



HUME CITY COUNCIL  
**SOCIAL JUSTICE  
CHARTER**  
2014

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# MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

Council recognises that every citizen of Hume City is entitled to aspire to a quality of life that allows them to freely realise their potential. The Social Justice Charter goes 'beyond words' to promote a fair and just society. Council is committed to advancing social justice and to address the social, cultural, economic and other factors that impact on the aspirations of its citizens.

As Mayor of Hume City Council, it is with great pride that I am able to bring to you the 2014 Social Justice Charter, incorporating the Hume Citizen's Bill of Rights. This 2014 edition of the Hume City Council Social Justice Charter, reiterates our commitment to recognising that all people are born free and equal in dignity and rights.

Social justice is the key to building a brighter future for our community. Local government is the level closest to the people and is in a perfect position to work towards enhancing community wellbeing by providing essential services, facilities and support networks. Council recognises that only long term sustained investment and support from all levels of government will improve the social and economic wellbeing of our community.

The attainment of social justice has been at the heart of Hume City Council's vision for many years - with Council making its major public commitment to Social Justice through the adoption of its original Charter in 2001. Significant action has been taken by Council since the original adoption. A range of innovative programs, services and infrastructure have been delivered to help this community reach its full potential.

The Broadmeadows Community Hub, the delivery of the Global Learning Centre in Craigieburn and the redevelopment of the Boardman Stadium in Sunbury are infrastructure projects that aim to facilitate learning, healthy lifestyles and community connections.

Council programs such as the Supporting Parents and Developing Children program, with a focus on literacy, language and learning helps to build community cohesion, encourages participation and strengthens community wellbeing. The development

of the Jobs and Skills Task Force aims to improve employment and training opportunities for Hume residents. We are also about to embark on a new project: 'Together 3047' which will focus on the 3047 postcode area of Broadmeadows and work with that community to improve pride, prosperity and connectedness in the community.

The outcomes we seek through this Social Justice Charter can only be done in partnership with community and stakeholders. Council's Social Justice Actions Plans place this City on a unique path towards strengthening the foundations upon which to build a just and inclusive City for all. It further commits Council to promote respect for every citizen, encourage community participation, strengthen community wellbeing and reduce the causes of disadvantage.

Hume City Council is on a journey to create a city in which all our diverse communities will be able to participate - without any distinction or discrimination of any kind.

**Cr. Casey Nunn**  
Mayor of Hume City



## 2. SOCIAL JUSTICE POLICY FRAMEWORK

*"We are all custodians of human rights and we must find our own way to do what is required"* Mary Robinson<sup>2</sup>

This Charter is a Social Justice Policy Framework underpinned by the concept of Social Justice with four inter-connected and overlapping elements:

**Principles** — influence the process and actions.

**Rights** — The Citizens Bill of Rights, incorporating *The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)*.

**Actions** — includes Social Justice Action Plans and other strategic documents.

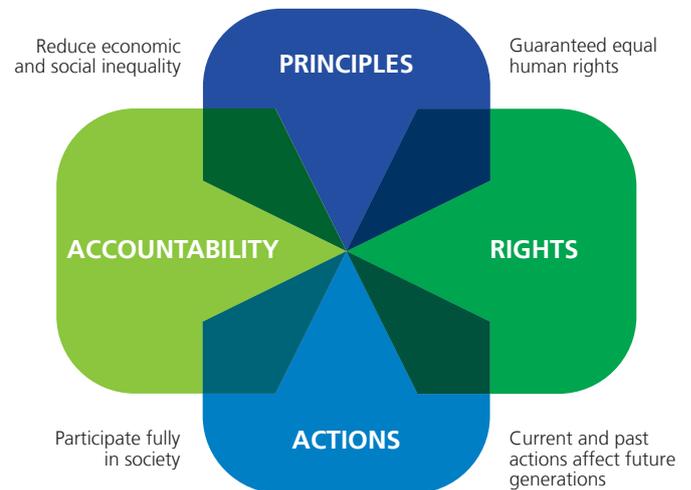
**Accountability** — monitoring of progress and Annual Reporting.

The Social Justice Framework detailed in this Charter assists Councillors and officers to apply the guiding principles in making policy and providing services to the Hume City community in the conduct of their responsibilities.

Social Justice means:

- Every effort should be made to reduce economic and social inequality.
- All people should be guaranteed equal human rights.
- All people should be enabled to participate fully in society.
- A just society understands that actions and experiences of the past and current decisions and activities affect future generations.

FIGURE ONE:  
SOCIAL JUSTICE POLICY FRAMEWORK



2. Mary Robinson is the former United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and former President of Ireland.

### 3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

What Council does and the actions and decisions it makes, matters. Council plans for, and promotes and protects the enjoyment of human rights by taking action within the resources and opportunities that are reasonably available. Council will implement actions under the Guiding Principles of the Charter.

Council has and continues to act within the Social Justice Framework and guided by the following principles. Council will:

- Represent and advocate on behalf of Hume City's citizens.
- Adopt a proactive role in supporting community initiatives.
- Create incentives that promote social and economic growth.
- Strive to strengthen community pride.
- Connect citizens with each other and their neighbourhoods.
- Foster development at individual, community and organisational level to secure a sustainable and healthy future for citizens.
- Recognise, welcome and build upon diversity of communities.
- Invest in community building.
- Promote partnership and collaborate in innovative ways to benefit and strengthen the community.

Hume City's Community Plan: Hume Horizons 2040, is the foundation to Council's corporate planning framework and is a plan for the whole community that has been developed in consultation with the community and within the policy framework of social justice and sustainability.

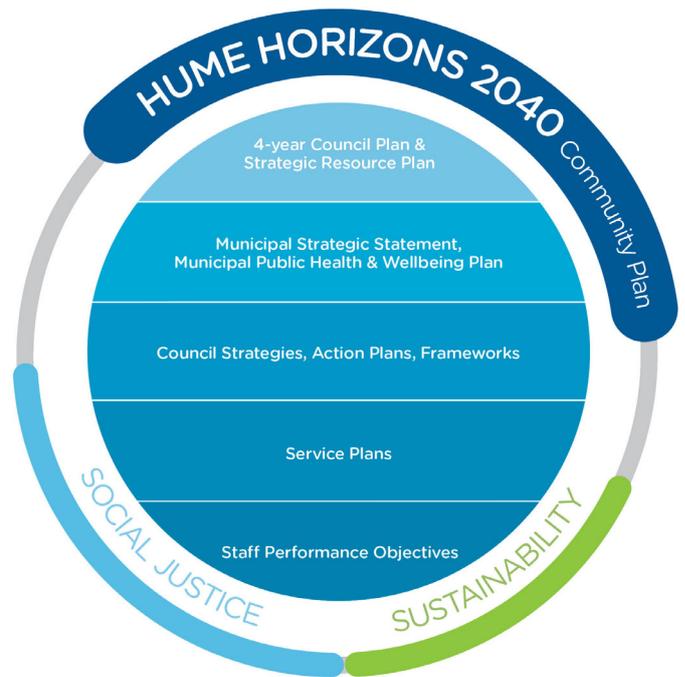


FIGURE TWO:  
SOCIAL JUSTICE POLICY FRAMEWORK – PRINCIPLES



## 4. HUME CITY CITIZEN'S BILL OF RIGHTS

*'The equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world'<sup>3</sup>*

Every citizen of Hume City is free and equal in dignity and in rights and is entitled to aspire to the quality of life that allows them to freely realise their potential.

Hume City Council affirms that each and every one of our citizens and people who work or visit Hume City, have universal, inalienable human rights. These rights are recognised under international, Australian and Victorian law, to varying degrees, including those rights set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

From 1 January 2008, all public authorities, including local councils, are obliged to act compatibly with the Victorian Charter Act. Hume City Council has a legal obligation to act compatibly with human rights in the way they go about their work and deliver their services.

In practice, this means that local councils must:

- Give proper consideration to human rights when making decisions
- Ensure that actions, policies and services are compatible with human rights
- Interpret and apply local laws consistently with human rights
- Ensure that people who work on their behalf, including third parties, do so in a way that respects human rights.<sup>4</sup>

### 4.1 HUMAN RIGHTS

Hume City Council is charged with the promotion of the peace, order, and good governance of Hume City: a responsibility shared as part of a three tiered system of local, state and federal governments; a responsibility that is only met in partnership.

Hume City Council recognises the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)*<sup>5</sup> which also guides the development of Council policy, plans and strategies. The Victorian Charter outlines the human rights and responsibilities of all Victorians and visitors to our State, based firmly in the international covenants of human rights, with similar spirit and commitment as this Social Justice Charter.

To support our community's aspirations for tolerance, dignity and quality of life, the following rights and responsibilities are expected to be upheld and exercised by all members of the Hume City community, including Council, service providers, local businesses, community groups and our residents:

- The equal rights of men and women.
- The right to a standard of living which ensures the dignity of each and every person.
- The right to access adequate food, clothing, housing and health.
- The right to learning throughout life.
- The right to work.
- The right to participate in public life.
- The right to participate in the cultural life of the community.
- The right to rest and leisure.
- The right to liberty and safety.
- The right to income support and social support.
- The right of everyone to enjoy freedom of expression.
- The right of peaceful assembly and freedom of association.
- The right of protection for children and families.
- The right to be respected as an individual and a member of the community without distinction or discrimination.
- The right to have access to a healthy and safe natural environment.

3. Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Preamble)

4. Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission; <http://www.humanrightscsmission.vic.gov.au/index.php/the-charter-and-local-government/charter-obligations>

5. Referred to as the Victorian Charter Act subsequently

## 4.2 PARTICIPATORY RIGHTS

Council acknowledges that the spirit and vigour of democracy and human rights is founded in partnerships and participation with Hume communities. Hume City Council simply cannot achieve full human rights and responsibilities for our citizens without the active participation of its residents, visitors, workers and stakeholders.

Council firmly supports and affirms the rights and responsibilities of Hume's citizens to participate in the community and acknowledge the following Participatory Rights:

**The right to political representation** – citizens have the right to stand for election and support the person of their choice. Council will continue to:

- Promote awareness of its citizens' right to stand for election and be involved in government at a local (or other) level.
- Ensure that electoral processes are, as far as practicable, appropriate to the abilities of Hume City's diverse communities.

**The right to vote** – under the Local Government Act 2003 citizens have the right to vote in local government elections. This is an essential foundation in a healthy democracy and one which we actively encourage. We will continue to encourage participation in this right and:

- Promote awareness of the right to apply to enrol to vote, particularly for young people and those from a non-English speaking background.
- Assist applicants to successfully enrol to vote.

**The right to participate in public life** – it is important that citizens actively participate in the decisions that affect their lives. Hume City Council will continue to support this right through:

- Consultation on major policies, plans and projects, including ensuring consultations at times are reasonably convenient and in venues that are accessible.
- Support for and active engagement with advisory networks, forums and Taskforces.
- Adhering to Council's Community Engagement Framework and Planning Guide.

**The right to access information** – it is important that citizens access information about policies, programs and decisions that affect them and their wider community. Hume City Council will continue support this right by:

- Open and accessible Ward and Council meetings, that are well advertised and at times/places that are accessible.
- Timely and accessible publication of meeting agenda and minutes, plans, policy, reports and budgets.
- Regular publication of relevant and useful information through newsletters, public notices, the local newspaper, social media and the Council's internet site.

**The right to accountability** – it is important that citizens can hold decision makers accountable for their decisions and that decisions made are transparent. Council will support this right by:

- The Annual Council Report incorporating a progress report on the implementation of the Social Justice Action Plans;
- Annual report to the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights and Commission (VEOHRC) on the operation of the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and responsibilities.
- Demonstration of consideration of Human Rights in Council decision making through the Council reporting process.

All Hume citizens are free and equal in dignity and in rights, and are entitled to aspire to the quality of life that allows them to freely realise their potential.

Each and every one of our Hume City's citizens, and people who work or visit Hume City, have universal, inalienable human rights.

These rights are recognised under international, Australian and Victorian law, to varying degrees, including those rights set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

Hume City Council is charged with the promotion of the peace, order and good governance of Hume City: a responsibility shared as part of a three-tiered system of Local, State and Federal governments and supported by Hume's community. This is a responsibility that is only met in partnership, and one in which Hume City Council strives to take a strong civic leadership role.

## 5. COMMITMENT TO ACTION

*'in pursuit of a fair and just society'*<sup>6</sup>

Hume City Council acknowledges that both targeted and general actions are needed to encourage participation, strengthen community wellbeing and address disadvantage.

The Commitment to Action responds to social justice issues that have been identified through community consultation, the development of the Hume Horizons 2040 Community Plan, and analysis of the Hume social profile data.

Social justice issues can be viewed as either a group of interconnected circumstances, or determined by the characteristic of the person. Social Justice issues relevant to the Hume community are:

- Social distress
- Respect for difference
- Health
- Low income
- Community safety
- Access to recreation
- Economic
- Education
- Affordable housing
- Disability
- Social connectedness
- Transport
- Alcohol, other drugs, problem gambling

### 5.1 SOCIAL JUSTICE ACTION PLANS

The Social Justice Charter takes sustained action on a set of social justice issues through strategic plans to enhance community wellbeing. The plans developed demonstrate appropriate concern of issues of social justice, inclusion and community wellbeing by "going beyond words" to implement strategic responses in the pursuit of a fair and just society.

Targeted Action Plans have been developed under this Charter with a focus on participation in opportunities that promote and protect community wellbeing, social justice data collection and performance measurement.

In addition, the objectives of the Social Justice Charter are driven by actions included in the following Council Plans and Strategies.

#### ACTION PLANS:

**Disability Action Plan 2012 - 2016**

**Multicultural Action Plan 2014 - 2018**

**Reconciliation Action Plan 2013 - 2017**

#### STRATEGIC PLANS:

**Hume Horizons 2040 Community Plan**

**Hume City Council Council Plan 2013 - 2017**

**Hume Municipal Strategic Statements**

**Hume Health & Wellbeing Action Plan 2013 - 2017**

**Hume City Council Youth Strategy 2011 - 2014**

**Community Engagement Framework & Planning Guide 2011**

**Hume Integrated Growth Area Plan**

**Broadmeadows Structure Plan**

**Economic Development Strategy 2030**

**Learning Together Strategy 2030**

**Hume Integrated Land use and Transport Strategy (HILATS)**

6. Vinson, T. op cit.

The Action Plans have a consistent structure comprising:

1. Actions grouped into themes of:
  - **Information** — Two-way communication between Council and the community is crucial to ensure the principles of social justice are achieved and the community's access to appropriate, timely and easy to understand information from Council is improved.
  - **Access and Participation** — Access to services, programs, venues and cultural activities are central to achieving social justice delivered through engagement or partnership with the local community and other stakeholders.
  - **Advocacy** — Advocacy is crucial in achieving social justice as it aims to raise awareness beyond the municipality of the needs and challenges faced by the Hume community. Advocacy is not driven by Council alone, but is generally achieved in partnership with the local community and other stakeholders.
2. Include performance measures/indicators which – as best as practicable – are designed to be outcome-oriented (as opposed to output or activity measures); and
3. Will be implemented over a four year period with a progress report on implementation of each action plan included in the Annual report to the community.

## 5.2 POLICIES, STRATEGIES & PLANS

To enhance social justice outcomes in other areas (eg learning, transport and employment), there will be a general plan or strategy. These and other Council plans will specify the relationship with the principles, rights and desired social justice outcomes.

Council will:

- Take targeted and general approaches to addressing social justice issues.
- Refer to Social Justice principles, rights, outcomes and the obligations of the Victorian Charter Act in the development of future policies, strategies and plans.

Key responsibilities, in accordance with our Federal system of Government for the provision of transport, education, health services and housing reside with other levels of government. Hume City Council will work with our colleagues at all levels of government, corporations, business and community organisations in pursuit of a fair and just society.

FIGURE THREE:  
SOCIAL JUSTICE POLICY FRAMEWORK -  
SOCIAL JUSTICE ACTION PLANS



## 6. COMMITMENT TO ACCOUNTABILITY

*“Let there be justice for all” Nelson Mandela<sup>7</sup>*

Hume City Council considers that accountable governance has occurred when there is a review of activities that includes evaluation of effectiveness of the program and regular and transparent reporting of actions and decisions. In this Charter, accountability is acknowledged as a right and an element of the Social Justice Policy Framework.

When assessing social justice actions, indicators of community wellbeing provide a multi – dimensional measure for evaluation and accountability.

### 6.1 ANNUAL SOCIAL JUSTICE REPORT

Council is committed to publishing an annual progress report on the achievements and key outcomes of the Social Justice Charter and Action Plans. The pledge that the Charter be a ‘living’ document ensures the continued evolution of the Charter to reflect the community experience and be responsive to emerging issues. This shall occur through ongoing community participation and engagement through the implementation of the Action Plans

The annual reporting on the delivery of actions includes the collection of participatory data. There will be an annual progress report to Council for the following plans:

- **Reconciliation Action Plan**
- **Disability Action Plan**
- **Multicultural Action Plan**

### 6.2 SOCIAL JUSTICE REVIEW

Hume City Council will use the principles of social justice and human rights to evaluate all of our policies, strategies and plans. Through comprehensive assessment and review, we will ensure that our policies, strategic plans and programs include universal, inalienable human rights for our citizens or visitors in Hume City.

This is a ‘living’ Charter that evolves through ongoing dialogue with our citizens, in response to their emerging needs. Council commits to ongoing review to ensure reflection and response to community aspirations and experiences.

The Action Plans are supported by internal and external groups who provide oversight of the implementation and operational elements and monitor progress to ensure the plans are meeting their objectives.

These groups are:

<b>ACTION PLAN</b>	<b>COUNCIL (INTERNAL)</b>	<b>COMMUNITY (EXTERNAL)</b>
<b>Disability Action Plan (DAP)</b>	<b>Disability Social Inclusion Committee</b>	<b>Hume Disabilities Issues Group</b>
<b>Multicultural Action Plan (MAP)</b>	<b>Multicultural Social Inclusion Committee</b>	<b>MAP Working Group</b>
<b>Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)</b>	<b>Reconciliation Social Inclusion Committee</b>	<b>Hume Reconciliation Action Group</b>

Figure Four below illustrates accountability as an element in the Social Justice Policy Framework.

**FIGURE FOUR:  
SOCIAL JUSTICE POLICY FRAMEWORK –  
ACCOUNTABILITY**



7. Independent on Sunday (14 May 1994) Nelson Mandela, South African Statesman and former president.

## 7. COMMITMENT TO DEMONSTRATE

### 7.1 PUTTING PARTICIPATORY RIGHTS INTO ACTION

Council has developed a Social Justice Guide for Action and Implementation. The purpose of this document is to provide practical tools and support to individuals and organisations that seek to implement social justice outcomes into the work that they do in a systematic and supported way.

The guide describes what assets and elements that must be paid attention to in order to be an effective and sustainable social justice organisation. Also contained within the guide are examples of the types of behaviours and philosophies that an organisation committed to social justice will display.

Through the provision of descriptions, examples, tips and tools the guide seeks to empower Council and all our partners committed to promoting social justice and putting into practice human rights policy and principles.

*"Social Justice is fundamental to everything we do. Not just Council but the whole community. We all have a role to play in ensuring people are treated fairly and with the highest level of respect."*

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Community member, Hume Horizons 2040 consultations 2013

# HumeLink

Hume City Council's  
multilingual telephone information service.  
**General enquiries: Telephone 9205 2200**

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