

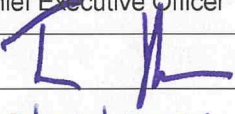
# 2026 gender equality action plan (GEAP) for: Ararat Rural City Council

<b>Organisation name</b>	ARARAT RURAL CITY COUNCIL
<b>Total number of employees (and full-time equivalent FTE), as at 30 June 2025</b>	Total employees: 198 Total FTE: 132.9
<b>Location (metropolitan, regional or rural. If other, please specify)</b>	RURAL

## Attestation by the head of the organisation

### I confirm that:

- I am the head of the organisation (CEO or equivalent)
- I have reviewed and approved the submission of this gender equality action plan (GEAP) on behalf of my organisation (as named above), and I attest that the implementation of the GEAP will be adequately resourced as required under the Gender Equality Act (2020).

<b>Any comments?</b>	
<b>Name</b>	Dr. Tim Harrison
<b>Role title</b>	Chief Executive Officer
<b>Signed</b>	
<b>Date</b>	29/04/2026

## A) Planning your GEAP

### Section 1: Use insights from your previous gender equality work

Council's previous Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) and progress reporting process provided valuable insights into what is working well, where gaps remain, and how gender equality can be more effectively embedded across Council. These learnings - drawn from workforce data analysis, Gender Impact Assessments (GIAs), employee consultation, and reflection on implementation challenges - have directly shaped the priorities and actions in this new plan.

The first GEAP supported progress across the seven workplace gender equality indicators, particularly in workforce composition, gender representation in leadership, and policy development supporting flexible work and workplace safety. Several strategies were successfully implemented, including strengthening flexible work arrangements, improving prevention and response frameworks for gendered violence and sexual harassment, and embedding GIA processes into policy and service planning. While many actions were achieved, some strategies were only partially implemented due to competing operational priorities, resource constraints, and the time required to embed organisational change. These areas - primarily workforce participation outcomes, employee engagement, and leadership capability development - have informed the priorities carried forward into this GEAP.

A key learning has been the importance of embedding gender equality considerations into everyday decision-making through GIAs. During the previous GEAP period, Council increased the use of GIAs across policies, infrastructure projects, and community programs, reinforcing that gender equality is not a standalone initiative, but a factor shaping how services are planned, delivered, and accessed. GIAs are most effective when applied early in planning and supported by staff confidence and capability, which has strengthened the focus on organisational capability building, governance accountability, and integration of gender impact considerations across strategic and operational processes.

Workforce data analysis highlighted that, while meaningful progress has been made, achieving gender equality outcomes remains complex and requires ongoing attention. Council maintains strong overall gender balance and positive representation of women in senior leadership roles. However, flexible and part-time work arrangements continue to be accessed predominantly by women, and pay equity data identified emerging disparities in senior leadership remuneration. These findings reinforce that structural barriers continue to influence career progression, workforce participation, and remuneration outcomes, informing actions focused on workforce planning, leadership development, pay equity monitoring, and promoting shared caring responsibilities across all genders.

The previous GEAP also reinforced the importance of fostering a workplace culture where staff feel safe, respected, and confident to raise concerns. While Council maintains clear policies on the prevention of sexual harassment and gendered discrimination, measuring workplace experience remains challenging in a small rural workforce where underreporting can occur. Strengthening prevention, awareness, education, and confidence in reporting mechanisms continues to be a key focus.

Another important insight has been the need for a stronger intersectional approach. GIAs and policy reviews highlighted that gender inequality often intersects with factors such as age, disability, cultural background, caring responsibilities, and family violence. This has informed more inclusive policies and service delivery approaches, including improvements to community infrastructure, financial hardship supports, and child safety frameworks. Further capability building and improved data collection remain priorities to support more meaningful and sustainable outcomes.

Council has also learned that sustainable progress relies heavily on leadership commitment and accountability. Awareness and support for gender equality have grown across the organisation; however, long-term change is most effective when leaders model inclusive behaviours, support flexible work practices, and integrate gender equality into planning and decision-making. Strengthening leadership capability and accountability remains a key enabler of continued progress.

Broader organisational indicators - including employee engagement feedback, workforce retention patterns, and leadership participation in gender equality initiatives - have provided additional insight into organisational culture and change readiness. These indicators demonstrate growing organisational awareness while highlighting the need for ongoing leadership visibility, staff engagement, and consistent communication. Improving consultation approaches and strengthening workforce data quality were also identified as priorities, particularly following lower-than-desired employee survey response rates.

As a small rural council, we have learned that progress requires practical, sustainable, and achievable actions aligned with operational demands and available resources. Embedding gender equality into existing policies, workforce practices, service planning, and community engagement has proven to be the most effective and sustainable approach. This new GEAP focuses on integrating gender equality into core business functions.

Collectively, these insights have enabled Council to adopt a more targeted, evidence-informed and sustainable approach to advancing gender equality. This plan builds on our previous achievements, addresses identified gaps, and strengthens our commitment to creating a safe, inclusive, and equitable workplace and community.

## Section 2: Processes, record keeping and governance

Council has established structured processes, governance arrangements and record-keeping practices that underpin the development, implementation, and ongoing evaluation of the 2026 GEAP. Building on our experience from the previous plan, these arrangements reflect a deliberate focus on embedding gender equality into everyday organisational practice, workforce strategies, and decision-making.

The GEAP was developed through a staged approach with defined responsibilities, milestones, and timeframes, ensuring workforce data analysis, consultation, drafting, leadership review, and adoption were completed efficiently while allowing time for meaningful engagement and feedback. These processes support accountability, coordination across service areas, and proactive identification of risks, providing a solid foundation for implementation and monitoring.

A cross-organisational working group was established to oversee development and guide ongoing implementation. Comprising representatives from different teams and employment levels, the group ensures initiatives reflect operational experience and the diverse perspectives of Council's workforce. The working group also provides advice on embedding GEAP actions into business planning, workforce development, and service delivery, ensuring gender equality is integrated rather than treated as a standalone initiative.

Senior leadership plays a central role in both the development and implementation of gender equality. The leadership team provides strategic oversight, reviews progress, and ensures alignment with Council's strategic objectives and workforce priorities. Their involvement reinforces accountability, promotes organisation-wide commitment, and keeps gender equality at the forefront of all decision-making.

Council undertook a range of consultation activities designed to be meaningful and inclusive. These included organisation-wide staff surveys, targeted focus groups, engagement with employee networks, and opportunities for written feedback. Multiple communication channels - internal newsletters, team meetings, and staff forums - were used to reach staff across different locations, employment types, and experiences. Participation was voluntary and confidential, designed to be safe, accessible, and respectful, with sufficient time allocated for feedback and any necessary follow-up. These engagement processes now form our foundation for ongoing consultation and review.

Council also considered guidance and resources provided by Women's Health Grampians, who support organisations across the region to build capability in gender equality and the prevention of gender-based violence. Access to these resources informed best practice approaches and guided the development of strategies aimed at strengthening workplace gender equality.

To support consistency across the organisation, Council has established shared definitions of key concepts including gender equality, intersectionality and the gender pay gap. This common language enhances understanding and application across policies, workforce initiatives, and service planning, strengthening staff awareness of Council's obligations under the *Gender Equality Act 2020*.

Robust record-keeping practices underpin implementation, monitoring and reporting. Consultation outcomes, workforce data, meeting records, action plans, progress reports, and evaluation findings are securely maintained in line with Council's records management framework and privacy obligations. These records ensure transparent reporting to the Gender Equality Commission, support progress tracking, and inform continuous improvement.

Clear governance structures define responsibilities and accountability across the organisation. The leadership team provides strategic oversight and ensures adequate resourcing, while the working group monitors operational progress and advises on emerging risks, barriers, and opportunities. This structure facilitates integration of gender equality into broader organisational performance monitoring.

Council recognises that sustained progress relies on visible and active leadership. Leaders must communicate commitment, model inclusive behaviours, support flexible and inclusive work practices, and ensure gender equality is considered in decision-making. Progress is tracked through measurable targets and reporting, with leaders supporting supervisors by setting clear expectations, providing guidance, and recognising contributions toward gender equality outcomes.

Collectively, these integrated processes, governance arrangements, and leadership commitments provide a strong foundation to embed gender equality into everyday practice and support long-term cultural and structural change.

### Section 3: Leadership commitment

Ararat Rural City Council is committed to fostering a workplace and community where gender equality is actively supported, promoted, and embedded in everything we do. We recognise that gender equality is fundamental to building a safe, inclusive, and high-performing organisation, and to delivering fair and equitable services to our community.

Council acknowledges its obligations under the *Gender Equality Act 2020* and understands that achieving gender equality requires sustained leadership commitment, accountability, and cultural change. Through our previous GEAP, Council made meaningful progress in strengthening organisational awareness, improving workforce data, and embedding gender considerations into policies, workforce practices and service delivery. While we are proud of these achievements, we also recognise that gender equality is an ongoing journey requiring continuous effort and reflection.

As a small rural council, we recognise that workforce participation, career progression, and access to flexible work can present unique challenges. Workforce size, geographic location, and workforce availability can influence how staff balance work, caring responsibilities, and career opportunities. This GEAP acknowledges these realities and focuses on practical, sustainable actions that support equitable opportunities for all staff, while ensuring Council continue to deliver essential services to our community.

Council is committed to embedding gender equality into everyday decision-making, workforce planning, service delivery, and community engagement. Our leadership team plays a critical role in modelling inclusive behaviours, supporting flexible and equitable work practices, and ensuring gender equality considerations are incorporated into organisational planning and governance.

We also recognise that meaningful and lasting change is achieved through collaboration. Council values the contributions of staff who shared their experiences and insights to inform the development of this plan. We remain committed to fostering a workforce culture where staff feel safe, respected, and supported, and where diversity of experience and perspective strengthens our organisation.

I am proud to support the implementation of this GEAP and reaffirm Council's commitment to building a workplace and community that is inclusive, equitable, and respectful for all.

## B) Consult on your audit results and strategies

### Section 4: Confirm consultation groups

You must consult with your...	Confirm yes or no	If no, why not?
<u>Governing body</u> (if your organisation has one)	Yes	
Employees	Yes	
<u>Employee representatives, including relevant trade unions</u>	Yes	
You might consult with...	Confirm yes or no	Please describe additional people and/or groups
<u>Other relevant people</u>	No	

### Section 5: Document your consultation process

Staff were provided with a summary of the workforce gender audit findings and key workforce data, along with a short guide to help interpret the information. These materials were emailed to all employees to ensure everyone had the information needed to provide informed feedback. They were designed to be clear, accessible, and easy to understand.

Staff were then invited to provide feedback through an anonymous online survey. The survey sought views on the audit findings, experiences working at Council, and suggestions for improving gender equality. A total of 26 employees responded. While participation was voluntary, the feedback received offered valuable insights and has been carefully considered alongside the audit results to help shape strategies and measures in the GEAP. Staff were also encouraged to provide feedback directly to their supervisors or to human resources, offering additional ways to contribute.

Councillors were provided with a briefing paper summarising the audit findings and outlining the consultation process. They were invited to review the information and provide feedback to help identify priorities for the GEAP. Employee representatives, including relevant unions, were also given the opportunity to review the materials and provide input.

Council took deliberate steps to ensure the consultation process was safe, inclusive, and accessible. Information was provided in plain language, responses were collected anonymously, and multiple channels were available for providing feedback. While survey participation was modest, the combination of survey responses, direct feedback, and input from Councillors and unions ensures that the consultation reflects a broad range of perspectives and experiences.

## Section 6: Findings from your consultation

Staff feedback indicates that Council is generally seen as performing well on gender equality, particularly in pay, leadership representation, and overall workplace culture. Flexible work and leave policies are viewed as effective in supporting gender equality, although uptake is not always consistent across teams and roles. Occupational gender segregation remains an area of concern, especially in outdoor and traditionally male-dominated roles. Staff suggested targeted recruitment and development initiatives to improve representation.

While pay gaps are relatively small, part-time work and caring responsibilities were noted as factors that can influence career progression and remuneration in some areas. Other suggestions for improving gender equality included mentoring and professional development opportunities, clearer communication of policies, awareness-raising initiatives, and fostering a culture that encourages men and women in non-traditional roles.

Staff feedback helped clarify some audit findings, particularly regarding pay and occupational segregation. It also highlighted areas where additional explanation or context would be valuable, which has informed refinements to the proposed strategies.

Although all input from employee representatives, unions, and Councillors has not yet been received, it's expected to focus on pay equity, maintaining a safe and inclusive workplace culture, and enhancing professional development opportunities. Once this feedback is provided, it will be reviewed and used to further shape the strategies and measures in the GEAP, ensuring Council continues to strengthen its commitment to gender equality.

## C) Consider the gender equality and the gender pay equity principles, and intersectionality

### Section 7: Consider the gender equality principles

In developing our GEAP, we applied the gender equality principles in a practical and accessible way, ensuring they are easily understood and applied across our workplace. They have helped explain why gender equality matters at Council — not just as a compliance requirement, but as a way to improve workplace culture, wellbeing, engagement, and opportunities for everyone. The principles guided our focus on leadership representation, career progression, flexible work, and pay, and helped shape the vision and goals of the GEAP to reflect fairness, respect, and genuine opportunity.

The principles were also integrated into staff consultation, asking employees what they mean to them and how they see them in their work. This input helped interpret the audit results and prioritise strategies that are realistic and relevant. The plan emphasises reducing barriers to participation, encouraging staff to consider roles outside traditional gender norms, supporting mentoring and professional development, and continuing to build an inclusive culture where people are not limited by gender stereotypes.

Consideration was also given to how gender inequality intersects with other forms of disadvantage, like age, disability or cultural background. Strategies have been designed to support a diverse workforce, while maintaining a safe and respectful workplace. Council's ongoing focus on respectful workplace behaviours, clear reporting pathways, and supportive policies aligns with the principle that gender equality plays a key role in preventing discrimination, harassment, and gender-based violence.

The gender equality principles will continue to guide the monitoring and review of this GEAP. Progress will be tracked through indicators and measures, enabling Council to assess whether strategies are improving outcomes and to identify areas requiring further action.

Overall, applying the principles has been about making them tangible for staff — ensuring strategies are not just ideas on paper, but things that genuinely support a fair, safe, and respectful workplace every day.

## Section 8: Consider the gender pay equity principles

The gender pay equity principles have guided how Council has examined pay and employment practices across the organisation. Our workforce gender audit provided a clear picture of mean and median salaries across the organisation and within different job groups. This helped identify any potential gaps and ensure pay practices reflect equal or comparable value of work.

Overall, the audit indicates that Council's gender pay gaps are relatively small, which is encouraging. However, the data also highlighted that factors such as occupational segregation, part-time work arrangements, and caring responsibilities can influence pay and career progression. At the senior leadership level, the pay gap appears higher, but this is influenced by the small number of roles in this group and the impact of the CEO's position on the overall data. These insights have helped shape strategies aimed at reducing barriers and improving equitable access to career development opportunities.

Council also places strong emphasis on transparency and fairness in employment and pay practices. The Enterprise Agreement and supporting policies establish consistent pay structures and progression pathways, helping to reduce bias and ensure pay decisions are applied fairly and consistently across the organisation.

Staff consultation also played an important role. Staff highlighted the importance of clear communication about pay and career progression, as well as access to professional development opportunities. This feedback has helped prioritise strategies such as improving pay transparency, reviewing promotion pathways, supporting flexible work, and creating more opportunities for leadership development.

The gender pay equity principles have helped keep the focus on practical outcomes. They reinforce that achieving pay equity is not only about numbers, but about creating fair systems and opportunities across the organisation. Staff, leaders, supervisors, and unions have been engaged where possible to ensure the strategies included in the GEAP are fair, realistic, and sustainable.

## Section 9: Consider intersectionality

During development, Council also ensured intersectionality was considered — recognising that gender inequality can overlap with other forms of disadvantage or discrimination, such as age, disability, cultural background, or caring responsibilities. This helps us to understand that staff may experience barriers in different ways, and that strategies need to reflect the diversity of our workforce.

Intersectionality informed both our workforce audit analysis and our consultation process. When reviewing the audit data, we looked beyond overall gender representation and pay to consider where patterns of disadvantage may appear for staff with multiple or intersecting characteristics. For example, part-time work combined with caring responsibilities or other factors can influence access to career progression, development opportunities, and leadership pathways.

Consultation with staff also highlighted how different experiences can affect opportunities and workplace inclusion. These insights helped identify areas where targeted strategies may be needed to support fair and equitable outcomes for all employees.

Our strategies reflect this understanding. They include initiatives that support staff working in non-traditional roles, mentoring and professional development opportunities that are accessible to all staff, and flexible work arrangements that recognise a range of personal circumstances. Policies relating to pay, progression, and workplace culture aim to reduce barriers for staff who may face multiple or overlapping challenges.

By considering intersectionality, Council aims to create a workplace where everyone can develop their skills, pursue career opportunities, and participate fully without being limited by gender stereotypes or other overlapping factors. Monitoring outcomes through the GEAP will help us understand whether these strategies are working for all staff and allow us to make adjustments where needed to ensure our approach remains inclusive.

## D) Making a case for change

### Section 10: Make a case for change and create a vision

#### Why Gender Equality Matters at Ararat Rural City

Gender equality matters at Ararat Rural City. It's not just about meeting legal requirements or ticking boxes; it's about creating a workplace that is fair, respectful, and inclusive. It's about ensuring everyone has the opportunity to do their best, grow their career, and feel valued. Gender equality benefits not only all our staff, but also the organisation and the community we serve. It helps strengthen workplace culture, improve staff wellbeing, and support engagement and productivity. It also supports broader economic and social participation. By fostering a fair and inclusive workplace, Council strengthens its reputation as an employer of choice, helping attract and retain talented staff, reduce turnover, and ensure our workforce continues to thrive into the future.

Our vision for gender equality at Council is a workplace where everyone has equal access to opportunities, leadership roles, and career development, and where people are not limited by gender stereotypes or assumptions. Staff from across the organisation helped shape this vision. We asked employees what gender equality means to them and how they see it reflected in their work. This helped ensure the vision is meaningful and relatable, not just words on a page, but something staff can connect with in their everyday work. Staff input also highlighted practical challenges they sometimes face, such as barriers to flexible work, access to leadership opportunities, or perceptions about non-traditional roles. These insights have helped shape strategies that are practical, relevant and achievable.

Gender equality also matters because it helps address the underlying causes of disadvantage and discrimination. We recognise that gender inequality can intersect with other factors such as age, cultural background, disability, or caring responsibilities. Addressing these barriers requires thoughtful approaches to how we recruit, develop, support, and promote our people. For example, mentoring, professional development opportunities, and flexible work arrangements can help ensure staff with caring responsibilities or those working in traditionally gender-segregated roles have opportunities to progress.

This GEAP builds on the work Council has already undertaken to strengthen gender equality and reflects our ongoing commitment to the gender equality and pay equity principles. It also aligns with our organisational values, showing that respect, excellence and passion aren't just ideals, but principles that guide how we operate every day. By putting this vision into action, we are working to create a fairer, safer, and stronger workplace. We also recognise our broader role in preventing discrimination, harassment, and gender-based violence, reinforcing that workplace culture and safety are central to achieving genuine gender equality.

Ultimately, our case for change is about more than just compliance. It is about creating a workplace where everyone feels supported, valued, and empowered to reach their highest potential, regardless of gender. It is about building a culture where equality is embedded in everything we do - from recruitment and career development to leadership, pay, and day-to-day interactions. This is the vision we are committed to, and it underpins every strategy and action in this GEAP.

## E) Analysing your data to identify forms of gender inequality AND developing your strategies

### Section 11: Identifying underlying causes of gender inequality

Our workforce gender audit highlighted several areas where gender inequalities exist. In reviewing the results, we used the “but why” approach recommended in the guidance materials, taking the time to explore the underlying causes rather than simply describing the outcomes. By looking at the data across leadership, pay, occupational groups, and flexible work arrangements, we asked a series of “but why” questions to better understand what may be contributing to the patterns identified in the audit.

One of the key findings relates to occupational gender segregation. Women are more commonly represented in administrative, people-focused, and part-time roles, while men are more likely to work in outdoor, technical and higher-paid positions. This matters because occupational segregation can reinforce stereotypes about which types of work are considered “men’s work” or “women’s work”. It can also influence pay equity and limit diversity of experience in certain areas of the organisation. Staff feedback suggested that career pathways in traditionally male-dominated areas are not always visible or actively promoted, which can reinforce these patterns over time.

Flexible work and caring responsibilities were another important factor. While Council offers flexible working arrangements, uptake varies across teams and roles. Staff indicated that some roles are perceived as less adaptable to flexible work, or that using flexibility could affect career progression. These perceptions can influence decisions about working hours or career opportunities and may contribute to differences in leadership representation and remuneration outcomes, particularly for those balancing work and family responsibilities.

Leadership representation and career progression also emerged as areas requiring attention. While women are well represented in senior leadership overall, the audit showed gaps in certain occupational streams. Feedback and internal analysis suggest that access to professional development, mentoring, and opportunities to take on new responsibilities aren’t always consistent across teams. Over time, this can impact pathways to leadership roles.

The audit also highlighted small but meaningful gaps in some areas. Overall remuneration outcomes are relatively consistent; however, patterns of workforce participation and historical workforce structures contribute to differences in some groups. Factors such as part-time work arrangements, occupational segregation, and previous recruitment patterns can have a cumulative effect on pay outcomes.

Workplace culture was also considered, including recruitment and promotion practices and staff experiences. Consultation suggested that unconscious bias and assumptions about roles and capabilities continue to influence decision-making, even where policies and processes are in place. In some areas, informal practices or longstanding stereotypes may shape how opportunities are offered or perceived.

Finally, we considered intersectionality and the way gender inequality can overlap with other forms of disadvantage. Some staff may experience additional barriers related to disability, Aboriginality, cultural background, or other personal circumstances. These factors can influence access to opportunities and participation in the workplace, highlighting the importance of inclusive policies and practices.

Understanding these underlying causes has helped us prioritise strategies that address both structural and cultural barriers. This has ensured that our GEAP is focused on real, practical actions that support lasting improvements in gender equality across the organisation.



## Section 12: Analysing your data and documenting your strategies

### Indicator 1: Gender composition of all levels of the workforce

#### Describing the problem

<p><b>Analyse audit data</b></p>	<p><b>Critical performance measures:</b>          Gender composition of the duty holder organisation in 2025: <b>49.03% (W), 50.32% (M), 0.65% (SD)</b>          Gender composition of part time workers in the duty holder organisation in 2025: <b>32.9% (W), 1.3% (M)</b>          Gender composition of senior leaders in the duty holder organisation in 2025: <b>60% (W), 40% (M)</b></p>
<p>Looking at our audit data, there's been some positive movement towards a more balanced gender composition overall. After women's representation declined in 2023 (42.8% women, 57.2% men), the 2025 data reflect a return to near parity, with 49.03% women, 50.32% men, and 0.65% self-described. This is an encouraging shift and suggests that our recent efforts to support gender diversity are having a positive impact. It also reflects growing recognition of gender diversity within the organisation.</p> <p>At the senior leadership level, female representation remains a key strength. Women have consistently held a strong share of leadership roles (61.1% in 2021, 57.9% in 2023, and 60% in 2025), demonstrating stability and inclusivity in leadership. This supports diverse perspectives in decision-making and reflects positive progress in leadership representation.</p> <p>However, part-time work continues to tell a different story. Women's participation in part-time roles has fluctuated but remains significantly higher than men's, with 32.9% women and only 1.3% men in 2025. This indicates ongoing gendered patterns in the workforce participation, where women are more likely to access flexible or part-time work, often tied to caring responsibilities. Low uptake of men may reflect perceptions about flexibility, role constraints, or concerns about career progression.</p> <p>These patterns are important because they can influence career pathways, leadership opportunities, and overall workforce diversity. If part-time work continues to be concentrated among women, it may contribute to longer-term inequalities in progression and pay.</p> <p>Overall, while the organisation demonstrates strong performance in leadership representation and overall gender balance, the concentration of women in part-time roles highlights structural patterns that require ongoing attention. Addressing these patterns will support more equitable access to flexible work, career development, and leadership opportunities for all staff. Consideration of intersectional factors will also be important to ensure strategies support a diverse and inclusive workforce.</p>	



## Setting metrics

<p><b>Measures</b></p>	<p><b>Critical performance measures:</b>            Gender composition of the duty holder organisation.            Gender composition of part-time workers in the duty holder organisation.            Gender composition of senior leaders in the duty holder organisation.</p> <p><b>Additional measures (optional):</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proportion of recruitment advertisements using gender-neutral language – to ensure recruitment practices attract a diverse pool of applicants.</li> <li>Participation in mentoring and development programs by gender – to support career progression and leadership opportunities, helping balance representation across levels.</li> </ol> <p>These additional measures will help assess how our strategies are influencing day-to-day practices, not just overall outcomes. They will give us practical insight into what's making a difference and what might need adjusting.</p>
<p><b>Target/s (recommended)</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gender composition of the organisation – By 2029, maintain overall gender balance within a range of 45-55% across men and women, while continuing to improve visibility and inclusion of gender diverse employees through inclusive practices and reporting.</li> <li>Gender composition of part-time workers – By 2029, increase the proportion of men accessing part-time work to at least 10%, while maintaining equitable access for all genders.</li> <li>Gender composition of senior leaders – By 2029, maintain at least 50% representation of women in senior leadership roles, while supporting pathways for all genders into leadership positions.</li> </ol>

## Strategies

Strategy	Responsible	Timeline	Related to other indicators?
Review and update recruitment policies to ensure all role advertisements use gender-neutral language, clearly outline flexible work options, and highlight development opportunities.	Human Resources Lead	Ongoing, review biennially	Indicator 5
Develop and implement a leadership development program that encourages participation from women and gender-diverse staff, with flexible delivery options.	Human Resources / Senior Leadership	Launch by Q2 2026, ongoing	Indicator 5 Indicator 3
Monitor and promote equitable access to flexible and part-time work across all teams, including tracking uptake by gender and supporting supervisors with guidance.	Human Resources / Team Leaders	Quarterly reporting, ongoing	Indicator 6
Conduct regular workforce reviews to track gender composition across all levels and report outcomes to CEO and Council.	Human Resources Lead / CEO	Twice yearly	None
Introduce mentoring and sponsorship initiatives targeting underrepresented groups, supporting progression into leadership roles.	Human Resources	Launch by Q3 2026, ongoing	Indicator 5 Indicator 3
Maintain a workforce dashboard to track trends in gender composition, flexible work uptake, and leadership representation to inform workforce planning.	Human Resources	Ongoing, review annually	All indicators

## Indicator 2: Gender composition of the governing body

### Describing the problem

<p><b>Analyse audit data</b></p>	<p><b>Critical performance measures:</b> Gender composition of the duty holder organisation's governing body in 2025: <b>30% (w) 70% (m)</b></p>
<p>The gender composition of Council's governing body has remained relatively stable over recent years, with women representing 28.6% of members in 2021 and 2023, increasing slightly to 30% in 2025. While this represents a small improvement, men continue to make up the majority at 70%, indicating that gender balance at the governance level has not yet been achieved.</p> <p>It is important to recognise that the governing body comprises seven councillors who are all elected by the community. As a result, Council has limited ability to directly influence the gender composition of this group. Elections are held every four years, unless a vacancy arises and a countback process is required, meaning opportunities for change in representation occur periodically. Broader social, cultural, and political factors largely shape who chooses to stand for election and who is ultimately elected, contributing to the ongoing underrepresentation of women.</p> <p>While councillors are not involved in day-to-day operations, the composition of the governing body plays an important role in shaping strategic priorities and community decision-making. Greater diversity at this level brings a broader range of experiences and perspectives, supporting more informed and inclusive decision-making. Representation in civic leadership can also influence community perceptions about who participates in leadership and governance roles.</p> <p>Although Council cannot directly influence election outcomes, we recognise the role we can play in supporting long-term change. Through community engagement, leadership development initiatives, and inclusive programs, Council can help encourage broader participation in civic leadership. Council also remains committed to monitoring and transparently reporting on the gender composition of the governing body over time.</p> <p>Maintaining visibility of this indicator allows Council to track trends, acknowledge ongoing imbalances, and contribute to broader efforts to support diverse representation in local leadership.</p>	

### Setting metrics

<p><b>Measures</b></p>	<p><b>Critical performance measures:</b> Gender composition of the duty holder organisation's governing body. <b>Additional measures (optional):</b> 1. Number of programs or initiatives that support women to explore leadership and governance roles – to track Council's efforts in encouraging leadership participation</p>
<p><b>Target/s</b></p>	<p>1. Gender composition of the governing body – By 2029, increase the proportion of women councillors from 30% to at least 42% (3 out of 7 councillors), subject to election outcomes.</p>

### Strategies

Strategy	Responsible	Timeline	Related to other indicators?
Implement leadership development, mentoring, and community engagement initiatives that support women to explore future elected roles.	CEO / Senior Leadership team	Ongoing	None



### Indicator 3: Equal remuneration for work of equal or comparable value across all levels of the workforce, irrespective of gender

#### Describing the problem

<p><b>Analyse audit data</b></p>	<p><b>Critical performance measures:</b>  Mean total remuneration gender pay gap by occupation group in 2025:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 9.2% (b/w M&amp;W)</li> <li>2. 2.8% (b/w M&amp;W)</li> <li>3. 20.7% (b/w M&amp;W); -23.56% (b/w M&amp;S)</li> <li>4. -2.2% (b/w M&amp;W)</li> <li>5. -14.56% (b/w M&amp;W)</li> <li>6. no data</li> <li>7. no data</li> <li>8. 10.7% (b/w M&amp;W)</li> </ol> <p><b>All occupations: 1.34% (b/w M&amp;W) -16.26 (b/w M&amp;S)</b>  Mean total remuneration senior leader gender pay gap in 2025: 24.12%</p> <p><b>Supplementary measures:</b>  Mean base salary pay gap in 2025: -0.64% (b/w M&amp;W) -21.02% (b/w M&amp;S)  Median total remuneration pay gap in 2025: -0.71% (b/w M&amp;W) -27.77% (b/w M&amp;S)  Median base salary pay gap in 2025: -2.10% (b/w M&amp;W) -31.41% (b/w M&amp;S)</p>
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Our 2025 audit data shows that Council has made some progress toward gender pay equity; however, some gaps remain that require ongoing attention. Across the workforce, the mean total remuneration gender pay gap is relatively small at 1.34% between women and men, indicating that overall pay practices are broadly consistent. Median base salary and total remuneration gaps have also narrowed over time, and in some cases, slightly favour women. This suggests that, for most employees, pay outcomes are generally equitable.

Despite this, the data highlights several ongoing challenges. Pay gaps vary considerably across occupation groups, with some showing more significant differences between men and women. The mean total remuneration gender pay gap for senior leaders has increased from 12.07% in 2021 to 24.12% in 2025. It is important to note though, that this figure includes the Chief Executive Officer and, given the small number of positions at this level, can significantly influence the overall result. While this contributes to the size of the gap, it also indicates that pay equity at senior levels is not yet fully achieved.

The data also shows that self-described staff experience negative pay gaps compared to men, reinforcing the importance of continuing to improve data collection and ensuring inclusive and equitable outcomes across all gender identities.

Structural and workforce patterns contribute to these outcomes. Women are more likely to work part-time or in flexible roles, which can limit access to higher-paying positions or additional remuneration components. Occupational segregation also plays a role, with some higher-paid roles more commonly held by men and lower-paid roles more commonly held by women. These patterns influence career progression, access to leadership opportunities, and longer-term earning potential.

While Council has undertaken gender pay audits and maintains consistent pay structures through the Enterprise Agreement, the data shows that these approaches alone are not enough to fully address pay gaps, particularly at senior levels. Understanding these underlying patterns allows us to focus on targeted strategies that support equitable progression and ensure fair pay for work of equal or comparable value.

## Setting metrics

Measures	<p><b>Critical performance measures:</b>  Mean total remuneration gender pay gap by occupation group.  Mean total remuneration senior leader gender pay gap.</p> <p><b>Supplementary measures:</b>  Mean base salary pay gap.  Median total remuneration pay gap.  Median base salary pay gap.</p> <p><b>Additional measures (optional):</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of role classification reviews completed annually – to ensure consistency and fairness in remuneration across occupation groups.</li> <li>Proportion of staff completing development or leadership programs by gender – to track whether opportunities that influence pay progression are equitably accessed.</li> </ol>
Target/s	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By 2029, reduce the mean total remuneration gender pay gap across all occupation groups to within +/-2% between women and men.</li> <li>By 2029, reduce the mean total remuneration gender pay gap at the senior leadership level to 15% or less, recognising the impact of the CEO role on this measure.</li> <li>By 2029, maintain mean and median base salary gender pay gaps within +/-2% between women and men.</li> <li>By 2029, maintain median total remuneration gender pay gaps within +/-2% between women and men, while continuing to improve data visibility and outcomes for self-described staff.</li> </ol>

## Strategies

Strategy	Responsible	Timeline	Related to other indicators?
Review and apply remuneration practices consistently across all roles, including clear salary bands, allowances, and transparent communication on pay and progression.	HR Lead / Senior Leadership	Annually	Indicator 1
Expand flexible work options to support equitable access to career progression and pay outcomes, particularly for employees with caring responsibilities.	HR Lead / Senior Leadership	Ongoing	Indicator 1 Indicator 6
Monitor senior leadership remuneration and ensure equitable access to leadership development and progression opportunities.	HR Lead / Senior Leadership	Ongoing	Indicator 1

## Indicator 4: Sexual harassment in the workplace

### Describing the problem

<p><b>Analyse audit data</b></p>	<p><b>Critical performance measures:</b>            Anonymous experience rate of sexual harassment in 2025: <b>0%</b>            Number of formal reports of sexual harassment in 2025: <b>1 (M)</b></p> <p><b>Supplementary measures:</b>            Participants who said they reported sexual harassment in 2025: <b>insufficient data</b>            Reasons for not making a formal sexual harassment complaint in 2025: <b>insufficient data</b>            Satisfaction with handling of workplace sexual harassment complaint in 2025: <b>insufficient data</b>            Satisfaction with handling of formal workplace sexual harassment complaint in 2025: <b>100%</b></p>
<p>The 2025 workforce gender audit indicates that sexual harassment is currently a low-incidence issue within the organisation, with a 0% experience rate reported in the People Matter Survey. One formal report was recorded in 2025, submitted by a male employee, with satisfaction in the handling of the complaint recorded as 100%. Previous audit data shows a declining trend, with 8% of women reporting experiencing of sexual harassment in 2021, and 5.3% of women and 3.8% of men reporting experiences in 2023.</p> <p>While these results are encouraging, the lack of supplementary data limits a deeper understanding of employee experiences. In particular, there is limited insight into whether employees feel confident reporting incidents, what barriers may exist, or how reporting processes are perceived across the organisation.</p> <p>Consultation undertaken for this GEAP identified that 13.3% of respondents had experienced or witnessed gender-based discrimination, harassment, or barriers in the workplace. This suggests that, while formal reports are low, some staff continue to experience or witness inappropriate behaviour. This highlights the importance of maintaining a proactive approach to workplace culture and prevention.</p> <p>It is important for us not to interpret low reporting as an absence of risk. Even isolated incidents can have a significant impact on employee wellbeing, workplace culture, and perceptions of safety. Maintaining strong prevention measures, clear reporting pathways, and employee confidence in complaint processes remains essential.</p> <p>Overall, the audit and consultation data indicate that sexual harassment is not widespread; however, there are still opportunities to strengthen prevention, awareness, and reporting confidence. Improving data collection and continuing to promote a safe, respectful, and inclusive workplace will support ongoing improvement in this area.</p>	



## Setting metrics

<p><b>Measures</b></p>	<p><b>Critical performance measures:</b> Anonymous experience rate of sexual harassment. Number of formal reports of sexual harassment.</p> <p><b>Supplementary measures:</b> Participants who said they reported sexual harassment. Reasons for not making a formal sexual harassment complaint. Satisfaction with handling of workplace sexual harassment complaint. Satisfaction with handling of formal workplace sexual harassment complaint.</p> <p><b>Additional measures (optional):</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Completion rates of sexual harassment prevention training by all staff.</li> <li>2. Employee confidence in reporting processes (via anonymous survey).</li> </ol>
<p><b>Target/s</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. By 2029, maintain a low reported experience of sexual harassment in the People Matter Survey (target: 0-2%).</li> <li>2. By 2029, achieve and maintain 100% completion of sexual harassment prevention and Respect@Work training for all staff.</li> <li>3. By 2029, ensure 100% of formal sexual harassment complaints are managed within policy timeframes, with at least 90% staff satisfaction in complaint handling.</li> <li>4. By 2029, achieve at least 90% of staff indicating they feel safe and supported to report incidents (via anonymous survey).</li> </ol>

## Strategies

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Related to other indicators?</b>
Deliver mandatory sexual harassment prevention and Respect@Work training to all staff. Enhance reporting pathways and complaint management processes, including multiple reporting options and feedback loops.	Human Resources Lead Human Resources Lead	Every 2 years Ongoing	None None
Conduct anonymous staff surveys to monitor experiences, reporting confidence, and workplace culture, using results to inform targeted actions.	Human Resources Lead	Annually	Indicator 7
Deliver targeted awareness campaigns and policy updates to reinforce respectful workplace behaviours and expectations.	Human Resources Lead	Biennially	Indicator 7



## Indicator 5: Recruitment and promotion practices in the workplace

### Describing the problem

<p><b>Analyse audit data</b></p>	<p><b>Critical performance measures:</b>  Gender composition of recruited employees in 2025: <b>53.66% W, 46.34% M</b>  Gender composition of employees who were promoted in 2025: <b>52.94% W, 47.06% M</b>  Perceptions of recruitment, by gender in 2025: <b>70% W, 47.4% M</b>  Perceptions of promotion, by gender in 2025: <b>56.7% W, 2.36% M</b></p>
<p>The 2025 workforce gender audit indicates that recruitment and promotion outcomes are broadly balanced in terms of gender. Recruited employees were 53.66% women and 46.34% men, while promoted employees were 52.94% women and 47.06% men. These figures suggest that, at an outcomes level, Council is achieving close to gender parity in recruitment and promotion processes.</p> <p>However, the data also highlights significant differences in employee perceptions of these processes. Seventy per cent of women reported positive perceptions of recruitment, compared to 47.4% of men. For promotion, the gap is more pronounced, with 56.7% of women reporting positive perceptions, compared to only 2.36% of men.</p> <p>While recruitment and promotion outcomes appear equitable, these perception gaps indicate that not all employees feel that opportunities are fair, transparent, or accessible. This is an important issue, as perceptions of inequity can impact staff engagement, trust in organisational processes, and retention.</p> <p>These differences may reflect underlying factors such as limited visibility of promotion criteria, inconsistent communication about opportunities, reliance on informal networks, or perceptions of bias in decision-making. Even where processes are fair in practice, a lack of clarity or consistency can lead to uncertainty and reduce confidence in career progression pathways.</p> <p>Addressing these perception gaps is a key priority. Strengthening transparency, improving communication, and ensuring consistent and inclusive recruitment and promotion practices will help build confidence across the workforce and support more equitable access to opportunities for all employees.</p>	



## Setting metrics

Measures	<p><b>Critical performance measures:</b>                      Gender composition of recruited employees.                      Gender composition of employees who were promoted.                      Perceptions of recruitment, by gender.                      Perceptions of promotion, by gender.  <b>Additional measures (optional):</b>                      1. Proportion of recruitment advertisements using gender-neutral language – to ensure recruitment practices attract a diverse pool of applicants.                      2. Proportion of recruitment and promotion decisions reviewed for consistency and bias – to monitor transparency and fairness in recruitment and promotion practices.</p>
Target/s	<p>1. By 2029, maintain gender balance in recruitment outcomes within a 40-60% range across women and men.                      2. By 2029, maintain gender balance in promotion outcomes within a 40-60% range across women and men.                      3. By 2027, increase positive perceptions of recruitment processes among all genders, with male employees' increasing from 47.4% to at least 60%.                      4. By 2027, improve positive perceptions of promotion processes among all genders, with male employees' increasing from 2.36% to at least 40%, with continued improvements beyond this point.                      5. By 2029, achieve 100% of recruitment advertisements reviewed for gender-neutral and inclusive language.</p>

## Strategies

Strategy	Responsible	Timeline	Related to other indicators?
Review and update recruitment and promotion policies to ensure equity, inclusive language, and transparent selection criteria.	Human Resources	Biennially	Indicator 1
Provide unconscious bias and inclusive recruitment training for staff involved in hiring and promotion decisions.	Human Resources	Biennially	Indicator 1 Indicator 4
Monitor and report on the gender composition of applicants, recruits, and promotions, including self-described gender where possible.	Human Resources	Annually	Indicator 1 Indicator 3
Implement structured promotion pathways, mentoring and career development initiatives to improve confidence in access to advancement.	Human Resources / Senior Leadership	Ongoing	Indicator 1 Indicator 3

## Indicator 6: Availability and utilisation of terms, conditions and practices relating to: family violence leave, flexible working arrangements, and working arrangements supporting employees with family or caring responsibilities

### Describing the problem

<p><b>Analyse audit data</b></p>	<p><b>Critical performance measures:</b>            Average weeks of parental leave, by gender in 2025: <b>11 (w)</b>            Uptake of flexible work, by gender in 2025: <b>22.3% (W), 13.39% (M)</b>            Perceptions of flexible work culture, by gender in 2025: <b>80% (W), 78.9% (M)</b></p> <p><b>Supplementary measures:</b>            Gender composition of parental leave takers in 2025: <b>100% (W)</b>            Gender gap in carer's leave in 2025: <b>21.49% (W), 22.32% (M)</b></p>
<p>The workforce audit data indicate that the availability of flexible working arrangements and leave provisions is generally positive; however, differences in the uptake between genders remain.</p> <p>In 2025, the average parental leave taken was 11 weeks, with 100% of parental leave taken by women. This suggests that men are not currently accessing parental leave, highlighting potential cultural or structural barriers. These may include perceptions about gender roles, lack of awareness, or concerns about the impact on carer progression.</p> <p>Uptake of flexible working arrangements also shows a gender gap, with 22.3% of women and 13.39% of men accessing flexible work. While perceptions of a flexible work culture are high (80% for women and 78.9% for men), the lower uptake among men suggests that flexibility may not be equally accessed or normalised across all roles and genders.</p> <p>Supplementary data provides a more distinct picture. Carer's leave usage is relatively balanced, with 21.49% for women and 22.32% for men, indicating some progress toward shared caring responsibilities. However, the absence of men accessing parental leave suggests that more formal or extended caring responsibilities continue to be undertaken predominantly by women.</p> <p>Encouraging more equitable uptake of flexible work and leave across all genders will support more inclusive workplace culture, improve staff wellbeing and retention, and help normalise shared caring responsibilities. Ongoing monitoring of both perceptions and utilisation will help identify where further action is needed.</p>	

## Setting metrics

<p><b>Measures</b></p>	<p><b>Critical performance measures:</b> Average weeks of parental leave, by gender. Uptake of flexible work, by gender. Perceptions of flexible work culture, by gender.</p> <p><b>Supplementary measures:</b> Gender composition of parental leave takers. Gender gap in carer's leave.</p> <p><b>Additional measures (optional):</b> 1. Employee awareness of leave and flexible work entitlements (via staff survey).</p>
<p><b>Target/s</b></p>	<p>1. By 2029, maintain positive perceptions of flexible work culture, with at least 80% of employees across all genders reporting that flexible work arrangements are supported.</p> <p>2. By 2029, increase uptake of flexible working arrangements among men to at least 20%, reducing the gap between genders.</p> <p>3. By 2029, increase uptake of parental leave across all genders, with at least one non-female employee accessing parental leave during the reporting period (where applicable).</p> <p>4. By 2029, maintain relatively balanced utilisation of carers' leave across all genders, with minimal variance over time.</p>

## Strategies

Strategy	Responsible	Timeline	Related to other indicators?
Promote awareness of parental leave, flexible work, carers' leave and family violence leave entitlements through regular staff communications and training.	Human Resources / Supervisors	Ongoing	Indicator 5 Indicator 4
Encourage equitable uptake of parental leave and flexible work across all genders through leadership modelling and supportive team practices.	Human Resources / Senior Leadership / Supervisors	Ongoing	Indicator 1 Indicator 4
Support return-to-work following parental leave through tailored flexible arrangements, mentoring, and career development opportunities.	Human Resources / Supervisors	Ongoing	Indicator 1 Indicator 5
Review policies and practices to identify and remove barriers to accessing flexible work and leave, ensuring consistent application across teams.	Human Resources / Supervisors	Biennially	Indicator 1 Indicator 5



## Indicator 7: Gendered segregation within the workplace

### Describing the problem

<p><b>Analyse audit data</b></p>	<p><b>Critical performance measures:</b> Occupational gender segregation in 2025:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>50% (W), 50% (M)</b></li> <li>2. <b>72.73% (W), 27.27% (M)</b></li> <li>3. <b>19.05% (W), 76.19% (M), 4.76% (SD)</b></li> <li>4. <b>68.75% (W), 31.25 (M)</b></li> <li>5. <b>88% (W), 12% (M)</b></li> <li>6. <b>no data</b></li> <li>7. <b>100% (M)</b></li> <li>8. <b>14.29% (W), 85.71% (M)</b></li> </ol> <p><b>All occupations: 49.03% (W), 50.32% (M), 0.65 (SD)</b></p>
<p>For Indicator 7, the workforce gender audit indicates that Council's overall workforce is near gender parity (between women and men), with 49.03% women, 50.32% men, and 0.65% self-described. Despite this balance, occupational gender segregation remains a significant issue, with several roles strongly dominated by one gender.</p> <p>Women are predominantly concentrated in professional, clerical, and service roles, while men dominate trades, machinery, and labour-intensive positions. Self-described employees are present in only a small proportion of the workforce, largely within technical roles, highlighting limited representation across most occupational groups. Certain roles show extreme imbalances, with one gender comprising 85% and 100% of employees in two occupation groups. This reinforces occupational stereotypes and perpetuates structural inequities in access, progression and workplace culture.</p> <p>These patterns have broader implications for our workforce. Gendered concentrations can affect access to flexible work arrangements, mentoring, and professional development opportunities. They also influence how career pathways are perceived and pursued across different groups. Without targeted strategies, occupational segregation can reinforce historical patterns, limit diverse leadership pipelines, and maintain inequities in pay, progression, and participation.</p> <p>Addressing gender segregation is essential to create a workforce where all employees, regardless of gender, have equitable access to opportunities, can challenge stereotypes, and feel included in all occupational groups. Focussing on underrepresented genders, including self-described employees, will strengthen inclusion, promote career progression, and support broader occupational goals of equity and diversity.</p>	



## Setting metrics

<p><b>Measures</b></p>	<p><b>Critical performance measures:</b> Occupational gender segregation. <b>Additional measures (optional):</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff perceptions of equal access opportunities and career progression, by gender and occupational group.</li> <li>Proportion of employees in underrepresented genders moving into roles where their gender is currently underrepresented.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Target/s</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By 2029, reduce extreme gender imbalances in occupational groups where one gender comprises over 85% and 100% of roles, increasing representation of the underrepresented gender by at least 5 percentage points.</li> <li>By 2029, achieve at least 80% positive staff perceptions of equal access to opportunities and career progression across all occupational groups, for employees of all genders.</li> <li>By 2029, increase the proportion of employees in underrepresented genders moving into roles where their gender is currently underrepresented by at least 5 percentage points.</li> </ol>

## Strategies

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Related to other indicators?</b>
<p>Implement targeted recruitment initiatives to attract underrepresented genders into occupational groups where they are currently in the minority.</p>	<p>Human Resources Lead / Senior Leadership</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Indicator 5</p>
<p>Provide mentoring, coaching, and professional development programs to support underrepresented genders in accessing career progression opportunities.</p>	<p>Human Resources / Senior Leadership</p>	<p>Ongoing, reviewed annually</p>	<p>Indicator 5 Indicator 6</p>
<p>Review and update position descriptions, selection criteria, and promotion processes to ensure they are gender neutral and actively promote equity across all occupational groups.</p>	<p>Human Resources / Supervisors</p>	<p>By 2028, then ongoing</p>	<p>Indicator 5</p>
<p>Monitor and report annually on occupational gender segregation and staff perceptions of career access, using audit data and staff surveys to inform strategies.</p>	<p>Human Resources / Senior Leadership</p>	<p>Annually reported to CEO and gender equality committee</p>	<p>Indicator 3 Indicator 5</p>

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## Additional areas of focus:

### Describing the problem

<b>Analyse audit data</b>	<p>The workforce gender audit and consultation process did not identify any significant gender equality issues beyond those already addressed under the seven gender equality indicators. Council's primary challenges relate to occupational gender segregation, perceptions of recruitment and promotion processes, and equitable utilisation of flexible work arrangements - all of which are addressed through the strategies outlined in our GEAP.</p> <p>While no additional areas of concern were identified in 2025, Council recognises that gender equality is an ongoing focus. Workforce patterns, staff experiences, and broader social trends may reveal new challenges over time. Monitoring emerging issues ensures that any additional gender equality concerns can be identified promptly and addressed through future updates to the GEAP.</p> <p>Council remains committed to maintaining an inclusive, fair, and equitable workplace, with continuous attention to data, staff feedback, and evolving workforce needs. This proactive approach helps ensure that strategies remain relevant, practical, and effective in supporting gender equality across all levels of the organisation.</p>
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## F) Resourcing your GEAP

### Section 13: Identifying current and required resources

<p>Implementation of our GEAP will be primarily supported through existing organisational resources. Human Resources will coordinate and monitor the GEAP, with active support from senior leadership and supervisors across Council. Many strategies align with existing organisational processes, such as recruitment and selection, workforce planning, policy review, staff development, and employee engagement. This integration ensures that much of the work is incorporated into existing roles and responsibilities, reducing the need for additional resourcing.</p> <p>Current resources include dedicated staff time within human resources and the leadership team, as well as systems used for workforce data collection, recruitment, and staff surveys and consultation. These resources support essential activities such as policy development and review, reporting, training, and ongoing monitoring of gender equality indicators.</p> <p>Where specialist expertise is required, Council will continue to draw on external guidance, including support from Women's Health Grampians, which provides advice, training, and tools to strengthen workplace gender equality initiatives. Engaging external expertise in this way ensures our strategies remain informed by current evidence and best practice.</p> <p>Additional resourcing needs primarily relate to staff time for training, consultation, communications, and monitoring activities. These requirements will be managed through workforce planning and by aligning GEAP initiatives with broader Council priorities and budgets to maximise efficiency and impact.</p> <p>By leveraging existing resources, integrating GEAP activities into current responsibilities, and drawing on specialist support where required, Council is confident that the GEAP can be implemented effectively, ensuring sustainable progress towards gender equality across the organisation.</p>
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## Section 14: Developing a resourcing plan

The GEAP has been resourced to ensure both its development and implementation can achieve reasonable and material progress against the workplace gender equality indicators over its lifespan. Strategies have been aligned with existing areas, systems, and budgets with clear responsibilities assigned to human resources, supervisors, and senior leaders to ensure accountability and effective delivery.

Resourcing encompasses human, financial, technological, and time resources, and will be reviewed periodically to ensure ongoing adequacy. Where gaps or constraints are identified, Council will adjust workloads, reallocate resources, or access additional external guidance. Integrating GEAP actions with existing organisational programs, such as leadership development and workforce capability initiatives, will optimise efficiency and minimise duplication of effort.

Ongoing monitoring and evaluation will ensure resources are used efficiently and remain sufficient to achieve our intended outcomes. Human resources will lead this process, supported by senior leaders, with clear responsibility assigned for each strategy. Progress against critical and supplementary measures will be reviewed regularly, and specialist guidance from Women's Health Grampians will be sought where required.

Resource use and effectiveness will also be tracked. Staff time, systems, and external expertise will be monitored to ensure they continue to support strategy delivery and measurable outcomes. Any shortfalls will be addressed through reallocation, workload adjustments, or additional external support.

Annual progress reports will be provided to Council and communicated to staff to ensure transparency and accountability. These reports will highlight achievements, challenges, and any adjustments to strategies or resourcing. At the end of the GEAP cycle, a comprehensive evaluation will assess overall impact, capture lessons learned, and provide recommendations to inform the next GEAP.

By systematically assigning responsibilities, integrating existing resources, and maintaining ongoing monitoring, we are confident that the GEAP is adequately resourced to deliver meaningful, sustainable progress in workplace gender equality.