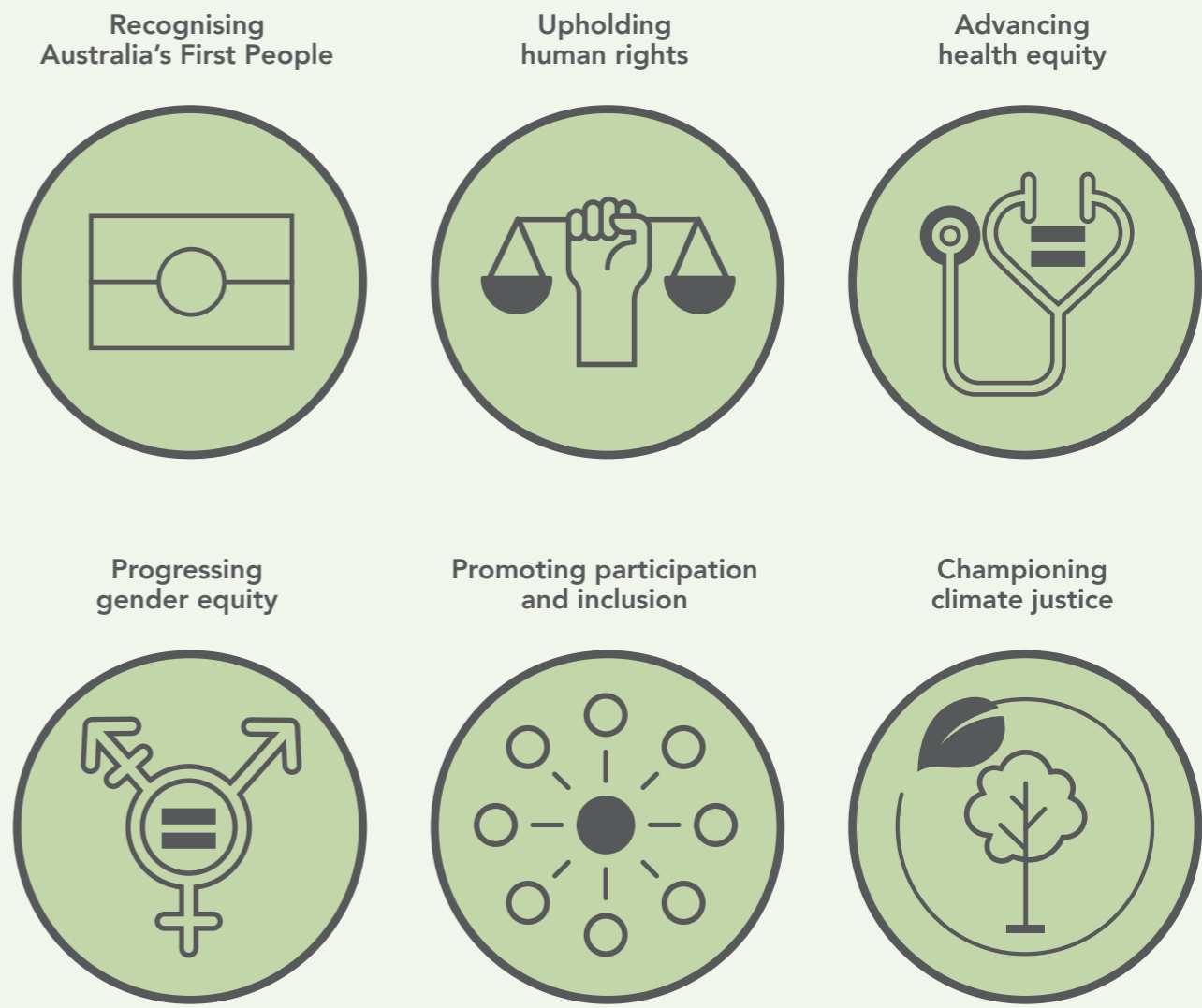
As such equity and fairness is at the centre of Council’s approach to social justice and human rights, and applied to all aspects of Council business to ensure that our processes and decisions do not contribute to further disadvantage or undermine aspirations for equity, diversity, inclusion and resilience.

Under the Equal Opportunity Act, it is unlawful to discriminate based on age, gender, disability, race, sex, intersex status, gender identity and or sexual orientation, among other protected attributes in Australia. Creating an equitable and inclusive community requires more than simply adhering to anti-discrimination laws.

It is important that Council actively embraces opportunities to improve health and wellbeing and reduce inequality for local residents, through advocacy on important issues, taking urgent action to address climate change and the provision of high quality community infrastructure, services and programs.

Human rights and social justice are fundamental to improving health and wellbeing and reducing inequality for local residents.

The Maribyrnong Social Justice Framework 2023-2033 is underpinned by six principles, which guide Council’s efforts in advancing social justice:



Our work to advance social justice will be monitored and reported across three goals, *equity, inclusion and resilience*. We are committed to reporting annually to our community our progress towards a fair, equal and inclusive city.

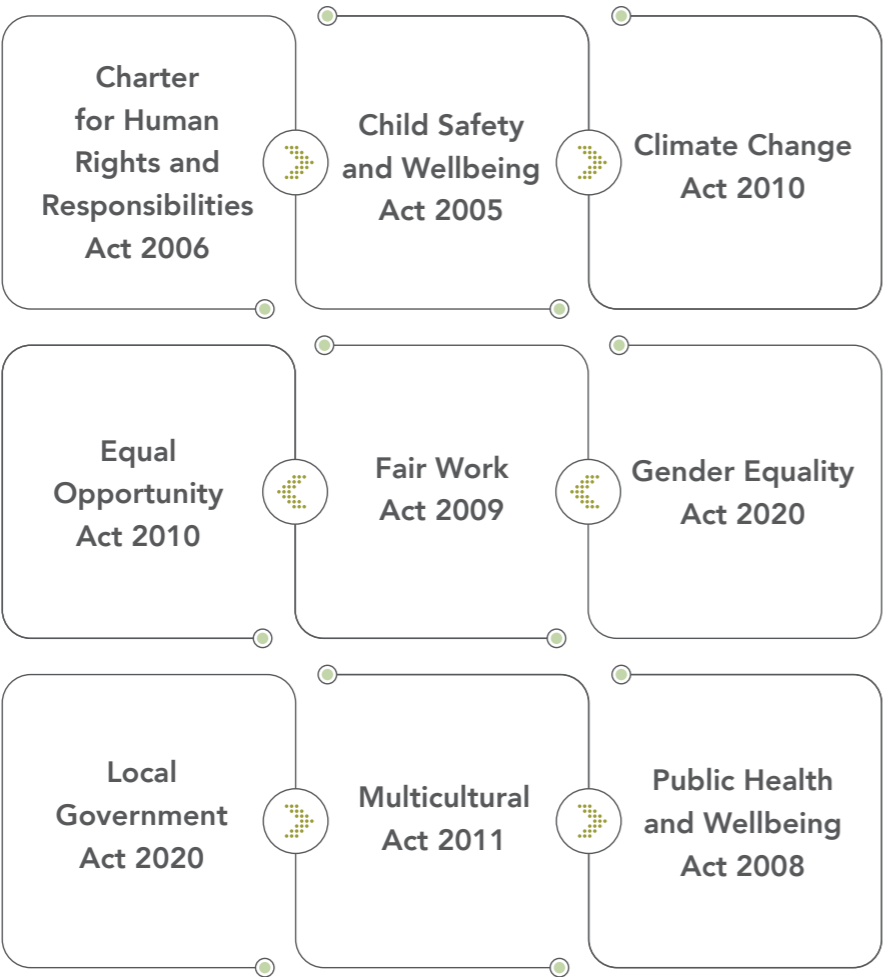
Our approach to social justice

Social justice is the pursuit of equal rights and equal opportunity for all people in our community. Social justice seeks to redress the impact that social, environmental and economic inequalities have on both the people experiencing it and the wider community.

Human rights are the rights that belong to everyone. These rights are recognised as the basic standards required for governments and communities to operate in a respectful and peaceful manner. Our approach to advancing social justice is underpinned by equity, inclusion and human rights.

It is unlawful to discriminate based on age, disability, race, sex, intersex status, gender identity and or and sexual orientation in Australia. Anti-discrimination legislation includes Age Discrimination Act 2004, Disability Discrimination Act 1992, Racial Discrimination Act 1975 and Sex Discrimination Act 1984.

In Victoria, there is key relevant legislation that guides our approach to social justice and human rights, including:



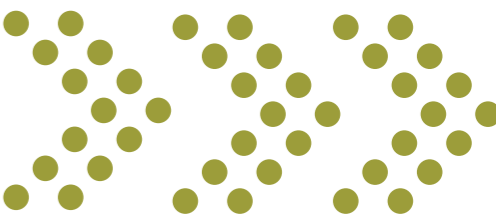
Globally, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals include a focus on economic growth, social inclusion, and environmental protection. Our approach is to support and align with the aspirations of the UN Sustainability Goals.


The Social Justice Framework 2023-2033 (the Framework) provides a foundation for Council’s commitment to protect human rights and promote social justice in the City of Maribyrnong and aligns with the vision, principles and values of the Council Plan 2021-2025 - Strategy 5.1 to support the objective of ‘ethical leadership’ is to: Uphold our obligations to promote and protect human rights by demonstrating strong social responsibility across Council’s operations.

It responds to the Council Plan (incorporating Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan) and provides a framework for progressing equity and inclusion in Maribyrnong.

The Framework espouses Council’s commitment and aspirations for a fair, equal and inclusive community and recognises that groups within our community experience persistent barriers to equal participation.

It uses an intersectional approach, that takes into account the needs and issues of priority communities, to address barriers to inclusion and health equality. It is committed to identified priority groups in our community, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, LGBTIQ+ communities, people living with a disability, children and young people, older people, women, newly arrived, migrant and refugee communities and people experiencing poverty and homelessness.





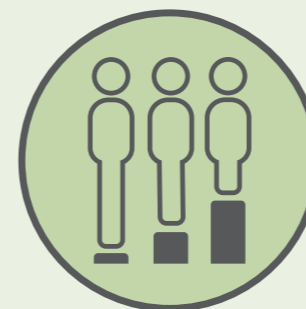
Vision

Maribyrnong aspires to be a fair, equal and inclusive community, where everyone is treated with respect, has access to and benefits from equitable services and experiences, and lives well.

Goals

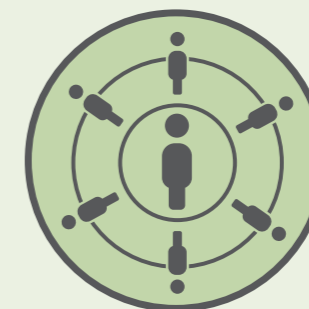
To support our vision of a fair and inclusive community, the Framework has three goals. These goals reflect the role of local government in advancing social justice, community feedback and our Council Plan aspirations for a fair and inclusive community. The goals are supported by measures and outcomes.

Goal 1: Equity



We will build and deliver services, programs, facilities and spaces that are accessible and equitable to our community. Equity is about fairness, acknowledging that individuals do not all have the same access to opportunities and rights. To effectively address these inequities, our approach to advancing social justice should incorporate a focus on redistribution.

Goal 2: Inclusion



We will build an organisation, programs and services that embrace inclusivity, foster and celebrate the diversity within our community. Addressing discrimination, disadvantage and other factors that contribute to barriers to inclusion are integral in advancing social justice.

Goal 3: Resilience



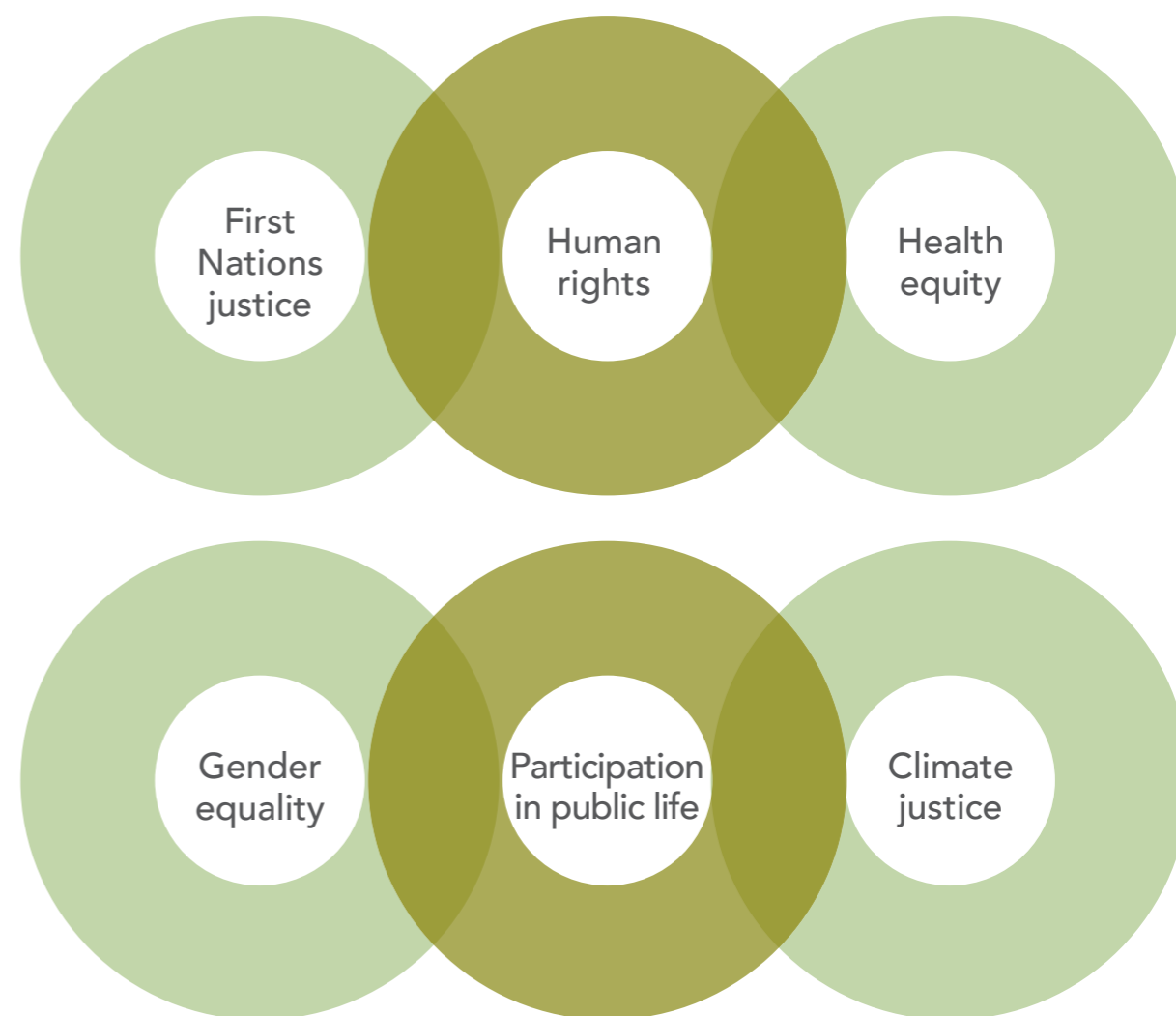
We will work to restore a safe climate at emergency speed to provide maximum protection for people and species and respond to the social and economic impacts of climate change on local communities. Our response to the climate emergency will prioritise fairness and justice. We will work towards empowering and mobilising community action and building community resilience.



Goals	Measures	Outcomes
 <p>Equity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health and Wellbeing Plan impact and outcomes Gender Impact Assessments impact and outcomes 	Equitable access to Council programs and services
 <p>Inclusion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maribyrnong health and wellbeing indicators Service and program level Indicators and data collection Progress against workplace gender equality indicators Council advisory committees 	Inclusive and collaborative partnerships with our local community and stakeholders
 <p>Resilience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Climate Justice Strategy impact and outcomes Health and Wellbeing Plan impact and outcomes 	Resilient community and environment

Guiding principles

Council's commitment to social justice are guided by six principles. The principles are based on best practice approaches to advancing social justice, reflect community feedback and will underpin this work, in order to reach our vision of a fair, equal and inclusive community.



1

Recognising Australia's First People

Council acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People as Australia's First People.

Council acknowledges that we are on traditional lands of the Kulin Nation. We offer our respect to the Elders of these traditional lands the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and the Bunurong peoples, and through them to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples past, present and emerging.

Acknowledging the Traditional Owners of the land and recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities is at the centre of our social justice and human rights work. It provides an important foundation for our commitment to creating a fair, equal and inclusive Maribyrnong.



2

Upholding human rights

Council will uphold human rights for all its community, including people who experience disadvantage, poverty and discrimination.

Council will implement human rights and social justice values across the organisation, this includes meeting key legislative requirements and supporting the implementation of policies, services and programs that promote human rights and social justice.

Council will celebrate the strengths and diversity of its community and does not condone the mistreatment or discrimination of community based on their race, faith, ability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, mental and physical health, and economic status.

3

Advancing health equity

Council will apply an intersectional lens to promote a community that values diversity and ensures that people are not discriminated against regardless of race, faith, ability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, mental and physical health, and economic status.

Council will respond to and advance health and wellbeing outcomes, with recognition that health inequalities exist in our community and that some groups may experience poorer health outcomes based on their identity and experiences.

Council will put equity and fairness at the centre of our approach to social justice and human rights, and apply this to all aspects of Council business, to ensure that our processes and decisions do not contribute to further disadvantage.

Racism, oppression and other forms of discrimination have a significant impact on our health.

The link between disadvantage and poor health is well established. To address these health outcomes, we need to apply a health equity lens to our social justice work.

The social determinants of health helps us to understand the social factors that one does not have control over, yet impacts on health and wellbeing such as gender, income and social status, education, physical environment, social support networks and access to health services.

These factors play a significant role in health inequalities and to redress health inequalities, we need to work on the social determinants of health that influence individuals' and communities' health and wellbeing.

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4

Progressing gender equity

Council will actively work towards progressing gender equitable outcomes for our community, through its longstanding commitment to preventing gender based violence and promoting gender equity. It will provide services and programs that actively address barriers that people face due to gender inequality.

Council will undertake gender equity work with an intersectionality lens that recognises how multiple forms of oppression can compound a person's experience of discrimination.

Its efforts to address gender inequality and violence against women will not be in isolation from work to address racism, poverty and other forms of inequality.

Council will build a city that is safe and inclusive and encourages women, girls and gender diverse community to participate and thrive.

Gender inequality and violence against women are significant human rights and public health issues for our community.

They contribute to poorer health and wellbeing outcomes and significantly diminish our aspiration for a safe and respectful community where people have equitable access and participation regardless of their gender.



5

Promoting participation in public life

Council will actively work to reduce barriers so that all residents can participate in community and access its programs and services regardless of their social, cultural or economic background.

Including high levels of accessibility, meeting the principles of universal design, gender diversity, and child-and aged-friendly design.

Council will encourage civic participation of all its community, through volunteering, arts and culture, lifelong learning, leisure and recreation, social connection, for all family groupings, young people, older adults and community of all abilities.

Council will encourage and support engagement by City of Maribyrnong communities in public life. This includes participation in Council elections, and public consultation through Your City Your Voice on the development and implementation of Council's policies, programs and services.

6

Championing climate justice

Council will champion climate justice and work to address the inequitable health impacts of climate change.

Council will work towards empowering and mobilising community action and building community resilience.

Climate change is now recognised as one of the greatest threats to human rights of our generation, posing a serious risk to the fundamental rights to life, health, food and an adequate standard of living of individuals and communities.



Addressing barriers to inclusion

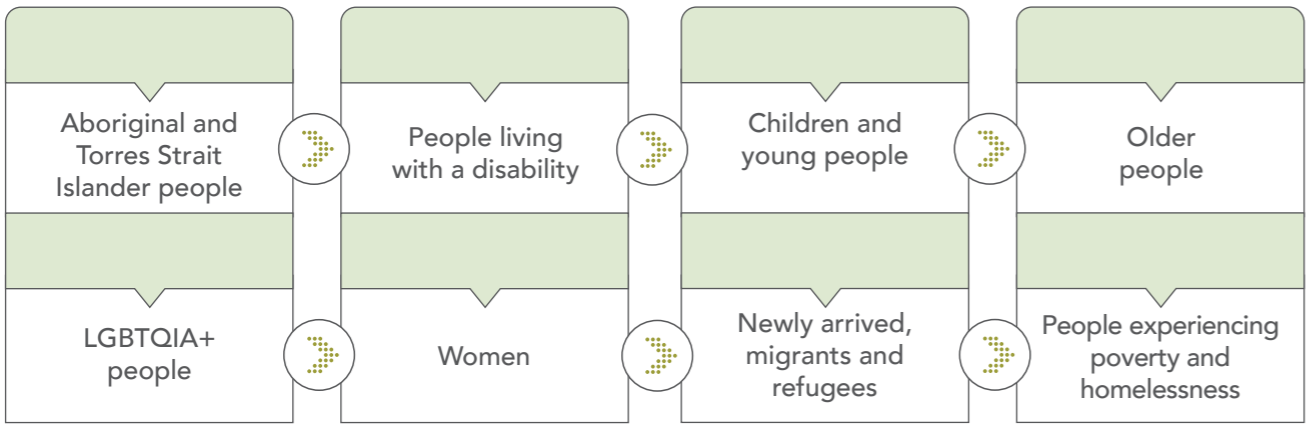
Council’s approach to social justice recognises that barriers to inclusion and health inequalities exist in our community and that some groups may experience poorer health outcomes based on their identity and experiences.

Council is committed to taking an intersectional approach, that takes into account the needs and issues of priority communities. This approach is intended to better understand discrimination, disadvantage and factors that contribute to or cause exclusion in the community.

This is articulated in the Council Plan 2021-2025 (incorporating Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan), Council is committed to promoting and protecting the wellbeing of our community across all life stages. We will achieve this through working to create and improve the physical, social, natural, cultural and economic environments that promote health and wellbeing.

Priority groups in Maribyrnong

In order to create a fair, inclusive and equal community for all, we must also commit to supporting the rights of people and groups that experience discrimination, disadvantage and factors that contribute to or cause exclusion in the community. Council is committed to supporting:



Council is committed to social justice and equity for all and has a vital role to play as a leader, partner, advocate and planner in developing and implementing strategies to protect and promote health, now and into the future.

As the level of government closest to the community, councils have a mandate to create healthy, safe and inclusive environments. This includes recognition of the social determinants of health and how they play a role in health inequality. The determinants of health include gender, income and social status, education, physical environment, social support networks and access to health services (World Health Organisation 2013).

This model states that the context of people’s lives determine their health, and so blaming individuals for having poor health or crediting them for good health is inappropriate. Individuals are unlikely to directly control many of the determinants of health (World Health Organisation 2013).

Council’s role and framework for action

The Social Justice Framework 2023-2033 provides an overarching commitment and investment in addressing inequalities across our community. These commitments to social justice principles will be implemented across all areas of Council business. It will influence policies, strategies, projects and action plans across all four Council directorates.

Council is committed to implementing social justice values across the organisation. This includes meeting key legislative requirements and supporting the implementation of policies, services and programs that promote human rights and social justice.

See appendix two for detailed list of legislation and Council strategies and plans.

The Framework responds to the Council Plan (incorporating Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan) and provides a framework for progressing equity and inclusion in Maribyrnong. It will be referenced and supported in all our key plans, to ensure our commitment to equity, inclusion and human rights is embedded in all aspects of Council business.



Monitoring and reporting

Council is committed to ongoing monitoring, reporting and evaluation of our approach to human rights and social justice. Through the Council Plan Annual Report, Council will publicly report to the community on our progress towards human rights, social justice and wellbeing outcomes.

The 10-year Framework will be reviewed at year five (2028) to ensure that our approach to advancing social justice and upholding human rights continues to be contemporary and reflective of our community.



Appendices

Appendix 1: Key definitions

Social justice	Social justice is the pursuit of equal rights and equal opportunity for all people in our community. Social justice seeks to redress the impact that social, environmental and economic inequalities have on both the people experiencing it and the wider community.
Human rights	<p>Human rights are universal and affirm the inherent right of all people to be treated with respect, equality and dignity.</p> <p>Human rights are the basic freedoms and protections that people are entitled to simply because they are human beings. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) recognises that ‘the inherent dignity of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world’.</p> <p>It declares that human rights are universal – to be enjoyed by all people, no matter who they are or where they live.</p>
Diversity	The differences between people and how they identify, such as cultural and ethnic background, sexuality, age, gender, socioeconomic status, income, education level, occupation, ability, faith, and beliefs.
Equity	Equity is about everyone achieving equal outcomes. We all have the same value and deserve a good life, but we all start from a different place.
Equality	Equality is recognising that, as human beings, we all have the same value. This means, we all have the same rights, we should all receive the same level of respect, and have the same access to opportunities.
Inclusion	Is the process of improving the terms of participation in society through enhancing opportunities, access to resources, voice, and respect for rights.



Appendix 2: Legislation, Council strategies and plans

Key legislation

Charter for Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006

The Charter is a law that sets out the basic rights, freedoms and responsibilities of all people in Victoria. It is about the relationship between government and the people it serves. Public authorities such as Councils, police, hospitals and public schools must consider these rights when making decisions, creating laws, setting policies and providing services.

Gender Equality Act 2020

Under this Act Council is required to prepare and publish a Gender Equality Action Plan every four years. This Action Plan must be grounded in the results of a workplace gender audit and meaningful consultation with employees and other stakeholders and set out strategies and actions to drive measurable progress against seven key workplace gender equality indicators. Under the Act, Council is also required to undertake a Gender Impact Assessment when developing or reviewing any policy, program or service which has a direct and significant impact on the public.

Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008

Under this Act, the function of a Council is to seek to protect, improve and promote public health and wellbeing within the municipal district and to apply the 'precautionary principle' to preventing and controlling public health risk. This includes the development of the Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan.

Local Government Act 2020

The requirements for transparency and accountability outlined in the Act. Section 9 2 (i) (Overarching Principles) of the Act states that the transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

Fair Work Act 2009

Workplace rights the right to engage in industrial activities, the right to be free from unlawful discrimination and the right to be free from undue influence or pressure in negotiating individual arrangements.

Equal Opportunity Act 2010

This Act provides protections from discrimination in public life in Victoria. This includes providing avenues for people to resolve discrimination disputes and outlines the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission's role in helping government, business and the community to identify and eliminate discrimination.

Climate Change Act 2010

This Act recognises that Victoria's climate is changing and introduces a duty that requires local government to consider climate change when developing a public municipal health and wellbeing plan.

Key Council strategies and plans

- Arts and Culture Strategy 2018-2023
- Climate Emergency Strategy and Action Plan 2021-2025
- Community Engagement Policy 2021
- Disability Action Plan 2022-2026
- Food Inequality Action Plan 2022-2024
- Gender Equality Action Plan 2022-2025
- LGBTIQ+ Strategy and Action Plan 2022-2026
- Libraries Plan 2023-2025
- Maribyrnong 2040: Community Plan
- Maribyrnong People and Participation Strategy 2021-2026
- Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan, integrated into the Council Plan 2021-2025
- Strategy for Children, Young People and Their Families 2030
- Towards Gender Equity 2030
- Walking Strategy 2023
- Zero Carbon Council.

Appendix 3: Relevant legislative context

Victorian legislation

- Charter for Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006
- Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition Act 2021
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005
- Climate Change Act 2010
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010
- Fair Work Act 2009
- Gender Equality Act 2020
- Local Government Act 2020
- Multicultural Victoria Act 2011
- Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001
- Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008.

Commonwealth legislation

- Age Discrimination Act 2004
- Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Fair Work Act 2009
- Native Title Act 1993
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984.

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