

# Gender Equality Action Plan 2022-2025







# Contents

<b>Acknowledgment of Country</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>CEO message</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Our Gender Equality Action Plan at a glance</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>8</b>
Key requirements for our GEAP	8
Gender equality principles	9
<b>Development of the GEAP</b>	<b>10</b>
Process of development for our GEAP	10
Baseline audit analysis	10
Consultation and engagement	11
Limitations and considerations	13
<b>Workforce data</b>	<b>15</b>
Workplace Gender Audit	15
People Matter survey data	17
<b>The case for change</b>	<b>19</b>
Our Vision	19
Our commitment	20
Our achievements	20
Existing organisational strategies and the GEAP	21
Our Business Case	21
<b>The Action Plan</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Resourcing, accountability and measuring progress</b>	<b>29</b>
Leadership and governance	29
GEAP Governance Structure	30
Resourcing and implementation	31
Monitoring and reporting	32

COVER  
Nillumbik Shire Council staff working off-site.



If you require this document in another format,  
email [nillumbik@nillumbik.vic.gov.au](mailto:nillumbik@nillumbik.vic.gov.au) or phone **9433 3111**

---

## Acknowledgement of Country

Nillumbik Shire Council respectfully acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people as the Traditional Owners of the Country on which Nillumbik is located, and we value the significance of the Wurundjeri people's history as essential to the unique character of the shire. We pay tribute to all First Nations People living in Nillumbik, give respect to Elders past, present and future, and extend that respect to all First Nations People.

We respect the enduring strength of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and acknowledge the ongoing impacts of past trauma and injustices from European invasion, massacres and genocide committed against First Nations People. We acknowledge that sovereignty was never ceded.

Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people hold a deep and ongoing connection to this place. We value the distinctive place of our First Nations People in both Nillumbik and Australia's identity; from their cultural heritage and care of the land and waterways, to their ongoing contributions in many fields including academia, agriculture, art, economics, law, sport and politics.

Djirri Djirri dance group performing  
at a Council event





## CEO message

I am proud to lead an organisation that is committed to achieving gender equality, recognising the existing barriers to this goal, and working towards eradicating them.

The Nillumbik Gender Equality Action Plan (herein 'GEAP') is informed by data collected from our staff. The primary means - a People Matter survey early in 2021 (to which 204 staff responded), and a Workforce Gender Audit - were supported by virtual and in-person forums run by internal and external staff, and follow-up surveys to help develop - and then provide feedback on - our GEAP.

The GEAP reflects our staff's opinions, backgrounds and lived experiences and provides steps for improving gender equity at Council over the next four years.

The vision comprises the main themes staff identified when asked what gender equality would look like in our workplace four years from now (key themes were equal, balanced, fair, safe, happy, and satisfied). Thus, our vision states:

*We will shape a fair, flexible and balanced workplace where employees are safe, healthy, supported and can achieve their best. Our actions will ensure we are progressive, value diversity and are inclusive of all employees and volunteers regardless of age, gender, ability or background.*

I'm pleased to see a reference to progressiveness in our vision. At Nillumbik, we don't want to be keeping up with other Councils when it comes to gender equity - we want to lead the way, and our GEAP will guide us in this goal.

The pillars upon which our GEAP stands have been identified as: **Culture, Engagement, Intersectionality, Leadership, and Structural and Systemic Change.**

In reflecting on the information gathered for the GEAP and the strengths and limitations of the data and its collection, I draw your attention to a number of factors.

- To obtain representative feedback, staff of all gender identities were invited to participate in the GEAP. While some staff submitted feedback anonymously (and therefore we can't be sure of their gender identity), only 32 per cent of respondents to our People Matter survey identified as male. The results would have benefited from gender parity and a greater representation of people who identify as non-binary. Improving this in future will help us achieve our key pillar of **Intersectionality**.
- In our Workplace Gender Audit, staff could note whether they identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, and disclose if they have a disability. No staff disclosed this information, and in the People Matter survey up to 10 per cent elected 'prefer not to say'. This somewhat limits the inferences we can draw from staff experience and background in relation to the data collected.
- We would have preferred more staff responses; something that may have been impeded by COVID and the need to work virtually through most of the project. A higher response rate for future projects focused on gender equity is key to achieving our **Engagement** pillar. A personal goal of mine is to better engage men and people of diverse backgrounds in our gender work. We need to hear from all of our staff to ensure we capture a broad range of experiences and opinions. This means an effort by teams working on gender-based projects, and from the men in our organisation to step up and realise gender equality can only be achieved when we are all on board.

- Key statistics from our workforce data reveal what we're doing right and what we need to address. While our executive management team (EMT) is almost equally split along gender lines (three women and four men), the average age for men in a leadership position is 35 to 44 while for women, it is 45 to 54. This represents an opportunity to identify women for leadership roles earlier in their career, to align with the male experience at Nillumbik.
- The gender pay gap at Nillumbik was revealed to be 5.02 per cent in favour of men (compared to the national average of 14.2 per cent noted by the Workplace Gender Equality Agency in mid-2021). The Victorian Auditor General's Office (VAGO) 2020 survey revealed 19.2 per cent of respondents experienced unwelcome behaviour/s that are likely to constitute sexual harassment in the past 12 months at Nillumbik, and in the People Matter survey, 18 per cent of men and women said they'd experienced sexual harassment in the preceding 12 months. While this is lower than the 28 per cent average, it is still unacceptable, disappointing, and in need of reform.

- We have tangible steps in place to review gender pay equity, gender composition throughout Council, sexual harassment, leave and flexibility, recruitment and promotion, and gender composition of governing bodies. These goals are derived from staff input, represent our pillars of **Culture** and **Structural and Systemic Change**, and will steer Nillumbik towards a more equitable, balanced, safe and fair future for all.

We have proudly led the way with initiatives like our Gender Equity Advocates; staff who trained with Women's Health in the North (WHIN) and external Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) trainers to conduct presentations on gender equity and kickstart important conversations among colleagues. The program, initiated in 2018, continues in a different form today, and our advocates were integral in amplifying the GEAP.

Our EMT is committed to gender equity, recognising training opportunities, leading by example and furthering the causes identified in the GEAP. Our **Leadership** pillar will be supported by the entire EMT through a genuine and austere approach to embedding gender equity into our organisation. The implementation of our Action Plan will benefit all staff and I look forward to seeing the GEAP come to fruition.

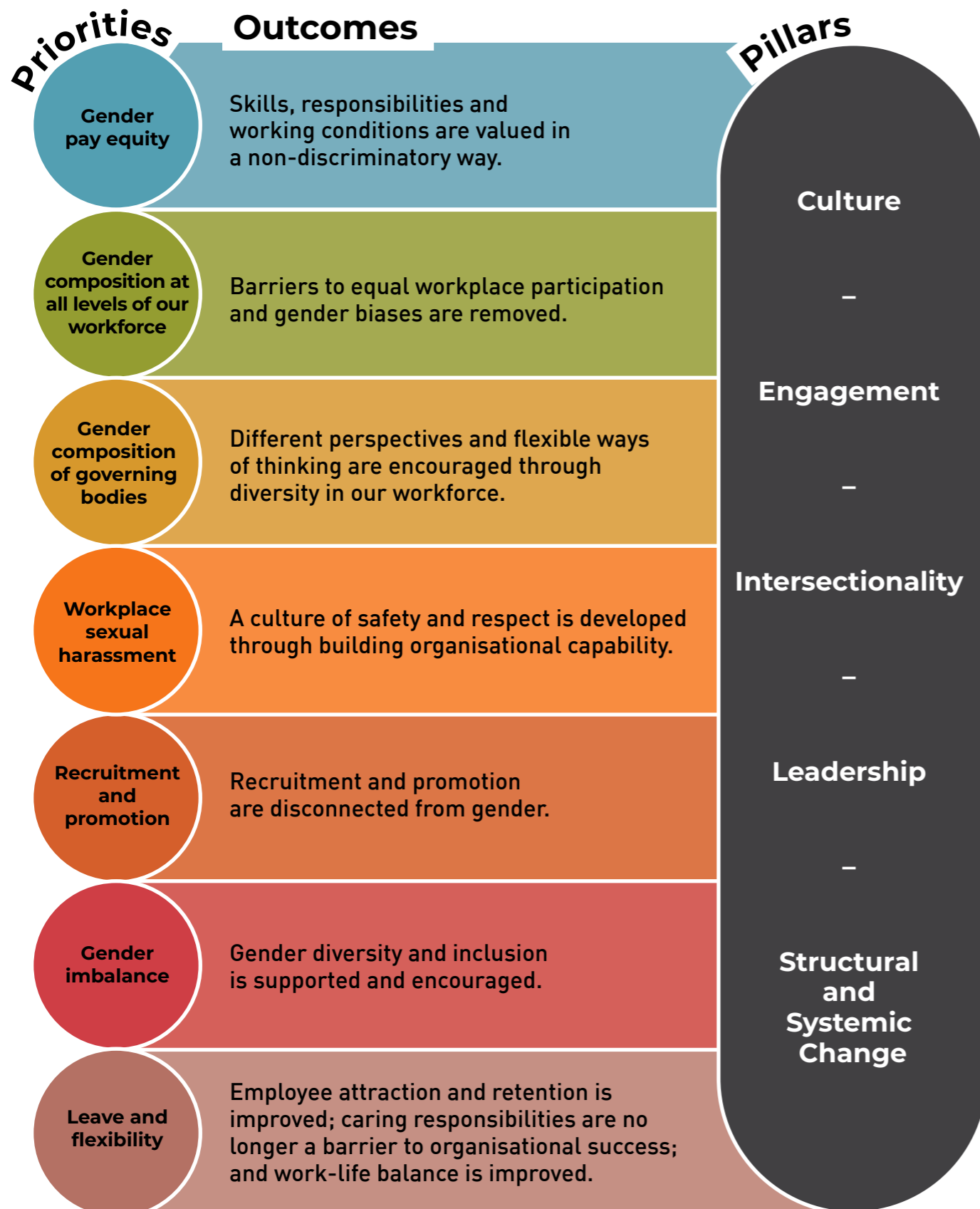


Carl Cowie  
Chief Executive Officer

# Our Gender Equality Action Plan at a glance

## Vision

*We will shape a fair, flexible and balanced workplace where employees are safe, healthy, supported and can achieve their best. Our actions will ensure we are progressive, value diversity and are inclusive of all employees and volunteers regardless of age, gender, ability or background.*



# Introduction

Nillumbik Shire Council is an employer of choice and a leader in gender equity. Our Gender Equality Action Plan 2022-2025 outlines the actions Council will take over the next four years to improve and measure progress towards greater gender equality in our workplace.

In the development and implementation of this Plan, we have applied a whole of organisation approach to work towards creating an inclusive workplace, where human rights are respected, participation is encouraged and diversity is celebrated.

The *Gender Equality Act 2020* (the Act) formalises the critical role local government plays in creating more equal and inclusive communities. The Act requires Council to develop a Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) every four years and submit the GEAP to the Commission for Gender Equality in the Public Sector.

Our GEAP is one of a number of initiatives being undertaken by Council and the Nillumbik community that are aimed at improving outcomes for girls, women and gender diverse people.

Nillumbik Shire Council is required to submit its first GEAP to the Commission for Gender Equality in the Public Sector by 31 March 2022.

## Key requirements for our GEAP

The Act requires that our GEAP focuses on strategies and measures that promote gender equality in our workplace. There are six key elements that must be included in the GEAP in order for Council to meet its obligations under the Act.

### Key requirements for the Gender Equality Action Plan

**Baseline audit analysis** including the results of our workplace gender audit.

**Documented, meaningful consultation and engagement** with employees, employee representatives and other relevant people.

A **case for change** that articulates how the gender equality principles and intersectional gender inequality have been considered in the preparation of our Action Plan.

**Documented strategies and measures** that support and track the achievement of the desired objectives and outcomes of the GEAP.

A **strategic resourcing plan** that outlines how the development and implementation of the GEAP will be resourced.

**Progress measurement and reporting** that identifies the extent to which the GEAP is contributing to the achievement of positive change to be completed at least every second year.

## Gender equality principles

In addressing these requirements we have aligned our approach to international, national, state and regional research, legislation, strategies and frameworks. The adherence to the gender equality principles outlined in the Act were a key driver in the development of our GEAP and we have considered intersectional gender inequality in analysing our data and developing our key actions.

Gender equality principles
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 for Victoria.
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 based on Aboriginality, age, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, race, religion, sexual orientation and other attributes.
Women have historically experienced discrimination and disadvantage based on sex and gender.
Special measures may be necessary to achieve gender equality.

### In line with the Act and in response to our specific workforce data, the priorities for our Gender Equality Action Plan 2022-2025 are –

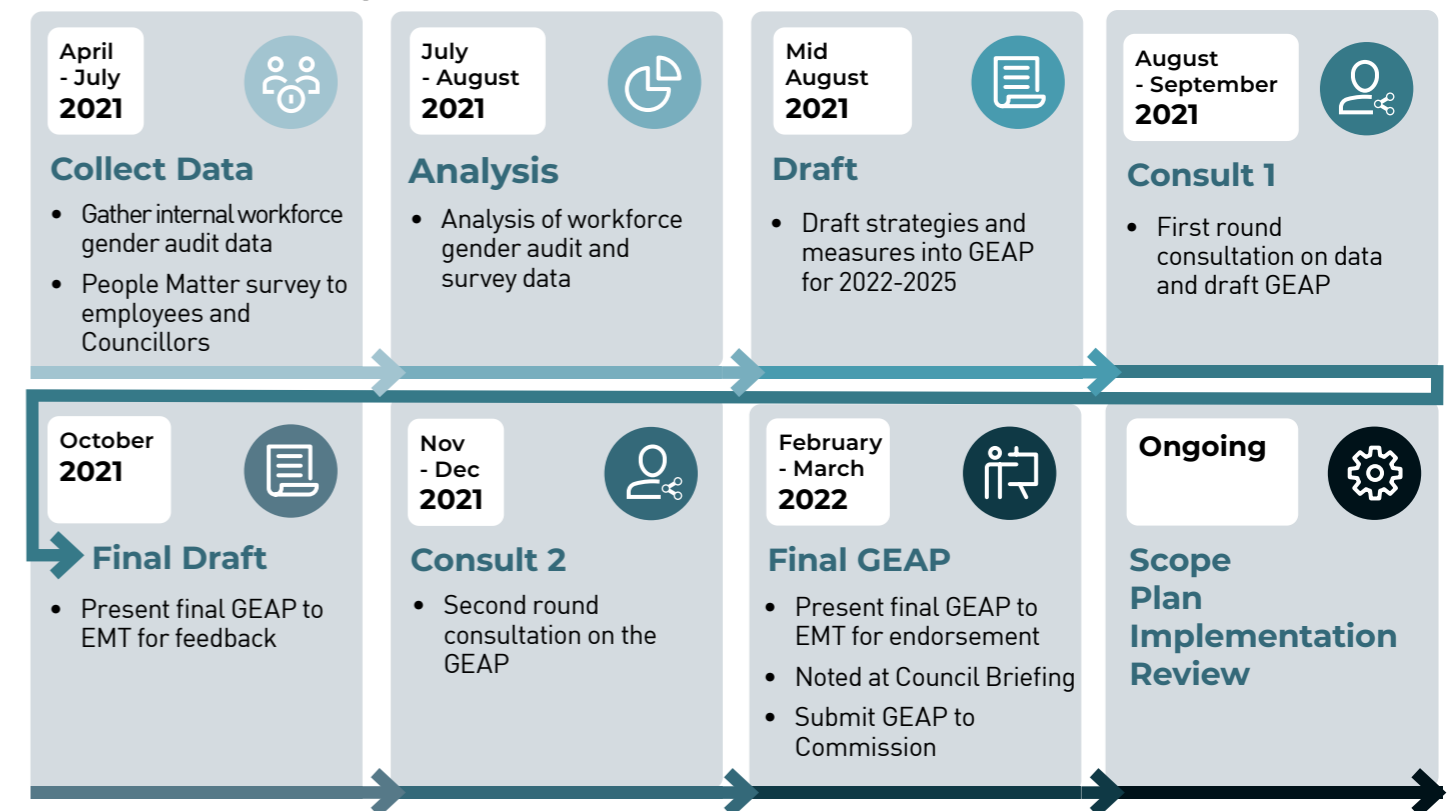
- Gender pay equity
- Gender composition at all levels of our workforce
- Gender composition of governing bodies
- Workplace sexual harassment
- Recruitment and promotion
- Gender imbalance
- Leave and flexibility

The priorities for Council are supported by key actions that detail what we will do in order to achieve our objectives across these priority areas as we work towards gender equality within our workplace. We will regularly monitor and report on our progress.

## Development of the GEAP

Council commenced the development of our GEAP in April 2021. The development of the GEAP involved the collection and analysis of baseline data including the workplace gender audit and the People Matter survey 2021 along with extensive consultation with employees and employee representatives, advisory committees, leadership teams and Councillors.

### Process of development for our GEAP



### Baseline audit analysis

The workplace gender audit results along with the People Matter survey 2021 underpins the development of our GEAP. Once this data was collected, collated and analysed the results were shared with stakeholders. The results identified areas for improvement in relation to workforce gender equality indicators and helped to inform key strategies and measures in our Action Plan (see the Action Plan section on page 23). Key data points have been included in the GEAP (see the Workforce Data section on page 15).



## Consultation and engagement

Consultation and engagement activities to inform the development of the GEAP were undertaken in line with our Community Engagement Policy, ensuring that all those impacted had the opportunity to engage in the planning and decision-making processes through the use of appropriate, effective and inclusive practices.

Council acknowledges that discussing gender equality can raise issues of safety and/or wellbeing for employees. Prior to, during and after the consultation and engagement period Council reinforced the option for employees to provide their feedback anonymously. Additionally, Council ensured that appropriate support mechanisms were in place and clearly communicated. Supports included Family Violence Contact Officers, Human Resources, the Employee Assistance Program and specialist organisations external to Council.

The Act required that Council undertake at least two rounds of consultation to develop our GEAP. Council provided a range of resources to promote the GEAP and to encourage meaningful engagement, offering a variety of options for people to participate including workshops, surveys, staff meetings, briefings, email correspondence and intranet updates.



### Consultation and engagement: Round One

Stakeholder	Facilitator
Councillor group	Women's Health in the North
Executive Management Team	Women's Health in the North
Employees	Social Planning and Equity Coordinator Family Support and Gender Equity Officer
Access, Equity and Inclusion Working Group (a cross-organisational group including employees from diverse backgrounds)	Family Support and Gender Equity Officer
Consultation Committee (inclusive of union delegates and union representatives)	Manager Human Resources Family Support and Gender Equity Officer

The first round of consultation and engagement took place after Council undertook our workplace gender audit and employees completed the People Matter survey 2021. Subsequently, results of the audit and survey formed the basis for conversations about how Council can address the identified issues.

In addition to workshops and presentations, draft strategies were published on the employee intranet, in the employee fortnightly e-news and paper copies were also made available.

Employees could submit feedback anonymously via a survey link and were also provided the opportunity to submit suggestions directly to the Manager Human Resources and/or the Family Support and Gender Equity Officer.

Council also utilised its network of Gender Equity Advocates and Gender Equity Contacts by asking that they speak to the draft strategies at their team meetings to encourage participation in and engagement with the process.

### Consultation and engagement: Round Two

Stakeholder	Facilitator
Executive Management Team	Manager Human Resources
Family Support and Gender Equity Officer	Women's Health in the North
Employees (All Staff Meeting)	Executive Management Team
Access, Equity and Inclusion Working Group	Family Support and Gender Equity Officer
Gender Equity Advocates	Family Support and Gender Equity Officer
Female Operations Centre Employees	Family Support and Gender Equity Officer
Employees (LGBTIQA+ Consultations)	Social Planning and Equity Coordinator Youth Development Officer

The second round of consultation provided further opportunities to facilitate feedback in relation to the proposed strategies and measures. Once again, employees could provide their response anonymously via a survey link and the opportunity to discuss their suggestions and feedback with the Manager Human Resources and/or the Family Support & Gender Equity Officer remained.

Additionally, the final draft strategies were sent to all of the aforementioned stakeholders and communicated to the broader organisation of the previously mentioned delegates throughout the organisation by the Executive Management Team at an All Staff Meeting.



## Limitations and considerations

### In completing the workplace gender audit, a number of data gaps and collection issues emerged. These included –

- The current data collection system for employees was limited in collecting and reporting gender in a binary way.
- While the current data collection system allows for employees to disclose if they have a disability, none of our employees disclosed this information.
- While the current data collection system allows for employees to identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, none of our employees disclosed this information.
- The People Matter survey 2021 provided additional opportunities to collect data relating to personal characteristics (including disability and Aboriginality) however not all employees disclosed this information, with 10 per cent of respondents selecting 'prefer not to say'.
- At present, Council does not collect demographic data for the Councillor group (our Governing Body). To better inform the development of the GEAP, Councillors were asked to complete an anonymous survey requiring them to disclose their gender and age. Councillors were also encouraged to complete the People Matter survey 2021.

- Consultation and engagement activities were organised around the legislative timelines dictated by the Act. While Council allocated as much time to these activities as the legislative timelines would allow, draft actions were developed and provided as part of the first consultations.
- Our consultation and engagement period took place during active COVID-19 restrictions, meaning that many of the activities were conducted virtually.

### Lessons learnt

In identifying these issues, we have integrated a number of strategies into our GEAP that will enhance data collection and analysis across the organisation.

This will be particularly important in relation to better identifying intersectional gender inequality within our workplace and how it impacts employees, volunteers and Councillors and the factors that cause it.



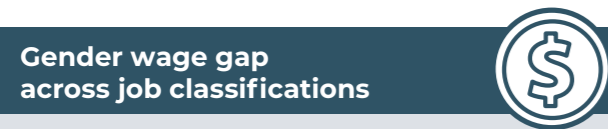


## Workplace Gender Audit



### Gender composition across job classifications

Women make up **61% of the workforce**, and are **overrepresented in lower banded positions** and disproportionately underrepresented in higher classification (based on 61% of the workforce being women).



### Gender wage gap across job classifications

The overall gender pay gap for all employees at Nillumbik Council is **5.02% in favour of men**

(Current national pay gap is 13.4% calculated by the Workplace Gender Equality Agency).

Of the 121 new employees in 2020/2021 (82 women and 39 men) they started on the following **increments in their banding:**

Increment	Women	Men
A	70%	62%
B	9%	3%
C	2%	13%
D	7%	18%

### Gender composition in part-time work



- 79%** of all part-time employees are women, with **50%** aged between 25 and 54
- 42%** of women are in part-time roles compared to **18%** of men
- 58%** of the part-time roles for women are Band 4 to Band 6 with **26%** below Band 4
- 79%** of our casual workforce are women
- 9%** of employees are part-time at the Coordinator level, of which **80%** are women. All other positions above Band 7 are full time and 45% are women

### Gender balance

- 78%** of all women are in Band 6 or below positions
- 75%** of men are in Band 6 or lower
- 86%** of Infrastructure is men
- 90%** of Community Services are women
- 88%** of Governance are women

### Gender composition of governing bodies



- 42%** of women make up the Executive Management Team

### Leave and flexibility



Only women have accessed family violence leave and there has been a **90% decrease in family violence leave** taken over the past 18 months (Please note: a recent change in our EA allows employees to access the leave if they are supporting someone who is experience family violence).

### 36 women and 24 men have Flexible Work Arrangements (FWA)

Of all these employees, 17% are women with a Purchase Leave FWA compared to 5% of men. 23% of these employees have a Rostered Day Off (RDO) FWA (Please note: RDO FWA is for annualised employees or for a fortnightly RDO)

Over the past 12 months:

- 9%** of all women and **9% of all men accessed carer's leave**
- 3%** of all women, **0% of all men accessed primary carer's parental leave**
- 3%** of all men, **0% of all women accessed secondary carer's parental leave**



### Sexual harassment in the workplace

182 of 451 potential respondents completed the Victorian Auditor-General's Office survey in 2020. **35 respondents experienced unwelcome behaviour/s** that are likely to constitute sexual harassment in the past 12 months at Nillumbik which represents a **19.23% prevalence of sexual harassment** (compared to industry average of 28.24%)



### Recruitment and promotion practices in the workplaces

Average age of men in leadership positions is **35 to 44**  
 Average age of women in leadership positions is **45 to 54**  
 (Coordinator level and above)

Over the past 12 months:

- 1%** of all women were promoted **compared to 1% of all men**
- 10%** of all women received higher duties **compared to 9% of all men**
- 3%** of all women were seconded into another position **compared to 3% of all men**



## People Matter survey data

In May 2021 Council ran the People Matter survey to inform key strategies and measures to be included in our GEAP. Council received responses from 204 people; 57 per cent identified as female, 32 per cent as male and 10 per cent preferred not to say. In addition to demographic data, almost 100 people provided comments and feedback related to how Council can create a more inclusive and respectful workplace.

### Key demographic data of survey respondents –

**16%** shared they speak a language other than English with their family or community.

**19%** stated their cultural identity as European, United Kingdom, East and/or South-East Asian, New Zealander, African, South Asian or other.

**15%** shared their country of birth as Italy, China, Canada, New Zealand, United Kingdom or other.

**7%** identified as LGBTIQ+.

**52%** of women stated they have a higher level of formal education than Year 12 or equivalent compared to 27% of men.

**10%** of respondents preferred to not disclose personal characteristics including identifying as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander or having a disability.

### Insights regarding caring responsibilities

- Women and men were **close to equal** in their response in relation to caring for children preschool aged and younger.
- **More women responded that they had caring responsibilities for children** in primary and secondary school, caring for person(s) with disability, mental illness and frail or aged person(s).
- More women stated that **having caring responsibilities is a barrier to their success in the organisation.**

### Workplace gender equality indicators

**80%** agreed that Nillumbik has a positive culture in relation to employees of different age groups.

**84%** agreed that Nillumbik has a positive culture in relation to employees of different sexes/genders.

**63%** agreed there is a positive culture at Nillumbik in relation to employees with a disability.



### Gender balance

**86%** of employees agreed that the organisation uses inclusive and respectful images and language.

**85%** feel culturally safe at work.

- More men than women responded that people in their work group often **reject others for being different.**
- Women who earn between \$65k and \$95k are **less likely to agree that they have an equal chance of promotion** and that there are adequate opportunities to develop their skills and experience.
- More women believe that there are **barriers to success and a lack of a positive culture for employees using flexible work arrangements.**

### Bullying

Bullying is repeated unreasonable behaviour directed at an employee that creates a risk to their health and safety. This includes people experiencing bullying from community members. Types of bullying included incivility, exclusion or isolation, intimidation and/or threats, and verbal abuse.

### In the past 12 months –

**29%** of women and 18% of men responded that they experienced bullying.

**41%** of men stated they witnessed bullying, discrimination, sexual harassment or violence or aggression against a colleague at work.

**45%** of women stated they witnessed bullying and discrimination of a colleague at work (respondents could select more than one).

For those who experienced bullying, **31%** experienced it once a month and **15%** once per week.

### Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment is non-consensual or unwelcome sexual behaviour that could cause an employee to feel offended, humiliated or intimidated.

### In the past 12 months –

**18%** of men and 18% of women have experienced sexually suggestive comments or jokes which made them feel offended.

**6%** of women have experienced intrusive questions about their private life or comments about their physical appearance.

**7%** of women have experienced unwelcoming touching, hugging, cornering or kissing.

### Discrimination

Discrimination is when a person treats, or proposes to treat, a person unfavourably because of their personal characteristics, such as their age or gender, or other attributes.

### In the past 12 months –

**26%** of women stated they have experienced discrimination compared to **0%** of men.



# The case for change

## Our Vision

We will shape a fair, flexible and balanced workplace where employees are safe, healthy, supported and can achieve their best. Our actions will ensure we are progressive, value diversity and are inclusive of all employees and volunteers regardless of age, gender, ability or background.



A word cloud generated by consultation workshop participants used in the creation of our vision

## Our commitment

Council recognises the important role that local government plays in promoting gender equality and preventing violence against women and children.

Council aligns its work to regional, state, national and international research, strategies and frameworks which determine that addressing the drivers of gender inequality reduces violence against women and children.

Our work focuses on addressing the drivers of gender inequity which in turn reduces the likelihood of violence against women and children occurring. The scope of our work extends from our workplace, where our emphasis is on leadership in gender equitable cultures and practices, to our programs and services which we aim to make accessible, equitable and inclusive, and outwards to the community where safety, awareness and collaboration is our focus.

As an employer of choice and Nillumbik's largest employer we have a responsibility to take positive action towards achieving workplace gender equality. The focus of our GEAP is to work towards reducing gender inequality in our workplace. We will create an inclusive culture, where human rights are respected, participation is facilitated and diversity is celebrated. In order to achieve this, Council acknowledges that an intersectional lens is required.

### Council recognises the following –

- Gender equality benefits all people regardless of their gender
- Gender equality is a human right and a precondition for social justice
- Gender equality prevents violence against women and children
- Gender inequality does not impact on all people in the same way
- Gender equality delivers social and health benefits to the whole community
- Gender equality provides economic benefits to the whole community

## Our Achievements

In recognition of the above principles, Council has made significant progress in creating a gender equitable and respectful workplace.

We are focused on increasing awareness of broader gender inequality in the community and the role of workplaces in addressing this, and are working across all areas of Council to embed this.

### Significant achievements in promoting gender equality at Nillumbik

- Introduction of a Gender Equity Policy Statement for Nillumbik
- Success in attaining grant funding to support gender equality initiatives across Council
- Establishment of an Access, Equity and Inclusion Working Group
- Creation and expansion of the Gender Equity Advocates Program
- Establishment of a Gender Equality Act 2020 Program Implementation Group
- Facilitation of Unconscious Bias and Intersectionality training programs
- Building organisational capability in the completion of Gender Impact Assessments and the application of a Gender and Intersectional Lens



## Existing organisational strategies and the GEAP

The promotion of gender equality is prioritised across key strategic planning documents including the Community Vision – Nillumbik 2040, the Council Plan, the Nillumbik Health and Wellbeing Plan, and the Workforce Plan.

The GEAP will also complement the implementation and delivery of additional policies and strategies including the Ageing Well in Nillumbik Action Plan, Disability Action Plan, Gender Equity Policy Statement, Reconciliation Action Plan, Reconciliation Charter, Recreation Strategy and Youth Strategy, which will strengthen Council’s capability to address intersectional gender inequality.

Additionally, the GEAP also complements community focused actions that will be achieved through recommendations generated from Gender Impact Assessments and the application of a Gender and Intersectional Lens across Council activities.

## Our Business Case

Everyone should be free to develop their personal abilities, pursue their professional careers and make choices about their lives without being limited by gender stereotypes, roles, prejudices and other barriers. Council recognises that gender equality is a key factor in promoting the health and wellbeing of our people; Prevention of family violence and other forms of violence against women and girls and improving organisational culture and performance. This is our business case for gender equality. Together with our workforce data and in line with the gender equality principles contained within the Act, it forms the foundation for our GEAP and informs the strategies and measures contained within.

## The case for gender equality

### Health and wellbeing

- Reduces disadvantage
- Improves mental and physical wellbeing
- Fosters social connections
- Improves access to equitable and inclusive facilities, services and programs
- Reduces health inequalities within communities
- Reduces barriers to economic participation and financial resources

### Prevention of family violence and other forms of violence against women and girls

- Creates a culture of safety and respect
- Challenges rigid gender stereotypes and the condoning of violence against women
- Promotes women’s independence and access to decision-making
- Strengthens positive, equal and respectful relationships

### Improving organisational culture and performance

- Creates an inclusive culture where diversity is celebrated
- Improves workplace participation
- Eliminates biases and discrimination based on gender and other personal attributes
- Increases opportunities for women and gender diverse people or with diverse identifies in leadership roles
- Improves staff retention; retaining knowledge and reducing expenses





# The Action Plan

The Action Plan outlines the responsibility for the implementation of each individual strategy and measure along with timelines for completion. Our governance structure supports the shared accountability across Council.

Priority	Strategy	Responsible department	Timelines				Measures
			2022	2023	2024	2025	
Gender pay equity	Review, develop and implement employee, Councillor and volunteer data collection systems with an intersectional lens	Finance Human Resources	Scope	Plan	Implement	Review	Increase in number of people who identify as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LGBTIQ+</li> <li>• Gender diverse</li> <li>• Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander</li> <li>• Culturally and linguistically diverse</li> <li>• Having a disability</li> </ul>
	Review Council's position and remuneration benchmarking process	Human Resources Managers and Coordinators Executive Management Team	Scope	Plan	Implement	Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decrease in gender pay gap at all levels</li> <li>• Decrease in gender pay gap in starting salaries</li> </ul>
	Review casual workforce and identify and address barriers including leave access	Human Resources		Scope and plan	Implement	Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce casual workforce</li> <li>• Increase gender balance within the casual workforce</li> </ul>
	Provide information and learning opportunities to increase financial literacy to reduce pay and superannuation gap for women and gender diverse people	Human Resources	Implement and review	Implement and review	Implement and review	Implement and review	Number of employees who attend information sessions



Priority	Strategy	Responsible department	Timelines				Measures
			2022	2023	2024	2025	
Gender composition at all levels of our workforce	Increase opportunities for women and gender diverse people from varied identities in leadership positions	Human Resources Community Partnerships Hiring Managers	Scope and plan	Implement	Review	Review	Maintain and increase gender balance and diversity in leadership at all levels in the organisation
	Build organisational capacity in the drivers of gender inequality and intersectionality through the Gender Equity Advocates program engaging men, women and gender diverse people.	Human Resources Community Partnerships Gender Equity Advocates		Scope	Plan	Implement and review	Number of employees who agree or strongly agree that there is a positive culture within the organisation in relation to employees of different sexes/genders
	Build organisational capacity and deliver training to create a more inclusive workplace with a focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>gender</li> <li>sexual orientation</li> <li>age</li> <li>ethnicity</li> <li>Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander status</li> <li>disability</li> <li>class</li> </ul>	Human Resources Community Partnerships	Implement and review	Implement and review	Implement and review	Implement and review	Number of employees who complete unconscious bias training, gender equity training and other training or workshops such as LGBTIQ+ inclusion or cultural awareness training
Gender composition of governing bodies	Leadership actively champions Council's gender equity work as well as access, equity and inclusion more broadly	Executive Management Team	Ongoing →				Number of employees who agree or strongly agree that the organisation has a positive culture towards employees of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Varied cultural backgrounds</li> <li>Different age groups</li> <li>Different sexes / genders</li> <li>Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander</li> <li>LGBTIQ+</li> <li>Disability</li> </ul>

Priority	Strategy	Responsible department	Timelines				Measures
			2022	2023	2024	2025	
	Ensure or maintain a gender balance with diverse identities for Executive Management Team and advisory committees	CEO Governance Advisory Committee convenors	Ongoing →				Maintain or increase gender balance and diversity in leadership and advisory committees
	Promote opportunities for local women and gender diverse people to run for local government elections	Community Partnerships Economic Development		Scope	Implement	Review	Maintain or increase gender balance and diversity on Council
	Build knowledge and capacity of Councillors to lead and promote gender equality through training, communications and events	Executive Management Team Community Partnerships Human Resources	Ongoing →				Number of opportunities for Councillors to learn, participate in and champion gender equality
	Explore opportunities to create an inclusive workplace for gender diverse people	Human Resources Community Partnerships	Ongoing →				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of employees who include pronouns in signatures</li> <li>• Number of activities, events and workshops that increase visibility of and celebrate gender diverse people</li> </ul>
Workplace sexual harassment	Leaders model respectful behaviours	Leadership	Ongoing →				Employees that strongly agree or agree that leaders encourage respectful behaviours
	Develop and implement a standalone Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedure and Bystander Action Procedure using an intersectional lens	Human Resources Communications	Ongoing →				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employees report they feel safe to challenge inappropriate behaviour at work</li> <li>• Number of employees reporting they experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months</li> <li>• Percent of employees who witnessed negative behaviours in the past 12 months who took positive action.</li> </ul>



Priority	Strategy	Responsible department	Timelines				Measures
			2022	2023	2024	2025	
	Review induction and ongoing training to align to Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedure and Bystander Action procedures	Human Resources	Scope, plan and implement	Review	Review		Number of employees that attend sexual harassment and bystander training
	Raise awareness of sexual harassment prevention and response for all employees and Councillors	Human Resources Communications Leadership	Ongoing →				Number of employees who agree or strongly agree that the organisation takes steps to eliminate bullying, harassment and discrimination
	Collect information about the prevalence and nature of sexual harassment	Human Resources		Scope and plan	Implement	Review	Number of employees who report experiences of sexual harassment in the last 12 months
	Review reporting process for sexual harassment	Human Resources			Scope and plan	Implement and review	Number of employees who participate in sexual harassment training
	Community education regarding treatment of employees and Councillors	Human Resources Occupational Health and Safety Customer Experience Communications			Scope and plan	Implement and review	Number of employees reporting bullying and harassment decreases
Recruitment and promotion	Review of Recruitment Policy to ensure it has regard to gender equality, diverse genders and identities	Human Resources	Scope	Plan and implement	Review		Number of employees who agree or strongly agree that gender (and other identities) is not a barrier to success within the organisation
	Investigate employment pathways into Council focused on employment for targeted populations	Human Resources		Scope and plan	Implement and review		Number of employees who strongly agree or agree that their manager works effectively with people from diverse backgrounds
	Identify leadership, mentoring and career development programs that support the progression of women and gender diverse people with diverse identities into leadership roles	Human Resources	Scope	Plan	Implement	Review	Number of employees who agree or strongly agree that people in their workgroup actively support diversity and inclusion in the workplace

Priority	Strategy	Responsible department	Timelines				Measures
			2022	2023	2024	2025	
	Review recruitment process, procedures and templates to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>remove bias</li> <li>use more inclusive and representative language and images</li> <li>challenge occupational gender stereotypes</li> <li>promote flexible work and job share opportunities.</li> </ul>	Human Resources Communications			Scope	Plan and implement	Number of employees who agree or strongly agree that the organisation uses inclusive and respectful images and language
	Develop equitable guiding structure around secondments and higher duties processes	Human Resources Managers			Scope plan and implement	Review	Women and gender diverse employees agree that they have an equal chance of promotion and that there are adequate opportunities to develop their skills and experience
Gender imbalance	Identify departments with current gender imbalance and implement actions to increase gender diversity at all levels	Human Resources		Scope	Plan and implement	Review	Number of employees who agree or strongly agree that people in their workgroup actively support diversity and inclusion in the workplace
	Identify opportunities to create more inclusive workplace facilities	Property and facilities maintenance		Scope	Plan	Implement and review	Number of improved facilities
	Engage with Operations Centre employees to develop and deliver actions that improve inclusive workplace practice and environment for women and people from diverse backgrounds	Operations Centre Human Resources Community Partnerships	Scope	Plan	Implement	Review	Action plan developed and 50% of actions implemented
	Challenge informal and gender stereotypical roles within the workplace (e.g. women being responsible for catering).	Leadership People Managers Gender Equity Advocates	Scope	Plan	Implement	Review	Anecdotal evidence
	Seek ways to embed gender equity principles into procurement processes and opportunities for gender responsive budgeting	Procurement Finance Grants	Scope	Scope	Plan	Implement and review	Number of opportunities identified



Priority	Strategy	Responsible department	Timelines				Measures
			2022	2023	2024	2025	
Leave and flexibility	Improve and trial new and innovative ways to support flexible work arrangements	Human Resources People Managers	Ongoing →				Fewer female employees report that having caring responsibilities is a barrier to their success in the organisation
	Promote flexible work opportunities and benefits at all levels to encourage equal access	Human Resources Communications Governance	Ongoing →				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased level of agreement (agree and strongly agree) with the statement 'I have the flexibility I need to manage my work and non-work activities and responsibilities'</li> <li>Increased uptake of flexible work arrangements</li> </ul>
	Review parental leave policies with an aim to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide equal leave for both parents (remove primary and secondary carers leave)</li> <li>Extend leave from 12-18 months</li> <li>Offer paid leave for 16 weeks with 12 months superannuation payments for those on unpaid parental leave.</li> </ul>	Human Resources Finance	Scope	Plan	Implement	Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of employees who strongly agree or agree that having caring responsibilities is not a barrier to success in the organisation</li> <li>Number of employees who are confident that if they requested a flexible work arrangement it would be given due consideration (strongly agree or agree)</li> </ul>
	Review and provide support for part-time and job share opportunities at all levels	Human Resources		Scope	Implement	Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More part-time and job-share opportunities at all levels</li> <li>Less gender imbalance in part-time and job share roles</li> </ul>
	Review and address barriers to accessing Family Violence leave including when working from home	Human Resources Community Partnerships	Scope	Plan and implement	Review		Number of employees who strongly agree or agree that the organisation would support them if they needed to take family violence leave
	Review leave options for employees to ensure more inclusive leave options are available	Human Resources Community Partnerships		Scope in line with Enterprise Agreement			Increase in leave options (e.g. transition leave, grandparents leave, cultural leave, menstruation leave, menopause leave, sick leave pool)

# Resourcing, accountability and measuring progress

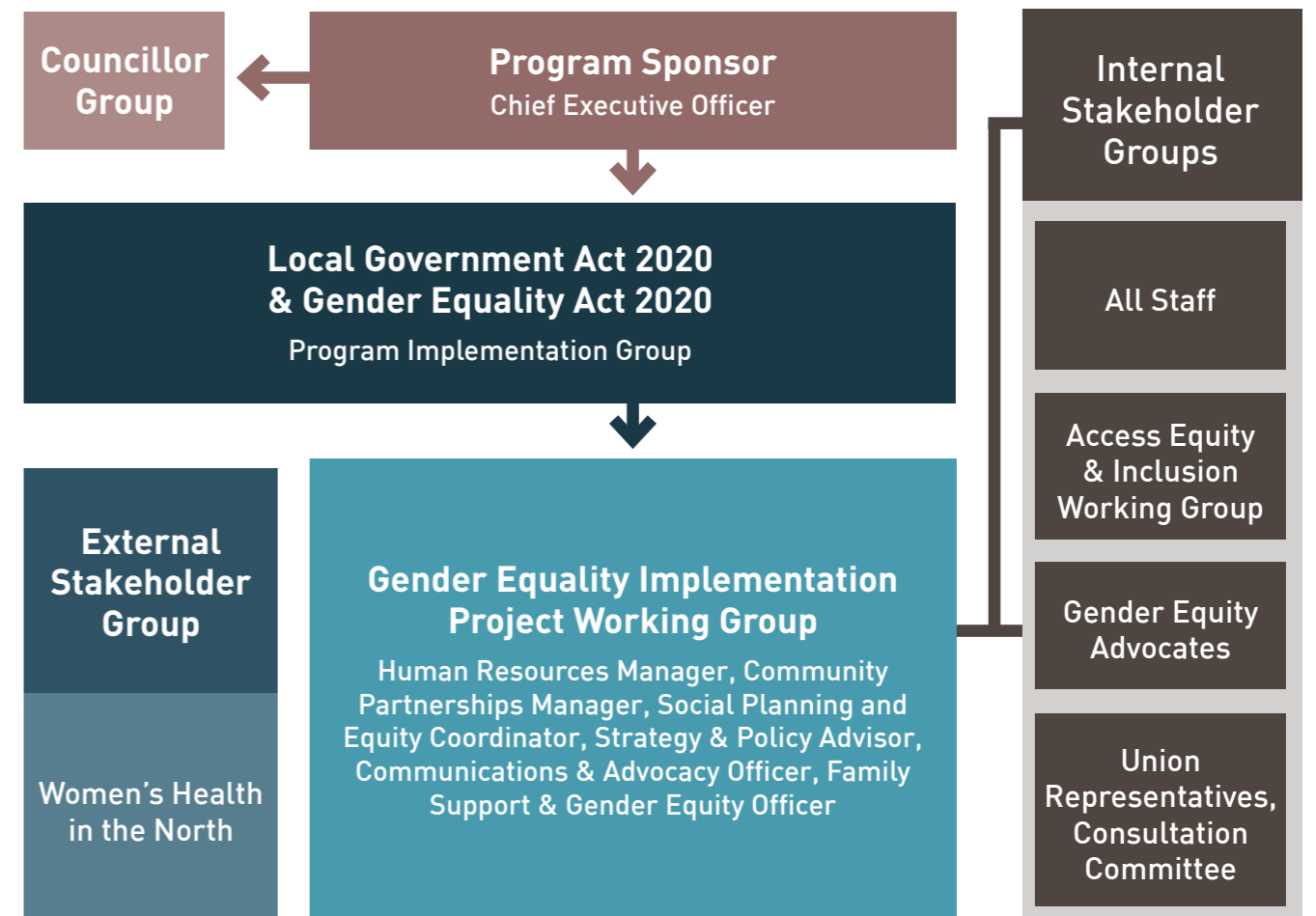
## Leadership and governance

A whole of organisation approach to the development, oversight and implementation of our GEAP is formalised through our governance structure. Our cross-organisational structure and collaborative working groups foster shared responsibilities and an integrated approach to implementation.

### Key elements of our governance structure include –

- Executive Management Team representatives who endorse this GEAP and commit to leading structural and systematic change to deliver a fair, progressive and supportive workplace which is safe and inclusive for all.
- Cross-functional working groups including the *Local Government Act 2020* and *Gender Equality Act 2020* Program Implementation Group and the Access, Equity and Inclusion Working group who are able to utilise their expertise to support the oversight, development and implementation of the GEAP.
- Gender Equity Advocates who represent all levels of staff across Council who can champion the GEAP in their individual departments/teams.

## GEAP Governance Structure



Nillumbik Gender Equality Action Plan Implementation - Governance structure





## Monitoring and reporting

We aim to achieve real and lasting change over the life of our GEAP and beyond. We are outcomes- focused and wish to measure the difference we make through the delivery of our GEAP. We will do so by setting priorities and measuring our success against measurable indicators. While we have set our priorities, strategies and measures, they may require further development. Additional priorities, actions and measures may need to be set as we continue to improve our data collection and analysis capabilities.

The Act requires Council to report on the progress of our GEAP every second year after 2021/2. Additionally, contributions to actions and progress against complementary strategies, policies and plans will also be monitored and reported on. These include the Council Plan, the Nillumbik Health and Wellbeing Plan and the Workforce Plan. Annual reports will be provided to Council and regular progress updates will be provided to the Executive Management Team as appropriate.

## Resourcing and implementation

The Act requires that Council allocate adequate resources to support the development and implementation of the GEAP. We have developed a Strategic Resourcing Plan that includes a specific budget for the implementation of strategies and measures we have developed to promote gender equality within our organisation.

Budget and roles will be scoped in the first year to support strategies and measures including an estimation of time for training of staff and/or participation on committees.

There is an organisational commitment of a minimum of 1 EFT per year to deliver the GEAP.

It is an expectation that all employees are involved in the advancing of gender equality at Council and implementing the deliverables of the GEAP, for example the Gender Equity Advocates, attendance at training, project groups, compiling data and developing new systems, participating in surveys, focus groups.



## **Nillumbik Shire Council**

Civic Drive (PO Box 476) Greensborough Victoria 3088

9433 3111 | [nillumbik@nillumbik.vic.gov.au](mailto:nillumbik@nillumbik.vic.gov.au)

[nillumbik.vic.gov.au](http://nillumbik.vic.gov.au)    