



EAST GIPPSLAND SHIRE COUNCIL

GENDER EQUALITY ACTION PLAN PROGRESS REPORT 2023



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

East Gippsland Shire Council acknowledges the Gunaikurnai, Nindi-Ngujarn Ngarigo Monero, Bidawel, Duduroa Dhargal, Jaithmathang people as the Traditional Custodians of this land that encompasses East Gippsland Shire, and their enduring relationship with country.

The Traditional Custodians have cared for and nurtured East Gippsland for tens of thousands of years. Council values their living culture and practices and their right to self-determination. Council pays respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in East Gippsland, their Elders, past, present, and future.





OUR COMMITMENT TO GENDER EQUALITY

We are dedicated to ensuring that everyone in our community is treated with dignity, respect, and fairness. In our planning, strategies, and service delivery, we will consider the gender, equality, and diversity of our community members.

We are committed to meeting the requirements of the Victorian Government's Gender Equality Act 2020 and will continually monitor and seek ways to enhance our efforts in making East Gippsland a safe, respectful, and inclusive community.

OUR VISION

East Gippsland is an inclusive and innovative community that values its natural environment, puts community at the centre of Council decision making and creates the conditions in which communities can thrive.

OUR VALUES

Our values have been developed to guide us and be embedded into all that we do, creating a great place to work that delivers quality services to our customers and community.

PROGRESS REPORTING

Under the Gender Equality Amendment Regulations 2023 progress reports must include the following components:

- Progress Audit* – conduct and report on workforce data and an employee experience survey (People Matter Survey) to enable reporting on progress against the seven workplace gender equality indicators.
- Gender Impact Assessments (GIA) – report on the policies, programs, and services subject to a GIA and the outcomes of those GIAs
- Strategies and measures – report on our progress in implementing the strategies and measures in Manningham Council's GEAP
- Workplace gender equality indicators – report on our progress against the seven workplace gender equality indicators using the results of the Progress Audit.

*The results of the Progress Audit are not included in this document but can be accessed directly via the CGEPS insights portal <https://insights.genderequalitycommission.vic.gov.au/application-dashboard>

GENDER EQUALITY INDICATORS



The [Gender Equality Act 2020](#) aims to improve outcomes across the broader Victorian community by eliminating the systemic causes of gender inequality in policies, programs and services in workplaces and communities.

The Act sets out seven workplace gender equality indicators. They represent the key areas where workplace gender inequality persists – and where progress towards gender equality must be demonstrated.

OUR PROGRESS AT EAST GIPPSLAND SHIRE COUNCIL

TABLE 1: GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENTS COMPLETED 2021-2023

Title	Subject	Description	Status	Confirm if actions taken	Describe actions taken	Confirm intersectionality considered	Explain intersectional lens applied
What is the title of the policy, program or service that was the subject of the GIA?	Was the subject of the GIA a policy, program or service?	Provide a description of the policy, program or service subject to the GIA.	Was the policy, program or service new, or up for review?	Were actions taken to develop or vary the policy, program or service to meet the needs of people of different genders, address gender inequality and promote gender equality as a result of the GIA?	Describe the actions taken to develop or vary the policy, program or service to meet the needs of people of different genders, address gender inequality and promote gender equality.	Was it considered that gender inequality may be compounded by disadvantage or discrimination that people may experience on the basis of intersectionality?	Explain how an intersectional lens was applied while completing the GIA.
Civic Functions and Recognition Policy	Policy	Outlines Council's role in holding civic events such as openings, citizenship ceremonies and civic celebrations.	For Review	No action taken			
Volunteer Policy	Policy	The purpose of this Policy is to define volunteering within an East Gippsland Shire Council (Council) context and identify the mutual obligations and responsibilities of both volunteers and Council	New	No action taken			
Prevention of Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedure	Policy	To set out the legal responsibilities and obligations for East Gippsland Shire Council (EGSC) staff and Councillors and details the standards and processes that EGSC will apply to protect all parties involved in the prevention and management of sexual harassment incidents.	New	Yes	The policy and procedure has been written to support gender equality in the workplace through establishing clear expectation on zero tolerance of workplace sexual harassment and complaint management process. Suggested changes were on maintaining gender sensitive language and including a Gender Equality statement.	Yes	Intersectional lens was applied to ensure that language and process was kept clear and easily understood. Intended to provide instructions on how to listen to the policy through Word or Adobe.
Forge Theatre Service Review	Service	An operations and service review of the Forge Theatre and Arts Hub,	New	Yes	Recommendations from the service review include encouraging new audience members with appropriate programming and targeted marketing to help address the current gender imbalance in the Forge Theatre audience and inclusion of unisex toilets and change rooms for the Forge Theatre (dependant on budget of the capital works program.)	Yes	Intersectional lens was applied to consider the needs of carers, people with disabilities, diverse cultural backgrounds and sexual orientations. This is in relation to accessing the theatre, and appealing to a wide variety of people.

OUR PROGRESS AT EAST GIPPSLAND SHIRE COUNCIL

TABLE 1: GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENTS COMPLETED 2021-2023

Title	Subject	Description	Status
Orbost Forest Park Upgrade	Service	Upgrade Orbost Forest Park infrastructure	New
Bruthen Streetscape	Service	Upgrade of the Bruthen Streetscape, including toilet block	New
LRCI Footpath Paynesville Road	Service	Footpath connection project between the Coast Estate and Main Road, Paynesville	New
Mallacoota Streetscape	Service	Renew the Mallacoota Streetscape	New
Buchan Streetscape	Service	Renew the Buchan Streetscape	New
Gilsenan Reserve Toilet Replacement	Service	Replace the Gilsenan Reserve toilet block	New
Mallacoota Skatepark	Service	Upgrade the Mallacoota Skatepark	New
Bairnsdale City Oval Changerooms Upgrade	Service	Upgrade the change rooms at Bairnsdale City Oval	New
Community Resilience and Development Program	Service	Upgrade 37 Community Facilities across the shire to operate as relief & recovery centres	New
Swifts Creek Recreation Reserve Upgrade	Service	Upgrade the Swifts Creek Recreation Reserve	New
Omeo Recreation Reserve Netball & Tennis Court Upgrade	Service	Upgrade the Omeo Recreation Reserve Netball & Tennis Court	New
Cann River Skatepark Upgrade and Mick Baum Park Planning	Service	Upgrade the Cann River Skatepark and Mick Baum Park	New
Eastwood Playspace	Service	Create a playspace at Eastwood	New
Making Metung Tennis Age Friendly	Service	Upgrade Metung Tennis courts	New
Metung Bowling Green Redevelopment	Service	Redevelopment the Metung Bowling Green	New

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TABLE 1: GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENTS COMPLETED 2021-2023

Title	Subject	Description	Status
Lindenow Recreation Reserve Lighting Upgrade	Service	Upgrade the Lindenow Recreation Reserve Lighting	New
Hard Wicket Upgrade	Service	Upgrade the Hard Wicket at local cricket grounds	New
Lakes Entrance Changing Places Development	Service	Construction of accessible Changing Rooms, adjacent to existing public toilet facility.	New
Omeo Streetscape Revitalisation	Service	Revitalisation of the Omeo Streetscape	New
AJ Freeman Reserve Netball/Tennis Changerooms	Service	Upgrade the AJ Freeman Reserve Netball/Tennis changerooms	New
Lochiel Park Lighting Upgrade	Service	Upgrade the Lochiel Park Lighting	New
Replace Ferry Landings at Paynesville and Raymond Island.	Service	Replace Ferry Landings at Paynesville and Raymond Island.	New

OUR PROGRESS AT EAST GIPPSLAND SHIRE COUNCIL

TABLE 2: STRATEGIES AND MEASURES 2021-2023

Strategies and measures	Status	Status description	Timeline	Relevant indicator
List your organisation's strategies and measures. Include one strategy or measure per row. These are the planned actions that you have outlined in your GEAP to promote gender equality in your workplace.	Assign each strategy or measure a status from the following list: • 'Complete' indicates that all planned activities related to this strategy or measure have been finalised. • 'In progress' indicates that the activities under this strategy or measure are progressing but not yet complete. • 'Ongoing' indicates that the activities under this strategy or measure do not have an end-date and will be addressed on a continual basis. • 'Not started' indicates that the planned activities related to this strategy or measure have not yet commenced, including those that are intended to commence in future years. This should include strategies or measures that have been delayed. • 'Void' indicates that this strategy or measure appeared in your defined entity's GEAP, but has since been cancelled	Describe your progress in implementing each strategy or measure in your GEAP.	If your GEAP included a timeline for action or implementation for your strategies and measures, include this timeline below. Year 1: Financial year 2022–23 Year 2: Financial year 2023–24 Year 3: Financial year 2024–25 Year 4: Financial year 2025–26	If your GEAP included a timeline for action or implementation for your strategies and measures, include this timeline below. Year 1: Financial year 2022–23 Year 2: Financial year 2023–24 Year 3: Financial year 2024–25 Year 4: Financial year 2025–26
1.1 Strive to maintain overall workforce gender balance of 40:40:20. *(gender balance of 40 percent women, 40 percent men, and 20 percent of any gender)	Ongoing	Six monthly workforce gender balance reports were produced for June 2022, December 2022 and June 2023.	Measured annually	1
1.2 Further strive to achieve 40:40:20* gender balance target across each reporting level within 5 years.	Ongoing	Six monthly workforce gender balance reports were produced for June 2022, December 2022 and June 2023.	Year 4	1
1.3 Encourage balanced gender member ratios across Council committees, working groups and other key representative groups.	Complete	To encourage balanced gender member ratios, Council developed the Diversity and Inclusion Statement in 2022. The statement has been incorporated into the Audit and Risk Committee Terms of Reference (TOR), the Health and Wellbeing Working Group TOR and Staff Consultative Committee TOR, and has been considered by the Youth Ambassadors group. Additionally, an internal Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion intranet page has been created which includes the Diversity and Inclusion Statement for use in Policies and Terms of Reference, along with additional resources.	Year 4	1

OUR PROGRESS AT EAST GIPPSLAND SHIRE COUNCIL

TABLE 2: STRATEGIES AND MEASURES 2021-2023

Strategies and measures	Status	Status description	Timeline	Relevant indicator
1.4 Improve understanding of our workforce's diversity by improving applicant and internal employee personal information data collection and management	Complete	As per the definition set out by the Office of Victorian Information Commissioner, a defined entity is permitted to use sensitive information it already holds, however it is not required to collect sensitive information, nor are employees required to disclose sensitive information. As such, Council only collects employee personal information related to Aboriginality, Gender and Disability.	Year 1	1
1.5 Develop and implement a safe and inclusive workplace training framework to increase awareness, support positive culture, inclusion and gender equality.	In progress	Training for staff on diversity and inclusion has been incorporated into Councils online Learning Management System as a standalone training module. As part of the review of Councils Workforce Plan, work will be undertaken throughout 2024 to further develop our focus on ensuring an inclusive and supportive workplace for all.	Year 1	1
1.6 Support the integration of the Gender Equality Working Group into the Staff Consultative Committee to provide further opportunity for support and positive engagement.	Complete	The Gender Equality Working Group was established to assist in the development of the Gender Equality Action Plan and as such no longer meet as a formal committee. The Staff Consultative Committee regularly discuss positive engagement opportunities to promote equality such determining which events should be promoted through for the organisational event calendar.	Year 1	1
1.7 Develop representatives and Contact Officers to be internal leaders on gender equality and inclusion.	In progress	Four staff members have completed training to become Contact Officers. Contact Officers are the first point of contact for staff within the organisation to discuss concerns relating to equal opportunity and equity (including gender equality and inclusion). Three additional staff are scheduled to complete training in 2024.	Year 1	1
3.1 Continue with banding assignment as per the Employee Award Agreement.	Ongoing	Job positions continue to be inline with the required banding assignment per the Employee Aware Agreement.	Measured annually	3
3.2 Review and audit as part of ongoing reporting requirements	Ongoing	Gender pay gap audit completed in June 2022 and June 2023.	Measured annually	3

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Strategies and measures	Status	Status description	Timeline	Relevant indicator
4.1. Develop a separate Prevention of Sexual Harassment Policy - Procedure to set clear expectations and provide staff with tools and knowledge required to support them.	Complete	A Prevention of Sexual Harassment Policy has been developed and was adopted in May 2022.	Year 1	4
4.2 Rollout new Prevention of Sexual Harassment policy to all current and new staff, along with specific Sexual Harassment Training (to be included as part of Safe and Inclusive Workplace Training).	Complete	The new Prevention of Sexual Harassment Policy is included in the onboarding materials for all new starters. All existing employees have also received notification and are required to read the policy and sign a declaration that they have read and agree to the policy.	Year 1	4
4.3 Develop staff representatives and Contact Officers to be confidential support officers available within the organisation.	In progress	Four staff members have completed training to become Contact Officers. Contact Officers are the first point of contact for staff within the organisation to discuss concerns relating to equal opportunity and equity (including gender equality and inclusion). Three additional staff are scheduled to complete training in 2024.	Year 1	4
4.4 Investigate third party anonymous reporting options for sexual harassment (and potentially other issues).	In progress	Third-party anonymous reporting options have been explored and assessed. Further engagement with internal stakeholders required to determine the suitability of preferred options.	Year 1	4

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TABLE 2: STRATEGIES AND MEASURES 2021-2023

Strategies and measures	Status	Status description	Timeline	Relevant indicator
5.1. Review recruitment processes to attract gender diversity in candidates, (specifically job titles and job descriptions and to promote Council's commitment as a welcoming and inclusive employer who supports and promotes flexible work arrangements.	Complete	The Position Description template has been updated with the new Diversity and Inclusion Statement. A 'Preparing Position Descriptions for Advertising' checklist was developed and made available on the Intranet in November 2022. This checklist provides a quick reference for those updating existing Position Descriptions to ensure the Diversity and Inclusion Statement has been included and that language is gender inclusive/neutral. Council reached out to external target groups (Sureways, Workways, APM, Maxima, Federation University and Gippsland Tafe) in December 2022 to gain a better understanding on how best to engage and recruit diverse applicants. Feedback received has resulted in adjustments to the complexity of the application process for entry level roles.	Year 1	5
5.2 Promote internal career development pathways and provide further support and focus on performance review and development plan outcomes.	In progress	Internal career development conversations continue to be undertaken as required. Training "Meaningful Conversations" will be rolled out in 2024, to support the staff development plan and performance review process.	Year 1	5
5.3 Review and invigorate Council's emerging leaders and succession planning process to consider gender equality.	In progress	A review of Council's talent management and succession planning process is currently underway. With the establishment of the Organisation Strategy and Performance Unit, this action will progress further in 2024.	Year 1	5
5.4 Promote specific cohorts to perform higher duties or cover acting of Executive Leadership roles.	Ongoing	A draft proposal and guide in relation to a Mentor Program has been created during the period. In the 2023 financial year there were 135 instances of staff performing higher duties. Of those, 84 instances were female and 51 male. There were 14 instances of staff performing higher duties in the Executive Leadership Team. Of those instances, 64% of the higher duties were performed by females and 36% of the higher duties were performed by males. Monitoring of this action is ongoing.	Measured annually	5
5.5 Develop quarterly reporting process on employee exit interviews	Complete	This action has been reconfigured to an annual action. The report was compiled in December 2022 for presentation to the Executive Team for consideration and monitoring. As the process has been established, this action is considered complete.	Year 2	5
5.6 Continue to engage staff to help understand barriers to staff fulfilling training and development needs by updating staff culture survey questions.	Complete	The staff survey was updated in 2022 to include additional questions around learning and development, including the addition of a free text question.	Year 1	5

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Strategies and measures	Status	Status description	Timeline	Relevant indicator
6.1 Continue to promote and support leave and flexible work entitlements as per relevant clauses in the East Gippsland Shire Enterprise Agreement.	Ongoing	Staff leave and flexible work arrangements have been promoted on the intranet and in the staff newsletter 'InFocus'. There has been a particular emphasis on promoting the Family Violence leave that is available to all staff. Leave options and flexible work arrangements are periodically promoted in the staff newsletter.	Year 1	6
6.2 Develop understanding of how to provide realistic flexible work options and support processes (accessible, preferable and available) for senior leaders.	In progress	Senior leaders currently have access to flexible work arrangements including models of employment/leave purchases schemes and 60:40 flexible work from home arrangements. Promoting the availability of flexible work options will continue in 2024 by the newly formed Organisational Strategy and Performance Team.	Year 2	6
7.1 Pursue traineeship and scholarship arrangements to support more diverse entry into all roles.	Complete	A scholarship agreement is in place with Federation University. Council currently has 8 trainees working within the organisation.	Year 1	7
7.2 Complete a business unit review, validation and alignment exercise of the baseline Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO) coding completed.	Complete	ANZSCO coding has been reviewed by managers for validation. Codes will need to be reviewed regularly due to changes by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and new jobs roles created within the organisation.	Year 1	7
7.3 Establish an ongoing process of capturing and maintaining the ANZSCO codes for Council roles in internal systems and position descriptions.	Not started	The organisation is currently considering updating the Human Resources management system which will potentially incorporate the capture and maintenance of ANZSCO codes. Therefore this action is on hold until this process is completed.	Year 1	7