

6.1.11 NOM 1604 Gender Equality

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Recommendation(s)

That Council stays informed of Cardinia's commitment and progress towards Gender Equality within the organisation and the community in general.

Attachments

Nil

Executive Summary

The People and Culture team continues working towards the implementation of the Gender Equality Act. The Gender Audit requirements have been finalised by the Commission and are in the process of undertaken by People and Culture team. People Matter Survey results have been delivered and are being analysed for inclusion in the Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP).

Background

People and Culture Update

Gender Equality Act 2020

The Gender Equality Act 2020 commenced on 31 March 2021. The aim of the Act is to improve Gender Equality in the Victorian public sector, universities, and local councils.

Cardinia will be required to create its first Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP). The Gender Equality in the Public Sector (Commission) has extended the due date for the GEAP to 31 March 2021.

Gender Impact Assessments

A Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) is required to be conducted for any new policy, program or service that directly and significantly impacts the public. Most recently, the Talent Management Policy, Disciplinary Policy and the Complaints Policy have undergone a gender impact assessment. These assessments consider how Cardinia's work affects people across our community directly or indirectly.

Guidelines and processes for policy developers are under development and training on following these guidelines and processes will commence in 2022.

Gender Survey

Cardinia engaged the Victorian Public Service Commission to obtain the survey requirements of the Gender Audit that will contribute to the Gender Equality Action Plan.

The results of this survey have now been received and are in the process of being collated. An analysis of these results is currently underway. The results of this survey will contribute towards the Gender Equality Action Plan.

Gender Audit

The final data from the People Matter Survey and information on-hand has been entered into the template as required by the Gender Equality Commission. This information will be submitted to the Commission prior to the 1 December 2021 deadline. Preliminary results are being collated and will be presented to Council in a Briefing prior to submission to the Commission. The results of this audit will inform the GEAP.

As previously reported, the categories for examination of the data remain the same and include:

- Gender pay equity
- Gender composition at all levels of the workforce
- Gender composition of governing bodies
- Workplace sexual harassment
- Recruitment and promotion
- Gendered work segregation
- Leave and flexibility

Respectful Workplaces Training

In light of the ongoing impacts of COVID restrictions, the method for delivery of training is under review. The aim of this review is to ensure that Respectful Workplaces Training can be delivered in a COVID-safe manner and achieve the outcomes desired in relation to the relevant issues of unconscious bias in discrimination, bystander intervention and address the recommendations handed down by Victorian Auditor General's Office in response to the sexual harassment survey. Improved training will form one of the actions in the GEAP currently under development.

White Ribbon Accreditation

It is with pleasure that we can report that White Ribbon Australia formally announced that Cardinia Shire Council has successfully been reaccredited as a White Ribbon Australia Workplace.

Achieving accreditation demonstrates our organisation's leadership and commitment to drive social change. Much of the hard work was driven through the organisation's volunteer Respect and Equality Committee. The detailed and complex work and data that needed to be gathered in order to succeed in accreditation was undertaken across the organisation, but largely by the committee.

In recognition of the great submission for accreditation, White Ribbon Australia has included examples of our work in their best practice library.

Policy Implications

The Gender Equality Commission has informed defined entities that the new Local Government Act 2020 includes a requirement to develop a workforce plan every four years. The workforce plan must include measures relating to gender equality.

A Gender Equality Action Plan that meets the requirements of the Gender Equality Act, will also meet the requirements of the Local Government Act. Complying with the gender equality requirements of the Local Government Act will not satisfy the requirements of the Gender Equality Act.

Section 26 (2)(ba) of the Public Health and Wellbeing Act requires councils to specify (in their municipal public health and wellbeing plan (Cardinia Shire Liveability Plan) measures to prevent family violence and respond to the needs of victims of family violence in the local community.

Other influential gender equity legislation in the Commonwealth and Victorian State Government is:

- The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006
- The Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012
- The Equal Opportunity Act 2010
- The Fair Work Act 2009

A Gender Equality Policy for Cardinia will be finalised for consideration, taking into account the above legislation.

Relevance to Council Plan

1.1 We empower our communities to be healthy, connected and resilient

1.1.1 Plan for, and support the delivery of, accessible health and social services that address critical gaps in provision.

1.1.3 Lead by example in creating an inclusive and welcoming community for all by facilitating community education, capacity building, connection and celebration of our diversity.

1.1.4 Facilitate a partnership approach to create safer communities.

2.1 We support the creation of liveable spaces and places

2.1.2 Plan and maintain safe, inclusive and connected open spaces, places and active travel routes.

5.1 We practise responsible leadership

5.1.1 Build trust through meaningful community engagement and transparent decision-making.

5.1.4 Maximise value for our community through efficient service delivery, innovation, strategic partnerships and advocacy.

Climate Emergency Consideration

Not applicable.

Consultation/Communication

This report has been developed with the cooperation and collaboration of teams across Council and designated groups such as the Respect and Equity Committee.

Financial and Resource Implications

Nil.

Conclusion

Cardinia continues to undertake several projects to promote and progress towards Gender Equality and meet the requirements of the Gender Equality Act. Cardinia will continue to do so through various projects that will positively impact Cardinia's employees as well as its residents.