

2015/16

Greater Shepparton Women's
Charter Alliance Advisory
Committee
2015-2016 Annual Report



WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION
IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT COALITION
STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES
THROUGH WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION



GREATER
SHEPPARTON

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Background

The Women's Charter was first launched by the Women's Participation in Local Government Coalition in 1996. The Charter's three principles of Gender Equity, Diversity and Active Citizenship are now supported by more than 60 local governments.

Greater Shepparton City Council officially endorsed its commitment to the Women's Charter in 2010 and an action plan followed. In 2011 an advisory committee was initiated and commenced with its first meeting being held on the 4th November 2011. The Committee was officially endorsed by Council on the 21st February 2012, and is known as the Greater Shepparton Women's Charter Alliance Advisory Committee (GSWCAAC).

FAST FACT

The GSWCAAC is an Advisory Committee of Council under the Local Government Act.

The GSWCAAC is made up of community representatives and Council Officers who volunteer their time and is supported by Greater Shepparton City Council.

The GSWCAAC can be found on the Greater Shepparton City Council website at <http://greater-shepparton.com.au/wcaac> .

Aim

The aim of the GSWCAAC is to support and promote women in leadership roles and all levels of decision-making, including business or workplace positions, community groups or boards of management.

All of the GSWCAAC's work is based around the three principles of Gender Equity, Diversity, and Active Citizenship.

The three principles

Gender equity: That women and men have an equal right to be representatives in local governments, committees and decision-making positions.

Diversity: The inclusion of different experiences and perspectives in local governments and community decision-making strengthens local democratic governance and helps build cohesive communities. Councils and communities encourage and welcome the participation of all women.

Active citizenship: Local governments will work with the community to increase the numbers and participation of women in public life, so that decision-making more clearly represents and reflects the interests and demographics of communities.

Accessibility

The GSWCAAC prides itself on being accessible to all. Examples of how this occurs include:

- Ensuring all venues used for events are accessible and have accessible toilets and parking
- Providing hearing loops at events, if needed
- Providing interpreters for the deaf where required
- Catering to dietary requirements at events when notified, such as gluten free and vegetarian
- Providing its nomination forms in another language, where requested
- Providing resources regarding topics of interest to women in other languages
- Ensuring events are free, where possible

2015/2016 Membership

FAST FACT

For the first time in its history, in 2015/16, the GSWCAAC reached membership capacity (20 members).

Reaching membership capacity is an indication of the reputation the GSWCAAC has built through its activities, events, and partnerships.



Above: Some of the members of the Greater Shepparton Women's Charter Alliance Advisory Committee. From left: Michelle Bertoli, Betul Tuna, Patricia Moran, Seema Abdullah, Sonali Jayasundera, Charlene Norton, Emma Hofmeyer (Support Person), Fran Smullen, Kelly McPherson, and Kate Montgomery.

The GSWCAAC's profile has been raised considerably, and the committee now has a solid reputation for promoting women's participation.

This good standing in the community is also reflected in the growing number of 'Friends' the GSWCAAC now has. 'Friends' of the GSWCAAC sign up to the GSWCAAC email list and receive notifications of upcoming events, consultations, and other general information.

FAST FACT

The GSWCAAC has 206 Friends.

The GSWCAAC currently has two year memberships, and also has the ability to co-opt members for a short period of time in order to utilise outside expertise. The 2015/16 financial year was the first time the GSWCAAC utilised the co-option opportunity. During this time a community member co-opted to assist with the planning of the 'Love Marriage in Kabul' movie event, the Forced Marriage Forum, the International Women's Day 2016 event, and the Action Plan review. A second community member was accepted to co-opt late in the financial year.

The Council endorsed GSWCAAC membership for 2015/2016 included:

- One Council Charter Champion – Councillor Dinny Adem
- Four endorsed Council members
- Fifteen endorsed community members
- One Council appointed Support Person
- Two co-opted members

It should be noted the Support Person and Friends do not have voting rights. A list of members can be found at Appendix one.

The GSWCAAC Terms of Reference currently allow for up to 15 community members, and up to five Members who are also Council staff, though a motion was moved at the May 2016 meeting to enable more flexibility in case members become employed by Council, or leave Council employment.

In the 2015/2016 financial year the GSWCAAC:

- Received six applications for membership, all of which are yet to be endorsed.¹
- Received four resignations
- Received three co-option applications

FAST FACT

Greater Shepparton City Council Mayor Councillor Dinny Adem is the GSWCAAC Charter Champion in 2015/2016.

Meetings

The GSWCAAC met on a monthly basis throughout 2015/2016 with the exception of December. A special meeting was also held on 10 September 2015 to discuss planning for the Action Plan review.

Administrative activities

In previous years the GSWCAAC has worked very hard to revise and streamline their administrative processes and procedures.

In 2015/16 the GSWCAAC continued to see the benefits of this streamlining, which has contributed to the committee membership reaching capacity and an increase in friends, and strengthened the 'brand' presence and reputation of the GSWCAAC within the community.

Further improvements to the administrative functions of the GSWCAAC include:

- A review of the GSWCAAC Award process, with the creation of new guidelines, and judging criteria

¹ These applications were received as part of the annual membership drive held in April/May. These memberships will be presented to Council for endorsement in July, as per the Terms of Reference.

- Commencing a comprehensive review of the GSWCAAC's 3x3 action plan. This process has included community consultation and provided an opportunity for the actions the GSWCAAC can deliver to be reviewed in line with the capacity available.
- A scheduled review of the Terms of Reference (currently underway).
- Provision of a greater scope for members to undertake tasks associated with the activities of the GSWCAAC
- Obtaining feedback about activities undertaken

FAST FACT

Event evaluations are undertaken for all events in which the GSWCAAC is the lead organiser.

Sub-Committees

The GSWCAAC Terms of Reference allows for the establishment of sub-committees to work on specific tasks. A sub-committee can consist of some of the members of the GSWCAAC, as well as members of the community who may have been co-opted for their special skills and/or expertise. Sub-committees bring value to the work of the GSWCAAC as they allow members to join projects they can add value to and are passionate about, as well as enabling members to learn new skills.

In the 2015/16 financial year the GSWCAAC had the following sub-committees:

- Malala Day sub-committee
- Forced Marriage Forum sub-committee
- GSWCAAC Award sub-committee
- International Women's Day sub-committee
- Membership sub-committee
- Terms of Reference Sub-Committee

2016 LGPro Award for Excellence in Organisational Diversity - winner

In 2016 Council nominated the GSWCAAC for the LGPro (Local Government Professionals) Award for Excellence in Organisational Diversity. Council and the GSWCAAC were extremely honoured to receive the award.

Right: *The LGPro Award for Excellence in Organisational Diversity.*



LGPro is the member association for local government professionals in Victoria.

LGPro provides the Awards for Excellence on a yearly basis to promote and celebrate the work of individuals and teams working within the local government sector.

The description and judging criteria of the Excellence in Organisational Diversity Award is as follows:

“How Councils encourage, acknowledge, support and celebrate diversity and inclusion in their own workplaces.

Judging criteria:

- Demonstrated commitment to diversity
- Ability to celebrate and capitalise on the contribution of people with diverse backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives
- Acting as a role model for diversity
- Benefit to the broader community.”²

The award nomination highlighted the GSWCAAC’s commitment to diversity (one of the three charter principles), and acknowledged the growing reach of the GSWCAAC. For example, in the year in which the award was judged the GSWCAAC:

- Reached 513 people through its events
- Reached member capacity
- Increased the Friends to 174 people
- Had 257 people respond to surveys on the three principles of Diversity, Gender Equity, and Active Citizenship.
- Partnered with more than 10 organisations

The GSWCAAC’s work in highlighting the difficulties faced by refugees, as well as the important topics of forced marriage and sexual harassment, helps to create awareness amongst the community of the difficulties faced by others. This awareness in turn fosters respect and empathy and leads to a more embracing and inclusive community.

Please see appendix two for a copy of the page from the LGPro – 2016 Awards and Recognition Year Book, and for a copy of a congratulatory letter received from Suzanna Sheed MP, Member for Shepparton.

For more information about LGPro please visit <http://lgpro.com/>.

² LGPro 2016 Awards and Recognition Year Book, page 45.



Above: The Greater Shepparton City Council was honoured to receive the 2016 LGPro Award for Excellence in Organisation Diversity for its work with the GSWCAAC. From left: Kate Montgomery - Team Leader Community Strengthening, Emma Hofmeyer – GSWCAAC Support Officer, Terri Cowley – GSWCAAC Member, and Amanda Tingay – Manager Neighbourhoods.

Events

In 2015/2016 the GSWCAAC (and its partners) held the following events:

- Malala Day – ‘Love Marriage in Kabul’ movie event – 14 July 2015
- Better Money Management: Financial Workshop for Regional Women – 8 September 2015
- Forced Marriage Forum – 25 November 2015
- International Women’s Day – 8 March 2016

The GSWCAAC also partnered with La Trobe University for the Women in Leadership Forum held on 29 October 2015, with the Victorian Local Governance Association for the GoWomenLG 2016 Local Government Forum (with Council’s Governance Department) held on 11 May 2016, and with Council for an event for Refugee Week.

The GSWCAAC believes events such as these are a great way to reach a variety of audiences, provide information, knowledge, resources and strengthen community ties. They are also a way of gaining new members, and provide an opportunity for consultation.

An indication of the growing esteem in which the wider community holds the GSWCAAC is the ability for the GSWCAAC to partner with other organisations – some of whom have approached the GSWCAAC.

The GSWCAAC has made a conscious decision to provide resources specifically for women at its events. Examples of resources provided at events in 2015/16 include:

- Know the Line sexual harassment resources
- Breastfeeding resources
- Forced marriage resources.

Malala Day – Love Marriage in Kabul movie event

On Tuesday 14 July 2015 the GSWCAAC held an event to highlight the significance of Malala Day and educate the wider community on the meaning of this day. The GSWCAAC felt holding an event on Malala Day would increase the broader awareness of women's and girl's rights and struggles encountered in a more global context.

Malala Day is named after Malala Yousafzai, a young Pakistani activist who advocates for universal education and girl's rights.

Malala was targeted because of her activism, and in October 2012 - at fifteen years of age - the Taliban boarded her school bus and shot her and two other girls.

Not only did Malala survive this horrific attack, she was not deterred from her advocacy for the rights of children everywhere to have universal access to education.

Malala said: "I had two options. One was to remain silent and wait to be killed. And the second was to speak up and then be killed. I chose the second one. I decided to speak up."³

A brief video about Malala can be viewed here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZrXVLN1kTtE>

To signify Malala Day the GSWCAAC decided to screen a movie entitled 'Love Marriage in Kabul'. The movie highlights the gender inequity that exists in a global context, and it is a documentary about arranged and forced marriages in Afghanistan. The official trailer for the movie can be viewed here: <http://lovemarriageinkabul.com/>.

The movie was screened at a time when Australian laws had changed to reflect the serious nature of the crime of forced marriage. The GSWCAAC followed this event with 'Forced Marriage Forum' for professionals in September 2015.

Love Marriage in Kabul was screened at the Harder Auditorium, Goulburn Ovens TAFE, Fryers Street, Shepparton.

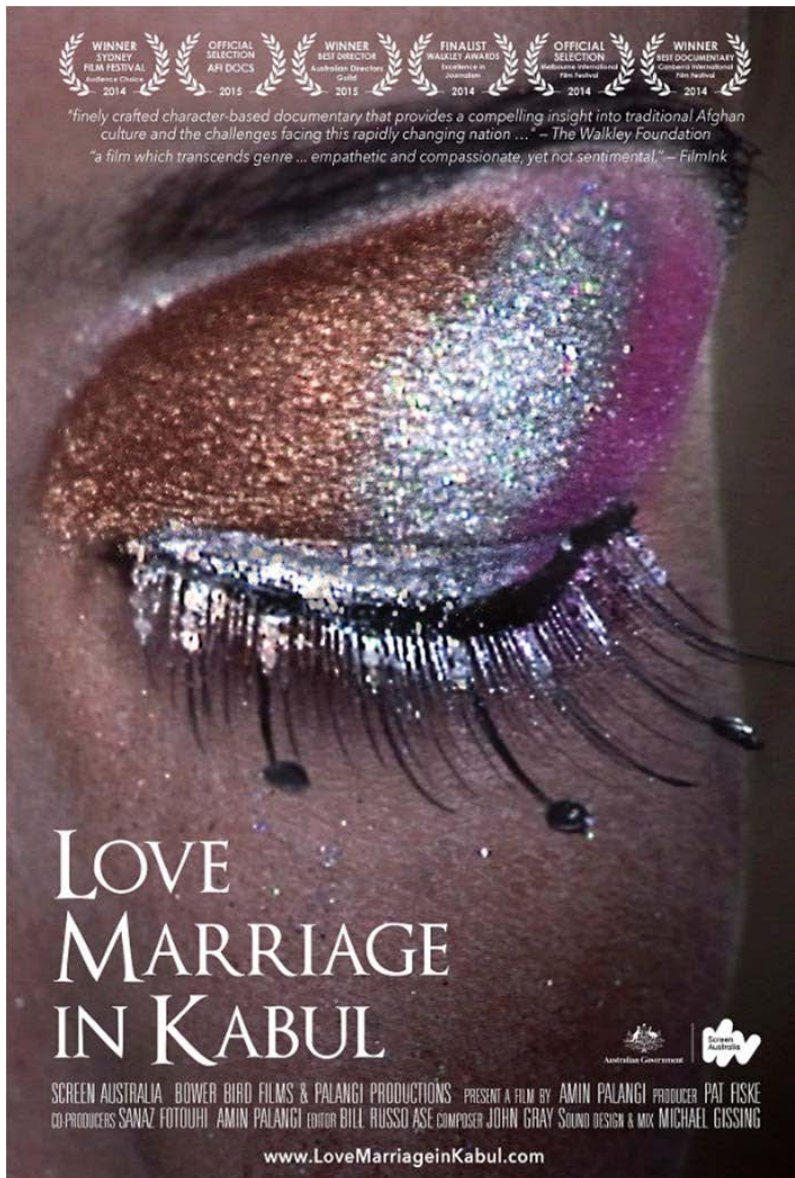
The screening was supported and funded by the Council, GOTAFE, the Ethnic Council of Shepparton and District, and the Shepparton Interfaith Network.

Approximately 140 people attended the event. The event was free.

A full evaluation (M15/49950) of the event is available on the Greater Shepparton City Council website

at: <http://greatershepparton.com.au/assets/files/documents/community/neighbourhoods/Womens Charter Alliance/Love Marriage in Kabul - Malala Day 2015 event Evaluation.pdf>.

³ Malala Yousafzai, Nobel Lecture Peace Prize 2014. Accessed 7 July 2015 from http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/2014/yousafzai-lecture_en.html



Above: *The official movie poster for the documentary 'Love Marriage in Kabul'.*

Better Money Management: Financial Workshop for Regional Women

In 2015 the GSWCAAC became aware of an opportunity to apply to 10thousandgirl to host one of 16 regional Australian financial literacy workshops in Shepparton. The GSWCAAC applied as financial illiteracy in women was identified (in consultation undertaken by the GSWCAAC) as one of the barriers to gender equity. As Gender Equity is one of the GSWCAAC's guiding principles, this was a perfect opportunity.

The GSWCAAC's application was successful, and on Tuesday 8 September 2015 10thousandgirl and the GSWCAAC held its 'Better Money Management: Financial Workshop for Regional Women'.

The intent of the workshop was to:

- Give women an understanding of the basic asset classes - cash, shares, property
- Give women an overview of reducing risk, diversification, and dollar cost averaging
- Provide ways to build women's financial nest eggs
- Allow women to document clear life and financial goals and work on a practical, personal long term plan and action chart for the next 12 months

- Provide women with the tools to lay solid financial foundations
Help women understand where to go for more information and further development

The afternoon session of the workshop featured a panel of local financial experts who were on hand to answer questions on money matters. The local panellists were:

- Roger Matthews: Branch Manager, Rabobank Shepparton
- Tracey Sofra: CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER® , Sofcorp Financial Services
- Lesley Hart: Director, Dawes & Vary Riordan Lawyers
- Bernadette McKenzie: Business Services Consultant, Belmores
- John Leitch: HESTA Member Education Manager, NSW Regional

10thousandgirl is a not for profit organisation started by a group of women in a Sydney pub in 2009. In March 2011 the campaign formally established a board of directors, laid governance in place and has grown to educate 1000's of women across Australia every year with the initiative attracting national and more recently global recognition in their bid to contribute to increasing the wellbeing and economic health of women.

Further information about 10thousandgirl can be found at: <http://10thousandgirl.com/>

The workshop was held at La Trobe University Shepparton.

Approximately 46 people attended the event. The event was free.

A full evaluation (M15/65493) of the event is available on the Greater Shepparton City Council website

at: [http://greatershepparton.com.au/assets/files/documents/community/neighbourhoods/Womens Charter Alliance/Better Money Management evaluation.pdf](http://greatershepparton.com.au/assets/files/documents/community/neighbourhoods/Womens_Charter_Alliance/Better_Money_Management_evaluation.pdf) .

Forced Marriage Forum for professionals

On Wednesday 25 November 2015 the GSWCAAC and its partners held a forum for professionals on forced marriage.

The GSWCAAC decided to hold this forum as forced marriage is an issue that affects women throughout the world. Holding a forum on forced marriage is in line with the GSWCAAC 'Charter Principal' of gender equity, as forced marriage is a gender equity issue.

The Forced Marriage Forum was the second of two events initiated by the GSWCAAC to open conversations about forced marriage. The first event was a free screening of the movie 'Love Marriage in Kabul', which was held on Malala Day – 14 July 2015.

The forum was not open to the general public, as the GSWCCAC recognised that providing frontline workers with relevant information was the most important place to start.

Three guest speakers spoke on the topic of forced marriage, and then took questions from the audience. The guest speakers were:

- Hanna Kopel, Case Worker from the Trafficking and Forced Marriage program at the Red Cross
- Melba Marginson, Executive Director of the Victorian Immigrant and Refugee Women's Coalition

- Bernadette Marantelli from the Centre for Multicultural Youth

It was also important to the GSWCAAC that they ensured the right partners were involved in this forum. Those partners were:

- Greater Shepparton City Council
- The Shepparton Interfaith Network
- GOTAFE (Goulburn Ovens Institute of TAFE)
- The Ethnic Council of Shepparton and District
- Goulburn Murray Social Workers Group
- Family Violence Prevention Network

The Forced Marriage Forum was held at the Shepparton Senior Citizens Centre.

Approximately 43 people attended the forum. The forum was provided free of charge.

A full evaluation (M15/72676) can be found on the Greater Shepparton City Council website at: http://greater-shepparton.com.au/assets/files/documents/community/neighbourhoods/Womens_Charter_Alliance/Forced_Marriage_Forum_2015_-_Event_Evaluation_-_Final.PDF .

International Women's Day

Each year, the GSWCAAC holds an event to celebrate and signify International Women's Day. International Women's Day is a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women⁴ and is held on 8 March each year.

The 2016 GSWCAAC International Women's Day event was the best attended in the GSWCAAC's history – with approximately 220 people in attendance.

The International Women's Day event was held on Tuesday 8 March at the St Paul's African House in Poplar Avenue Shepparton.

The event was opened with live music provided by young musician and singer Jorja Bromley. People were given an opportunity to mingle and enjoy the delicious Turkish food on offer.

Following this five guest speakers spoke of their 'Stories of Prejudice and Pride'. The guest speakers were:

- Elaine Cooney, Journalist
- Natarsha Bamblett, Dancer and young Aboriginal woman
- Seema Abdullah, GSWCAAC member
- Jeanette Collinson, local Enabling Women Leadership Graduate
- Dr Leslie Cannold, Ethicist, researcher, educator, and public presenter on values driven leadership, gender equity, and respectful relationships

The event was facilitated by local business woman Fiona Smolenaars.

⁴ International Women's Day website: <http://www.internationalwomensday.com/Resources> Accessed 15/3/2016.



Above: The guest speakers at the 2016 International Women's Day event. From left: Elaine Cooney, Jeanette Collinson, Seema Abdullah, Fiona Smolenaars (Facilitator/MC), Dr Leslie Cannold, and Natarsha Bamblett.

Natarsha Bamblett's Individual Spirits Dance Crew also performed.



Above: The Individual Spirits Dance Crew performed at International Women's Day.

Some of the photos from the #SuperWomanPose campaign were shown on the evening.

The International Women's Day event was provided free of charge, and was delivered in partnership with the following organisations:

- Greater Shepparton City Council
- GV Fancy Dress
- Innovative Outcomes (Fiona Smolenaars)
- Ethnic Council of Shepparton and District Inc.
- Primary Care Connect
- Kildonan UnitingCare

- Shepparton Festival

It is important to note that in 2016 no paid advertising was needed for the International Women's Day event. GSWCAAC networks and word of mouth was all that was required to obtain an audience of 220 people. This is a reflection of the growing reach of the GSWCAAC.

A full evaluation (M16/21032) can be found on the Greater Shepparton City Council website at: <http://greatershepparton.com.au/assets/files/documents/community/neighbourhoods/Womens Charter Alliance/International Womens Day 2016 - Event Evaluation.PDF> .

#SuperWomenPose Campaign

In 2015 the Greater Shepparton Women's Charter Alliance Advisory Committee (GSWCAAC) became aware of research that indicated posing like a superhero can be beneficial for health and self-esteem.

The Harvard research (Amy J.C. Cuddy, Caroline A. Wilmuth, and Dana R. Carney) showed *"...that if you pose like a superhero – in a strong, open stance with fists on your hips for just 2 minutes – there are actually measurable positive effects. Your power hormone testosterone rises by 8% and your stress hormone cortisol drops by 25%. And lastly, the research also showed that if you pose like a superhero for just 2 minutes you are more likely to take a risk."*⁵

The GSWCAAC decided it would be a great to inspire women to stand like a superhero and devised a #SuperWomanPose campaign in the lead up to International Women's Day. The #SuperWomanPose campaign encouraged people to upload a picture of themselves standing like a super hero to the hashtag. Some of the results of the campaign can be viewed at: <http://websta.me/tag/superwomanpose> . Please note this is a public hashtag so not all the pictures are from the GSWCAAC campaign.

The GSWCAAC launched this campaign on Friday 18 December at the Maude Street Mall in Shepparton. Some of the GSWCAAC members dressed as super heroes to create interest in the campaign.

Below: *Members of the GSWCAAC launching the #SuperWomenPose campaign. From left: Super Woman Jo Fasano, Fran Smullen, Bat Woman Kate Montgomery, Melinda Weston (friend), Mayor Dinny Adem, Seema Abdullah, Xena Warrior Princess Jean Young, Suzanne Wallis, Wonder Woman Emma Hofmeyer (Support Person), and Leanne Raditsas.*

⁵ Women You Should Know website: http://www.womenyoushouldknow.net/his-tedx-talk-inspired-us-to-get-women-and-girls-to-poselikeasuperhero/?utm_content=bufferd0632&utm_medium=social&utm_source=linkedin.com&utm_campaign=buffer Accessed 15/3/2016.



The results of the #SuperWomanPose campaign were shown in a slide show presentation at the International Women's Day event. The slideshow can be viewed by clicking on the icon below.



SuperWomanPose
International Women:

FAST FACT

Approximately 449 people attended GSWCAAC led events
in the 2015/16 financial year

Partnership events

In the 2015/16 financial year, the GSWCAAC was also involved in events in which they took a secondary role. A snapshot of these events is provided below.

Women in Leadership Forum – La Trobe University

The GSWCAAC was approached by La Trobe University in Shepparton to support them in delivering their 'Women in Leadership Forum'.

The Women in Leadership Forum was held at Eastbank in Shepparton on Thursday 29 October 2015.

The forum was chaired by Professor Amalia Di Iorio, La Trobe University's Associate Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic Partnerships), and featured a panel of industry leaders. The topic of the forum was the importance of self-belief for women at work.

The GSWCAAC was pleased to provide support in the form of promoting the event through their extensive networks.

GoWomenLG 2016 Local Government Forum

In 2015 the Greater Shepparton City Council, with the assistance of the GSWCAAC, was successful in their application to host a GoWomenLG 2016 Local Government Forum.

GoWomenLG 2016 is an initiative of the Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA) designed to encourage women from all backgrounds to stand for election to local government.

The Greater Shepparton City Council hosted this event on Wednesday 11 May 2016 in Shepparton.

Former Councillor and State Member for Shepparton Jeanette Powell facilitated the event which included speakers who shared their insights into local government and standing for election. The speakers were:

- Cr Colleen Furlanetto (Mayor, Strathbogie Shire)
- Cr Marie Martin (Moirra Shire)
- Cr Carol Howell (Campaspe Shire)



Above: Women shared their knowledge of standing for, and serving in, local government. Back, from left: Councillor Carol Howell (Campaspe Shire), Linda Bennett (Women's Policy Officer, Victorian Local Governance Association), Councillor Marie Martin (Moirra Shire), and Jeanette Powell (MC and former Councillor and State Member of Parliament). Front: Councillor Colleen Furlanetto (Mayor, Strathbogie Shire).

Approximately 31 people (including the guest speakers) attended.

The GSWCAAC assisted by sharing the invitation with their networks, providing administrative support, and with assistance at the event.

Three members of the GSWCAAC - Fran Smullen, Terri Cowley, and Leanne Raditsas - attended the launch of the GoWomenLG 2016 campaign in Melbourne on 19 November 2015.

Further information about GoWomenLG can be found at: <http://gowomenlg.org.au/>

An evaluation of the Local Government Forum will soon be available on the Council's website at: <http://greaterShepparton.com.au/community/neighbourhoods/wcaac> .

Refugee Week – Desert Flower

On 23 June 2016 the Greater Shepparton City Council, via the Council's Cultural Development Officer, delivered a free screening of the movie 'Desert Flower'.

Below: The poster promoting the free Refugee Week screening of 'Desert Flower'.



Based on the bestselling novel by WARIS DIRIE and CATHLEEN MILLER

desert flower

Free Movie Night

This Refugee Week event is proudly sponsored by Greater Shepparton Women's Charter Alliance Advisory Committee

Do you think you would have the courage to flee your homeland?

This movie is the autobiography of Waris Dirie a Somali nomad that was cut when she was 3, sold in marriage at 13 and then fled Africa to later become an American Supermodel and UN spokeswoman against Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Khadija Gbla was born in Sierra Leone, came to Australia as a refugee when she was 13 and is a survivor of FGM. Khadija will talk about being born a girl in the wrong place and her experience. Khadija will take the time to answer any questions as well.


THURSDAY 23 JUNE 2016

VILLAGE CINEMA – 9-13 STEWART ST, SHEPPARTON

FROM 5:15pm - CATERING PROVIDED AFTER MOVIE WITH THE Q&A


RSVP – <http://desertflowermovie.eventbrite.com.au> or

Charlene on (03) 5832 9527 or CommunityAdmin@shepparton.vic.gov.au

 **ETHNIC COUNCIL OF SHEPPARTON AND DISTRICT Inc.**
Reg. No. A6321

 **NO FGM AUSTRALIA**
PROTECTING GIRLS
EMPOWERING SURVIVORS

 Refugee Week

Desert Flower is the autobiography of Waris Dirie a Somali nomad that was cut when she was three, sold in marriage at 13 and then fled Africa to later become an American Supermodel and UN spokeswoman against Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).

The trailer for Desert Flower can be viewed here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TCpXLQTQepo>

After the movie FGM survivor Khadija Gbla spoke. Khadija Gbla was born in Sierra Leone, came to Australia as a refugee when she was 13 and is a survivor of FGM. Khadija spoke about being born a girl in the wrong place and her experience. Khadija also took the time to answer questions.

This event was in partnership with The Ethnic Council of Shepparton and District Inc., No FGM Australia, and the GSWCAAC. The GSWCAAC provided \$3,353 from their budget to enable this event to proceed.

The movie was screened at the Village Cinema in Shepparton, and approximately 170 people attended.

Catering was provided by the Filipino Friends Association.

“Excellent and thought provoking movie. The guest speaker is inspirational. Congratulations to the organisers for providing this educational opportunity to the community. I am very grateful I was able to attend.” Feedback from an audience member.

Terms of Reference review

In 2014 the GSWCAAC reviewed their Terms of Reference. The Terms of Reference are able to be reviewed at any time by the GSWCAAC, or at each two year period.

In May/June 2016 the GSWCAAC again revisited their Terms of Reference and made changes to better reflect the growth experienced by the GSWCAAC over the past few years.

The Terms of Reference will be finalised and will go to Council for endorsement early in the 2016/17 financial year.

Consultation activities/3x3 Action Plan review

The GSWCAAC is keen to ensure its actions are informed by community consultation. As a result, in the first half of 2015 the GSWCAAC began a review of its 3x3 Action Plan that commenced with community consultation surveys to gain insight to the expectations of the Greater Shepparton community.

The 3x3 Action Plan focuses on the three principles of the Women’s Charter: Gender Equity, Diversity, and Active Citizenship, and is intended to guide the activities of the GSWCAAC.

The review of the 3 x 3 Action Plan also consisted of a revision of literature available on the three principles.

A survey on each of the principles was then devised and opened for community consultation.

FAST FACT

257 people responded to the GSWCAAC surveys.

The results of the surveys were then reviewed by the GSWCAAC and, at a special meeting in September 2015, the GSWCAAC utilised these results to inform the formation of the draft 3 x 3 Action Plan.

The draft 3 x 3 Action Plan identified that there are numerous opportunities for the GSWCAAC to undertake initiatives that support women and the Charter principles. As the opportunities exceeded the current resourcing and capacity of the committee the draft plan was taken to management within Council for a decision on how to proceed forward. Council leaders continue to

appreciate the activities and passion of the committee on all its endeavours and confirms its ongoing commitment to support the GSWCAAC.

However the organisation has identified that there are no current opportunities to increase the resource support for the GSWCAAC and acknowledges that the scope of the activities delivered by the GSWCAAC will need to be re-prioritised and reduced to meet the capacity of the GSWCAAC to work within the delegated support it has. This will mean the focus will need to be on the delivery of 3-4 initiatives throughout the year.

The GSWCAAC is currently working to finalise the 3 x 3 Draft Action Plan.

GSWCAAC Award

The GSWCAAC allocates an award to an outstanding individual or community group on an annual basis.

In 2015 the GSWCAAC decided they wanted to revisit the way in which the award is allocated. With this in mind, a GSWCAAC Award Sub-Committee was formed. The Sub-Committee looked at the way in which the award had been allocated in previous years, and decided to create official guidelines.

This resulted in a more rigorous GSWCAAC Award policy, application form, and the creation of judging criteria.

Traditionally this award is presented to the recipient at the International Women's Day Breakfast held by Soroptimists International Shepparton Inc. The GSWCAAC wanted to enshrine this relationship with the Soroptimists in a formal way, and a Memorandum of Understanding was created.

The GSWCAAC annual award recognises an individual or group who has made a difference to women and the community. The GSWCAAC award is about acknowledging any individual or group whose actions impact upon women within the Greater Shepparton area in a positive way.

Nominations were judged using the following criteria:

- How the nominee made a difference to the community, particularly within the Greater Shepparton area
- How the nominee has acknowledged and embraced diversity
- How the nominee inspired and encouraged women

FAST FACT

The 2016 GSWCAAC Award recipient was Tracey Sofra.

Tracey was chosen as the recipient of the GSWCAAC award due to her commitment to community work.

Tracey has over 25 years' experience in financial planning and accounting, specialising in women's financial issues. In addition to her businesses, Tracey works tirelessly in her community by educating the locals on financial literacy through pro-bono work, sponsoring scholarships for young women who have experienced financial hardship, and developing networking events to bring together like-minded businesswomen (WOW Women).



Above: Tracey Sofra was the 2016 GSWCAAC Award recipient. Tracey is pictured here with Charter Champion, Mayor Dinny Adem.

Scholarships

In the 2015/16 financial year the GSWCAAC worked to provide opportunities for women in the community. In order to do this the GSWCAAC provided tickets for two women to attend the WOW Women event held on Sunday 5 June 2016, and also partnered with 10thousandgirl to enable nine women to participate in the '6 Week Money Makeover Program'.

WOW Women

In May 2016 the GSWCAAC voted to purchase two tickets to the WOW Women 'Empower, Inspire, Succeed' event held in Shepparton on Sunday 5 June 2016. The tickets were valued at \$149 each.

It was the aim of the GSWCAAC that two women who may not normally attend such an event be given the opportunity to do so.

The GSWCAAC then called for Expressions of Interest (EOI) from GSWCAAC Members and Friends.

The two successful EOI were from Denise Martin and Wendy Matthews, both of whom outlined their involvement with the activities of the GSWCAAC.

Wendy Matthews kindly provided the following feedback regarding her attendance at the WOW Women event:

“Thank you most sincerely for providing the opportunity to attend WOW Women. I very much enjoyed the day and left feeling wonderfully inspired.

Most of all I was pleased to have met the recipient of the second ticket provided by the Women’s Alliance...

Thank you once again – I very much valued the opportunity and have taken away ideas which I hope will benefit others as well as me.”

For further information about the WOW Women Group and the WOW Women event, please see: <http://www.wowwomengroup.com.au/> .

6 Week Money Makeover Program

As mentioned previously, in September 2015 the GSWCAAC hosted a ‘Better Money Management: Financial Workshop for Regional Women’ in conjunction with 10thousandgirl.

In May 2016 10thousandgirl offered the GSWCAAC the opportunity to provide scholarships to women to enable them to participate in the 10thousandgirl ‘6 Week Money Makeover Program’.

The GSWCAAC voted to accept this offer, and in June 2016 made the offer available to the Friends of the GSWCAAC.

10thousandgirl were allocated funding for this project from the social impact fund, Vasudhara Foundation. Further information on the Vasudhara Foundation can be found here: <http://www.vasudhara.org/home>

10thousandgirl and the Vasudhara Foundation were working together to ensure women from all life stages, backgrounds and experiences can participate in the program. 10thousandgirl provided the scholarships to support women who are keen to get on track with their saving and investing to plan ahead for their financial future. It was designed to target women who:

- Want to get out of a debt cycle,
- Have recently moved to Australia and are looking to familiarise themselves with the Australian financial system,
- May be getting back on track having experienced a relationship breakdown or major life event,
- May be living in regional or remote Australia and like the idea of having supportive money conversations with like-minded women.

The 6 Step Money Makeover Program is usually \$149. The scholarship enabled women to participate in the program for \$30. 10thousandgirl made the decision to still ask for a financial commitment from each participant as they believe people then value and maximise the opportunity. The GSWCAAC concurred with this decision.

Nine people were successful in obtaining the scholarship provided by 10thousandgirl and the GSWCAAC.

Queens Gardens Honour board

In 2015 the Greater Shepparton City Council’s Heritage Advisory Committee provided the GSWCAAC with a report regarding the significance of the rose gardens and honour boards in the Queen’s Gardens in Shepparton.

In 1983 the Business and Professional Women Group organised ‘Woman of the Year’ awards. In 1991 a rose garden was planted at the International Village with a rose planted in honour of each award recipient.

In 2001, as the International Village was no longer operational, the roses were moved to the Queen's Gardens in Shepparton along with an honour board noting the names of the award recipients.



Above: *One of the restored honour boards in the Queens Gardens Shepparton.*

The Heritage Advisory Committee and GSWCAAC are keen to see the roses and honour boards remain.

At the recommendation of the GSWCAAC, a report was submitted to Council for their consideration. The report requested that Council notes the significance of the existing roses in the Queens Gardens in their master plan and recommends that Council (with GSWCAAC support) restores the existing honour boards and establish a new honour board to list the names of the GSWCAAC Award recipients.

This recommendation has been supported.

The restored signs and the new sign for the GSWCAAC Award recipients have been installed in the Queen's Gardens.

Below: *The other restored honour board in the Queen's Gardens.*



Victorian Honour Roll of Women

On a yearly basis, the Victorian State Government calls for nominations to the Victorian Honour Roll of Women.

The Victorian Honour Roll of Women is a Victorian State Government initiative that aims to recognise and celebrate the great achievements of inspirational women in the community.

Recognising the importance of such recognition for women who are making a difference, the GSWCAAC released a media statement calling for the Greater Shepparton community to nominate a woman they felt would be worthy of such recognition.

Each year the GSWCAAC considers if it will nominate a local woman for the Honour Roll. As 2015 was an extremely busy year for the GSWCAAC, the GSWCAAC did not submit a nomination.

Website

The GSWCAAC has a page on the Greater Shepparton City Council's website. The page is located at: <http://greater-shepparton.com.au/wcaac> .

The page has background information about the GSWCAAC, as well as expression of interest (membership nomination) forms, the meeting schedule, information about past and forthcoming events and activities.

The page also has links to other organisations/websites that have resources and information relevant to women.

Relationships/Partnerships

Throughout 2015/2016 the GSWCAAC developed relationships with and/or utilised the resources of a variety of groups and individuals.

The GSWCAAC recognises seeking expertise from organisations/individuals who work in specialist fields is integral to the success of its activities, and for engaging appropriately and successfully with the wider community.

In 2015/2016 the GSWCAAC was also approached by other organisations to partner in several events.

The partnerships the GSWCAAC entered into in the 2015/16 year included 'in kind' partnerships, as well as partnerships involving funding.

FAST FACT

In 2015/16 the GSWCAAC partnered with 16 organisations.

Partnerships for 2015/16 included:

- 10thousandgirl
- Family Violence Prevention Network
- GOTAFE
- Goulburn Murray Social Workers Group
- GoWomenLG 2016 (Victorian Local Governance Association)
- Greater Shepparton City Council
- GV Fancy Dress
- Innovative Outcomes
- Kildonan UnitingCare
- La Trobe University Shepparton
- Primary Care Connect
- Refugee Week
- Shepparton Festival
- Shepparton Interfaith Network
- Soroptimists International Shepparton Inc.
- Ethnic Council of Shepparton and District

Community interaction (Active Citizenship)

The GSWCAAC is also committed to supporting other organisations that support and assist women within the wider community. GSWCAAC members are kept informed of events and activities being run by other organisations.

On occasion members of the GSWCAAC attend events. Examples of this include:

- The launch of GoWomenLG 2016 in Melbourne on 19 November 2015
- The LGPro Awards for Excellence dinner in Melbourne on 25 February 2016
- The Soroptimists International Shepparton Inc. International Women's Day breakfast held on Thursday 3 March 2016.

Promotion

The GSWCAAC has enjoyed excellent promotion in local media. Not only is such promotion aimed at advising the community about events and activities of the GSWCAAC, it is also about trying to increase community awareness of the Council, GSWCAAC and its work.

The Council Marketing and Communications Department has facilitated this promotion, and in the 2015/2016 year, the following mediums of promotion were utilised:

- EventBrite (for ticketing)
- Facebook
- Greater Shepparton City Council website
- GSWCAAC friends mailing list
- Individual networks
- Internal Greater Shepparton City Council newsletters
- Internal Greater Shepparton City Council website
- My Community
- Partner networks
- Posters
- Radio 3SR FM
- Shepparton Adviser
- Shepparton Festival booklet
- Shepparton News
- WIN Television

It is interesting to note that in the 2015/16 financial year the only paid advertising undertaken by the GSWCAAC was a public notice for its membership drive (a requirement of the Terms of Reference). Not only is this a reflection of the growing reputation of the GSWCAAC, it is also an example of the fiscal responsibility of the GSWCAAC.

FAST FACT

In 2015/16 the GSWCAAC:

- Released ten media releases
- Had 25 articles in external print media
- Had two radio interviews
- Had one television interview

For examples of some of the promotion the GSWCAAC has done, please see appendix three, and for examples of some media coverage see appendix four.

2015/2016 Budget

The GSWCAAC was allocated a \$12,585 budget by the Greater Shepparton City Council for the 2015/2016 financial year.

As an advisory committee of Council, the GSWCAAC always works to ensure the money allocated to its activities is spent in an appropriate and responsible manner. During the past two years the GSWCAAC has had an increased focus on spending its allocation wisely.

The GSWCAAC has sought funding from other organisations to supplement their budget, and to ensure its activities are delivered to a high standard.

FAST FACT

In 2015/16 the GSWCAAC received \$1482.00 from partner organisations.

The GSWCAAC has also made small adjustments where possible and has made decisions such as no longer ordering catering for their meetings, and resolving to pay for tickets to events as individuals rather than from the budget.

The growing reputation of the GSWCAAC has also meant the GSWCAAC did not need to pay to advertise its events during the 2015/16 year.

A breakdown of the budgetary activity for the 2015/2016 financial year is tabulated below:

Sub Account	2015/2016 Budget	YTD Actual including commit
Operating expense		
361 Advert/Promo/Market	2500	643
371 Materials or Services	11510	11284
365 Stationery/office expenses	200	8
Total Operating Expense	14,210	11,935
Operating Income		
106 Contributions	-1784	- 1784
Total Operating Income	(1784)	(1784)

Continuous improvement

The GSWCAAC always strives to improve in its operations, and to remain transparent in its procedures. Below are some examples of ways in which the GSWCAAC has made improvements in the 2015/16 financial year:

- Reviewed its Terms of Reference
- Looked for budgetary savings
- Increased partnership opportunities
- Implemented Memoranda of Understanding for funding agreements
- Requests feedback from event attendees
- Discusses ways of improving after an activity
- Streamlined administrative processes
- Makes available event evaluations for all the events the GSWCAAC is the lead organiser

Feedback

The GSWCAAC has received constructive feedback from its events and activities over the past year. Below are some quotes from the feedback obtained.

FAST FACT

In 2015/16 the GSWCAAC reached 525 people through its events/consultation.

Praise for Love Marriage in Kabul – Malala Day event:

- *“The film was touching and shed light on this somewhat taboo subject.”*
- *“Well done to everyone involved. The speech by the charter member was excellent.”*

Praise for Better Money Management – Financial Workshop for Regional Women:

- *“...clarified many questions and provided invaluable insights of how women can improve their money management and the resources they can find in the community...”*

Praise for Forced Marriage Forum for professionals:

- *“Great that this event was organised to raise the profile and awareness.”*
- *“Some great information presented by Hanna and Melba [guest speakers]; both do interesting work and particularly inspired by Melba and her relevance or focus on community change.”*
- *“Thank you for providing the opportunity for our community to have conversations around an emerging risk.”*

Praise for International Women’s Day:

- *“Free event enabled my whole family to attend.”*
- *“The guest speakers were so knowledgeable, captivating and inspiring. Loved every moment...”*
- *“Brilliant night, my 88 year old mum enjoyed it also, catered for all ages. Thanks!”*
- *“Amazing food, interesting and inspiring speakers, general camaraderie was enjoyable.”*

Future

The GSWCAAC will continue to deliver opportunities for the Greater Shepparton community that meet the principles of the charter in to 2016/2017.

Following the finalisation of the 3 x 3 Action Plan it is anticipated that future work will include:

- International Women’s Day event
- Continuation of the GSWCAAC Award (including putting the recipient’s name on a sign in the Queens Gardens in Shepparton).
- Annual Membership drive
- Terms of Reference Review (every two years)
- Action Plan – (reviewed every two years)

Appendices

Appendix one: Membership list

Betul Tuna	(Resigning member, term ending 30 June 2016)	Member - Community
Charlene Norton	(Resigning member, term ending 30 June 2016)	Member - Council
Connie O'Dea		Member - Community
Cr Dinny Adem		Member - Council Charter Champion
Fran Smullen		Member- Community
Jan Phillips	(Reappointed member, yet to be endorsed)	Member - Community
Jean Young		Member – Council
Jennifer Broadbent		Member - Community
Jo Fasano		Member – Community
Kate Montgomery		Member - Council
Kelly McPherson		Member – Community
Lyn Hewson		Member – Community
Margo Koskelainen, OAM	(Reappointed member, yet to be endorsed)	Member - Community
Michelle Bertoli		Member - Council
Patricia Moran		Member - Community
Seema Abdullah		Member – Community
Shira Lam	(Resigning member, term ending 30 June 2016)	Member – Community
Sonali Jayasundera	(Resigning member, term ending 30 June 2016)	Member - Community
Suzanne Wallis		Member – Community
Terri Cowley		Member – Community
Sharon Sellick	(Yet to be endorsed)	Member - Community
Fatmatta Munu	(Yet to be endorsed)	Member - Community
Denise Stewart	(Yet to be endorsed)	Member - Community
Rosemary A Walker		Co-opted Member
Amy Masunu	(Yet to be endorsed)	Member - Community
Emma Hofmeyer		Council Support Person

Please note: this membership list was current as at 30 June 2016.

Appendix two: LGPro 2016 Award for Excellence in Organisational Diversity

Below: The article that appeared in the LGPro 2016 Awards and recognition Year Book, regarding the GSWCAAC being announced as the recipient of the 2016 Award for Excellence in Organisational Diversity.

ORGANISATIONAL DIVERSITY WINNER



GREATER SHEPPARTON CITY COUNCIL, WOMEN'S CHARTER ADVISORY COMMITTEE
GREATER SHEPPARTON WOMEN'S CHARTER ALLIANCE

The Greater Shepparton Women's Charter Alliance Advisory Committee (GSWCAAC) is an Advisory Committee of the Greater Shepparton City Council which aims to support and promote women in leadership roles and at all levels of decision-making, including business or workplace positions, community groups or boards of management.

Officially endorsed by Council in February 2012, the volunteer members of the GSWCAAC are guided by the three principles of gender equity, active citizenship and diversity.

Since its endorsement, the GSWCAAC has grown in its membership, capacity and activities. The committee strives to consult and engage with the community through its activities and events and aims to provide educational resources at all its events, provide opportunities for members of the community to network and to highlight the diversity of the local community in a positive way. It also advises Council on areas relating to the three principles.

The GSWCAAC has built capacity and knowledge amongst its members by providing them with resources, networking and collaboration. This capacity building has enabled meaningful interaction with the wider community which has benefited the members and the community.

Through its events alone the GSWCAAC reached a total of 513 people in one year. The committee's achievements in the past year include:

- Reaching membership capacity (20 people)
- Increasing the number of 'Friends' of the GSWCAAC to 174
- Staging a 'Women's Voices – Know the Line' Forum on the topic of sexual harassment

- A total of 110 people attended a free International Women's Day event hosted by local Aboriginal leader, Robynne Nelson
- Partnering with Council's Cultural Development Officer, the Ethnic Council of Shepparton and District and the Shepparton Interfaith Network to bring the movie 'The Good Lie' to Shepparton during Refugee Week
- Partnering with organisations including the Goulburn Ovens Institute of TAFE to provide a free screening of the movie 'Love Marriage in Kabul', a documentary about forced marriages
- Partnering with 10thousandgirl to bring a free financial literacy workshop to Shepparton for women
- Conducting community consultation via three surveys on the topics of gender equity, active citizenship and diversity. A total of 257 people responded to these surveys
- Presenting an award to a person who made a difference to women

The GSWCAAC collaborates in partnership with more than 70 organisations and groups and its work has benefited the wider community by providing welcoming and accessible events where people can network and by highlighting, celebrating and acknowledging the diversity of the Greater Shepparton area.

The GSWCAAC's work in highlighting the difficulties faced by refugees, as well as the important topics of forced marriage and sexual harassment, helps to create an awareness amongst the community of the difficulties faced by others. This awareness in turn fosters respect and empathy and leads to a more embracing and inclusive community.

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Suzanna Sheed MP ■ Member for Shepparton District

Thursday, 24 March 2016

Greater Shepparton City Council
Greater Shepparton Women's Charter Alliance Advisory Committee
Locked Bag 1000
Shepparton VIC 3632

Record No	
31 MAR 2016	
Referred To	
To	

Dear Members of the GSWCAAC,

I am writing to congratulate Greater Shepparton City Council and in particular the dedicated members of the Greater Shepparton Women's Charter Alliance Advisory Committee and supporting staff on winning the LGPro Award for Organisational Diversity on February 25 2016.

Since 2012 the members of the Greater Shepparton Women's Charter Alliance Advisory Committee have undertaken very valuable work within the Shepparton District to acknowledge, support, and celebrate the diversity of our community. I was delighted to be able to participate as a speaker in one of these events.

Your dedication and commitment to ensure equity, participation, inclusion and diversity, being core principles of your events and activities is commendable. I see this award as testimony to your committee's effectiveness and your members should be very proud you have collectively achieved this accolade above the other 78 local government regions within Victoria. Your work has not only been of great benefit to and acknowledged locally, but now statewide by LGPro on receiving this Award.

I encourage you to continue your great work in the Shepparton District and I look forward to attending and participating in your future events.

Yours faithfully,



Suzanna Sheed MP



5 Vaughan St, Shepparton VIC 3630 Phone: 03 5831 6944 Fax: 03 5831 6836
Website: www.suzannasheed.com.au Email: suzanna.sheed@parliament.vic.gov.au
[@SheedSuzanna](#) [/Suzanna Sheed](#)

Appendix three: Examples of promotion

Below: *Malala Day – Love Marriage in Kabul* poster

Greater Shepparton Women's Charter Alliance Advisory Committee presents



Tuesday 14 July 2015 6pm
Harder Auditorium, GOTAFE Fryers St, Shepparton

LOVE MARRIAGE IN KABUL

FREE EVENT

Tickets available at EventBrite: www.eventbrite.com.au
Further information: women@shepparton.vic.gov.au or phone (03) 5832 9479.

 **WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT COALITION**
STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES THROUGH WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION

 **SHEPPARTON INTERFAITH NETWORK**

 **ETHNIC COUNCIL OF SHEPPARTON AND DISTRICT Inc.**
Helping You Help

 **gotafe**

 **GREATER SHEPPARTON**

Below: *Better Money Management poster*



Want to take time out to focus on your money and make it work harder for you?

Join us for a free half day workshop designed to give you the information and the support you need to start managing your money better.

The workshop will:

- Give you an understanding of the basic asset classes - cash, shares, property
- Give you an overview of reducing risk, diversification, and dollar cost averaging
- Provide ways to build your financial nest egg
- Allow you to document clear life and financial goals and work on a practical, personal long term plan and action chart for the next 12 months
- Provide you with the tools to lay solid financial foundations: learn how managing your long term saving and investing can help you achieve what you want to do in your life
- Help you understand where you can go for more information and further development

Support from qualified financial experts

Local experts will give you guidance on money matters and how they can help you, as well as be on hand to answer your specific questions.

Roger Matthews: Branch Manager, Rabobank Shepparton

Tracey Sofra: CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER®, Sofcorp Financial Services

Lesley Hart: Director, Dawes & Vary Riordan Lawyers

Bernadette McKenzie: Business Services Consultant, Belmores

John Leitch: HESTA Member Education Manager, NSW Regional

Workshop details

When: Tuesday September 8

Where: Learning Space 4,
La Trobe University,
210 Fryers Street,
Shepparton

Time: 9:30am - 3:30pm

RSVP: Click below to register to attend

[Register here >](#)

Who can attend?

You might be a small-medium business owner or partner, an employee, a stay at home mum. You might work in agribusiness, manufacturing, tourism, health, government, professional services or retail. You might work part time, downsizing and thinking ahead to retirement. This workshop is for any woman who wants to improve her money management.



www.10thousandgirl.com

0401 740 440

events@10thousandgirl.com

Below: *Forced Marriage Forum poster*



SAVE THE DATE

Greater Shepparton Women's Charter Alliance Advisory Committee presents

FORCED MARRIAGE FORUM FOR PROFESSIONALS

FREE EVENT

Date: Wednesday 25 November 2015
Time: 1:00pm - 3:00pm
Where: GOTAFE 152 - 200 Fryers St, Shepparton

Further information phone (03) 5832 9479 or email: women@shepparton.vic.gov.au
Bookings essential at www.forcedmarriageshepparton.eventbrite.com.au Password: Marriage



Below: International Women's Day 2016 poster.

Greater Shepparton Women's Charter Alliance Advisory Committee

International Women's Day

Stories of Prejudice and Pride

FREE EVENT

TUE 8 MARCH
6PM - 9PM

The Greater Shepparton Women's Charter Alliance Advisory Committee are holding a FREE event to celebrate International Women's Day. All are welcome to come along and listen to inspiring speakers including **Dr Leslie Cannold**, enjoy good food, and celebrate this important day.

Light catering will be provided.

Location: African Community House, 54 Poplar Avenue Shepparton.

Further information: Phone Emma during business hours on (03) 5832 9479 or email women@shepparton.vic.gov.au

This is an accessible event.
Please contact us with any requirements.

Tickets are available at: www.eventbrite.com.au

This event is proudly supported by the Greater Shepparton City Council.



Below: La Trobe University Women in Leadership Forum poster.



The poster features a light beige background with a red accent box on the right side. At the top left is the La Trobe University logo, and at the top right is the Greater Shepparton Women's Charter Alliance logo. The main title 'WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP FORUM' is in large, bold, black letters. A photograph of Professor Amalia Di Iorio is shown in a dark frame. The event details, including the date, time, venue, and cost, are listed in a red box on the right. A registration link is provided at the bottom right.

LA TROBE UNIVERSITY

Proudly supported by the Greater Shepparton Women's Charter Alliance Advisory Committee

La Trobe University and Greater Shepparton City Council present:

WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP FORUM

THURSDAY 29 OCTOBER

TIME
Prompt 7.00 pm start

VENUE
Eastbank Centre, Weisford Street, Shepparton

COST
\$20 - All proceeds from ticket sales are donated to the Regional Women in Leadership Bursary. Please join us for drinks and further discussion after the Forum.

The Regional Women in Leadership Bursary is a fund established through income received from donations and ticket sales to regional Women in Leadership Forums. The purpose of the fund is to provide bursaries to female La Trobe University students in regional Victoria who are aspiring to leadership positions within their chosen field, but are experiencing some educational disadvantage during the course of their studies.

REGISTER ONLINE NOW
riverlinksvvenues.com.au/leadership_forum.html

latrobe.edu.au

IC0619 429 CR005 Pr:4646 03/16

Below: GoWomenLG 2016 Local Government Forum poster.



**More women in local governments
Let's make diversity happen!**

Election Information Session

Have you ever thought about standing for council?
Do you know a woman who might make a great councillor?
Want to expand your influence for the issues you care about?

Hear from women who have been there - candidates, councillors and mayors.
Our panel will discuss:

- Being a voice for your community
- What's involved in running a campaign
- How to be an effective councillor
- How to make a difference

Shepparton Session - 11 May, 6.00pm to 8.00pm
Shepparton Senior Citizens Centre, 122 - 132 Welsford Street
Finger food, tea and coffee provided
**RSVP and more info: www.sheppartonlocalgovernmentforum.eventbrite.com.au
or phone 03 5832 9479**

Wangaratta Session - 10 May, 6.00pm to 8.00pm
Wangaratta Government Centre, 62-68 Ovens Street
For more info on this session please contact Rebecca Golia on 03 5722 0888



Appendix four: Examples of media coverage

Below: Article from *The Shepparton News*, Saturday 11 July 2015, regarding 'Love Marriage in Kabul' Malala Day event.

6 NEWS WEEKEND NEWS SATURDAY, JULY 11, 2015

Love lives despite rules

A MARRIAGE IN AFGHANISTAN CAN BE HARD BUT THINGS ARE DIFFERENT HERE, SAY LOCALS

By John Lewis

Marriage can be a challenging time for a lot of couples. Outfits, speeches, transport and seating arrangements are just some of the hurdles to overcome when two people in Australia decide to get hitched.

However, in many parts of the world the contract of marriage can be far more complicated, expensive and even dangerous.

An Australian documentary to be screened in Shepparton next week follows the extraordinary quest of an Afghan-Australian woman, Mahboba Rawi, as she negotiates old traditions to make a love marriage happen in Kabul.

In *Love Marriage in Kabul*, Abdul is in love with Fatemeh, the girl next door. The two have been exchanging romantic letters for almost a year and hope to marry one day. But Fatemeh's father won't let the pair marry unless he is paid \$10 000 or finds a wife for his eldest son, who then can replace Fatemeh in taking care of the household.

Shepparton Afghani Association president Dawood Baqiri said in rural areas of Afghanistan marriage arrangements were often made without the consent of the couple. "You see a lot of



Wedding vows: Shepparton Afghani Association president Dawood Baqiri and Turkish community spokeswoman Betul Tuna say marriage arrangements are now very different from the traditional ways.

forced marriages. A lot of couples don't see each other until the day of the marriage," Mr Baqiri said.

He said some families had huge debts and used daughters to pay off the money through a marriage dowry. "In a lot of circumstances it's the girls who are the victims. Some parents consider girls a financial burden

because legally they are not allowed to work."

Mr Baqiri said things were different among the Afghani community in Shepparton. "Arranged marriages do happen here, but the boy and girl have a very strong say. They can reject each other. There is no forcing anyone. A lot of people choose their partners, then they tell

their mum and dad. We haven't had any cases of people getting married under the age of 18, which is good. We haven't had any cases of forced marriage, but we do have arranged marriage because that is how it has been done for centuries," he said.

Australian-born Shepparton Turkish-community member Betul Tuna said when her parents arrived in the 1970s, they brought with them traditional ideas of arranged and forced marriage.

"The first generations to come had issues — the fear of protecting their daughters and sons from marrying someone from a different culture was very strong.

"A lot of those marriages



have probably ended now — they would be in their 40s now," she said.

"It was a protecting thing from our parents. Some sent their daughters back to Turkey."

Ms Tuna said today things were different in the Turkish community.

"We've definitely assimilated. We're one of the older cultures here. Now it's the opposite. We choose who we marry — with our parents' blessing," she said.

The film *Love Marriage in Kabul* is being hosted by Greater Shepparton Women's Charter Alliance Advisory Committee. The free screening takes place at Goulburn Ovens TAFE on Frysers St, Shepparton on Tuesday from 6 pm.

To book a seat, phone 5832 9479.

Help wanted with survey

RESPONSES FROM PUBLIC WILL HELP TO SHAPE PLAN

By Siannie Kelly

The Greater Shepparton Women's Charter Alliance is giving everyone the chance to complete its final survey, which will help shape its new action plan.

The survey — focused on active citizenship — is the final of three surveys that all so looked at the issues of gender and diversity.

Greater Shepparton City Council neighbourhoods team leader for community strengthening and Women's Charter Alliance member Kate Montgomery said an action plan was completed a few years ago, but it was time to renew it.

She said the charter had been fortunate to receive many responses to its first two surveys.

"We'll be able to compile all that feedback and draft up an action plan to see the Women's Charter operations going forward," Ms Montgomery said.

"It'll be really nice to have a current action plan that's based almost purely on

community feedback about what they'd like to see."

The active citizenship survey asks people to answer questions about how involved they are in the community. Ms Montgomery said it would determine why people get involved, and how to make it easier for women to do so.

"We think it's really important that people are able to engage where they feel comfortable so they can be actively part of society," she said.

Women's Charter Alliance member Pat Moran said the group was excited to have full membership and had achieved a lot in the past few years.

"This active citizenship (survey) is all about women's place in the framework and we are having another election of council next year... it would be nice to get some more women on board," she said.

Mrs Moran and Ms Montgomery said there were only two female councillors at Greater Shepparton City

Council and it would be good to discover what prevented women from becoming involved in local government.

"If you look across all local government areas, you'll see there's not a great number of females represented," Ms Montgomery said.

"They've come up quite along way, but not far enough," Mrs Moran said.

Ms Montgomery said as next year's elections approached, the charter would look at what it could do to encourage women to participate and whether the actions of councillors stopped women from being involved.

Women's Charter Alliance member Sonali Jayasundera migrated to Shepparton from Sri Lanka 10 years ago.

She said being an active citizen in the community stopped her from feeling alone in what was originally a foreign town to her.

"I don't have family, so I tried to make a life in Shepparton and I think what I



Active citizenship survey: Greater Shepparton Women's Charter Alliance members Pat Moran, Sonali Jayasundera and Kate Montgomery. *Picture: Helly Curtis*

found is you can if you want to," she said.

"I'm encouraging a lot of people to do volunteer work... because I think there is an opportunity, it's just that some people don't know where to go and some are a bit shy."

The survey closes on July 30. To find out more about how you can get involved with the Greater Shepparton Women's Charter Alliance go to greater-shepparton.com.au/wcaac

Everyone is welcome to participate in the active citizenship survey at www.surveymonkey.com/r/1WQKLZJ

Below: Article from The Shepparton News, 5 August 2015, encouraging people to nominate women for the Victorian Honour Roll of Women.

Shepparton News, page 9
5 August 2015.

Nominate inspiring women for honour roll

The Greater Shepparton Women's Charter Alliance advisory committee is encouraging people to nominate inspirational women for next year's Victorian Honour Roll of Women.

The honour roll is a Victorian Government initiative that aims to recognise and celebrate the great achievements of inspirational women in the community.

Previous Victorian Honour Roll of Women inductees from the local area include:

- Mary Atkinson (deceased) — leader in Aboriginal education;
- Frances Mathysen — leader in indigenous community affairs;
- Vicki Mitsos — ethnic communities support;
- Margo Koskelainen — battling for women's sport (softball); and
- Rien Silverstein — supporter of rural women.

Charter champion and Greater Shepparton councillor Dinny Adem said it would be great to see more women from the local community nominated.

"The Greater Shepparton community has many women who have made a real difference and who are inspirational in their efforts to contribute to the wider community," Cr Adem said.

The committee is a community advisory of Greater Shepparton City Council, and is part of a broader network of Local Government Area advisory committees across the state that are guided and informed by the Victorian Local Government Women's Charter.

It is made up of volunteers and, with council support, aims to increase women's participation in key decision making forums in the community and in democratic governance.

The committee supports three main principles: gender equity, diversity, and active citizenship.

Nominations for the Victorian Honour Roll of Women can be made at www.dpc.vic.gov.au/index.php/news-publications/victorian-honour-roll-of-women

Nominations close at 5 pm on Friday, August 21.

DON'T FORCE IT

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TAKES TOUGHER STANCE ON FORCED MARRIAGE WITH NEW LAWS INTRODUCED

By ANTHONY CINI

A marriage should be about the two people together, not what other people want.

That is the view of Turkish community member and Shepparton resident Betül Sahin, who believes forced marriage

should be eradicated in Australia. Her thoughts come after Member for Murray Sharman Stone this week announced new Federal Government laws that would clarify what constitutes forced marriage, introducing tough new penalties for people who try to force others into marriage.

Dr Stone said the definition of forced marriage was amended in relation to children aged under 16, who are presumed to have not understood the marriage ceremony and not consented to marriage.

"These changes also mean someone who has forced another

to marry under 16 or who has arranged or officiated over the marriage of a child under 16, would also be committing an offence," Dr Stone said.

"The penalty for an aggravated forced marriage offence will be increased from a maximum of seven years' imprisonment to a

maximum of nine years' imprisonment." She said forced marriage offences were seen to be aggravated if the victim was under 18 years of age, if the offender was cruel, degraded a victim, or caused danger of death or serious harm to the victim or another person.

● **Continued on page 4**

SHEPPARTON NEWS, THURSDAY, AUGUST 20, 2015

New laws on forced marriage

● **From page 1**

"The law changes will also increase the maximum penalty for non-aggravated forced marriage offences from the existing four years to seven years imprisonment," Dr Stone said.

Ms Sahin said families seemed to lead the conversation about arranged marriages.

"When it involves young people in particular, let them have the final say," she said.

"I haven't heard of many forced marriages take place within my own community, but

my view is that people are introduced to other people and they make the decision. It's part of our western culture.

"But it does exist in other communities."

She said forced marriages were regular occurrences 50 years ago within the Turkish community and to criminalise it today was a great initiative.

"I'm sure many community members would agree with me in saying it's not just women who don't get a choice with who they marry, but men too," she said.

"(Forced marriage) isn't an issue with our community anymore. Years ago, people could be forced to get married as a way of ending a war between two families or to save the family estate.

"In my own experience, my marriage wasn't arranged or forced. We met by our own means but are now divorced.

"Teachers and principals at our local schools should engage with their students and discuss this issue, it's the only way our young people will learn."

Ethnic Council of Shepparton

and District president Chris Hazelman said any law that strengthened the elimination of forced marriage was welcomed.

"It's great the government is aware of these issues and that there are programs put in place to reinforce these rules," he said.

"It's important for everyone to understand how serious this issue is. We want to ensure people are making an informed decision when they choose to marry."

● **For more information on the new laws, go to www.ag.gov.au/forcedmarriage**

Below: Article from *The Shepparton News*, Wednesday 9 September 2015, regarding the Better Money Management – Financial Workshop for Regional Women.



Women's workshop: Katrina Khoo was one of about 40 women at the Shepparton Better Money Management workshop yesterday. Picture: Kate Mercer

Leading lady: 10thousandgirl founder Zoe Lamont taught a room of women how to look after their financial security.

Women are on the money

REGIONAL WORKSHOP BRINGS EDUCATION ON MANAGING FINANCES AND PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

By Emily Woods

Women from across the Goulburn Valley were educated and empowered at a money management workshop yesterday.

The Shepparton Better Money Management workshop is one of 16 regional events across the country, run by financial wellbeing social enterprise 10thousandgirl with government and corporate support.

The Greater Shepparton City Council and Women's Charter Alliance Advisory Committee approached the enterprise to include Shepparton in the regional tour.

"Women in regional areas are really catalysts," 10thousandgirl founder Zoe Lamont said.

"There's a real impact if a woman increases her

understanding of her financial capacity, they can improve their position, their family's, the local economy and even the broader economy. It's a ripple effect."

She said the full house at yesterday's workshop at La Trobe University showed there was appetite in the region for more financial education.

"People know what they need to do, but they're not doing it," Ms Lamont said.

"It's about taking action, doing the small things, like putting small amounts of money away, educating yourself or getting good advice."

"The more clear we are, the more opportunities we open up to educate ourselves and the community — that's how the world changes."

Shepparton business owner Robynne Nelson attended the workshop and said she was wondering about retirement and financial security.

"I'm thinking about how can I get to the point of retirement in 10 years?" Ms Nelson said.

"So I want to get ideas around ways to create better financial security."

She said it was important for women, particularly Aboriginal women, to be informed about finances.

"For me as an Aboriginal woman it's important to find out how we can turn that around for us, people don't realise that it's a struggle for the Aboriginal community. We don't have good incomes and we generally don't live long enough to spend our super," she said.



Learning ladies: Wendy Matthews, Sandra Boyd and Sandra Seenz at the financial workshop for women at La Trobe University Shepparton yesterday.



Money matters: Rebecca Pike and Cindy Sheahan learning how to manage their finances.



Valuable lessons: 10thousandgirl founder Zoe Lamont.

Below: WIN TV coverage (8 September 2015) of the Better Money Management – Financial Workshop for Regional Women.



Win News
Shepparton - clip reg:

Below: Article from The Shepparton Adviser, 28 October 2015, regarding the GSWCAAC Award.

Women
IN BUSINESS

Nominations open for *Women's Charter Award*

THE Greater Shepparton Women's Charter Alliance Advisory Committee (GSWCAAC) is encouraging members of the Greater Shepparton community to nominate an individual or group who has made a difference to women and the community for the Greater Shepparton Women's Charter Alliance Advisory Committee Award.

The purpose of the GSWCAAC Award is to recognise women, men and groups who make a difference to the community in which they live. The GSWCAAC Award is about acknowledging any individual or group whose actions impact upon women within the Greater Shepparton area in a positive way.

Nominations will be judged using the following criteria:

- How the nominee made a difference to the community, particularly within the Greater Shepparton area
- How the nominee has acknowledged and embraced diversity
- How the nominee inspired and encouraged women

GSWCAAC Charter Champion Councillor, Dinny Adem believes recognising people and groups who have made a positive difference to women's lives is important.

"The GSWCAAC knows there is a lot of great work going on in the community – work that has a positive impact on women", said Cr Adem.

"The GSWCAAC wants to acknowledge this work and highlight the efforts of people within the community, in the hope that it will inspire others."

Nomination forms and further information about the Greater Shepparton Women's Charter Alliance Advisory Committee Award can be found at www.greatershepparton.com.au

Nomination forms can also be obtained by contacting Council on (03) 5832 9700 or by email to women@shepparton.vic.gov.au

Nominations close on November 26, 2015.

Below: Article from *The Shepparton News*, 21 December 2015, regarding the #SuperWomanPose campaign.

Shepparton News Page 3 21/12/15

Set to suit up as superwomen

By Cameron Whiteley

Don't be surprised if you see women striking a pose around town in the coming months.

In the lead-up to International Women's Day in March, the council-supported Greater Shepparton Women's Charter Alliance advisory committee has launched a special initiative, which comes with its own hashtag.

Women are being encouraged to be photographed in a superhero-type pose, posting images on Instagram under the hashtag #SuperWomanPose.

It comes after new research showed a correlation between such poses and increased confidence levels.

Speaking at the launch in Shepparton's Maude St Mall last week, charter alliance member and council's community strengthening team leader Kate Montgomery explained the concept.

"The committee came up with this idea based on research they read about that Harvard had done, looking at gender inequality and the theory behind the perception that superheroes are a boys thing and not a girls thing," she said.

"The research they did revealed that if people stand in



Striking a pose: The Greater Shepparton Women's Charter Alliance advisory committee members Jean Young, Jo Fasano, Kate Montgomery and Emma Hofmeyer. Picture: Julie Mercer

the superhero pose with their hands on their hips, that drops their stress hormone by 25 per cent and raises their strength hormone by eight per cent."

Mrs Montgomery encouraged local women to embrace the initiative, with the images posted brought together for a presentation for International

Women's Day. Shepparton's International Women's Day event will be at St Paul's Lutheran Church's African House on Tuesday, March 8.

Below: Article from *The Shepparton Adviser*, 2 March 2016, regarding the LGPro Award for Organisational Diversity.

Women's Charter Alliance wins award

THE Greater Shepparton Women's Charter Alliance Advisory Committee has taken away the LGPro Award for Organisational Diversity last week, with Greater Shepparton City Council receiving the award on behalf of the committee.

Greater Shepparton City Council director community, Kaye Thomson said, "We are elated with the award, the committee has worked really hard since 2012 and organised a number of events for the community throughout the year. It is great to see the committee's hard work recognised.

"The membership of the alliance is in itself diverse – and the membership has a range of ethnicities, ages, abilities, educational levels, socio-economic backgrounds, and beliefs. The alliance membership is also open to men and has Mayor, Dinny Adem as its charter champion.

"All the activities of the alliance are designed to acknowledge, support, and celebrate the diversity of the Greater Shepparton community. The core values are to ensure that its activities and events are accessible to all and these are the reasons for the award for organisational diversity."

Shepparton Adviser, Page 8, 2 March 2016

Below: Article from *The Shepparton News*, Thursday 10 March 2016, regarding International Women's Day.

Women's day celebrated

SPEAKERS AT SHEPPARTON'S INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY EVENT INSPIRE AND UPLIFT

By Emily Woods

There was barely a seat left in the room at Tuesday night's International Women's Day event in Shepparton, with equality, empowerment and inspiration permeating every corner of St Paul's African House.

Several speakers from diverse backgrounds spoke about their individual struggles, each referring to a source of prejudice and pride, the theme of the Greater Shepparton Women's Charter Alliance Advisory Committee event.

About 220 people attended the sold-out evening, which fired up a timely discussion about gender inequality.

"All of the feedback has been sensational. . . it's met people's expectations and exceeded that," committee member Kate Montgomery said.

However very few men attended, and Ms Montgomery said that was something the committee was trying to turn around.

"Despite the name, anything that we host — unless it is specifically said that it is for women only — is always open to men," she said.

Elaine Cooney

Shepparton News journalist Elaine Cooney shared a personal story about her own experience with gender inequality and domestic violence.

"When I was 19, I fell in love with a man and moved with him to a desert island, off the coast of Africa," Ms Cooney said.

"It sounds romantic — it's not. By this point I was a ferociously independent and brave woman and nothing or no-one was going to take that away from me.

"I never let him see that his words were weakening me, but deep down they were eroding who I was."

Ms Cooney recalled one night when her then-boyfriend drove her home and she tried to get him to stop the car and let her drive.

"He refused to stop and we had an argument. When we got home, he came around to my side of the car, dragged me out and beat me until I couldn't feel my body," she said.

Police took her away, questioned her, called her names and she realised she was alone, on a strange island.

Then she met a powerful woman who looked after her and introduced her to other women who had similar stories of abuse.

"I felt empowered by their words," Ms Cooney said.

"Everyone's experiences are different, but if we pay attention and help empower women around us, our world becomes a more positive place and we are taking steps towards equality."



Super-dancers: The Individual Spirits Dance Crew wowed the crowd at the end of the event with their hip-hop moves.

(Picture: Emily Woods)



Stand together: Leslie Cannold held nothing back during her speech for International Women's Day, advocating for female solidarity in the fight for equality.

educated Pakistani woman, one who has travelled a long way from my origins in Islamabad to Shepparton — my new home, a place that supports and encourages men and women from diverse backgrounds."

Jeanette Collinson

A passionate advocate for disabled women experiencing domestic violence, Jeanette Collinson played a video illustrating who she was.

"This is the story of my life, there are many women out there like me," she said.

In the video, the 2015 Women with Disabilities Victoria women's empowerment program graduate spoke about her own struggles as a woman with a disability.

"I wish there were more opportunities for more people with disabilities in the workplace," Ms Collinson said.

"I think being a woman with a disability is especially challenging because people perceive us as being weak, in the worst case scenarios it can lead to violence against women with disabilities."

Leslie Cannold

Researcher, public speaker, activist and writer Leslie Cannold delivered a controversial talk which called on older and younger women to support each other.

Dr Cannold spoke about the lack of women in leadership positions and called on every woman in the audience to do their part and "back ourselves in".

"We as women are not supportive of one another," she said.

"If we can't back ourselves, I don't think that anyone else would want to back us."

"So what? What are we going to do about it? Young women need to back older women. And as older women we need to give respect to young women who want to take the movement forward."

"It's never going to go away if we ignore it . . . everyone who is running in every-thing needs to be 50 per cent women."



The other side: Seema Abdullah spoke about her journey from Islamabad to Shepparton, changing perceptions of Pakistani women and their rights.



Enjoying the evening: Tam Perry of Numarkah, Lyn Hewson of Katunga, and Paula Jafer of Kiella just before Tuesday's event kicked off.



Female solidarity: The women who empowered and inspired the sold-out crowd on Tuesday night, left to right, Elaine Cooney, Jeanette Collinson, Seema Abdullah, event MC Fiona Smolensars, Leslie Cannold and Natarsha Bamblett.



Hungry for equality: The long lines of attendees ready to taste some of the Turkish cuisine prepared and served by volunteers.

Natarsha Bamblett

Yorta Yorta woman Natarsha Bamblett, 21, began her talk by asking the room to

"raise your hand if you're proud to be a woman".

After a resounding response she smiled and said, "Now, take a look

around."

Ms Bamblett started the indigenous hip-hop dance group Individual Spirits Dance Crew, and now

studies in Melbourne.

"I have many titles: dancer, mother of a 17-month-old boy, daughter, friend, business owner, and with these titles comes responsibility," she said.

She said through her own personal struggles she had learnt "no matter how hard life gets, there's always someone doing it harder than you".

Ms Bamblett urged the audience to look at the positives.

"I hope that all you beautiful women are feeling strong and empowered after today."

Seema Abdullah

Seema Abdullah said she wanted to reveal a Pakistani woman's success story.

"My story aims to present the other side," she said.

Ms Abdullah said initially she had avoided an arranged marriage, opting to move away and pursue her studies in London.

Once she returned to Pakistan, she decided it was time to get married.

"To me this arranged marriage meant that a woman can be educated,

financially empowered, make independent decisions, and still follow her cultural traditions," she said.

"I feel proud to be an

Below: Article from *The Shepparton News*, 4 March 2016, regarding the Soroptimist International of Shepparton Inc.'s International Women's Day breakfast and the announcement of the 2016 GSWCAAC Award recipient.



Speakers: Julie Andrew, Kerri Rivett and Kate Hodge.

Inspirational women talk

SOROPTIMIST SHEPPARTON WOMEN'S DAY BREAKFAST

By Elaine Cooney

Shepparton women were treated to a morning of inspirational talks and laughter at the Soroptimist International of Shepparton's Women's Day Breakfast.

Shepparton accountant and financial planner and founder of the WOW Women event, Tracey Sofra, was presented with the Women's Charter Alliance's Women's Award for inspiring women in the community.

She spoke about the lack of opportunities when she was younger and how she was pushed by her father to get an education and become self-reliant.

Ms Sofra told the audience to look around at the five people closest to them because they will be what one becomes.

Shepparton Villages chief executive Kerri Rivett offered a candid view into her life as a woman working towards her goals.

She told the audience that being dux of the school did not win her friends but instead led to bullying and she was often tipped off her chair, pinched and told that when she grew up she would be a witch.

Ms Rivett moved schools but began wondering why she was studying maths and science and, much to the shock of her family, left school and home at the age of 17.

She went to Wilsmere Psychiatric Hospital in Melbourne and asked for a job.

Often told off for not feeding residents fast enough, Ms Rivett said she was appalled by the hygiene standards — some units did not have a toilet.

"I was so determined to prove to everyone I could stick it out," she said.

So she became an enrolled nurse and never stopped educating herself.

Again she faced adversity from her peers in her early 30s and was treated differently because she did not have children.

Ms Rivett learned that her colleagues were speaking behind her back and questioning her sexual orientation.

She hoped that attitudes had changed for younger women in the workplace today.

After a postgraduate degree and masters in gerontology, Ms Rivett set a goal to be the manager of North Western Aged Mental Health Service, the largest aged psychiatry service in the southern hemisphere, within five years. But she managed to take up this position in two years.

She told the audience that women needed to work together and not judge one other.

Two Numurkah women spoke about their work at the Umoja Orphanage in Kenya.

Veterinarian Kate Hodge helped administer tick treatments to cattle, which greatly improved their health and nurse Julie Andrew treated ailments from tinea to a condition called jiggers, which involved cutting worms out of the soles of people's feet.

Both women found the hunger experienced by children confronting.

They ran a feeding station once a week where children travelled for kilometres, sometimes with a younger sibling on their back, to receive a plate of food and a bag of flour to take home to feed them for the week.

They plan to return one day with their own children.

Below: Article from the Shepparton News, 18 April 2016, regarding memberships.

Nominate for charter

The Greater Shepparton Women's Charter Alliance advisory committee is calling for nominations from men or women to join the group.

The committee is made up of 15 community representatives and up to five members from Greater Shepparton City Council, including a councillor who acts as Charter Champion.

The committee aims to promote women in leadership and decision-making and focuses on promoting diversity, active citizenship and gender equality.

There are five vacant community positions and memberships are for a two-year period.

● For more information go to

www.greatershepparton.com.au, email women@shepparton.vic.gov.au, phone Greater Shepparton City Council on 5832 9700 or visit its office at 90 Welsford St, Shepparton.
Applications on Friday, May 20, at 5 pm.

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Below: Public notice in The Shepparton Adviser, 20 April 2016, regarding memberships.

PUBLIC NOTICES
Shepparton Adviser Page 35
2014/2016

Greater Shepparton City Council's Women's Charter Alliance Advisory Committee

Greater Shepparton City Council's Women's Charter Alliance Advisory Committee (WCAAC) is calling for nominations from local residents who are interested in becoming a member of the committee.

The WCAAC comprises of up to 15 community members and up to five representatives from Greater Shepparton City Council including a Councillor as the Charter Champion.

The committee aims to promote women in leadership and decision making. A three point action plan focussing on Diversity, Active Citizenship and Gender Equity guides the strategic objectives of the committee.

Memberships are for a two year period. Current members whose memberships are due to expire at the end of the 2015/2016 financial year are able to reapply.

Applications for nominations can be made:

- **Online** – www.greatershepparton.com.au
- **Email** – women@shepparton.vic.gov.au
- **In Person** – Greater Shepparton City Council, 90 Welsford Street, Shepparton.

Membership applications are open to all. Diversity is welcomed.

If you require the application form in another language, please contact us.

There are currently five vacant community positions.

**Applications will be open until
5.00pm Friday 20 May 2016.**

For more information please contact Emma Hofmeyer, Support Officer on **(03) 5832 9700** or by email to women@shepparton.vic.gov.au



GREATER SHEPPARTON

Push for females on board

INFO SESSION AIMS TO SUPPORT WOMEN CANDIDATES WANTING TO PURSUE ROLES IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

By **Thomas Moir**

An information session will be held next month aiming to encourage more women to run for council later this year.

Hosted by Greater Shepparton City Council, in partnership with the Greater Shepparton Women's Charter Alliance Advisory Com-

mittee, Victorian Local Government Association and GOWomenLG, it will offer people the opportunity to quiz a panel of councillors and former candidates about how to run a campaign, ways to be an effective councillor and being a representative for the community.

Greater Shepparton Mayor

Dinny Adem said it was important to have an equal gender representation on council to better reflect the views and values of our community.

"We would like to see a greater representation of women in local government so if you are thinking about standing but aren't too sure of what's involved, come

along to the session and find out," Cr Adem said.

"It is important that people standing for council have a strong understanding of what is involved, both leading up to the election as part of their campaign and if they are elected.

"This session will give people an opportunity to hear from people who have

been through the election process and those who have been elected to council," Cr Adem said.

Nine Greater Shepparton City councillors will be elected for a four-year term in October, an increase on the existing seven.

Deputy Mayor Fern Sumner this year called for more women, mums and

younger people to stand for council, and said to prospective candidates that being on council was not as demanding a position as it might first appear.

Greater Shepparton Information session, Wednesday, May 11, 6 pm, Shepparton Senior Citizens Centre, 132 Weisford St, Shepparton.

Women encouraged to stand for council

GREATER Shepparton City Council, in partnership with the Greater Shepparton Women's Charter Alliance Advisory Committee, Victorian Local Government Association and GOWomenLG are hosting an information session aimed at encouraging women to stand for council.

The session will comprise a panel of councillors, mayors and former council candidates and will discuss running a campaign, being an effective councillor, how to make a difference and being a voice for the community.

Greater Shepparton City Council Mayor and charter champion, Cr Dinny Adem said it was important to have an equal gender representation on council to better reflect the views and values of our community.

"We would like to see a greater representation of women in local government, so if you are thinking about standing but aren't too sure of what's involved, come along to the session and find out," Cr Adem said.

The information session will be held on Wednesday, May 11 from 6pm at the Shepparton Senior Citizens Centre, 132 Welsford Street, Shepparton.

For more information, or to register for the Shepparton session, visit www.eventbrite.com.au/e/local-government-forum-shepparton-tickets-24248210049

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