



**MEDIA RELEASE: FRIDAY, 10 NOVEMBER, 2017**

### **Women Mayors take stand on Family Violence**

As the 2017 mayoral year draws to an end, we can all look back with pride as 2017 holds the highest number of women Mayors ever elected in Victoria's history.

Strathbogie Shire Council Mayor Amanda McClaren stands united with her fellow mayors with concern about the unacceptable level of family violence in Victorian communities.

Strathbogie Shire Council's CEO, Steve Crawcour is also an advocate for breaking down barriers related to domestic violence, as one of few local government CEOs to be an official White Ribbon Ambassador and the first to have this commitment included in his contract.

Among many risk factors, the role of gender inequality contributes to the prevalence of domestic violence.

Ensuring that approaches to combating violence are evidence-based and based on best practice from across the world is paramount.

Achieving progress will require a change in the culture that allows violence, by sending the right messages to our children; by supporting early childhood and school educators to embed Respectful Relationships into the curriculum from preschool, throughout primary and secondary education.

This will require cooperation at all levels of government in working together on prevention of violence, as well as providing service to those needing immediate and ongoing support.

Raising awareness of gender equity is essential to changing attitudes towards women that can lead to disrespect and violence.

We are asking all female politicians at every level of government and from all sides of politics pledge to take a stand against violence.

We also ask our male colleagues and community leaders to stand beside us and continue to support efforts to work together against family violence.

Respectful Relationships is one of Strathbogie Shire Council's key priorities in their draft Liveability Plan 2017-2021, which aims to enable environments that promote non-violent norms and equal respectful relationships to build resilience.

Cr McClaren said reducing violence in the community is about education and having open conversations.

"Our recent Liveability Survey exposed an alarming statistic that 22 per cent of those surveyed had witnessed violence or experienced an injury due to violence," she said.

"Council aims to combat this by supporting our communities to build and nurture respectful relationships through our policies and our actions."

-ENDS-

**Media contact:** Clare Allen- 5795 0028

**Key Spokesperson:** Mayor Amanda McClaren- 0409 700 958