



HUME CITY COUNCIL

Gender Equality Action Plan 2021-2025

Welcome from the Chief Executive Officer

As Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Hume City Council (Council), it is with great pride that I introduce our Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) 2021-2025.

2021 marks two years since Council introduced its first ever Gender Equity Action Plan in 2019, developed to further support Council's ongoing commitment to ensuring that all staff are able to receive and enjoy the same rewards, resources and opportunities regardless of gender identity. I am delighted to reaffirm Council's commitment to gender equality, and to building a fair, prosperous and healthy society, where women, men and gender-diverse people are afforded equally the opportunities to thrive.

Council has a proud and progressive history when it comes to gender equality, playing a strong leadership role in raising awareness of the importance of gender equality through activities such as White Ribbon Day events, Leadership Forums, staff gender equity awareness training, and clauses in the EBA to support employees who experience family violence, and workplace flexibility. Our 2019 Gender Equity Action Plan further advanced our work in this space, underpinned by three core themes taken directly from staff:

1. Council provides an inclusive, safe and equitable workplace culture
2. Gender equality is actively and consistently considered in Council's people management and recruitment practices
3. Council fosters and promotes gender equality in our internal communications and strategic documents

However, more work can be done, as we recommit ourselves to building a workplace and society that is fair and equitable for all. Further, the timely release of our 2021 GEAP coincides with the publication of Council's revised Social Justice Charter 2021, which seeks to promote respect for every citizen, to encourage community participation, to improve wellbeing and to reduce the causes of disadvantage.

In working together with our people and our communities, we look forward to helping this to become a reality.



Sheena Frost
Chief Executive Officer

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1. Introduction



Introduction

Background to the Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP)

Council develops and delivers a broad range of policies, programs, initiatives and services for the City of Hume community. The organisation has a responsibility to continuously and proactively work to improve gender equality and other forms of social inclusion within its workforce and the local community.

Significant reform in relation to gender equality has taken place Federally and at a State-level over the past decade, which has had an impact on all facets of society in Victoria. In 2016, the Royal Commission into Family Violence demonstrated that gender inequality at all levels must be addressed in order to reduce family violence and all other forms of violence against women. In response, the Victorian Government released Safe and Strong in 2016, Victoria's first ever gender equality strategy.¹

The Gender Equality Act 2020 (the Act) was developed as part of the Safe and Strong initiative, following a series of stakeholder consultations which involved 10 face-to-face stakeholder workshops, a Citizens Jury as well as 56 submissions and 700 responses through Engage Victoria. After the Act was passed in February 2020, the Department of Premier and Cabinet (Victoria) began work on its implementation and established the Commission for Gender Equality in the Public Sector.¹ The Commission supports the Public Sector Gender Equality Commissioner to oversee the implementation of the Act and promote gender equality in the public sector workforce and the broader Victorian community.

The Act¹ aims to:

- Promote, encourage and facilitate the achievement of gender equality
- Identify and eliminate systemic causes of gender inequality in policy, programs and delivery of services
- Recognise the impact of other forms of disadvantage on gender equality (intersectional gender equality)
- Enhance economic and social participation by persons of different genders

The Act applies to certain defined entities – those in the public sector, universities and local councils – that employ more than 50 people. These defined entities are required to first submit the data sourced from an audit of gender equality in the workplace, which Council completed in September 2021. Then, entities must develop a Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP), which includes the results of the internal gender equality audit and strategies for achieving workplace gender equality.¹

They must provide a public report on their progress, approximately 18 months after the submission of this GEAP. Appendix A defines all key terms used within this report.

¹ Commission for Gender Equality in the Public Sector

Council Responsibilities under the Act

As a Victorian public entity with over 50 employees, Council is required to comply with the Gender Equality Act 2020 from 31 March 2021. Ernst and Young was engaged to assist Council in meeting their statutory obligations, set out below. The methodology to produce Council's GEAP 2021-2025 is detailed below and in Appendix B.

1 Baseline audit analysis

An assessment of the current state of intersectional gender equality at Council has been undertaken through a workplace gender audit. This has highlighted areas for improvement, and areas where Council has high levels of gender parity.

This audit incorporates employee disaggregated data and anonymised employee responses to large-scale surveys.

Unless otherwise stated, the data collected and reported on herein spans the period 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021.

2 Meaningful consultation and engagement

Consultation was conducted in order to assess the level of intersectional gender equality at Council from a lived experience perspective. Conducted in October 2021, they provided feedback on action items recommended as per this GEAP.

Consultation was targeted as set out in the Gender Equality Action Plan 2021-2025 Guidance for Defined Entities, and included the Council Gender Equity and LGBTIQ+ working groups, employees from each department, union delegates, department leadership and senior executives.

3 The GEAP strategies and measuring progress

Consultation feedback and workplace data has informed the recommendations included in this document.

This GEAP provides ongoing, measurable action items which will propel Council's progress towards a gender equitable workplace.

History of Gender Equality Work at Council

Council has a strong recent record of gender equality work, as well as more general social justice commitments. 2021 marks 20 years since Hume City Council first affirmed its commitment to Social Justice with the adoption of the inaugural Social Justice Charter, with a focus on access, participation and accountability. Though it outlines a number of strategic actions to achieve this, such as the implementation of Disability, Multicultural and Reconciliation Plans, no strategic actions specifically relate to gender, however the equal rights between men and women is the first listed human right in the charter. The charter will continue to guide Council in its journey to foster, create and nurture a fairer society for all.

Council's Gender Equity Action Plan 2019 ('2019 GEAP') was developed internally following the Victorian Government's 2017 Listen, Learn, Lead Program. This program engaged with approximately 60 Council employees, focussing on women in senior leadership, and emerging women in Council. These consultations identified three key areas of improvement for gender equality at Council. The actions included in the 2019 GEAP formed the basis of the 2021 GEAP to ensure work was building off already identified

issues and opportunities.

The first goal of the 2019 GEAP was to ensure that Council was a gender equitable, safe and inclusive workspace. Two key recommendations under this theme were the expansion of active bystander and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) training to 100% of employees, as well as the improvement of women's access to hands-on leadership upskilling programs such as Learn to Lead and Passport to Work.

The second goal was to cement principles of gender equity into Council's people management and recruitment policies. An update and retraining of the Leaders Toolkit remains ongoing, with recruitment managers currently undergoing unconscious bias training.

The final goal was to foster and promote gender equality through internal communications and documents. These recommendations focused on creating guidelines on how to apply an equitable lens when drafting council documents.

Gender Equality Training Policy

Currently, training programs and sessions are the primary way in which the Council workforce are exposed to the issue of gender equality and are provided with an opportunity to upskill themselves in this area. Training was a key focus of the 2019 GEAP. Currently, these training programs are delivered in the form of compulsory online EEO modules, as well the opt-in active bystander training.

The EEO modules include content on sexual harassment, bullying and discrimination. Therefore, all employees are exposed to anti-gender discriminatory content; however, given each module is 20 minutes in length, there is the potential that some may lose out on an understanding of the intersectional complexity of the issue.

The active bystander training is opt-in. Though some of these training programs are not gender-specific, third party programs such as from Women's Health in the North (WHIN) include a detailed discussion of preventing discrimination against women - noting however the exclusion of LGBTIQ+ and gender diverse employees.



Commitment to Intersectionality and Inclusion

The Gender Equality Act 2020 recognises that for many, gender inequality may be compounded by other forms of disadvantage and marginalisation due to other characteristics. These characteristics may include ethnicity, age, ability, sexual orientation and gender identity. Therefore, attempts to redress gender inequality via a GEAP must take into account the influence of these factors on the needs of employees.

Audit analysis

In undertaking the audit analysis, due to a lack of information on key characteristics such as ethnicity, ability and religion, some intersections could not be explored. This was a result of the data available from Council and pre-determined survey questions as per the PMS.

Despite this, the audit incorporated the available information regarding intersectional factors. Gender-diverse individuals, as well as those who did not denote their gender, were incorporated into the reporting at every stage and levels of the workforce where gender diverse or gender not recorded individuals were noted.

An additional consideration of the audit's intersectional analysis was age. Mean remuneration of employees from all employment status was analysed by age, demonstrating that across the organisation, men received increased remuneration than women at all age brackets.

Case for change

Priority Area 8 of the case for change identified that Council is commencing its journey for those who identify outside of the gender binary, however greater work needs to be done to further support diversity and inclusion at Council. It identified that some sectors of the workforce had been 'sheltered' from diversity which was especially true for gender diversity, with areas of Council still operating in binary terms.

Further, a review of Council's externally facing image highlighted that the majority of social media or internet content was centred around more "general" celebrations of gender diversity such as International Women's Day, without reference to any intersectional factors or those whom identify outside of the gender binary.

Strategies and measures

The proposed strategies and measures have been developed to enable Council to address intersectional gender equality in the workplace. These actions include investigating and delivering best practice professional development on applying an intersectional gender lens, reviewing internal career opportunity processes and policies across the organisation with an intersectional lens and reviewing data collection and analysis practices to ensure key intersectional data is being captured to inform decision making on intersectional gender equality.

2021 GEAP alignment with existing intersectional policies

Council's Gender Equity Action Plan 2019 further established an intersectional lens to inclusion at Council, along with Council's Social Justice Charter, Multicultural Framework, Disability Action Plan (incorporated into the Council Plan 2021-2025) and Reconciliation Action Plan. These plans will work in alignment to further ensure an intersectional approach.

Though the Reconciliation Action Plan is chiefly targeted with supporting City of Hume residents rather than Council employees, a key point of overlap is the commitment to reducing systemic barriers in recruitment. Action 3.4 of the action plan is therefore integrated with Action 1.1 and 1.3 of the 2021 GEAP, in its commitment to improving manager awareness of unconscious bias within the recruitment context.

2. Audit Analysis



The Gender Equality Indicators

The Victorian Government's Gender Equality Act 2020 outlines seven workplace gender equality indicators.² They represent the most persistent sites of gender inequality in contemporary workplaces, and therefore are the focus of the initial gender equality audit. The quantitative analysis of workforce data, such as average pay and carer's leave, was structured around providing insights for these indicators, as were the responses to the PMS survey. Defined entities, such as Council, are required to make reasonable and material progress in relation to these indicators, as demonstrated over the span of the progress reports and subsequent GEAPs.

#1: Gender composition at all levels of the workforce

Women are often underrepresented in leadership roles, and overrepresented in lower-paid, lower-powered roles. This reinforces the gender pay gap and means the organisation misses out on women's experience and skills at senior levels.

#2: Gender composition of governing bodies

Governing bodies make important decisions about finances and strategy, therefore it is important to have diverse voices at the table. In the context of Council, this group denotes the elected Councillors.

#3: Gender pay equity

The gender pay gap is created by an absence of women in high-powered positions, gendered work segregation and workplace bias. The whole of organisation average pay gap currently stands at 10% in favour of men in the Victorian public sector.

#4: Workplace sexual harassment

Sexual harassment causes significant harm to victim survivors as well as having a detrimental impact to an organisation's culture, operations and ultimately the safety of all persons connected to the organisation.

#5: Recruitment and promotion

Gender bias and gender stereotypes can influence recruitment, promotion and career progression practices, leading to inequality in career development opportunities.

#6: Leave and flexibility

Flexible working arrangements and leave entitlements including parental leave and family violence leave help employees of all genders balance paid work with other responsibilities.

#7: Gendered workforce segregation

Gendered segregation is driven by gendered norms and stereotypes about what work is appropriate for men and women. As a result, women make up a higher proportion of certain occupations and industries, while men are more represented in others.

² Workplace gender equality indicators | Commission for Gender Equality in the Public Sector (genderequalitycommission.vic.gov.au)

Audit analysis for Gender Equality Indicator #1: Gender composition of all levels of the workforce (1/2)

According to the Commission for Gender Equality in the Public Sector, women are often underrepresented in leadership roles, and overrepresented in lower level roles. This contributes to the gender pay gap and results in organisations missing out on the expertise and skills of women at the senior levels.

Analysis showed that Council's overall workforce (n=1,719) as of 30

June 2021 was composed of 67.89% women, 31.59% men, 0.29% gender-diverse, and 0.23% whom prefer not to say. Specific trends and insights which were identified are discussed in further detail below.

Employee perceptions of Council gender composition

A total of six items examining employee perception of workplace gender composition were included in the 2021 PMS.

General trends observed across these items indicated that between 23% and 43% of survey respondents felt that there was room for Council to improve its overall culture towards people who were of different ages, genders, cultural backgrounds, and sexual preferences. This came through particularly strongly in relation to employees with a disability, with only 58% of PMS survey respondents indicating that there was a positive culture at Council towards people with a disability.

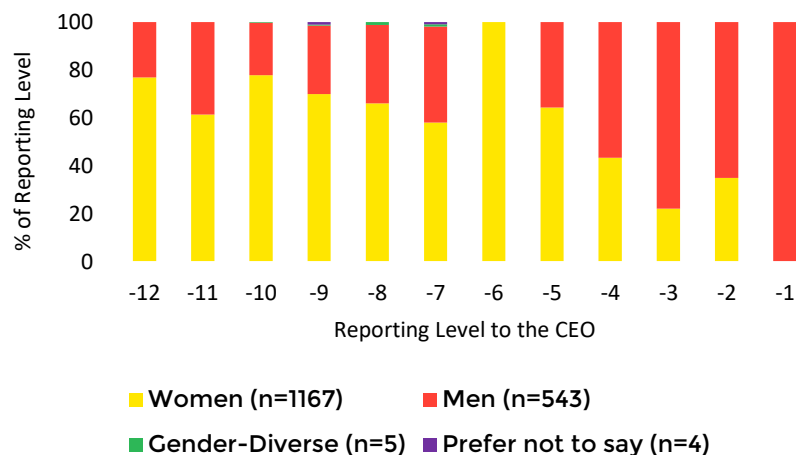
Representation of women across reporting levels

Consistent with the observation that Council's workforce is predominantly female, results showed that women make up over 50% of employees at the -12 to -5 reporting levels (see Figure 1). Further, women made up 100% of employees at the -6 reporting level.

Further analyses showed that at the most senior levels of the organisation (-4 to -1), women were substantially underrepresented as at 30 June 2021. Specifically, women made up just 43% of employees at the -4 reporting level, 22% of those at the -3 level, 35% of those at the -2 level, and 0% of those at the -1 level.

Representation data indicates there may be opportunities for Council to review barriers to women reaching and maintaining senior leadership positions, and identify areas for improvement.

Figure 1. Proportion of genders at each reporting level across Council



Audit analysis for Gender Equality Indicator #1: Gender composition of all levels of the workforce (2/2)

Representation of women by employment basis

Given that women make up 67.89% of Council's overall workforce, in a truly gender-equitable scenario, we would see similar proportions of women across different employment types (full-time, part-time, etc.). However, as shown in Table 1 below, 30.59% of all women are employed in a full-time permanent/ongoing basis, compared to 63.54% of all men. Conversely, 38.39% of all women are employed on a part-time permanent/ongoing capacity, compared to only 7.73% of all men.

Examining these trends from a different perspective, women make up 91.24% of Council's permanent/ongoing part-time employees, and 69% of the casual workforce. By comparison, only 8.55% and 30.54% of Council's permanent part-time and casual employees are male, respectively. Collectively, these results indicate there are opportunities for Council to address the significant over-representation of women in permanent part-time and casual work arrangements.

Table 1. Employment bases broken down by gender

Employment Basis	Women	Men	Gender-diverse	Prefer not to say	Total
Full-time permanent/ongoing	357 (50.42%)	345 (48.73%)	3 (0.42%)	3 (0.42%)	708 (100%)
Part-time permanent/ongoing	448 (91.24%)	42 (8.55%)	-	1 (0.20%)	491 (100%)
Full-time contract (fixed-term)	33 (62.26%)	20 (37.74%)	-	-	53 (100%)
Part-time contract (fixed-term)	33 (86.84%)	5 (13.16%)	-	-	38 (100%)
Casual	296 (69.00%)	131 (30.54%)	2 (0.47%)	-	429 (100%)

Representation of gender-diverse people at Council

A total of five Council employees identified as gender-diverse, representing 0.29% of Council's overall workforce. These rates are broadly consistent with estimates from Rainbow Health Victoria, which suggest approximately 1% of the population may identify as gender-diverse. In terms of employment type, three of these individuals were employed in a full-time permanent/ongoing capacity, with the remaining two being employed casually. As a step forward, Council may opt to leverage these insights to identify ways of attracting talent who identify outside of the gender binary to full-time and part-time roles.

Audit analysis for Gender Equality Indicator #2: Gender composition of governing bodies (1/1)

The Victorian Government has made a commitment that 50% of all new appointments to paid government boards must be women. Representation of women at the highest level of an organisation is vital to ensure that movement towards intersectional gender equality begins with and is led from the top down.

In the case of Council, the "Governing Board" to which this indicator refers to are Hume's councillors (n=11)

The gender composition of the Council governing body supports the trend observable in Indicator #1, namely that women and gender-diverse people are underrepresented at the most senior levels of the organisation, with women composing 27% of Council's councillors. By comparison, males comprise the remaining 73% of the governing body, including the Chair (Mayor). As at 30 June 2021, there were no gender-diverse individuals represented within Council's councillor group.

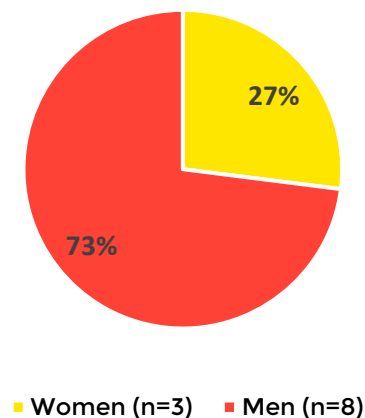
The challenge in addressing gender inequality across Council's governing body

Although data aligned to this indicator demonstrates a heavy proportion of males at the most senior level of Council's hierarchy, it is important to note that the organisation's capacity to address this area is somewhat limited.

Council's councillors are elected officials. The gender composition of Council's governing body is largely predicated on community voting preferences regarding the available candidates.

Given this, Council is in a position where it may opt to address the societal factors which underpin gender inequality, through engaging with the broader Hume community to understand current attitudes towards women and gender-diverse people in senior leadership positions within the Council. Similarly, an overarching community awareness campaign may also serve to promote councillor positions as viable career pathways for individuals of all genders, thereby increasing the gender diversity of the candidate pool.

Figure 2. Gendered Breakdown of Council's Governing Body



Audit analysis for Gender Equality Indicator #3: Remuneration across all level of the workforce (1/3)

Despite greater visibility and awareness around gender inequality, the gender pay gap remains a persistent issue. As of May 2021, Australia's national gender pay gap stands at 14.2%, with women, on average, earning \$261.50 per week less than men. According to the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA; 2021), this gap is underpinned by a variety of factors, including but not limited to:

- Discrimination and bias in hiring and pay decisions
- Women and men working in different industries and different jobs, with female-dominated industries and jobs attracting lower wages
- Women's disproportionate share of unpaid caring and domestic work
- Lack of workplace flexibility to accommodate caring and other responsibilities, especially in senior roles
- Women's greater time out of the workforce impacting career progression and opportunities.

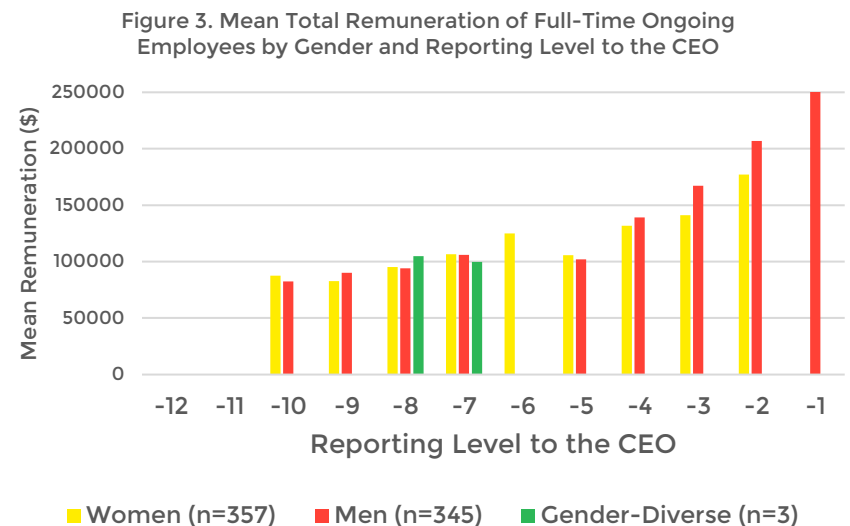
Total Remuneration - Full-Time Ongoing Employees

In terms of overall headcount, as at 30 June 2021 Council's full-time ongoing workforce composed 357 women, 345 men and 3 gender-diverse employees, collectively employed at the -10 to -1 reporting levels. As shown to the right in Figure 3, there was a general trend observed across reporting levels -10 to -5 whereby women and men were paid at a relatively comparable rate, slightly in favour of women. For example, mean total remuneration of \$95,298 for women and \$94,009 for men at the -8 level. Exceptions to this were at the -9 level (where men were paid on average \$7,481 more than women annually), and at the -6 level, where no men were employed. However, at the -4 to -2 levels (representing the more senior levels of the organisation), analyses showed that men continue to receive higher total remuneration than women, on average.

Positively however, mean remuneration for gender-diverse employees was comparable to women and men at the -7 level, and in fact higher at the -8 reporting level.

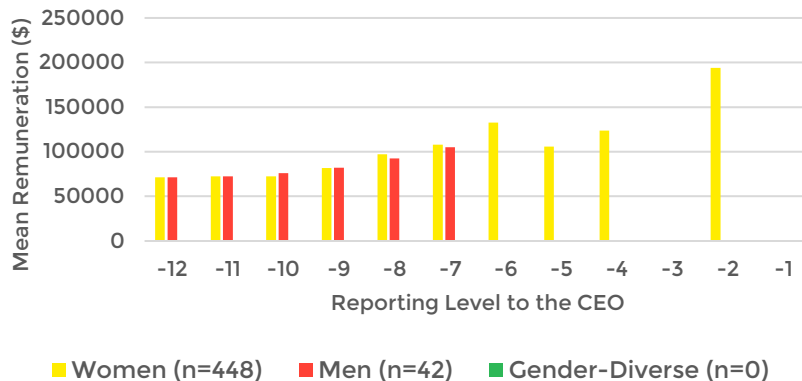
The data shows that men continue to be paid higher on average than females and gender-diverse employees from ages 15 – 64.

Although Victoria's gender pay gap sits slightly below the national average, at 12.2%, there is a clear and pressing need for organisations to address this systemic issue. The inclusion of "gender pay equity" as an indicator in this year's gender equality audit represents the first step in this process, with the collection and reporting of remuneration data enabling organisations to see where pay gaps are largest, and to identify the underlying causes. Results of data analyses aligned to this indicator are outlined below, broken down by employment basis.



Audit analysis for Gender Equality Indicator #3: Remuneration across all level of the workforce (2/3)

Figure 4. Mean Total Remuneration of Part-Time Ongoing Employees by Gender and Reporting Level to the CEO



Total Remuneration - Part-Time Ongoing Employees

Amongst part-time ongoing employees, direct female-male comparisons were available at the -12 to -7 reporting levels, with no males being employed in a part-time ongoing capacity at the -6, -5, -4 or -2 levels. Where comparisons were available, women and men were paid at relatively comparable rates, slightly in favour of men at the -10 and -9 levels, and favouring women at the -8 and -7 levels.

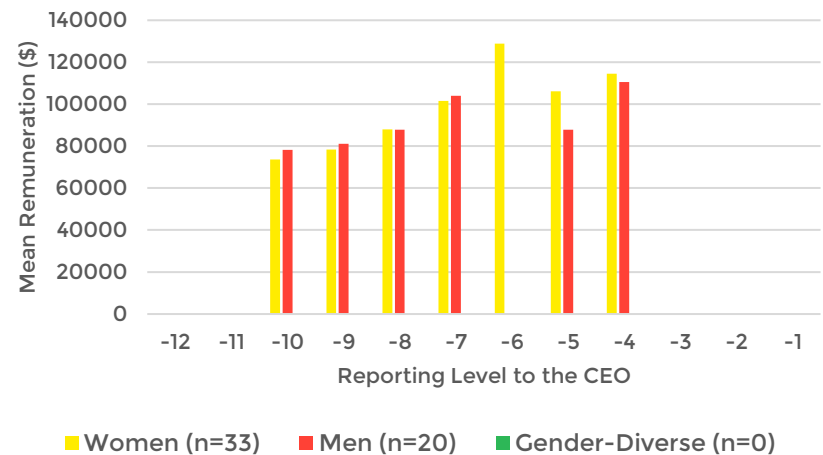
The data showed that men were paid higher on average than women between the ages of 15-34, whilst women were consistently paid higher than men, again on average, between the ages of 35-65+.

Total Remuneration - Full-Time Temporary Employees

Council's full-time temporary workforce spanned reporting levels -10 to -4, inclusive. Across these levels, analyses showed subtle differences between mean total remuneration between women and men. These were favouring men at the -10, -9 and -7 levels, and in favour of women at the -8, -5 and -4 levels. No direct comparisons were available at the -6 reporting level, again due to an absence of male employees.

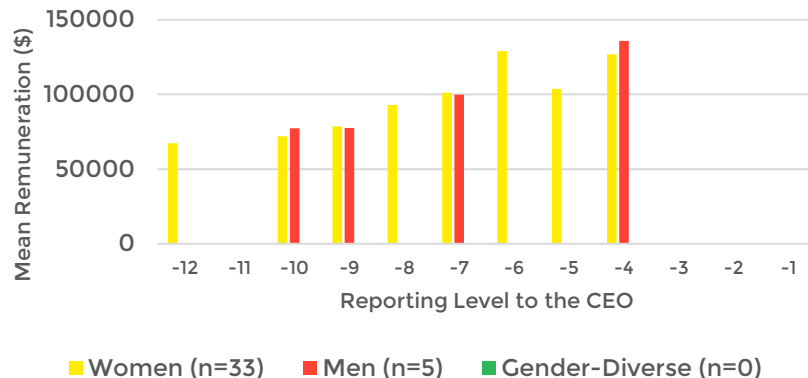
Further segmentation by employee age showed that women were consistently paid higher, on average than men, when comparing employees by age bracket.

Figure 5. Mean Total Remuneration of Full-Time Temporary Employees by Gender and Reporting Level to the CEO



Audit analysis for Gender Equality Indicator #3: Remuneration across all level of the workforce (3/3)

Figure 6. Mean Total Remuneration of Part-Time Temporary Employees by Gender and Reporting Level to the CEO



Total Remuneration - Part-Time Temporary Employees

Council's part-time temporary workforce spanned the -12 to -4 reporting levels, with the majority of these being women (86.84%), relative to men (13.16%). Further, men were only employed at the -10, -9, -7 and -4 reporting levels, being paid higher on average than women at the -10 and -4 levels.

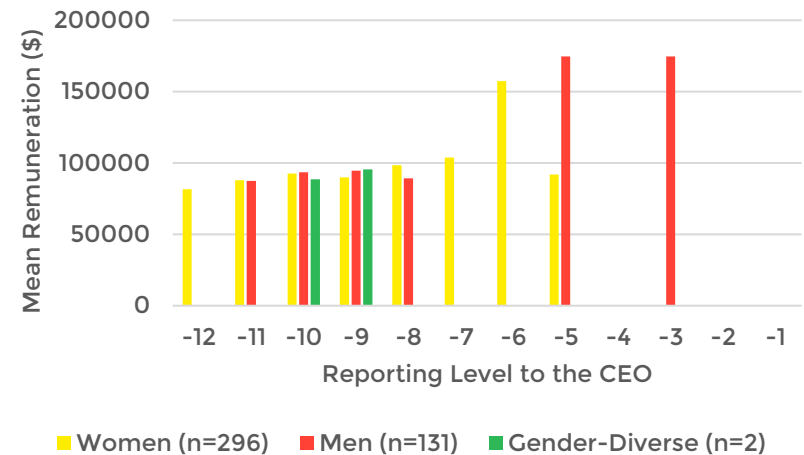
Further segmenting this workforce by employee age, it was interesting to note that men aged 55-64 years were paid \$135,877 on average, compared to women of the same age whom were paid an average of \$83,870 (a difference of 38.28%). In line with observations previously reported against this indicator, this may suggest that Council has opportunity to review their remuneration practices in greater detail, in order to understand the underlying factors which may be contributing to these trends.

Total Remuneration - Casual Employees

Council's casual workforce was shown to comprise 296 women (69%), 131 men (30.54%) and 2 gender-diverse individuals (0.46%), and spanning the -12 to -3 reporting levels. Where direct comparisons between genders were available, generally comparable rates of remuneration were observed from the -11 to -8 reporting levels. However, a substantial difference was noted between women and men at the -5 reporting level, with men being paid 47.38% higher than their female counterparts.

The data showed subtle differences between age-matched women, men and gender-diverse individuals, however no substantive trends were noted to indicate a consistent gender bias.

Figure 7. Mean Total Remuneration of Casual Employees by Gender and Reporting Level to the CEO



Audit analysis for Gender Equality Indicator #4: Sexual Harassment in the workplace (1/2)

Sexual harassment in the workplace remains common in Victoria and causes significant physiological, physical and financial harm to victim survivors.² It is vital to have a timely and competent reporting and investigations system at Council. Collecting data for indicator #4 allows Council to be more transparent, and to identify pain points in the various stages of the prevention or treatment process.

Indicator #4 involved analysis of official reports of sexual harassment, based on data extracted from Council's internal Human Resources systems (summarised in Figure 8 on page 18), and reported experiences of sexual harassment in the anonymous People Matters Survey (PMS).

There was a discrepancy between the number of official reports to Council in the last 12 months (three) and the number of those who unofficially reported having experienced harassment to the PMS (8% of respondents or approximately 38 individuals).

However, significant portions of employees agreed that Council takes positive action regarding eliminating bullying and encouraging respectful workplace behaviours.

Employee Experience Data

8% of survey respondents reported having experienced sexual harassment in the past 12 months (n = ~ 38)

64% of survey respondents agreed that Council takes steps to eliminate bullying, harassment and discrimination

66% of survey respondents agreed that they felt safe to challenge inappropriate behaviour at work

81% of survey respondents agreed that Council encourages respectful workplace behaviours

² Workplace gender equality indicators | Commission for Gender Equality in the Public Sector (genderequalitycommission.vic.gov.au)

Audit analysis for Gender Equality Indicator #4: Sexual harassment in the workplace (2/2)

Three individuals officially lodged complaints of sexual harassment in the past 12 months. All of the complainants were female, and one was a bystander as opposed to the subject of the harassment. All three respondents indicated they were 'neutral' in relation to the satisfaction with the outcome of their case.

It is concerning that approximately 38 individuals (8% of survey respondents) indicated that they had experienced sexual harassment in the anonymous PMS, especially considering that less than a third of all Council employees actually responded in this survey. The actual number may therefore be even higher.

This data suggests that sexual harassment reporting and complaints management systems are a key area of improvement for Council, given that it appears that the majority of victims of harassment are not making official reports. This is consistent with findings reported within the recent Victorian Auditor-General's Office (VAGO) report into sexual harassment in local government, which provided eleven recommendations to Victorian local councils in relation to identifying and acting on sexual harassment risk factors³. Council has responded to the recommendations of the VAGO report and is undertaking a number of actions including identifying ways to improve the reporting process for those who experience sexual harassment.

Promisingly, 81% of PMS respondents agreed that Council encourages respectful workplace behaviours. However, only 66%, though still a majority, agreed that they felt safe to challenge inappropriate behaviour at work. This also suggests that work may need to be done to empower individuals to report and confront inappropriate behaviour – meaning that leadership, not employees, will be responsible for promoting positive workplace sexual harassment action at Council.



Figure 8. Council workplace sexual harassment data

³Sexual Harassment in Local Government: Are Victorian local councils providing workplaces that are free from sexual harassment?

Audit analysis for Gender Equality Indicator #5: Recruitment and promotion practices in the workplace (1/3)

Recruitment, promotion and career progression practices across organisations have long been shown to be detrimentally impacted by gender biases and stereotypes. The result of this is that women and gender-diverse employees may face entrenched barriers that limit their access to career opportunities that are otherwise readily available to their male counterparts. This inequality can then be further compounded by additional sources of disadvantage associated with intersecting forms of identity, such as age, sexual orientation, religion, cultural background and disability.

The inclusion of recruitment and promotion practices in the workplace as a gender equality indicator in this year's audit serves to prompt organisations such as Council to identify where the careers of women and gender-diverse employees are stalling, and help identify strategies to create more equal opportunities.

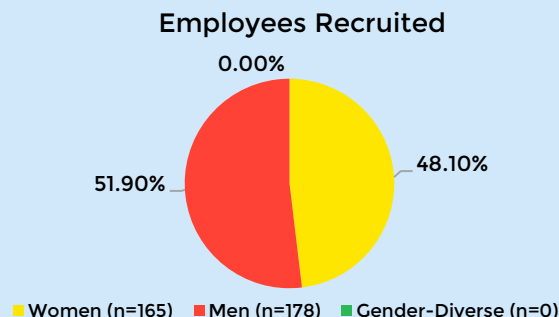
Within the indicator, Council has been assessed according to six key metrics; employees recruited, permanent promotions, participation in career development training, employees on higher duties, internal secondments, and exits from the organisation.

Specific trends and insights against these six metrics are discussed in further detail below and overleaf.

Employees Recruited

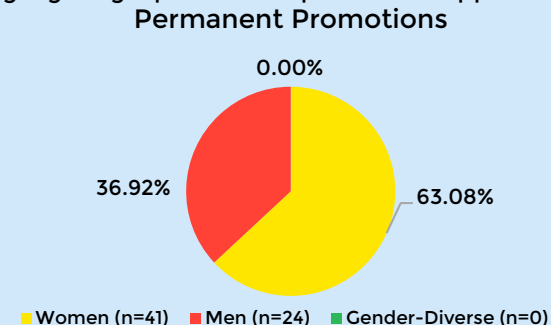
Over the period spanning 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021, men accounted for 51.90% of new hires at Council, relative to the remaining 48.10% of new hires, whom were female. No gender-diverse employees were recruited during this period.

Further, additional segmentation of data showed that the majority of men were recruited into full-time roles, whilst women were recruited into part-time and casual roles, highlighting a potential improvement opportunity for Council.



Permanent Promotions

Women accounted for 63.08% of permanent promotions over the past 12-month reporting period, with men composing the remaining 36.92%. Interestingly, the comparatively small numbers of female and male promotions (n=41 and n=24, respectively), may also explain key employee experience data from this year's PMS, wherein 28% of respondents felt that they did not have an equal chance for promotion at Council, whilst 18% disagreed that Council made fair recruitment and promotion decisions, based on merit, highlighting a potential improvement opportunity.

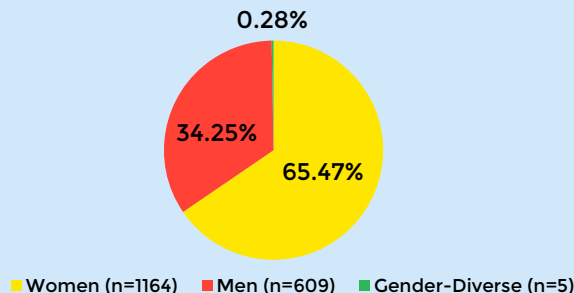


Audit analysis for Gender Equality Indicator #5: Recruitment and promotion practices in the workplace (2/3)

Participation in Career Development Training

Of all Council employees who engaged in some form of formal career development training during this reporting period, 65.47% were women, 34.25% were men, and 0.28% were gender-diverse individuals. In terms of the way these training opportunities were viewed by employees, 17% of PMS respondents indicated that there were not adequate opportunities for them to develop skills and experience within Council.

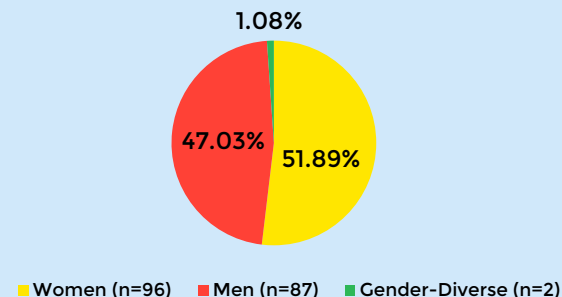
Participation in Career Development Training



Employees on Higher Duties

51.89% of employees on higher duties were women, 47.03% were men, and 1.08% were gender-diverse individuals. Additional segmentation of this data showed relatively comparable breakdowns between women and men according to employee age and reporting level. However, data showed that substantially fewer casual and part-time employees were recipients of higher duties, which may be a source of inequality given the higher proportions of women employed in these capacities.

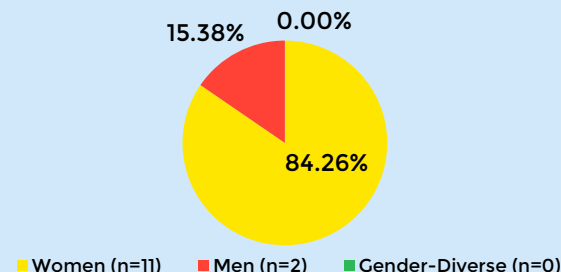
Employees on Higher Duties



Internal Secondments

In terms of internal secondments, 84.26% of these employees were women, with the remaining 15.38% being men. No gender-diverse employees were on internal secondment at any point during the period spanning 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021. All secondments for both women and men occurred at the -10 to -6 reporting levels. On the basis of these findings, Council may opt to create greater opportunities for internal secondments at the more senior levels of the organisation.

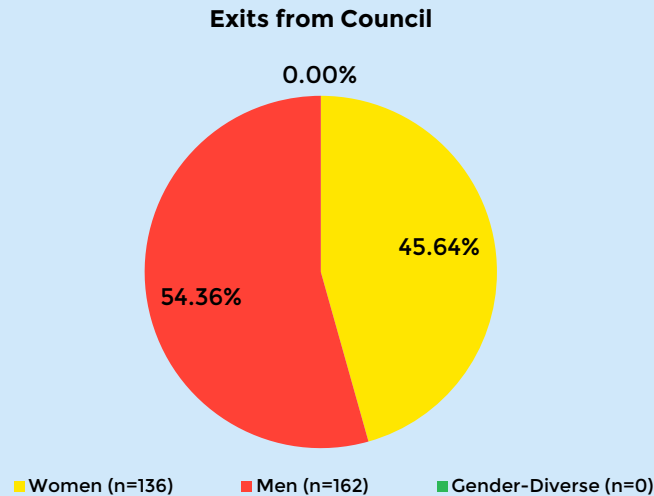
Internal Secondments



Audit analysis for Gender Equality Indicator #5: Recruitment and promotion practices in the workplace (3/3)

Exits from the Organisation

54.36% of employees who exited Council from 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021 were men, with the remaining 45.64% being women. Quite positively, no gender-diverse individuals exited Council during this period. The majority of these employees were at the -11 to -8 reporting levels, and employed on a temporary full-time basis.



Audit analysis for Gender Equality Indicator #6: Family violence leave and flexible working arrangements (1/2)

The majority of unpaid domestic labour, such as caring for children and housework, is borne by women within households due to the persistence of various structural and cultural factors. This has resulted in the need for flexible work arrangements to support all employees, but particularly female employees, in order to maintain the same level of workforce participation. It is important to determine which groups require flexible work to see for whom more support can be offered, and to implement policies that encourage men to work flexibly in order to support more equitable unpaid work arrangements.

The COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent Victorian Government Stay at Home directions (as first issued in March 2020) have increased the amount of unpaid care labour required in households with children, which has further exacerbated inequalities within the home as well as from a workforce participation perspective⁴. Flexible work arrangements will be a key part of ensuring female workforce participation is not detrimentally impacted in the long run.

Flexible work arrangements and employment status

The majority (88%) of those using flexible working arrangements are full-time ongoing employees, with 77.87% of full-time women, 85.22% of full-time men, and 100% of full-time gender-diverse individuals utilising formal flexible working arrangements. Interestingly, there was a disproportionately low number of part-time female employees accessing flexible arrangements. Given that 91% of part-time employees are women, it is surprising to note that only 6.25% of women who were employed in a permanent part-time capacity, and 6.06% of those employed in a fixed-term part-time capacity were utilising these arrangements. This may be explained by the PMS results, in which 42% of respondents disagreed with the statement that there was a positive culture at Council towards those that use flexible work. However, this may also represent the inherent flexibility afforded to employees in part-time work arrangements, offsetting the need for other arrangements.

This supports anecdotal evidence sourced from consultations in which women suggested they were expected to take on additional duties, particularly administrative ones, that men were not. Women at Council should be better enabled to establish a positive work-life balance, with flexible work arrangements encouraged, without fear of future barriers to success as a result.

Family violence leave provides victim-survivors with the time away from work needed to manage their experiences and address their needs. It also promotes a culture that refuses to condone family violence. Promisingly, 85% of PMS respondents felt that Council would support them if they chose to take family violence leave. No employees accessed family violence leave during the reporting period.

However, attitudes were less positive towards flexible working arrangements. Only 56% of PMS participants agreed that using these arrangements were not a barrier to success, and only 58% agreed that there was a positive culture at Council towards employees who did so.

Table 2 overviews the proportion of employees (by gender and employment basis) on formal flexible working arrangements (e.g., 77.87% of full-time women were utilising formal flexible working arrangements).

Table 2. Breakdown of Formal Flexible Working Arrangements as a proportion of corresponding gender and employment basis

Employment Status	Women	Men	Gender-diverse
Full-time permanent/ongoing	77.87%	85.22%	100%
Part-time permanent/ongoing	6.25%	45.24%	-
Full-time contract (fixed-term)	57.58%	10.00%	-
Part-time contract (fixed-term)	6.06%	20.00%	-
Casual	1.01%	1.53%	-

⁴ Household Impacts of COVID-19 Survey, May 2021 | Australian Bureau of Statistics (abs.gov.au)

Audit analysis for Gender Equality Indicator #6: Family violence leave and flexible working arrangements (2/2)

Employee Experience Data

56% of respondents agreed that utilising flexible work arrangements was not a barrier to success at Council

58% of respondents agreed that there was a positive culture at Council in relation to employees who use flexible work

66% of respondents indicated that they were confident that if they requested a flexible work arrangement, it would be given due consideration

85% of respondents felt that Council would support them if they needed to take family violence leave

Carers and Parental Leave

Of the 73 employees that took carer's leave, 68% were women, which is approximately proportional to the workforce generally. However, of the 73 that took parental leave, 83% were women. No men took unpaid parental leave, where each woman took an average of 4 unpaid weeks. Supporting and encouraging men to take parental leave is therefore an opportunity for Council.

Figure 9. Women, Men and Gender-Diverse People on Flexible Working Arrangements (FWAs) as a Proportion of Total Employees on FWAs

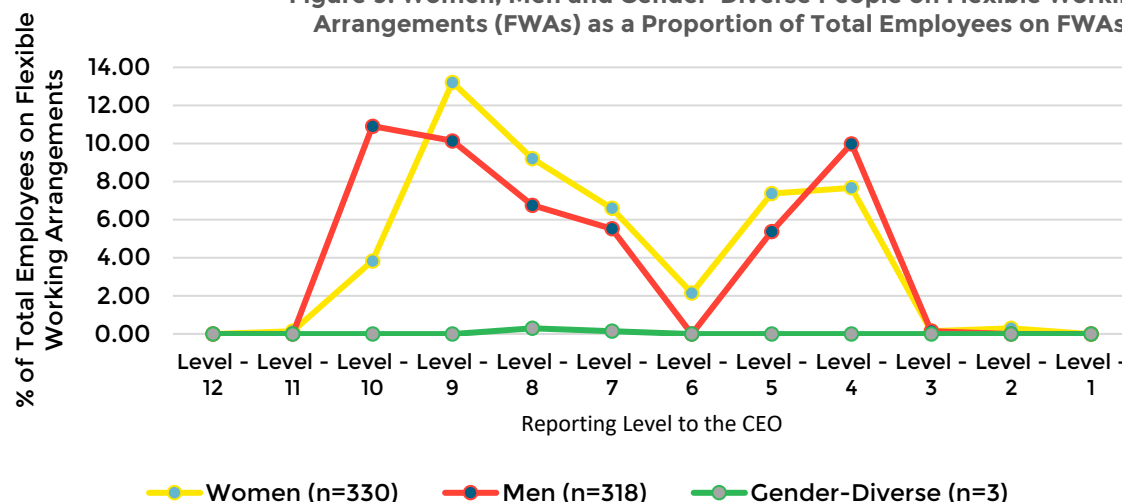


Table 3. Overview of weeks paid and unpaid parental leave by gender*

Gender	Number of Employees	Cumulative Number of Weeks Paid Leave	Cumulative Number of Weeks Unpaid Leave
Women	61	260.43	243.92
Men	12	40.5	0
Self-described	0	0	0
Prefer not to say	0	0	0

*Note. Figures based on cumulative number of "average weeks leave taken" at each reporting level, segmented by gender

Audit analysis for Gender Equality Indicator #7: Gendered segregation in the workplace (1/1)

Stereotypes surrounding what work is appropriate for men and women, as well as structural considerations such as workplace flexibility, results in roles and departments that are disproportionately dominated by a certain gender. Identifying which roles, levels, departments or divisions may be segregated by gender allows Council to identify which sectors require targeted action. It is also a key step in identifying the source of gender pay gaps, as roles that are dominated by women are typically low-paid.

Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupation (ANZSCO) codes standardise the reporting of occupations,

allowing their precise gender breakdown to be quickly identified.

The 10 most common ANZSCO codes for men and women saw a 40% overlap between the two groups, with roles such as general clerks, lifeguards and swimming coaches. Overlap roles are shaded grey in Tables 4 and 5, below. However, much of the rest of the top 10 roles were highly gendered.

Addressing gender segregation is a key point of action for Council, in order to address gender pay gaps and to ensure every employee has the ability to exercise their full skill set and career ambition.

Table 4. Top 10 roles held by women by ANZSCO

Rank	Roles	Headcount	% of Workforce
1	Child Care Workers	187	10.88%
2	General Clerks	98	5.70%
3	Swimming Coaches or Instructors	86	5.00%
4	Early Childhood (Pre-Primary School) Teachers	84	4.89%
5	Personal Care Assistants	76	4.42%
6	Registered Nurses (Child and Family Health)	67	3.90%
7	Program or Project Administrators	59	3.43%
8	Lifeguards	57	3.32%
9	Receptionists (General)	43	2.50%
10	Library Assistants	34	1.98%

Table 5. Top 10 roles held by men by ANZSCO

Rank	Roles	Headcount	% of Workforce
1	Program or Project Administrators	60	3.49%
2	Lifeguards	54	3.14%
3	Recycling or Rubbish Collector	33	1.92%
4	Swimming Coaches or Instructors	32	1.86%
5	Civil Engineers	26	1.51%
6	Fitness Instructors	23	1.34%
7	Truck Drivers	23	1.34%
8	Greenkeepers	20	1.16%
9	General Clerks	19	1.11%
10	Inspectors and Regulatory Officers	15	0.87%

Data Gaps

During the initial audit phases some gaps were identified in relation to Council's available data. These included an absence of information relating to a number of (optional) intersectional data metrics outlined under the Gender Equality Act 2020 (and specific below in greater detail), along with data limitations pertaining to a number of specific gender equality indicators.

Lack of intersectional data

S11(3)(b)) of the Gender Equality Act 2020 states that intersectional data (if available) must also be included within a workplace gender audit. Where this data is unavailable, organisations such as Council are advised to consider how they might collect this data in the future, and include this as an action in the resultant action plan. At the time of Council's audit, intersectional data is not something which was routinely collected and stored via Council's internal data collection mechanisms, with the only intersectional data metrics available pertaining to employee age, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status. As a result, workforce data was unable to be further segmented by intersecting forms of identity including disability status, cultural identity, religion, and/or sexual orientation. As a result, insights at this level of specificity were limited to those collected via the employee consultation process. Revising these data collection mechanisms will be a focus of Council's GEAP moving forward (see Strategies and Measures Area 6: Data and Strategy), to ensure that Council is better able to consider and address any different systemic barriers being experienced by a specific cohort of our employee population.

Indicator-specific gaps

Over the course of the audit phase, it became apparent that the data collected in line with the Commission's reporting requirements and reporting template, although insightful, at times failed to capture additional information which would have enabled more in-depth analysis of key areas of interest. This was particularly evident in relation to analyses pertaining to Indicators #3, #4, #5 and #6.

Indicator #3: Remuneration across all level of the workforce

During subsequent employee consultations, it became apparent that employee tenure was very much a moderating variable, in that this would undoubtedly exert a degree of influence over remuneration. Further, Council presently did not have data available to hone in on remuneration and pay gaps across specific areas and divisions or the

organisation. Each of these factors will be considered and addressed moving forward.

Indicator #4: Sexual harassment in the workplace

As indicated above, a discrepancy was noted between the officially reported instances of sexual harassment (as recorded in Council's workforce data), and those which were reported anonymously via the PMS. Specifically, three instances were officially reported, compared to approximately 38 instances anonymously. Although hypotheses were formulated to attempt to explain this trend, it is important to acknowledge this as a data gap. Additional work therefore is required to better understand i) the 'true' rates of sexual harassment at Council, and ii) reasons for reporting / not reporting via the official structures and processes. Actions which get to the heart of this are included in the GEAP (see Strategies and Measures Area 4: Workplace Safety).

Indicator #5: Recruitment and promotion practices in the workplace

Specific areas examined under the banner of Indicator #5 spanned recruitment, permanent promotions, career development training opportunities, higher duties, internal secondments and exits from the organisation. Similar to the above data gaps raised for past indicators, data was unable to be segmented by specific areas or divisions. In addition, the absence of supporting qualitative data meant that the reasons for exiting Council were unable to be explored.

Indicator #6: Family violence leave and flexible working arrangements

Finally, data collected under the heading of 'flexible working arrangements' was similarly impacted by an unavailability of supporting qualitative data (e.g., articulating some of the reasons for not accessing flexible working arrangements, the degree of effort that had to go into this) along with the previously reported gaps stemming from being unable to segment further by department of area.

3. Meaningful Consultation and Engagement



Meaningful Consultation and Engagement Overview

Meaningful Consultation and Engagement occurred across three phases of consultation: Round 1 sought to understand Council's Case for Change, Round 2 sought to share the outcomes of the workplace Gender Equality Audit and seek ideas for how Council can address any issues identified. Round 3 sought feedback on proposed strategies and measures. Despite the breadth of Council, each area of the workforce outlined below was included in one or all of the rounds of consultation, with 8.5% of the

organisation engaged through focus groups.

Consultation was targeted as set out in the Gender Equality Action Plan 2021-2025 Guidance for Defined Entities, includes: people for whom gender inequality may be compounded by disadvantage or discrimination, people of different levels and employment types, the gender equity working group at Council and individuals who have experienced Council's recruitment process.

		CEO Office				
		0.17% / 3 ppl				
Division		Communications, Engagement and Advocacy	Community Services	Corporate Services	Planning and Development	Sustainable Infrastructure and Services
		6.55% / 133ppl Director Office: 0.12% / 2ppl	40.15% / 693ppl Director Office: 0.17% / 3ppl	29.72% / 513ppl Director Office: 0.12% / 2ppl	7.71% / 133ppl Director Office: 0.12% / 2ppl	15.70% / 271ppl Director Office: 0.17% / 3ppl
Department		Customer Service / Events and Venues	Community Strengthening	Finance and Property Development	Urban and Open Space Planning	Assets
		3.88% / 67ppl	8.05% / 139ppl	2.55% / 44ppl	1.04% / 18ppl	3.53% / 61ppl
		Strategic Communications	Family, Youth and Children's Services	Governance	Economic Development	Capital, Works and Building Maintenance
		0.93% / 16ppl	18.71% / 323ppl	3.36% / 58ppl	1.22% / 21ppl	1.80% / 31ppl
		Human Resources	Health and Community Wellbeing	Information Technology	Statutory Planning and Building Control Services*	Parks
		1.16% / 20ppl	13.21% / 228ppl	2.14% / 37ppl	3.07% / 53ppl	3.71% / 64ppl
		Organisational Performance and Engagement		Leisure Centres and Sport	Strategic Planning	Sustainable Environment
		0.46% / 8 ppl		21.55% / 372ppl	0.87% / 15ppl	1.74% / 30ppl
					Subdivisional Development	Waste and Resource Recovery
					1.39% / 24ppl	4.75% / 82ppl

*Department name for the period 1 July 2020 - 30 June 2021. Current name as at 13 January 2022 is "Development Assessment"

Meaningful Consultation and Engagement

Round 1 – Understanding the Case for Change

Eight virtual focus groups were conducted to identify the current state of intersectional gender equality at Council and Council's Case for Change. An outline of the groups consulted is demonstrated below.

Prior to consultation an email was sent to all attendees to ensure they were informed of the consultation process. This email also enabled attendees to be introduced to the facilitator of the consultation who was external to Council to ensure attendees felt they could be open and transparent in providing feedback. This communication also outlined the format of the focus groups, the role of the focus groups in the development of the GEAP and safety considerations that were implemented to prioritise the wellbeing of

those consulted.

Throughout consultation a discussion format was implemented with open-ended questions to encourage ongoing dialogue, the core questions asked are outlined in the table below.

Following each consultation, the insights from the sessions was transcribed (de-identified) and subsequently the transcription was "coded" (whereby each response was assigned a code to grasp what each focus group was speaking about) which enabled a collation of all repetitive codes. These codes were then grouped into wider priority areas underpinning Council's Case for Change.

Focus group	Groups involved		Core questions
Focus Group 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LGBTIQA+ At Hume Group 	23 August 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How would you describe the level and nature of gender equality at Hume City Council? What are some of your positive and negative experiences relating to gender equality at Hume City Council? What are the Council's strengths when it comes to gender equality? Where are the "pain points" and priority areas when it comes to gender equality at Hume City Council? Do you have any other suggestions for how Hume City Council can strengthen gender equality?
Focus Group 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender Equity Working Group 	25 August 2021.	
Focus Group 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 x Group from Sustainable Infrastructure and Services division 	31 August 2021.	
Focus Group 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 x Group from Family, Youth and Children's Services, and Health and Community Wellbeing 	1 September 2021.	
Focus Group 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 x Group from Information Technology, Statutory Planning and Building Control Services, and Strategic Planning 	1 September 2021.	
Focus Group 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 x Group from Strategic Communications / Events and Venues / Community Strengthening 	1 September 2021.	
Focus Group 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 x Department Managers 	13 September 2021.	
Focus Group 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CEO and Directors 	16 September 2021.	

Targeting consultation:



Focus groups targeted approximately 77 employees



This represents approximately 4.5% of Council's workforce



To achieve breadth of input various areas of the organisation were engaged (see overleaf).

Meaningful Consultation and Engagement

Round 2 – Ideas for Addressing Workplace Gender Equality Issues

The findings of the Baseline Audit Analysis and Round 1 – Understanding the Case for Change engagement were first presented to the Council Gender Equity Working Group on 16 September 2021.

Following this initial feedback, the second round of consultation was developed to give an overview of the Baseline Audit Analysis and Round 1 consultation results and seek ideas for how Council can address any workplace gender equality issues it has identified.

Again, prior to consultation an email was sent to all attendees to establish what was being considered, introduce the facilitator of the consultation, outline the format of the focus groups, the role of the focus groups in the development of the GEAP and safety considerations that were implemented to prioritise the wellbeing of those consulted.

This consultation was again held in the form of virtual focus groups but used the online collaboration tool 'Mural' to ensure maximum contribution as well as providing an anonymous feedback mechanism function if attendees did not want to verbally share thoughts / feedback or considerations. Mural is a digital canvas that enables individuals to all enter the one workspace and collaborate visually.

Following each consultation, the insights written by attendees within the Mural were copied into a tracker alongside any other transcribed (de-identified) notes to collate the thoughts and feedback of each focus group on ideas for addressing workplace gender equality issues.

Focus group	Groups involved	Date
Focus Group 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Gender Equity Working Group	30 September 2021
Focus Group 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none">LGBTIQA+ At Hume Group	30 September 2021
Focus Group 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none">1 x Group from across Council	5 October 2021
Focus Group 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none">1 x Group from across Council	6 October 2021
Focus Group 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none">1 x Group of Council Managers	8 October 2021
Focus Group 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none">1 x Group from Council spanning the CEO and Executive group	14 October 2021
Focus Group 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none">1 x Group of Union Delegates	15 October 2021

Targeting consultation:



Focus groups targeted approximately 78 employees



This represents approximately 4% of Council's workforce



To achieve breadth of input various areas of the organisation were engaged.

Meaningful Consultation and Engagement

Round 3 – Feedback on Proposed Strategies and Measures

The proposed actions and themes identified as part of Round 2 – Ideas for Addressing Workplace Gender Equality Issues were developed and presented to the Project Steering Committee (composing the Director of Communications, Engagement and Advocacy, and the Senior Human Resources Advisor, Organisational Development).

Actions were subsequently reviewed in detail by Council, and a revised list of priority areas and actions were proposed, aligning feedback from Round 2 consultations to Council's broader strategic and operational context. These revised actions were then incorporated into Council's draft Gender Equality Action Plan, and distributed for consultation.

Consultation for Round 3 – Feedback on Proposed Strategies and Measures entailed an email being sent to all previous consultation session invitees from Focus Groups 1-15. Invitees were provided the Strategies and Measures, and were asked to provide feedback in

response to the following questions:

- Do you have any feedback, suggestions or edits you would like to see made to these proposed actions?
- Do you have any suggestions around how the employee engagement process could be improved when we next need to refine our GEAP?

Email recipients were invited to provide feedback via email from 10 December 2021 to 21 December 2021.

Following this period of consultation, stakeholder feedback was themed up and again presented to members of the Project Steering Committee, whom reviewed the comments made and supported integration of these findings and edits into the GEAP.

Step	Groups involved	Date
GEAP Feedback Email Sent	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus Group 1-15 participants and invitees	10 December 2021
Feedback Period Close	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus Group 1-15 participants and invitees	21 December 2021
Data Reviewed and Played Back to Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Director of Communications, Engagement and Advocacy• Senior Human Resources Advisor, Organisational Development	22 December 2021

Targeting consultation:



Anonymous feedback mechanism targeted approximately 155 employees



This represents approximately 8.13% of Council's workforce



To achieve breadth of input various areas of the organisation were engaged.

4. Case for Change



Case for Change (1/2)

Overview

Gender equality is critical to building a fair, prosperous and healthy society, where women, gender diverse individuals and men are afforded equal opportunities to thrive. The Gender Equality Act 2020 outlines a number of gender equality principles that defined entities including Council should leverage to inform the strategies and measures outlined within our Gender Equality Action Plan, namely:

- All Victorians should live in a safe and equal society, have access to equal power, resources and opportunities and be treated with dignity, respect and fairness.
- Gender equality benefits all Victorians regardless of gender.
- Gender equality is a human right and precondition to social justice.
- Gender equality brings significant economic, social and health benefits.
- Gender equality is a precondition for the prevention of family violence and other forms of violence against women and girls.
- Advancing gender equality is a shared responsibility across the Victorian community.
- All human beings, regardless of gender, should be free to develop their personal abilities, pursue their professional careers and make choices about their lives without being limited by gender stereotypes, gender roles or prejudices.
- Gender inequality may be compounded by other forms of disadvantage or discrimination that a person may experience on the basis of Aboriginality, age, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, race, religion, sexual orientation and other attributes.
- Women have historically experienced discrimination and disadvantage on the basis of sex and gender.
- Special measures may be necessary to achieve gender equality.

Council acknowledges and recognises the importance of gender equality, inclusion and respect within the organisation, and society as a whole. Advancing gender equality is a shared responsibility across the Victorian community however, Council's are uniquely placed to play a strong leadership role in advancing gender equality within their governance and organisation settings.

As a public-sector organisation and prominent local employer, Council is in a position to ensure a safe and equal community, with access to opportunities that bring significant economic, social and health benefits to the City of Hume and Victoria.

To formulate Council's Case for Change, insights from the Round 1 consultation were transcribed and the findings de-identified. The transcription was subsequently "coded", whereby each response was assigned codes in order to categorise what each group was speaking about and choosing to reiterate. The codes were subsequently grouped into wider priority areas, representing Council's key barriers and pain points to focus on within the context of Council's GEAP. Collectively, strategies and initiatives targeting these key areas are likely to have the greatest impact on Council's ability to address and embed the Gender Equality Principles outlined within Section 6 of the Act. The eight priority areas that form the case for change are:

1. Employees feel like they are leading gender equality efforts and are looking to Council leadership for more support
2. Council is experiencing significant gender segregation across divisions, departments and teams
3. Although there are policies and strategies in place, work remains to be done to further embed gender equality into Council culture and sub-cultures
4. Understanding of gender equality and other intersecting social issues varies across divisions, departments and teams
5. Employees want greater transparency in Council processes, promotions and skill development opportunities
6. There is a perception that women are expected to take on additional unpaid tasks that are deemed feminine and are not part of their job description
7. There is a perception Council lacks an outward facing / community facing united gender equality stance that employees can be proud of
8. Council is commencing its journey for those who identify outside of the gender binary, and an opportunity exists to further support this dimension of diversity and inclusion

Case for Change (2/2)

Council's History of Progressing Gender Equality

Council has a strong and proud history of gender equality work, as well as more general social justice commitments. Over the past several years, Hume City Council have endeavoured to create a more inclusive and equitable organisation for all our people, including through:

- Publication of the Hume City Council Social Justice Charter 2014, and subsequent recommitment to this through the release of the Hume City Council Social Justice Charter 2021
- The ongoing delivery of Council's Active Bystander Training for Preventing Violence Against Women
- Council's Express Yourself Survey (completed in March 2020 and November 2020)
- Hume City Council's Gender Equity Action Plan 2019
- Participation in the Local Government Listen, Learn and Lead Gender Equity Program Guide
- Hume City Council Reconciliation Action Plan 2018 - 2022
- Hume City Council Unconscious Bias Training for Recruitment and Selection

The Ongoing Challenge

Despite the progress that has been in relation to gender equality, gender inequality continues to remain a clear and ever-present issue within our society, communities, and workplaces. The Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) has consistently reported that women continue to be paid less than men, are likely to experience far greater barriers and plateaus in relation to career progression, and on average accumulate less retirement or superannuation savings⁵. Simultaneously, men have consistently been shown to have less access to family-friendly policies, such as parental leave or flexible working arrangements, relative to their female counterparts⁵.

Hume City Council is at a turning point when it comes to gender equality for our organisation and the local community. Now more than ever Hume City Council has an opportunity to go further and become true leaders in gender equality.

This progress will need to be undertaken in a way that recognises where we are at in our gender equality journey and the array of

experiences within the workforce and broader Hume community. There is no one pathway to gender equality for organisations, and thus it will be important for us to leverage lessons learnt and the evidence base for progress whilst also tailoring relevant actions and strategies to its own context.

The eight priority areas identified have highlighted where Council can continue to work towards creating a more gender equitable organisation for all. In particular, the acknowledgement that we are very much commencing our journey for those who identify outside of the gender binary has served as a call-to-action. Applying an intersectional gender lens is not simply a isolated measure or intervention, but must be applied to all of our gender equality decisions and initiatives moving forward. It is vital that we progress gender equality in it's broadest sense, accounting for not only those who identify outside of the gender binary, but also for all intersecting forms of identity, including race, religion, age, and disability.

The Business Case for Change

- In ensuring Hume City Council is a truly gender equitable organisation, we anticipate enhanced capabilities in attracting and retaining talent to ensure Council is efficient, productive, innovative, creative and engaged
- Through applying an intersectional gender lens to the way we engage with both our communities and our people, we will be able to deliver superior services and ensure inclusivity of all members of the Hume community
- By cultivating a culture where people feel safe and secure to be themselves, Hume will have build on a positive culture with a workforce and Council that we can all be proud of
- Ensuring that our people can access and enjoy the same rewards, resources and opportunities, regardless of gender or other interesting forms of identity, is inextricably linked to Council's capacity to deliver on our purpose and mission for all members of our community

⁵ Gender workplace statistics at a glance 2021

Priority Area 1: Employees feel like they are leading gender equality efforts and are looking to Council leadership for support

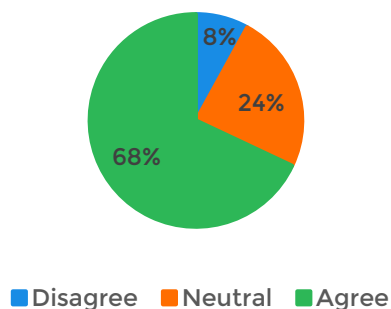
A priority area that emerged across the focus groups was the prevalence of employees that feel they are leading gender equality at Council and are responsible for actively calling out inappropriate behaviour. Focus group attendees spoke of the difficulties in attempting to instigate change at an employee (non-manager) level and that there is a need for senior leadership support in order to drive gender equality at Council.

In describing lived experiences of working at Council individuals felt more comfortable calling out inappropriate behaviour with age, maturity and experience. These self-nominated champions of gender equality within the organisation encourage others to come to them with issues and make themselves known for being 'safe' to speak to about gender inequality and incidents that occur in order to feel supported.

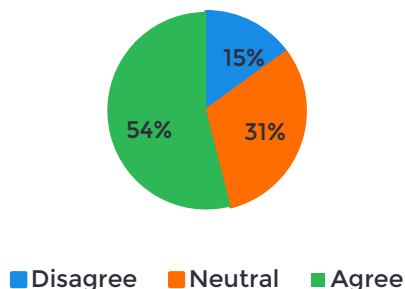
These individuals who felt comfortable calling out inappropriate behaviour often felt like they were labelled as a 'whinger' and that despite wanting to be there for other employees and supporting others, they too require support and feel this is currently lacking at Council.

Supporting data:

Senior leaders actively support diversity and inclusion in the workplace



I have confidence that the leadership team will take action on issues raised by employees



In 2017, 60 Council employees took part in the Victorian Government's Listen, Learn, Lead Gender Equity Program. The takeaways from this program were remarkably similar to those evident in the recent focus group's – a desire for job mobility, leadership opportunities for women, encouragement of top-down communication. This suggests that the issues Council faces today are similar to that of four years ago and there is an ongoing sentiment of employees attempting to drive this change.

The key action items from Council's Gender Equity Action Plan 2019 focused on active bystander training for employees; the only item specifically relating to the leadership cohort was in relation to recruitment. This may also suggest that change is individualistically positioned at Council, potentially isolating those who wish to make change.

In the 2020 Express Yourself Survey, only 54% of respondents felt that the leadership team takes action on issues raised by employees. Despite this, there are some positive signs – as per the PMS, 68% of respondents agreed that leaders actively support diversity and inclusion.

What we heard

"Council's strength are our employees. Our employees are the ones that drive things, and so we are very lucky that we have some good people that will stand up for what's right and what's wrong."

"If I call something out, I get treated like a whinging woman. But I'm only calling things out because its not acceptable to be saying things like that. For the most part people are ok with it, but some people don't care because there's no consequence for them."

Priority Area 2: Council is experiencing significant gender segregation across divisions, departments and teams (1/2)

There is widespread acknowledgement and for the most part, acceptance of gender segregation across divisions, departments and teams at Council and this is evident overleaf with the division of genders across divisions and departments.

Throughout the engagement, focus group attendees often spoke of the gendered physical divide between areas of Council. This was felt between buildings such as Splash and the Council building, the Depot and library, and even within a building such as between Level 2 and Level 3 of the Council building.

Further to the division across Council's various areas is the perception that some roles are gendered, for example community facing roles are better suited to women whereas more "technical" roles are suited to men, this is also demonstrated in the division of genders between divisions / departments overleaf.

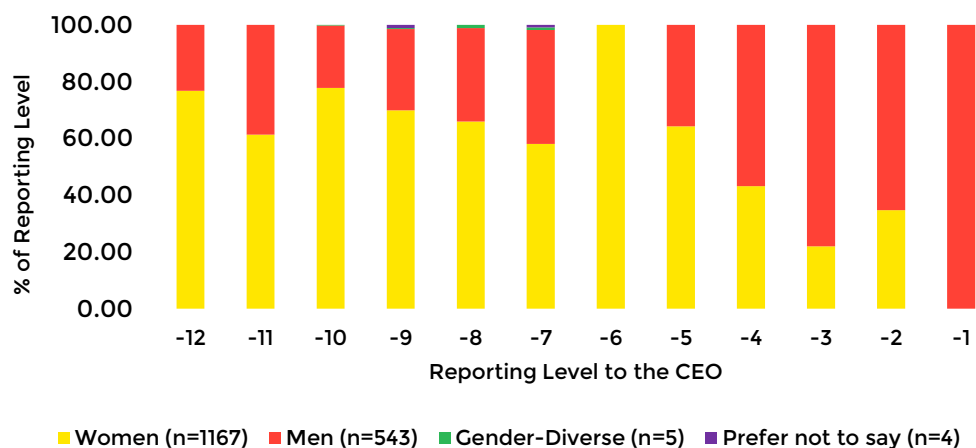
Throughout the consultations attendees spoke of the gendered

power imbalance at Council and the historically male leadership team. Despite the fact women make up over 50% of employees at the -12 to -5 reporting levels at Council (see supporting data below), at the most senior levels of the organisation (-4 to -1), women are substantially underrepresented as at 30 June 2021. Specifically, women made up just 43% of employees at the -4 reporting level, 22% of those at the -3 level, 35% of those at the -2 level, and 0% of those at the -1 level, this indicates that this gendered power imbalance is continuing and there may be opportunities for Council to review barriers to women reaching and maintaining senior leadership positions.

Also evident throughout the focus groups was a perception of barriers in accessing roles in gender segregated areas, this was discussed in regards to recruitment processes, language in advertisements and the availability of flexible working arrangements.

Supporting data:

Proportion of genders at each reporting level across Council



Graph source: Internal Hume City Council Workforce Data, 2020-2021

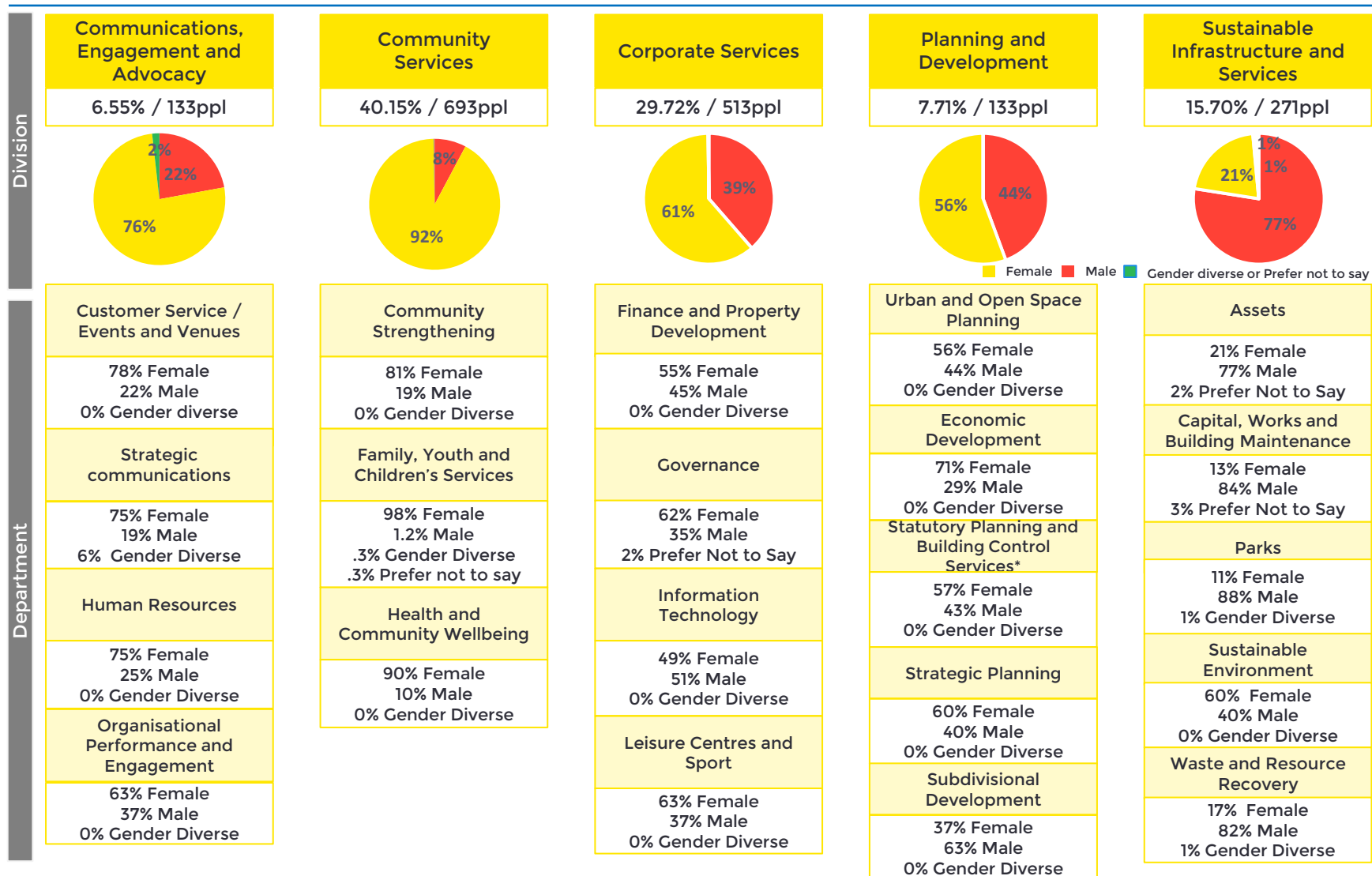
What we heard

"I think that there are some spaces within Council that are very male and female dominated"

"Areas are dominated by certain genders. Libraries are a very female dominated industry, whereas the depot is a male dominated industry. There are certain sectors that are gender based"

"Unsurprisingly, many areas across the organisation are either male/female dominated"

Priority Area 2 : Council is experiencing significant gender segregation across divisions, departments and teams (2/2)



*Division name for the period 1 July 2020 - 30 June 2021. Current name as at 13 January 2022 is "Development Assessment"

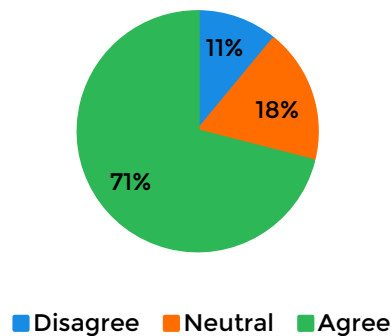
Priority Area 3: Although there are policies and strategies in place, greater work needs to be done to embed gender equality into Council culture and sub-cultures

It was stated in focus groups that Council had policies and programs in place that sought to support intersectional gender equality and that gender equality was an ongoing journey. Council's first Gender Equity Action Plan was developed in 2019, and drew from Victorian Government initiatives such as the Listen Learn Lead Gender Equity Program, and the Women's Health in the North (WHIN) Building a Respectful Community Strategy 2017 – 2021.

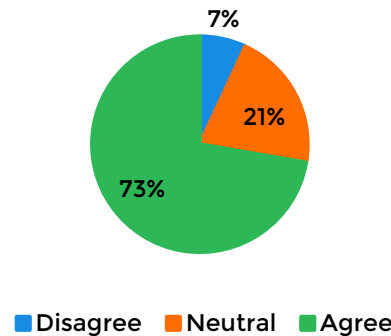
A consistent theme that emerged however, was the discrepancy between what a policy or action plan outlines and what is actually occurring 'on the ground' in the day to day culture of Council. Positively, the majority of focus group attendees were aware of Council's Gender Equity Action Plan 2019 being in place, however it is evident there is work to be done in embedding changes into the various sub-cultures of Council, and translating policy initiatives into practice. The notion that Council had developed policies but these were not translating into action was often linked with a perception that Council is potentially taking a tokenistic approach to gender equality.

Supporting data:

Gender is not a barrier to success in at Council



There is a positive culture within Council in relation to employees of different genders



For example, Council's Gender Equity Action Plan 2019 focused heavily on optional training and targeted programs for those already in contentious areas, such as recruitment and women in leadership positions. It appears that these policies could have a more ambitious scope, in implementing interpersonal social change for example: compulsory training, stricter language guidelines or improved misconduct reporting mechanisms.

Attendees consistently noted that whilst inequality was not occurring overtly at Council, it was occurring. Individuals spoke of their experiences of microaggressions, offensive language and poor behaviour and felt that often these incidents were rarely escalated to a manager level and in turn, individuals responsible did not face any consequences. This is evidenced by the supporting data below which demonstrates 28% of respondents felt Council had a negative or neutral culture in relation to employees of different genders. Further to this, 11% of respondents felt gender was a barrier to success at Council and 18% responded neutrally.

What we heard

"There is a big difference between the legislation process, policies currently in place, Human Resources policies and the actual day to day practices of Council"

"Not obvious but less obvious things that are happening. Gender equality needs to be embedded into Council's culture and Council's culture needs to shift."

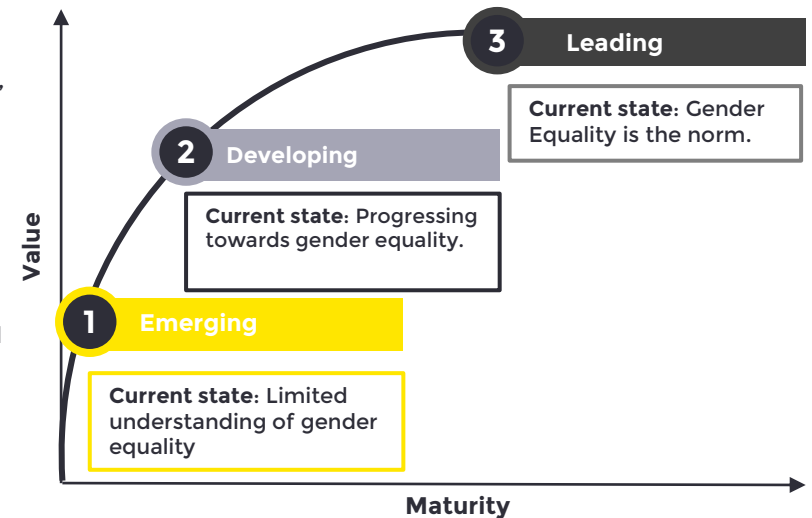
"We have been an organisation that avoids certain conversations or stances. As an organisation, there's nothing overt that favours any sort of gender"

Priority Area 4: Understanding of gender equality and other intersecting social issues varies across divisions, departments and teams

Each focus group had a very different understanding of gender equality, ranging from what gender equality is to a firm grasp of what lies outside the gender binary. This came across both in what was said, what was not said and the language employed by attendees in describing gender equality at Council which, for the most part, remained in discussing disparities and structures to do with 'females' and 'males'. In targeting consultation with a variety of areas of the organisation it is evident there are pockets of Council that are 'leading' (see right), pockets that are 'developing' and pockets that are still 'emerging' in their journey towards gender equality. Several of the focus groups spoke to the need for further compulsory, accessible education and training on Gender Equality.

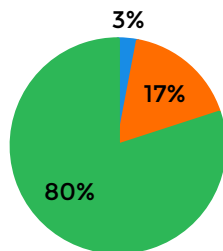
Council's Gender Equity Action Plan 2019 forefronts the need for active bystander and unconscious bias training, which is available for all employees. Active bystander training run by Women's Health in the North (WHIN) is targeted towards preventing violence against women. However, it is not compulsory for employees below a manager level.

Focus Group attendees spoke of verbal communications and emails between teams being male and heterosexual oriented. This further emphasises Council operating within the gender binary. This is evidenced by the supporting data below which demonstrates 20% of respondents felt Council did not or were neutral in the use of inclusive and respectful images and language.



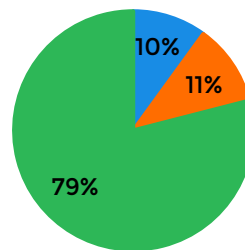
Supporting data:

My organisation uses inclusive and respectful images and language



■ Disagree ■ Neutral ■ Agree

I feel culturally safe at work



■ Disagree ■ Neutral ■ Agree

Graph source: 2021 People Matter Survey (PMS) Results, Hume City Council

What we heard

"We sort of have these little bubbles where gender equity is quite visible. I think it's important if we're talking about organisation-wide change to bring to attention that it's not necessarily the case everywhere in the organisation. Some people don't feel as though they can be themselves in their teams."

"Everyday language, like calling a co-worker 'darl' is really important and creates a culture."

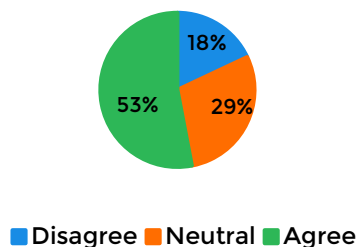
Priority Area 5: Employees want greater transparency in Council processes, promotions and skill development opportunities (1/2)

There was a sentiment across the focus groups that sought greater transparency at Council in regards to reporting and recruitment processes. Focus group attendees felt they were not informed if recruitment considered gender or gendered targets for various areas of Council and wished to be more informed on the processes Council employs to secure new employees. This is demonstrated in the supporting data below which indicates 18% of respondents felt Council did not make fair recruitment and promotion decisions based on merit. No gender diverse employees were nominated for promotions, secondments or higher duties, but given the sample size it is difficult to draw any definitive conclusion from this indicator.

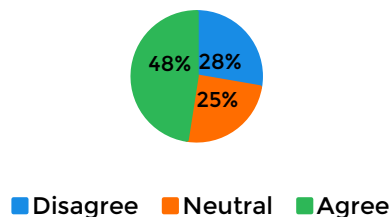
This sentiment was echoed in the availability and advertisement of promotions and skill development opportunities. Individuals spoke to their personal experience of being unaware of progression opportunities or pathways towards a promotion which is reflected below in 28% of respondents disagreeing that they have an equal chance at promotion at Council and 16% of respondents dissatisfied

Supporting data:

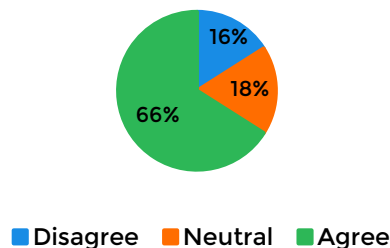
Council makes fair recruitment and promotion decisions, based on merit



I feel I have an equal chance at promotion in my organisation



I am satisfied with the way my L&D needs have been addressed in the last 12 months



with the way learning and development (L&D) needs had been addressed in the past 12 months.

These responses are despite equality in recruitment being one of the key themes of Council's Gender Equity Action Plan 2019. The action items on these topics were focused on improving the guidelines for recruiters and interview panels, but there was nothing dedicated to employees that informed them about equitable recruitment policies. In considering the present GEAP there is an opportunity to improve communication to all employees regarding recruitment.

It was mentioned in focus groups that there was both a gender pay gap and benefits pay gap across Council. This is evidenced by Indicator #3 (page 14) where men are overrepresented in higher level positions (-2 and -3 from the CEO) and there is a male-skewed remuneration gap at 13.3% and 16.2%.

What we heard

"We need to have transparency around what gets reported. The annual report does now have the number female and males in different areas, but there are ways to be more transparent, for example, providing transparency around recruitment."

"Gender segregated areas often have industry specific working conditions, entitlements, allowances and rates of pay – which may result in gender pay equity gaps and unequal work life family balance (span of hours for specific industries that are gender dominated)."

Graph source: 2021 People Matter Survey (PMS) Results, Hume City Council

Priority Area 5: Employees want greater transparency in Council processes, promotions and skill development opportunities (2/2)

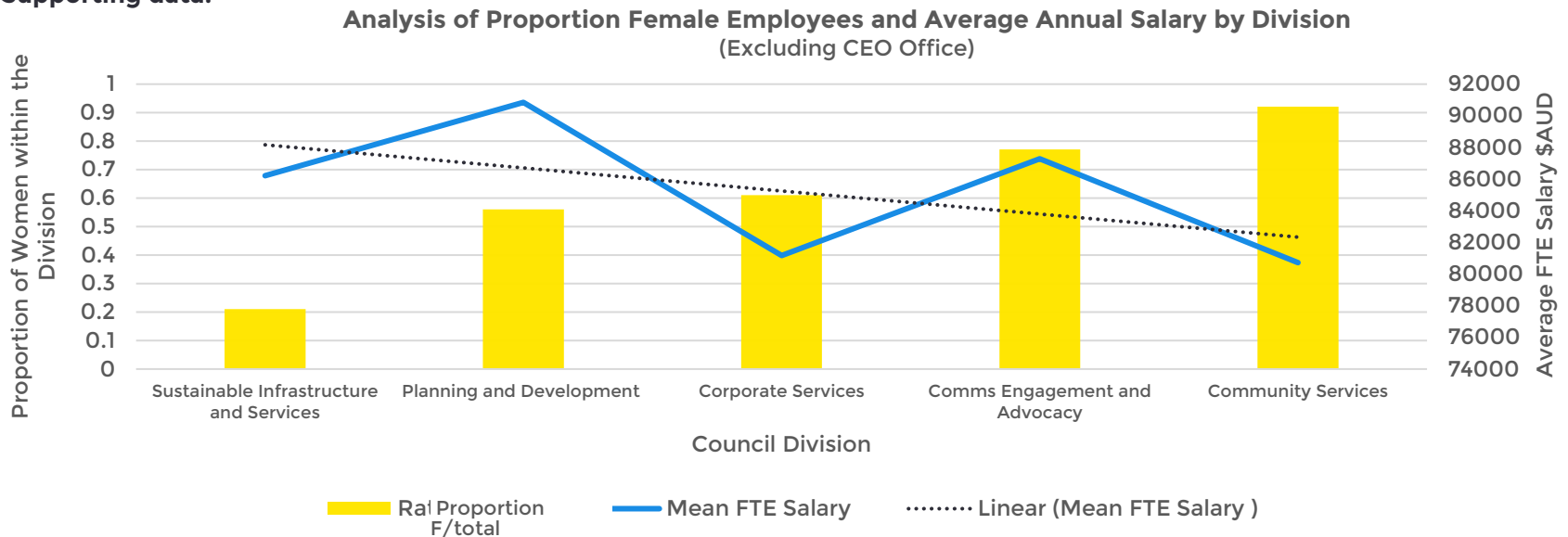
Divisions and departments within Council often do not proportionately represent the gender divide of the broader workforce. The Sustainable Infrastructure and Services, and Planning and Development divisions have only 21% and 56% women respectively, despite the workplace average sitting at approximately 68%.

These divisions sit in the higher range of average FTE salaries; Planning and Development has the highest average FTE salary of all divisions (not including the CEO office). Conversely, Community Services, which has the highest proportion of female employees (92%) has the lowest average FTE salary. The trendline demonstrates a slight downwards trend in salary as the proportion of women in a division increases (this excludes the CEO Office division).

Further to this, divisions and departments at Council do not proportionately represent the divide of the workforce on full time or part time employees. Sustainable Infrastructure and Services has the highest percentage of full-time employees (80%) of all divisions, where Community Services has the lowest (27.5%).

This presents an opportunity for Council to consider their resourcing and recruitment for each department.

Supporting data:



Graph source: Internal Hume City Council Workforce Data, 2020-2021

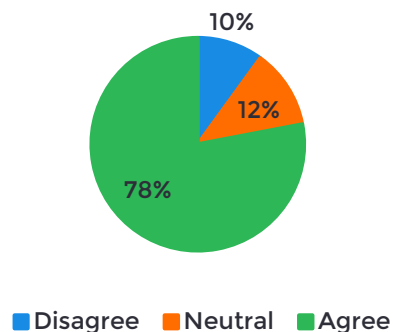
Priority Area 6: There is a perception that women are expected to take on additional unpaid tasks that are deemed feminine and are not part of their job description

A consistent theme that emerged from the focus groups was an unconscious bias in gender roles at Council and an expectation that women are to undertake additional unpaid work such as other individuals' printing, administrative tasks, typing, etc. that is deemed feminine. The work is not part of the women's job descriptions. Further to this, there is a perception that women are to take on additional unpaid work that is not part of any employees' job description, including roles such as cleaning communal areas, organising birthday cakes and arranging morning teas.

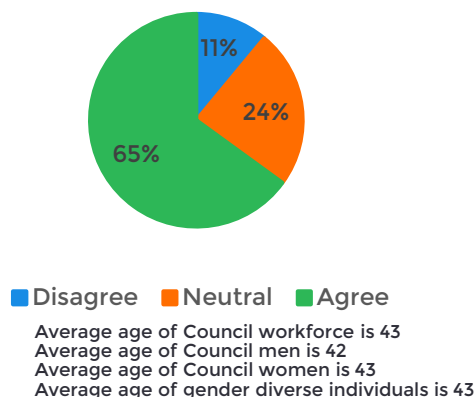
This was often discussed as something that does not prevent women from completing their work but adds to their roles and places increased pressure and workload on to women within the workforce. This is evidenced by the supporting data below which demonstrates 22% of respondents felt either work was not allocated fairly regarding gender or felt neutrally about allocation of work regarding gender.

Supporting data:

In my workgroup work is allocated fairly, regardless of gender



Age is not a barrier to success in my organisation



This type of behaviour as well as more severe microaggressions, name calling, offensive language etc was often felt to be generally accepted across Council and hidden beneath a categorisation of 'that's just how that person is'. Rationalising this inappropriate behaviour with excuses of age, an individuals personality, or historical behaviour continues to enable these incidences and develops a culture of a lack of consequences for these individuals. Some focus group attendees spoke of developing a barrier or 'thick skin' to such language, name calling and microaggressions in order to undertake their work. As a consequence of not actively calling out such behaviour on a daily basis, individuals felt as if they are contributing to a culture of acceptance when in fact, they do not accept this behaviour but also do not have capacity to continuously be the ones who are responsible for addressing these issues.

This current model of women being responsible for calling out inappropriate behaviour and being labelled as a 'whinger' further contributes to the daily workload of women at Council and is additional unpaid work that is not part of their job description.

What we heard

"There is an expectation that females will take on certain roles, e.g. administration. A person might do a certain part of their job but then request a female do the printing or get one of the 'girls' to do something for them. That's the inequality culture. It doesn't stop you doing your job but it does add to your job."

"The cleaning up or ordering morning tea doesn't stop when you move through the hierarchy. I have experienced the same thing as a manager."

Graph source: 2021 People Matter Survey (PMS) Results, Hume City Council

Priority Area 7: There is a perception Council lacks an outward facing / community facing united gender equality stance that employees can be proud of

Across the focus groups there was a sentiment that Council does not outwardly, to the community, project a position on gender equality and that instead, Council remains silent on gender equality. This has contributed to the sentiment amongst focus group attendees that Council has missed opportunities to celebrate gender equality and that the community have more programs in place to celebrate gender equity than employees do.

Individuals spoke of their experiences looking at surrounding municipalities and other Local Government events where there were stalls and information regarding gender diversity and LGBTIQ+ groups, along with other Local Government Areas participating in events such as the Pride Parade, and actively having a stance on things such as the Marriage Equality vote. Missed activities and events such as these are felt by Council employees.

It was noted in focus groups that wider Council messaging and communications, for example, to the community do not champion gender equality / diversity. Individuals spoke of varying levels of acceptance surrounding diversity in public communications and

publications which did not include gender diversity. This is evidenced in a search of Council's website where when searching for the keyword 'gender', limited results came through not reflecting outwardly what Council is working on internally. Further to this when searching 'LGBTIQ+' (or any previous variation of this acronym) there was one result regarding disability support. There are no public facing policies relating to gender equality. The Council Social Justice Charter 2021 makes only one passing mention of gender. Despite this sentiment, there is confidence amongst the Focus Groups in the new CEO and their ability to improve leadership on gender equality.

There was positive messaging on the Council Facebook page with posts (as evident below) celebrating International Women's Day and others raising awareness for domestic violence and advertising opportunities such as Dads of Hume social groups, and employability skills workshops for women. This was not the same for the Council Instagram page, which makes no mention of gender equality.

Supporting data:

Search for what you're looking for

Home / Content search

Content search

1 Result(s) Found

Disability Support

Published on 22 July 2021

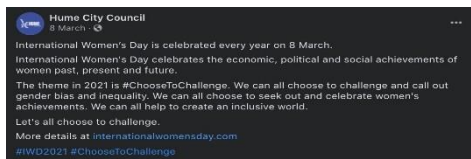
Hume City Council provides accessible services and spaces to support all residents to connect with their community.

Search

By Phrase or Keyword

Search

Page 1 of 1



What we heard

"Council communications depicts our multicultural community and community living with disabilities but I haven't seen any other form of diversity beyond that."

"When I've attended events at other Councils, mostly our surrounding municipalities, they have had stalls and information about gender equality and LGBTIQ+ activities, we don't have any of that."

Images source: [Home - Hume City Council](#); Facebook – Hume City Council

Priority Area 8: Council is commencing its journey for those who identify outside of the gender binary, however greater work needs to be done to further support diversity and inclusion

Council is commencing its journey for those who identify outside of the gender binary however, for the most part, there is a perception of gender as being limited to a binary, where every person is either 'male' or 'female'. Within this assumed binary system, biological sex and gender form a singular unit, where individuals who were assigned female at birth are viewed as women, and those assigned male at birth are viewed as men. However, many people experience and think about their gender in ways that challenge or contradict this strict distinction and alignment between sex and gender. The overarching term 'trans and gender diverse' can be defined as referring to people whose gender identity or experience is different from the gender that was presumed and recorded for them at birth⁵.

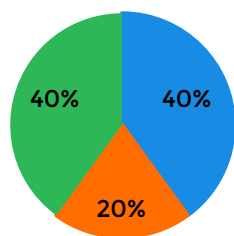
A consistent theme in analysing the language used across all eight focus groups is that for the most part, Council operates within the gender binary and employs language that is male / female oriented

which excludes those who identify as trans and gender diverse. Focus group attendees were aware of language, but the primary concern was with the consistent use of male and heterosexual oriented language through verbal communications and emails between teams. There was less of a concern / awareness for the inclusion for those who identify outside of the gender binary. This is evidenced in 20% of PMS respondents feeling Council did not or were neutral in the use of inclusive and respectful images and language.

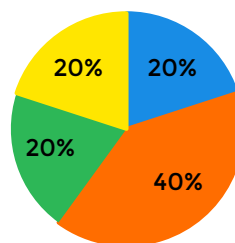
Focus group attendees also spoke of opportunities within Council to celebrate gender such as women in leadership and women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Medicine (STEM), whilst great programs to support women, it is noted by employees that these programs do remain within the gender binary.

Supporting data:

Age groups of gender-diverse Employees (n=5) at Council



Reporting levels gender-diverse Employees (n=5) at Council



■ 25-34 (n=2) ■ 35-44 (n=1) ■ 55-64 (n=2) ■ Level -7 (n=1) ■ Level -8 (n=2) ■ Level -9 (n=1) ■ Level -10 (n=1)

Graph source: Internal Hume City Council Workforce Data, 2020-2021

Estimates from Rainbow Health Victoria suggest approximately 1% of the population may identify as gender-diverse.

⁵ Research Matters: Trans and gender diverse health and wellbeing (rainbowhealthvic.org.au)

What we heard

"If our GEAP only focuses on men and women, we're already behind. If it doesn't take into account things like sexualities, gender diversities, across the whole spectrum, we're creating a plan that's already dated."

"It's different across teams, people from front facing services know how to create safe and inclusive spaces for our community. Some areas are more sheltered; they haven't been exposed to diversity. Council needs to educate everyone I think"

5. Strategies and Measures



Overview of Strategies and Measures

Strategies and Measures details the actions developed to assist Council with its gender equality goals. There are six priority areas with 2-5 actions under each. These actions are linked to the seven gender equality indicators as well as the Case for Change. Additionally, detail regarding proposed approach, enablers and measuring success are included for each action. Resourcing and ownership of delivery is outlined under “Leadership and Resourcing”. The actions are designed to support and enable Council’s gender equality progress whilst maintaining some flexibility to allow for effects and influences from other strategic decisions made by the organisation.

Priority Area	Behaviour Change Pages 46-48	Leading By Example Pages 49-50	Attraction and Attention Pages 51-53	Workplace Safety Pages 54-56	Corporate Identity Pages 57-59	Data and Strategy Pages 60-63
Actions	<p>Investigate and deliver best practice professional development on applying an intersectional gender lens.</p> <p>Develop a gender equality training plan based on employee interest areas and emerging best practice.</p> <p>Advance unconscious bias information within the organisation’s Leader Toolkit.</p> <p>Develop and support the organisation’s leaders on gender equality.</p>	<p>Implement executive level leadership sponsorship and oversight of the 2021-2025 Gender Equality Action Plan.</p> <p>Commit to developing the organisation’s gender equality metrics and KPIs and building into the performance reviews for leaders.</p>	<p>Engage with the organisation on flexible work practices and career opportunities to inform a consistent approach to their promotion and access.</p> <p>Review internal career opportunity processes and policies across the organisation with an intersectional lens, to identify any barriers to accessing these opportunities. Develop a plan to address barriers.</p> <p>Review the awareness, recruitment and education process with a gender equality and intersectional gender lens and adjust it accordingly.</p> <p>Commit to exploring the introduction of meaningful targets for workforce gender representation.</p>	<p>Review the organisation’s policies and processes, and the end to end experience associated with sexual harassment, bullying and discrimination and develop a plan to rectify using a victim-centric approach.</p> <p>Raise organisational awareness, through an internal communications campaign, about the organisation’s zero tolerance of sexual harassment, bullying and discrimination.</p> <p>Incorporate psychological safety as it relates to gender equality into the organisation’s Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy.</p>	<p>Commit to exploring options for meaningfully sharing and demonstrating the organisation’s commitment/s to gender equality both internally and externally.</p> <p>Identify options for organisational participation to support and progress commitment to gender equality.</p> <p>Commit to exploring workplace certifications and/or accreditations which will advance, enhance and sustain the organisation’s commitment to gender equality.</p>	<p>Test whether current remuneration, talent acquisition, talent progression, leave and other related policies and practices are meeting gender equality best practice, and consider adjusting accordingly.</p> <p>Develop a user guide based on the organisation’s established gender equality principles to ensure gender equality is integrated in developing Council documents.</p> <p>Review data collection and analysis practices to ensure key intersectional data is being captured to inform decision making on gender equality.</p> <p>Commit to sharing the output of the audit analysis internally with all employees.</p> <p>Report progress in relation to the Gender Equality Indicators in the annual workforce reporting.</p>

Strategies and Measures Priority Area 1 - Behaviour Change

Behaviour Change Overview						
Alignment with Indicators						
1. Gender Pay Equity	2. Gender Composition at all levels of the workforce	3. Gender composition of governing bodies	4. Workplace sexual harassment	5. Recruitment and promotion	6. Gendered work segregation	7. Leave and flexibility
Suggested Actions						
Time Frame	Action	Connection to Case for Change				
1.1: Now, Next	Investigate and deliver best practice professional development on applying an intersectional gender lens.	The implementation of this action would benefit both Case for Change Priority Area 3: Although there are policies and strategies in place, greater work needs to be done to embed gender equality into Council culture and sub-cultures and Case for Change Priority Area 4: Understanding of gender equality and other intersecting social issues varies across divisions, departments and teams.				
1.2: Next, Beyond	Develop a gender equality training plan based on employee interest areas and emerging best practice.	The implementation of this action would benefit Case for Change Priority Area 2: Council is experiencing significant gender segregation across divisions, departments and teams, both Case for Change Priority Area 3: Although there are policies and strategies in place, greater work needs to be done to embed gender equality into Council culture and sub-cultures and Case for Change Priority Area 4: Understanding of gender equality and other intersecting social issues varies across divisions, departments and teams.				
1.3: Now, Next	Advance unconscious bias information within the organisations Leader Toolkit.	The implementation of this action would benefit Case for Change Priority Area 6: There is a perception that women are expected to take on additional unpaid tasks that are deemed feminine and are not part of their job description.				
1.4: Next, Beyond	Develop and support the organisation's leaders on gender equality.	The implementation of this action would benefit Case for Change Priority Area 1: Employees feel like they are leading gender equality efforts and are looking to Council leadership for more support.				

Strategies and Measures Priority Area 1 – Behaviour Change: Action 1.1 and 1.2

Action 1.1 Overview

Investigate and deliver best practice professional development on applying an intersectional gender lens.

Proposed approach

- Clearly define goals and objectives to be achieved through professional development, and agree upon a uniform definition of 'success'.
- Research to understand best practice professional development on applying an intersectional gender lens looking at both other organisations and external providers, as well as best practice viewpoints of core (mandatory) and supplementary (optional) training options, training cadences, etc.
- Produce a project plan incorporating tangible, measurable goals.
- Develop test pilot of professional development opportunities and test with an engaged group. Ensure opportunities for feedback and re-development are provided.
- Deliver professional development across Council, ensuring equal access for all. Ensure leaders are 'leading by example' and are supporting their employees in their professional development journey.
- Ensure scheduled, consistent review periods, through surveys, exit feedback or working group reviews.

Enablers

- Human Resources
- External gender equity and intersectionality bodies
- LGBTIQ+ and Gender Equity Working Groups
- The SLT, ELT
- All employees

Measuring Success

- Project Plan to be developed by mid-2022
- Project pilot to be developed by 2022 end
- Delivery of professional development on applying an intersectional gender lens by start of 2023
- Review to be conducted by 2023 end

Action 1.2 Overview

Develop a gender equality training plan based on employee interest areas and emerging best practice.

Proposed Approach

- Research to understand best practice gender equality training looking at other organisations, external providers etc.
- Create a list of priority areas of interest and target sectors within Council, underpinned by Council's desired changes and targets (see 1.1). Incorporate employee input, through surveys, consultations, working group reviews and leadership. Consider emerging best practice and third party resources.
- Develop a project plan that targets the priority areas. Consider employee resourcing, potential external support and budgetary constraints. Build in consistent review and employee feedback mechanisms, targets and KPIs, and timing for key milestones.
- Roll out training plan for the first year. Ensure management provide access to the training and encourage employees to attend. Training s should be made available at a variety of times and days of the week.
- Act on feedback mechanisms, including surveys, exit feedback and working group reviews, both for the program generally and individual sessions and providers. Conduct reviews and revisions at scheduled times, perhaps yearly.

Enablers

- Human Resources
- External gender equity and intersectionality bodies
- LGBTIQ+ and Gender Equity Working Groups
- The SLT, ELT
- All employees

Measuring Success

- Consultations, feedback and priority areas to be developed by mid-2022
- Project plan to be developed by 2022 end
- Training available to employees by mid-2023, 50% of employees received training by 2023 end
- First review conducted by 2024 end

Strategies and Measures Priority Area 1 – Behaviour Change: Action 1.3 and 1.4

Action 1.3 Overview

Advance unconscious bias information within the organisation's Leader Toolkit.

Proposed Approach

- Review existing resources on unconscious bias to identify gaps and improvement opportunities. E.g., the need to develop relevant checklists, examples of appropriate versus gender biased language etc.
- Continue with pre-existing updates and training to the Leader's Toolkit.
- Ensure managers and recruitment and selection panellists from priority sectors have access to the training.
- Ensure existing employees have access to recruitment policies, and the principles of these policies are advertised to applicants.

Enablers

- Human Resources
- The SLT
- Recruitment and selection panellists

Measuring Success

- Complete update and training on Leader's Toolkit to all relevant leaders by mid 2023

Action 1.4 Overview

Develop and support the organisation's leaders on gender equality.

Suggested Approach

- Consult with employees and leadership to identify the most impactful delivery method of the training. Consider providing a variety of times and days of the week, an online or in-person event, and tools to boost engagement, such as interactivity or third-party deliveries.
- Develop the training and relevant support materials, with input from working groups. Explore the potential for third-party materials to be incorporated.
- Develop an internal communications piece, focusing advertising on priority sectors.
- Deliver the training, ensuring attendance levels from across the organisation is monitored.
- Support formal training initiatives with leader access to coaching, mentoring, shadowing, buddy systems etc, ensuring alignment with the 70/20/10 model of adult learning.

Enablers

- Human Resources
- Third party providers
- Consulted employees
- Strategic Communications
- Leadership

Measuring Success

- Leadership training to be developed by mid-2022
- Leadership training pilot program to be offered to leaders by 2022 end

Strategies and Measures Priority Area 2 - Leading by Example

Leading by example overview						
Alignment with Indicators						
1. Gender Pay Equity	2. Gender Composition at all levels of the workforce	3. Gender composition of governing bodies	4. Workplace sexual harassment	5. Recruitment and promotion	6. Gendered work segregation	7. Leave and flexibility
Suggested Actions						
Time Frame	Action		Connection to Case for Change			
2.1: Now	Implement executive level leadership sponsorship and oversight of the 2021-2025 Gender Equality Action Plan.		The implementation of this action would benefit Case for Change Priority Area 1: Employees feel like they are leading gender equality efforts and are looking to Council leadership for more support.			
2.2: Next, Beyond	Commit to developing the organisation's gender equality metrics and KPIs and building into the performance reviews for leaders.		The implementation of this action would benefit Case for Change Priority Area 1: Employees feel like they are leading gender equality efforts and are looking to Council leadership for more support and Case for Change Priority Area 2: Council is experiencing significant gender segregation across divisions, departments and teams.			

Strategies and Measures Priority Area 2 - Leading by Example: Action 2.1 and 2.2

Action 2.1 Overview

Implement executive level leadership sponsorship and oversight of the 2021-2025 Gender Equality Action Plan.

Suggested Approach

- Liaise with members of the executive leadership to align on a suitable cadence and ways of working to ensure appropriate sponsorship and oversight of the GEAP.
- Establish appropriate governance structures and mechanisms to ensure that executive leaders have clarity around their roles and responsibilities as they relate to the GEAP. This should include dedicated time for resourcing decisions to be made (see Section 7: Leadership and Resourcing).
- Develop a communications channel whereby the executive leadership are able to directly engage with Council stakeholders, and communicate their plans and intentions as they relate to the GEAP.
- Leverage executive sponsorship to assign dedicated project sponsors / initiative leads to each of the actions outlined within the GEAP, to ensure clear accountability and ownership for delivery.

Enablers

- The ELT, SLT
- Human Resources
- Strategic Communications

Measuring Success

- Formalised governance, meeting cadence accountabilities amongst the executive leadership team by early-mid 2022

Action 2.2 Overview

Commit to developing the organisation's gender equality metrics and KPIs and building into the performance reviews for leaders.

Suggested Approach

- Consult with leadership of all levels to consider incorporating gender equality metrics and KPIs into existing performance appraisal processes.
- Review existing datapoints readily available to Council (including People Matter Survey results), and align these to leader KPIs.

Enablers

- The ELT, SLT
- Human Resources

Measuring Success

- Complete consultations by 2022 end
- Identify relevant data metrics by 2022 end

Strategies and Measures Priority Area 3 - Attraction and Retention

Attraction and Retention Overview						
Alignment with Indicators						
1. Gender Pay Equity	2. Gender Composition at all levels of the workforce	3. Gender composition of governing bodies	4. Workplace sexual harassment	5. Recruitment and promotion	6. Gendered work segregation	7. Leave and flexibility
Suggested Actions						
Time Frame	Action	Connection to Case for Change				
3.1: Now, Next	Engage with the organisation on flexible work practices and career opportunities to inform a consistent approach to their promotion and access.	The implementation of this action would benefit Case for Change Priority Area 4: Understanding of gender equality and other intersecting social issues varies across divisions, departments and teams.				
3.2: Next, Beyond	Review internal career opportunity processes and policies across the organisation with an intersectional lens, to identify any barriers to accessing these opportunities. Develop and operationalise a plan to address barriers.	The implementation of this action would benefit Case for Change Priority Area 5: Employees want greater transparency in Council processes, promotions and skill development opportunities.				
3.3: Now, Next	Review the awareness, recruitment and education process with a gender equality and intersectional gender lens and adjust it accordingly.	The implementation of this action would benefit Case for Change Priority Area 3: Although there are policies and strategies in place, work remains to be done to further embed gender equality into Council culture and subcultures and Case for Change Priority Area 5: Employees want greater transparency in Council processes, promotions and skill development.				
3.4: Next, Beyond	Commit to exploring the introduction of meaningful targets for workforce gender representation.	The implementation of this action would benefit Case for Change Priority Area 2: Council is experiencing significant gender segregation across divisions, departments and teams.				

Strategies and Measures Priority Area 3 - Attraction and Retention: Actions 3.1 and 3.2

Action 3.1 Overview

Engage with the organisation on flexible work practices and career opportunities to inform a consistent approach to their promotion and access.

Proposed Approach

- Consult with employees and managers to understand the existing processes, prerequisites, approvals and bottlenecks for accessing flexible working arrangements and career development opportunities. Ensure a diverse range of employee needs are investigated, and especially from priority sectors of Council applying an intersectional gender lens.
- Create an outputs paper based on these consultations, with the aim of addressing inconsistent or unfit for purpose flexible working policies and career development opportunities. Incorporate diverse employee needs, as well as the potential impact on service delivery and how to address customer needs.
- Use insights from this paper to redesign policies, processes and practices that better address intersectional gender equality.
- Support managers to in disseminating and implementing the revised policies, processes and practices, providing managers with formal training and assistance as required to ensure that policies address intersectional gender equality in practice.
- Collect ongoing data on the levels of access to flexible working arrangements amongst employees of different needs.

Enablers

- Human Resources
- Gender Equity Working Group
- The SLT

Measuring Success

- Develop outputs paper by end of 2022
- Update policies by end of 2023
- Review updated policies by end of 2024

Action 3.2 Overview

Review internal career opportunity processes and policies across the organisation with an intersectional lens, to identify any barriers to accessing these opportunities. Develop and operationalise a plan to address barriers.

Proposed Approach

- Engage with employees and working groups to identify gendered and intersectional barriers to accessing higher duties and secondment opportunities.
- Consult with managers and conduct a review of existing policies regarding access to higher duties and secondments.
- Update application processes to address barriers to accessing internal career opportunities, ensuring uniformity and clarity.
- Develop appropriate policies and/or training to eliminate unconscious gender bias in considering applicants for higher duties and secondments.
- Create a communications piece, alerting employees to such opportunities and encouraging women and gender diverse employees to apply.
- Establish escalation and reporting mechanisms for employees to seek support in addressing entrenched barriers to accessing these opportunities.

Enablers

- Human Resources
- Gender Equity Working Group
- The SLT

Measuring Success

- Consultation with employees and managers complete by 2022 end
- Updated policies and communications piece implemented by 2023 end
- Establish reporting mechanism by end of 2024

Strategies and Measures Priority Area 3 - Attraction and Retention: Actions 3.3 and 3.4

Action 3.3 Overview

Review the awareness, recruitment and education process with a gender equality and intersectional gender lens and adjust it accordingly.

Proposed Approach

- Build upon existing audit results to clearly articulate the current level of awareness (i.e., overall gender equality 'maturity') of Council's workforce.
- Review Council's recruitment and education (learning and development) processes and practices, applying an intersectional gender lens to understand how embedded gender equality is within these areas.
- Establish key gender equality principles which will be embedded into awareness, recruitment and education at Council, and incorporate diverse input in drafting these principles, including but not limited to relevant working groups.
- Establish a change strategy and transition plan to implement and embed these principles.
- Embed intersectional gender equality principles into the above settings.

Enablers

- Human Resources
- The SLT, ELT
- LGBTIQ+ and Gender Equity Working Groups
- All employees

Measuring Success

- Review of recruitment and education processes and practices by 2022 end
- Articulation of overall gender equality maturity by 2023 end
- Establishment of gender equality principles by 2023 end
- Development of change strategy and transition plan by 2024 end
- Implementation and embedding of gender equality principles by 2025 end

Action 3.4 Overview

Commit to exploring the introduction of meaningful targets for workforce gender representation.

Proposed Approach

- Engage with ELT and SLT to investigate incorporating gender representation targets generally or in targeted sectors and levels of the workforce (e.g., Maternal Child Health, Director level).
- Investigate existing approaches to targets in similar organisations, and what might constitute 'best practice'.
- Consult with managers and employees about the initiative, through surveys, consultations and working group reviews.
- Develop a report on a potential approach to target setting.
- Having aligned on a point of view around i) the appropriateness of targets, and ii) what specific targets might be of most value to Council on the basis of the gender equality audit and consultations, explore opportunities for implementation.

Enablers

- Human Resources
- The SLT, ELT
- LGBTIQ+ and Gender Equity Working Groups
- All employees

Measuring Success

- Engagement and consultation with employees and managers complete by 2022 end
- Review of existing approaches and best practice complete by 2023 end
- 'Go / No Go' decision around the appropriateness of gender equality targets and quotas made by 2024 end

Strategies and Measures Priority Area 4 - Workplace Safety

Workplace Safety Overview						
Alignment with Indicators						
1. Gender Pay Equity	2. Gender Composition at all levels of the workforce	3. Gender composition of governing bodies	4. Workplace sexual harassment	5. Recruitment and promotion	6. Gendered work segregation	7. Leave and flexibility
Suggested Actions						
Time Frame	Action	Connection to Case for Change				
4.1: Now, Next	Review organisational sexual harassment, bullying and discrimination policies, processes and the end to end experience. Based on findings, develop a plan to ensure a victim-centric approach is adopted.	The implementation of this action would benefit Case for Change Priority Area 3: Although there are policies and strategies in place, work remains to be done to further embed gender equality into Council culture and sub-cultures and Case for Change Priority Area 8: Council is commencing its journey for those who identify outside of the gender binary, and an opportunity exists to further support this dimension of diversity and inclusion				
4.2: Next, Beyond	Undertake an internal communications campaign to raise organisational awareness about the organisation's zero tolerance of sexual harassment, bullying and discrimination.	The implementation of this action would benefit Case for Change Priority Area 4: Understanding of gender equality and other intersecting social issues varies across divisions, departments and teams and Case for Change Priority Area 7: There is a perception that women are expected to take on additional unpaid tasks that are deemed feminine and are not part of their job description				
4.3: Next, Beyond	Incorporate psychological safety as it relates to gender equality into the organisation's Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy.	The implementation of this action would benefit Case for Change Priority Area 4: Understanding of gender equality and other intersecting social issues varies across divisions, departments and teams				

Strategies and Measures Priority Area 4 - Workplace Safety: Action 4.1 and 4.2

Action 4.1 Overview

Review organisational sexual harassment, bullying and discrimination policies, processes and the end to end experience. Based on findings, develop a plan to ensure a victim-centric approach is adopted.

Suggested Approach

- Consult with employees, managers, Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Contact Officers, Human Resources and other relevant stakeholders to identify and map the end to end experience of reporting and escalating sexual harassment, bullying and/or discrimination, including potential barriers or bottlenecks in the system.
- Review the sexual harassment, bullying and discrimination policies and practices used by comparable organisations, as well as 'best practice' approaches being used by leading organisations.
- Review the corresponding policies and procedures, applying an intersectional gender lens to identify areas for refinement and improvement.
- Synthesise the above outputs into a coherent blueprint and action plan for implementing a refined victim-centric approach.
- Consider and develop the role of EEO Contact Officers, including a potential update to the scope of their potential position, their powers and capabilities, and the remuneration the holder of the role would be entitled to. Consider how to ensure EEO Contact Officers have adequate experience in both intersectional gender equality, and mental health first aid.

Enablers

- Human Resources
- EEO Contact Officers
- Strategic Communications

Measuring Success

- Consultation and external scan completed by the 2023 end
- Delivery of blueprint and action plan by mid 2024
- Implementation of action plan by 2025 end

Action 4.2 Overview

Undertake an internal communications campaign to raise organisational awareness about the organisation's zero tolerance of sexual harassment, bullying and discrimination.

Proposed Approach

- Review and refresh Council's formal position statement on sexual harassment, bullying and discrimination.
- Leverage existing initiatives and programs of work to meaningfully demonstrate Council's commitment to zero tolerance.
- Establish a communications and engagement plan, with clear and coherent themes and messaging to be communicated to employees.
- Implement the above plan, and embed opportunities for reflection and incorporation of feedback and learnings.

Enablers

- Human Resources
- Strategic Communications

Measuring Success

- Refreshed Council position statement completed by 2022 end
- Development and implementation of communications campaign by mid 2023

Strategies and Measures Priority Area 4 - Workplace Safety: Action 4.3

Action 4.3 Overview

Incorporate psychological safety as it relates to gender equality into the organisation's Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

Proposed Approach

- Through the drafting and development of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy, consider inclusion of initiatives that align to the concept of psychological safety.
- Develop collateral to support the development of psychologically safe practices, including checklists, tip sheets, etc.
- Identify clear metrics to allow Council to measure psychological safety over time.
- Engage with employees to identify the levers that Council must pull in order to further promote a psychologically safe workplace.
- Support leaders to role model psychological safe practices and behaviours.

Enablers

- Human Resources
- The SLT, ELT
- All employees

Measuring Success

- Review of drafted Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy for 'quick wins' by mid 2023
- Employee consultation and identification of metrics completed by 2023 end
- Development of collateral by mid 2024.

Strategies and Measures Priority Area 5 - Corporate Identity

Corporate Identity Overview						
Alignment with Indicators						
1. Gender Pay Equity	2. Gender Composition at all levels of the workforce	3. Gender composition of governing bodies	4. Workplace sexual harassment	5. Recruitment and promotion	6. Gendered work segregation	7. Leave and flexibility
Suggested Actions						
Time Frame	Action	Connection to Case for Change				
5.1: Now, Next	Commit to exploring options for meaningfully sharing and demonstrating the organisation's commitment/s to gender equality both internally and externally.	The implementation of this action would benefit Case for Change Priority Area 7: There is a perception Council lacks outward facing / community facing united gender equality stance that employees can be proud of.				
5.2: Next, Beyond	Identify options for organisational participation to support and progress commitment to gender equality.	The implementation of this action would benefit Case for Change Priority Area 4: Understanding of gender equality and other intersecting social issues varies across divisions, departments and teams and Case for Change Priority Area 7: There is a perception Council lacks an outward facing / community facing united gender equality stance that employees can be proud of.				
5.3: Beyond	Commit to exploring workplace certifications and/or accreditations which will advance, enhance and sustain the organisation's commitment to gender equality.	The implementation of this action would benefit Case for Change Priority Area 4: Understanding of gender equality and other intersecting social issues varies across divisions, departments and teams and Case for Change Priority Area 5: Employees want greater transparency in Council processes, promotions and skill development opportunities.				

Strategies and Measures Priority Area 5 - Corporate Identity: Action 5.1 and 5.2

Action 5.1 Overview

Commit to exploring options for meaningfully sharing and demonstrating the organisation's commitment/s to gender equality both internally and externally.

Proposed Approach

- Develop a detailed change strategy and transition plan to support the development and implementation of actions within the GEAP.
- Leverage Council's Summary of Findings and GEAP documents to identify datapoints and trends to share with employees, highlighting strengths when it comes to gender equality.
- Identify opportunities for Council to internally demonstrate its commitment to advancing gender equality, such as through the development of new policies and procedures which address emerging trends in this space. Potential options include but are not limited to:
 - Gender transition
 - Pregnancy loss
 - IVF and Fertility
 - Menopause leave

Enablers

- Human Resources
- LGBTIQA+ and Gender Equity Working Groups
- The SLT
- All employees

Measuring Success

- Commit to distributing a set target of trends / insights from the Summary of Findings annually
- Implementation of in at least one new policy or practice by the submission of the October 2023 progress report

Action 5.2 Overview

Identify options for organisational participation to support and progress commitment to gender equality.

Proposed Approach

- Identify external events and opportunities where Council may be able to visibly demonstrate their commitment to intersectional gender equality. Potential options include but are not limited to:
 - Transgender Day of Visibility
 - Lesbian Day of Visibility
 - IDOHOBIT
 - LGBTI Domestic Violence Awareness Day
 - Pride Month
 - Wear it Purple Day
 - International Women's Day
- Explore opportunities for employees to get involved in events and initiatives within the community, aimed at progressing gender equality.
- Communicate Council's commitment to and support of employees whom choose to get involved in events and initiatives (at both the SLT and ELT levels).

Enablers

- Human Resources
- Strategic Communications
- The SLT, ELT
- LGBTIQA+ and Gender Equity Working Groups

Measuring Success

- Participation in at least two external events by the submission of the October 2023 progress report

Strategies and Measures Priority Area 5 - Corporate Identity: Action 5.3

Action 5.3 Overview

Commit to exploring workplace certifications and/or accreditations which will advance, enhance and sustain the organisation's commitment to gender equality.

Proposed Approach

- Conduct a desktop review of potential certifications and accreditations that may be of benefit to Council in progressing gender equality (potential options include but are not limited to Rainbow Tick, White Ribbon, and Edge certifications).
- Engage with core stakeholder groups to prioritise proposed initiatives, and to identify which opportunities Council should progress.
- Liaise with corresponding vendors and accreditation bodies to commence relevant certifications and accreditations.

Enablers

- Human Resources
- Leadership
- LGBTIQ+ and Gender Equity Working Groups
- External vendors and accreditation bodies

Measuring Success

- Commencement of at least one accreditation/certification by the October 2023 progress report submission
- Completion of at least one accreditation/certification by 2025 end

Strategies and Measures Priority Area 6 - Data and Strategy

Data and Strategy Overview						
Alignment with Indicators						
1. Gender Pay Equity	2. Gender Composition at all levels of the workforce	3. Gender composition of governing bodies	4. Workplace sexual harassment	5. Recruitment and promotion	6. Gendered work segregation	7. Leave and flexibility
Suggested Actions						
Time Frame	Action	Connection to Case for Change				
6.1: Now, Next	Test whether current remuneration, talent acquisition, talent progression, leave and other related policies and practices are meeting gender equality best practice, and consider adjusting accordingly.	The implementation of this action would benefit both Case for Change Priority Area 3: Although there are policies and strategies in place, greater work needs to be done to embed gender equality into Council culture and sub-cultures and Case for Change Priority Area 4: Understanding of gender equality and other intersecting social issues varies across divisions, departments and teams				
6.2: Now, Next	Develop a user guide based on the organisation's established gender equality principles to ensure intersectional gender equality is integrated in developing Council documents.	The implementation of this action would benefit Case for Change Priority Area 4: Understanding of gender equality and other intersecting social issues varies across divisions, departments and teams and Case for Change Priority Area 7: There is a perception Council lacks an outward facing / community facing united gender equality stance that employees can be proud of				
6.3: Next, Beyond	Review data collection and analysis practices to ensure key intersectional data is being captured to inform decision making on gender equality.	The implementation of this action would benefit Case for Change Priority Area 3: Although there are policies and strategies in place, work remains to be done to further embed gender equality into Council culture and subculture				
6.4: Now	Commit to sharing the output of the audit analysis internally with all employees.	The implementation of this action would benefit Case for Change Priority Area 5: Employees want greater transparency in Council processes, promotions and skill development opportunities				
6.5: Next, Beyond	Report progress in relation to the Gender Equality Indicators in the annual workforce reporting.	The implementation of this action would benefit Case for Change Priority Area 5: Employees want greater transparency in Council processes, promotions and skill development opportunities and Case for Change Priority Area 7: There is a perception Council lacks an outward facing / community facing united gender equality stance that employees can be proud of				

Strategies and Measures Priority Area 6 - Data and Strategy: Actions 6.1 and 6.2

Action 6.1 Overview

Test whether current remuneration, talent acquisition, talent progression, leave and other related policies and practices are meeting gender equality best practice, and consider adjusting accordingly.

Proposed Approach

- Undertake a formal review of all relevant Council policies pertaining to remuneration, talent acquisition, talent progression, leave and other relevant areas, applying an intersectional gender lens to understand the gendered impacts of these policies and systems.
- Conduct deeper dives into available Council data to generate additional insights and targets for intervention, building upon initial audit insights. This may include further analysis of existing remuneration data, segmenting by divisions and areas, as well as accounting for the role that length of service (tenure) has on remuneration.
- Undertake desktop research into best practice policies and practices relating to the above areas.
- Consolidate the above insights and identify priority areas for change and refinement, and development a change strategy and transition plan.
- Commence implementation of revised policies and practices.

Enablers

- Human Resources
- Internal data analysis capability
- LGBTIQA+ and Gender Equity Working Groups

Measuring Success

- Completion of reviews, desktop research and further data analysis by mid 2023
- Identification of priority areas for change by mid 2023
- Finalisation of change strategy and transition plan by the 2023 end

Action 6.2 Overview

Develop a user guide based on the organisation's established gender equality principles to ensure intersectional gender equality is integrated in developing Council documents.

Proposed Approach

- Engage and consult with employees to understand what would be required to change in order to 'embed' Council's gender equality principles into Council documents, ensuring that this also addresses key intersectional considerations.
- Prioritise documents for review and updating according to value-add and ease of implementation.
- Engage with work being undertaken to implement Gender Impact Assessments to ensure alignment and avoid repetition.
- Establish a clear timeline for completion of policy review / embedding of gender equality principles.
- Commence review process with clearly articulated cadence.

Enablers

- Human Resources
- LGBTIQA+ and Gender Equity Working Groups
- The SLT
- Strategic Communications
- All employees

Measuring Success

- Consultation complete by the 2022 end
- Prioritisation of policies for review finalised by mid 2023
- 25% completion by October 2023 reporting period

Strategies and Measures Priority Area 6 - Data and Strategy: Actions 6.3 and 6.4

Action 6.3 Overview

Review data collection and analysis practices to ensure key intersectional data is being captured to inform decision making on gender equality.

Proposed Approach

- Human Resources review current mechanisms through which Council collects workforce and employee data, including during recruitment, Human Resources systems, employee engagement surveys, etc.
- Apply an intersectional gender lens to identify current gaps in relation to intersectional gender data being collected. Areas currently identified as lacking through the Gender Equality Audit include:
 - Disability status
 - Cultural identity
 - Religion
 - Sexual orientation
- Identify opportunities to better capture workforce data on key intersectional attributes to address any systemic barriers that are experienced by Council employees (with due consideration to our employees' right to privacy, as well as relevant legal obligations)

Enablers

- Human Resources
- Internal data analysis capability
- LGBTIQA+ and Gender Equity Working Groups
- All employees

Measuring Success

- Reviewed data collection mechanisms by mid 2023
- Identified opportunities to refine data collection mechanisms by 2023 end
- Implemented new data collection mechanism by 2024 end

Action 6.4 Overview

Commit to sharing the output of the audit analysis internally with all employees.

Proposed Approach

- Engage with relevant working groups to seek input regarding the best means of sharing the outputs of Council's Gender Equality Audit with the broader workforce.
- Develop a communications and engagement plan to map the distribution of audit findings.
- Commit to distributing all findings by the end of 2022.

Enablers

- Human Resources
- LGBTIQA+ and Gender Equity Working Groups
- The SLT
- Strategic Communications

Measuring Success

- Full distribution of audit results by the 2022 end

Strategies and Measures Priority Area 6 - Data and Strategy: Action 6.5

Action 6.5 Overview

Report progress in relation to the Gender Equality Indicators in the annual workforce reporting.

Proposed Approach

- Work with internal communications team to identify scope and approach for embedding progress updates in annual Council workforce reporting.
- Establish a clear approach and governance to ensure clear accountability and timeframes for reporting.

Enablers

- Human Resources
- Strategic Communications

Measuring Success

- Inclusion of progress updates in annual Council workforce reporting

Complete Timeline

All actions that sit beneath Council's identified priority areas have been identified as initiatives to be undertaken either 'Now' (2022-2023), 'Next' (2023-2024), or 'Beyond' (2024-2025), with this sequencing accommodating for dependencies and slippages that may emerge over the coming years.

	Now 2022-2023	Next 2023-2024	Beyond 2024-2025
Area 1: Behaviour Change	1.1: Investigate and deliver best practice professional development on applying an intersectional gender lens	1.2: Develop a gender equality training plan based on employee interest areas and emerging best practice.	
	1.3: Advance unconscious bias information within the organisations Leader Toolkit	1.4: Develop and support the organisation's leaders on gender equality.	
Area 2: Leading by Example	2.1 Implement Executive level leadership sponsorship and oversight of the 2021-2025 Gender Equality Action Plan.	2.2 Commit to developing the organisation's gender equality metrics and KPIs and building into the performance reviews for leaders	
Area 3: Attraction and Retention	3.1 Engage with the organisation on flexible work practices and career opportunities to inform a consistent approach to their promotion and access.	3.2 Review internal career opportunity processes and policies across the organisation with an intersectional lens, to identify any barriers to accessing these opportunities. Develop a plan to address barriers	
	3.3 Review the awareness, recruitment and education process with a gender equality and intersectional gender lens and adjust it accordingly.	3.4 Commit to exploring the introduction of meaningful targets for workforce gender representation.	
Area 4: Workplace Safety	4.1 Review organisational sexual harassment, bullying and discrimination policies, processes and the end to end experience. Based on findings, develop a plan to ensure a victim-centric approach is adopted.	4.2 Undertake an internal communications campaign to raise organisational awareness about the organisation's zero tolerance of sexual harassment, bullying and discrimination.	
		4.3 Incorporate psychological safety as it relates to gender equality into the organisation's Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy.	
Area 5: Corporate Identity	5.1 Commit to exploring options for meaningfully sharing and demonstrating the organisation's commitment/s to gender equality both internally and externally.	5.2 Identify options for organisational participation to support and progress commitment to gender equality.	
		5.3 Commit to exploring workplace certifications and/or accreditations which will advance, enhance and sustain the organisation's commitment to gender equality.	
Area 6: Data and Strategy	6.1 Test whether current remuneration, talent acquisition, talent progression, leave and other related policies and practices are meeting gender equality best practice, and consider adjusting accordingly.	6.3 Review data collection and analysis practices to ensure key intersectional data is being captured to inform decision making on gender equality.	
	6.2 Develop a user guide based on the organisation's established gender equality principles to ensure gender equality is integrated in developing Council documents.	6.5 Report progress in relation to the Gender Equality Indicators in the annual workforce reporting.	
	6.4 Commit to sharing the output of the audit analysis internally with all employees.		

*Note. All "Measuring Success" metrics will be consolidated into a timeline to avoid bottlenecks pinch points

6. Leadership and Resourcing



Resourcing Council's Gender Equality Action Plan 2021 - 2025

Under section 10(3) of the Gender Equality Act 2020, Council is required to outline a strategic workforce plan which provides clarity around how our GEAP will be further developed and resourced. This must include details of how Council will appropriately assign employees and budget to implement initiatives outlined above. In line with Action 2.1, Council is committed to implementing Executive level leadership sponsorship and oversight of the Gender Equality Action Plan 2021-2025, which will facilitate oversight and input into key resourcing matters in collaboration with key stakeholders. This resourcing process is outlined below:

Process for allocating GEAP resources and funding

1. Initiative Scoping by Executive Level Sponsors

Prior to the commencement of each year of the GEAP, the ELT will be responsible for reviewing the scoped actions and initiatives for the year ahead, and develop an initial position around the required staffing and budget necessary to successfully deliver on these within the associated timeframes. Note that this will also be underpinned by input and involvement from relevant stakeholders detailed under the "Enablers" section within "Strategies and Measures"

2. Resourcing Alignment between the ELT, Gender Equity Working Group, and Human Resources

Following this process, the proposed resourcing plan will be subject to formal discussion and review by members of the ELT, the Gender Equity Working Group, and Human Resources. The purpose of these conversations will be to a) align on the complexity and scope of the year's planned actions and deliverables, and b) to reach consensus around the required staffing and budget.

In making these determinations around adequate resourcing for the GEAP, the below factors will be considered by the relevant stakeholders:

- Council's current headcount
- Council's current circumstances, including any barriers to progressing scoped actions within the GEAP
- Competing requirements that may apply to Council under any other Act
- Council's current resources
- Council's operational priorities, and competing operational obligations
- The practicability and cost to Council of progressing scoped actions within the GEAP
- Previous genuine attempts made by Council to progress scoped GEAP initiatives, and gender equality more broadly

3. Resourcing Approval at the CEO / ELT Level

Once a consensus has been reached, the finalised resourcing plan will be signed off at the CEO / ELT level.

Further, any concerns raised during step 4 of the process for allocating resources and funding will also be escalated to the CEO / ELT level for resolution.

4. Engagement with Relevant Departments and Stakeholders

Once a resourcing plan for the GEAP has been endorsed by Council leadership, the actions will be communicated to relevant departments and stakeholders to commence delivery, and to establish initiative leads and project sponsors. These may include (but are not limited to) Managers, Supervisors, Coordinators, Strategic Communications, ELT and Organisational Performance and Engagement.

Executive Commitment to Council's GEAP

The Commission for Gender Equality in the Public Sector strongly recommends the inclusion of a statement from the executive leadership, explicitly endorsing the organisation's GEAP. Through providing this statement, Council is committing to the implementation of the actions outlined within this document, and to the progression of gender equality throughout our organisation and community.

It is with pleasure and privilege for the Hume City Council Executive Leadership Team (ELT), to officially endorse Hume's second Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP).

Since the publication of Council's first ever Gender Equity Action Plan in 2019, the subsequent passage of the Gender Equality Act 2020 (the Act) marked a key milestone in the Victorian Government's commitment to legislative reform in this space.

Having commenced on the 31st March 2021, the Act outlines a number of gender equality principles that defined entities such as Hume City Council should strive to reflect in their day-to-day work with the community:

1. All Victorians should live in a safe and equal society, have access to equal power, resources and opportunities and be treated with dignity, respect and fairness.
2. Gender equality benefits all Victorians regardless of gender.
3. Gender equality is a human right and precondition to social justice.
4. Gender equality brings economic, social and health benefits for Victoria.
5. Gender equality is a precondition for the prevention of family violence and other forms of violence against women and girls.
6. Advancing gender equality is a shared responsibility across the Victorian community.
7. All human beings, regardless of gender, should be free to develop their personal abilities, pursue their professional careers and make choices about their lives without being limited by gender stereotypes, gender roles or prejudices.
8. Gender inequality may be compounded by other forms of disadvantage or discrimination that a person may experience on the basis of Aboriginality, age, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, race, religion, sexual orientation and other attributes.
9. Women have historically experienced discrimination and disadvantage on the basis of sex and gender.
10. Special measures may be necessary to achieve gender equality.

Gender equality is critical to building a fair, prosperous and healthy society, where women, men and gender-diverse people are afforded equally the opportunities to thrive.

The passage of this legislation provides Hume City Council with the perfect opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to equality for all.

We at Hume continue to acknowledge the role we have to play in building a safe and equal society for all Victorians, and commit to ensuring that all employees are able to receive and enjoy the same rewards, resources and opportunities, regardless of gender identity.

The Hume City Council Executive Team are proud to endorse this GEAP, and look forward to seeing this plan become a reality as it is embedded across the organisation, ultimately leading to benefits for the community we serve.

Executive Leadership Team



Sheena Frost
Chief Executive Officer



Fiona Shanks
Acting Director,
Communications, Engagement
and Advocacy



Hector Gaston
Director, Community Services



Daryl Whitfort
Director, Corporate Services



Michael Sharp
Director, Planning and
Development



Peter Waite
Director, Sustainable
Infrastructure and Services

7. Measuring Progress



Implementation Plan

In terms of implementing the strategies and initiatives outlined within the GEAP, Council have developed a high-level implementation plan, provided below. This framework outlines the way in which the GEAP will be communicated and distributed to employees, along with how the first tranche of activities (those slated to be undertaken in 2022) will be delivered in a seamless and cohesive manner.

Phase 1: Preparation	Stage 2: Communication	Stage 3: Implementation	Stage 4: Review
<p>1.1 Message from the CEO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Official “Message from the CEO” to all employees, officially launching Council’s 2021 – 2025 GEAP <p>1.2 Circulation of GEAP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distribution of the 2021 – 2025 GEAP to all employees, as well as clear signposting of how to navigate to the GEAP on Council’s externally facing website <p>1.3 Alignment on communications / engagement plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal consultation between the Gender Equity Steering Committee, Gender Equity Working Group, and Council’s Strategic Communications team, to align on messaging and sequencing of year #1 (“Now”) initiatives 	<p>2.1 Targeted Communication of “Now”, “Next”, “Beyond” time horizons</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rollout of coordinated communications campaign to Council employees, advising of key activities and sequencing of “Now”, “Next” and “Beyond” initiatives <p>2.2 Rollout plan for “Now” activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear and coherent communication of key dates and timeframes of “Now” activities scheduled for 2022 <p>2.3 Clarity of key GEAP contacts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distribution of names and contact details of key gender equality stakeholders, including points of contact for the Gender Equity Steering Committee and Gender Equity Working Group 	<p>3.1 Phased rollout of “Now” initiatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phased rollout and actioning of “Now” initiatives slated for commencement in 2022 <p>3.2 Stand-up of reporting and monitoring mechanisms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commencement of formal reporting and monitoring framework, including the formal involvement of the ELT 	<p>4.1 Review of “Now” initiatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12-month retrospective of GEAP 2022 initiatives and progress Identification of areas for refinement <p>4.2 Preparation for “Next” initiatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leveraging of insights and learnings from 2022 GEAP initiatives to inform plan for 2023 activities

8. Appendices



Appendix A: Key Terms, Definitions and Acronyms

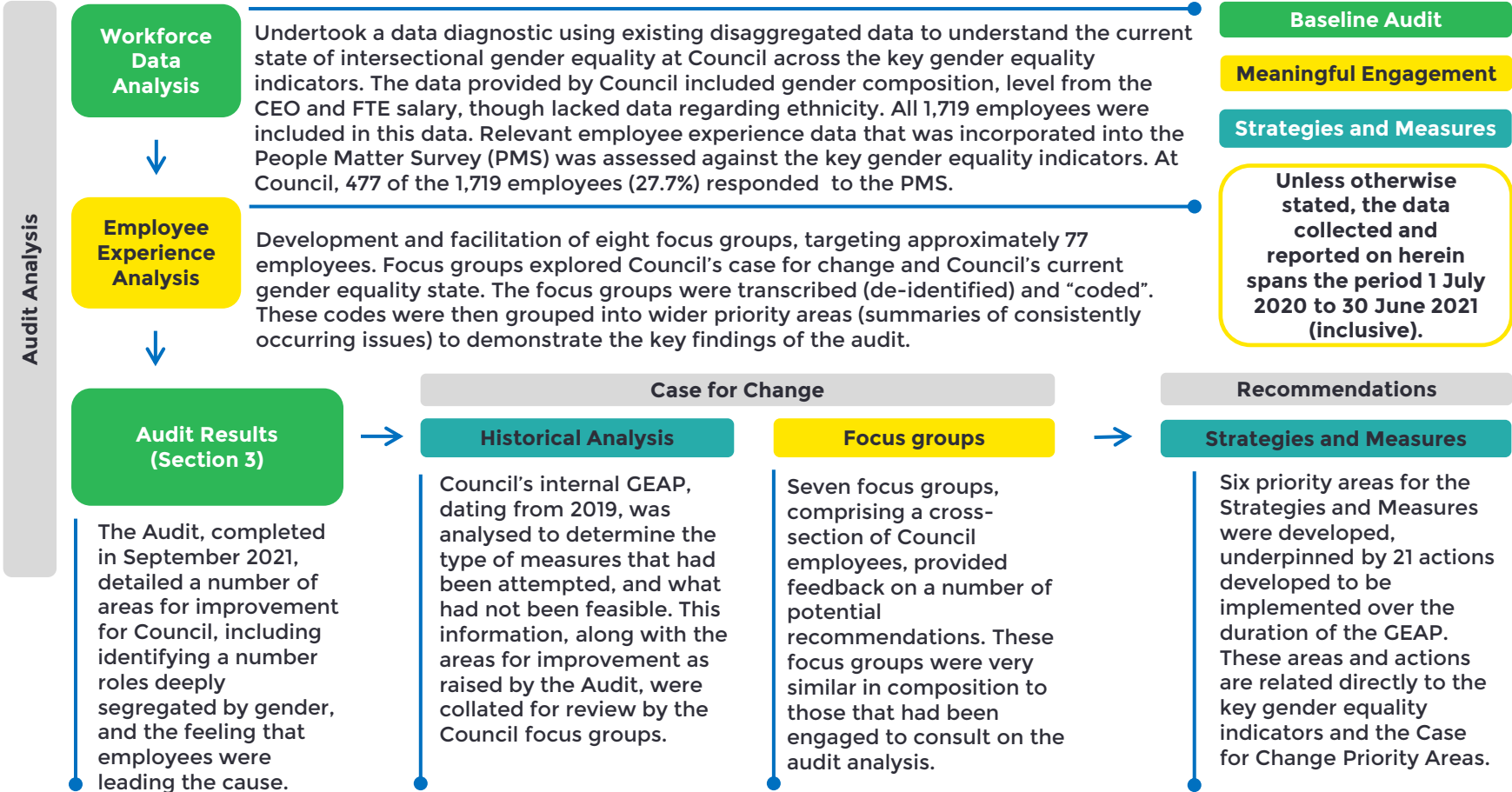
Term	Definition
The Act; the Gender Equality Act	The Gender Equality Act 2020 is the Victorian bill that requires certain organisations, including Council, to audit the level of gender equality in the workforce, and to submit an action plan detailing their strategy to achieve equality
Defined Entity	A defined entity is one that is obligated under the Act to report on gender inequality. It includes all public sector bodies, local governments and universities that employ more than 50 people.
ELT	Denotes Council's Executive Leadership Team, spanning our Chief Executive Officer and Directors.
Employee Experience Data	Employee experience data provides a snapshot of the thoughts, experiences and insights of the Council workforce, as informed by the People Matters Survey (PMS). The data is directly correlated to the seven indicator.
FTE	Full Time Equivalency is a metric which indicates the workload of an employed person across various contexts. In relation to remuneration, a part time or casual employee's salary can be converted into what they would receive if they worked full-time. This conversion is used to make salaries more comparable across the workforce, in addition to reflecting available workforce and capacity.
GEAP	A Gender Equality Action Plan is a key requirement under the Gender Equality Act 2020, which includes strategies and measures that promote gender equality in the workplace of a defined entity, based on the results of a workplace gender audit.
Gender	The socially-constructed roles and behaviours that a society typically associates with males and females.
Gender Binary	A common assumption that one's gender and gender expression is either male or female, and that one's biological gender will align with constructs of masculine or feminine identity, expression and sexuality.
Gender Composition	Describes the ratio of men, women, and trans and gender diverse employees in a given sector of the workplace
Gender Diverse	An individual whose gender identity falls outside of the binary of male or female.
Gender Equality	The equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women, men and trans and gender-diverse people. Equality does not mean that women, men and trans and gender-diverse people will become the same but that their rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on their gender.
Gender Equity	The provision of fairness and justice in the distribution of benefits and responsibilities on the basis of gender. The concept recognises that people may have different needs and power related to their gender and that these differences should be identified and addressed in a manner that rectifies gender related imbalances.

Appendix A: Key Terms, Definitions and Acronyms

Term	Definition
Gender Segregation	The extent to which certain areas of the workforce are isolated from other genders, given their domination by one gender. For example, leadership positions may often be segregated, as they are mostly comprised of male employees.
GEWG	Council's Gender Equity Working Group, an internal employee representative body committed to the advancement of gender equity.
Indicators	The Gender Equality Act 2020 provided seven indicators against which levels of gender equality are measured. Each indicator relates to a common area of concern in workplaces.
Intersectional Gender Equality	The acknowledgement that gender inequality may be compounded by other forms of disadvantage or discrimination that a person may experience based on Aboriginality, age, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, race, religion, sexual orientation and other attributes.
LGBTIQA+	An evolving acronym that stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer/questioning and asexual
PMS	People Matters Survey. The PMS runs annually for all public sector organisations and their employees, and measures levels of contentment with various areas of their workplace. Participation is optional.
Remuneration	In the context of the Gender Equality Audit and Action Plan, remuneration may refer to any of three categories – base salary, fixed remuneration, and total remuneration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Base the full time equivalent annualised salary specified in the relevant employee agreement for the individual. • Fixed remuneration is the compensation that an employee receives as a fixed payment regardless of the number of hours they work. This may include bonuses or other payment types that are not associated with the number of hours worked, and outside of base salary. • Total remuneration is equal to the total of base salary (as described above) plus fixed remuneration (as described above) plus any non-fixed remuneration amount. Non-fixed remuneration amounts include any amounts paid that are not already included in base salary or fixed salary, such as superannuation, travel or meal allowances.
Reporting Levels	Refers to the number of levels of management between a given employee and the CEO. A level closer to 0 means they have more authority, and vice versa with employees further from 0. Council has 12 reporting levels
SLT	Denotes Council's Senior Leadership Team, spanning divisional and departmental managers and leaders whom sit just below the ELT.
WHIN	Women's Health In the North (WHIN) is the regional women's health service for the northern metropolitan region committed to improving the health, safety and wellbeing of women.
Workforce Data	Workforce data provides quantitative information from sources such as payroll, recruitment and other such internal reporting mechanisms. Workforce data is used to analyse the reporting indicators, as well as provide further insight into employee experience reports.

Appendix B: Gender Equality Action Plan Design Methodology

A robust methodology was used to produce the Council GEAP. The GEAP draws from quantitative analysis of disaggregated data, and qualitative analysis of organisational documents and verbatim notes from employee consultation sessions. The quantitative analysis utilised workforce data to determine the key structural barriers to equality at Council.



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