

Womensport NSW

2014 Annual Showcase

Long Term Strategic Partnerships with Local Government – Notes for Presentation

Amanda Spalding, Vice-President Womensport NSW

Slide 1

Womensport NSW has been working on this Program with Local Government with funding from the Minister's Strategic Partnership Fund for 2 years of a 5 year program. We started in 2012 and have gained momentum over the past 2 years to make a real difference through working with the 152 councils in NSW. The aim is to assist councils to ensure the needs of women and girls in equity, access and participation are promoted as a priority in the strategic and land use planning for sport and recreation, in localising the State Plan for each local government area, and in specific projects on the ground.

- Why local government? Councils have a community leadership role to develop long term Community Strategic Plans with their local community. These express the priorities of local communities and develop partnerships to deliver on those priorities.
- Councils **own** the majority of sport and recreation facilities
- Influence and often **determine who uses them**
- **Control** how they are managed
- Make land use planning **decisions**
- So They have a **BIG** part to play and this project is about working with councils to deliver results on the ground. Womensport NSW was invited to present this project at the International Working Group for Women in Sport at Helsinki.

Slide 2 Local Government Women in Sport Equity Program

We have undertaken research into the strategic planning that councils do, and the role they envisage for their sport and recreation service. Many Councils use their sport and recreation service to take an active role in promoting healthy and active communities.

Other councils only see their role in sport being an asset management role, that doesn't actively pursue the social justice principles of access, equity and participation.

We aim to get information to set baselines with councils that keep records for the use of their facilities so that we can tell where we are now so we can move forward together.

We find that councils who actively promote healthy communities are more likely to share our mission of access, equity and participation for women and girls through sport and recreation, and help girls to develop leadership skills to become community leaders.

In one Sydney Metropolitan Council the bookings of Council facilities for sport for women and girls are only 14% and for boys and men are 86%. The situation is often better in regional areas, but it depends on whether there are any organised competitions for girls.

In October 2013 we made a major step forward in our partnership with local government as Local Government NSW, the peak body that represents all 152 councils in NSW passed a resolution for its conference:

In relation to the resolutions from Blacktown and Shellharbour Councils regarding women in sport, Local Government NSW will shortly be calling on all councils to promote women in sport by improved access, participation and equity for women and girls.

From this we then developed our Local Government Women in Sport Equity Program that we launched in Broken Hill in March 2014 at the Australian Local Government Women Association NSW Conference. This is an awards based program like the 50:50 Gender Equity Program for local government. You will see the flyer on your chairs. Councils will be apply to Womensport NSW for accreditation as a Council working towards sporting equity for women and girls.

Slide 3 – Making a Difference

So are we making a difference? The answer is yes. We are succeeding in influencing many councils, these are our top 13.

We have named some councils here that we feel we are making a difference with, and they are making a difference on the ground helping us to deliver our mission of equity, access and participation for women and girls through sport.

We have researched 57% of the 152 councils in NSW and this work is ongoing. We found that 71% of those councils are Active – in other words they are using their sport and recreation service to promote active and healthy communities. Of those 86 councils, we need to go back and look at 73 of them as they developed their Community Strategic Plans in 2011 and 2012 and reviewed them in 2013. We have looked at the changes that 3 big councils made and see that they moved from being Passive Councils, to being Active Councils. Those Councils are **Parramatta, Penrith and Warringah**, so we are hopeful that more councils will have changed to being Active councils..... Parramatta and Penrith are speaking on the Panel.

We are engaging with Councils through submissions to their Community Strategic Plans, Delivery Programs and Operational Plans as well as through our Girls Get Active events, to make a sustainable difference.

We are holding a GGA event with Blacktown next month. **Blacktown** aspires to be the Sport City, with the vision that *families participate in some form of sporting code or activity, creating a healthy and fit community.*

We worked in partnership with **Marrickville** council to put on a Girls Get Active – Together in Motion event in March this year to celebrate International Women's Day. Sadly Simone Schwarz couldn't join us this evening, but let me know the progress they are making

- *Currently reviewing the sportsground allocation policy to include a guideline that sees women's clubs having a minimum access of 30% to bookable fields. This will mean that where there are competing requests and women only have 20% of allocations – the new booking will be prioritised. This is designed to ensure women's start up clubs or not disadvantaged by historical access being granted to other clubs, where women's divisions are not offered.*
- *Council is working with service providers of our major sports centres such as the PCYC to build recreation programs specifically for women, where there is an identified under utilisation by women at the centre. Marketing will only be targeted at women to increase utilisation of Council facilities.*
- *Council is also working with a number of clubs, namely Randwick Petersham Cricket Club and Dulwich Hill Soccer Club to introduce women's divisions within their respective clubs. This will assist with the provision of additional sports and locations available for women to participate in the local area.*

We held a Girls Get Active Event with **Shoalhaven** Council in **March 2014**.

Leichhardt is speaking on the Panel, so Erla will talk about the difference they are making.

Pittwater *'we have now included additional strategies as a result of your letter to ensure greater equity, access and participation in sport in Pittwater for women and girls'*

We ran a Girls Get Active event with Shoalhaven City Council also in March 2014 that *'will continue to generate outcomes and encouragement for girls to make being active a part of their lives now and in the future.'*

Warringah as well as moving from Passive to Active has started to record gender statistics at our behest.

Rockdale made changes to its Community Strategic Plan to improve participation outcomes to under-represented groups.

Nambucca Shire Council changed its Community Strategic Plan in response to our submission to include community indicators and a strong focus on health and well being.

Cootamundra Shire Council has changed its Delivery Program as a result of our submission to read: *provide a range of activities suitable for all ages, genders, ethnicities, ability levels and socio-economic groups.*

We made a submission to **Great Lakes** Council who replied *'your comments regarding recreation and Naiboc swimming pool will be taken into consideration with the development of future plans and achievable outcomes.'*

Slide 4 Ballina Shire Council

Our latest star council is Ballina Shire. *'In response to your submission to Council's draft Delivery Program and Operational Plan 2014/15 I wish to confirm that Council has now amended its plan to include this strategy and actions'*

CC3.4 Provide strategies for increased participation by females	<i>Healthier and more active women and girls</i>	CC3.4.1 Develop actions to improve female participation rates in recreational activities		
		<i>CC3.4.1a</i>	Identify measures and undertake actions to promote increased female participation rates	Participation rates and actions implemented to increase rates

Slide 5 Bourke Girls Get Active Event

In November 2012 we held a GGA event in Bourke attended also by girls from Brewarrina and Walgett that was sponsored by the Minister for Sport and Graincorp. Our GGA events work on the presumption that “You can only be what you can see” – to encourage girls to dream of a different future.

The Female sporting champions talk about their experiences, as role models that schoolgirls would not normally encounter, and help the girls to understand that perseverance and self belief are just as important as talent and training in achieving their ambitions. We aim to provide the necessary inspiration and participation for girls to continue chasing their dreams despite the barriers they may face and helps them to develop leadership skills to become leaders within their community, and close the gap.

Last Thursday and Friday I was in Bourke and Brewarrina on business and took the opportunity to meet with the Councils, and the Brewarrina Central school to ask whether our GGA event had made a sustainable difference on the ground.

From these discussions we are hoping to develop the girls’ equivalent of the highly successful Clontarf Program for Aboriginal Boys. The Clontarf Foundation believes that failure to experience achievement when young, coupled with a position of under privilege can lead to alienation, anger and potentially to more serious consequences. Boys who participate in the program are first provided with an opportunity to succeed and to raise their self-esteem. The vehicle for achieving this outcome is sport.

Building on the existing Girl Fit program in Brewarrina and linking it with a sister program in Orange, using sport to build self esteem and resilience as well as work and vocational pathways and outdoor recreation to make a real difference. We would aim to hold a GGA with Orange City Council next year with the Girl Fit girls from Brewarrina.

Slide 6 Best Practice Sporting Facilities

We have been talking to Councils about a Best Practice sports amenities building that is inclusive for women and girls, athletes with disability, and people from different cultural backgrounds .

This is an early version of one that was being developed by Rockdale City Council. The concept was to have private cubicles outside the showers so that athletes have privacy when dressing and undressing, and we suggest that there should be 2 umpires’/referees’ rooms for officials of different genders.

Also, the lighting in car parks and outside the buildings is important so people feel safe training and playing at night.

Slide 7 What remains to be done?

There is still much to be done. As well as working with councils we need to continue to work closely with Sports NSW to encourage State Sporting Organisations, Regional Sporting Organisations and local clubs to develop and implement targets for women's participation in all areas including officiating and boards to deliver equity results on the ground.

There is still much to be done with Councils leading up to the local government elections in 2016 and the development of their new Community Strategic Plans and we aim to assist all 152 councils in NSW to include our mission in their new plans to deliver results.