

6.2 General Reports

6.2.1 Gender Equality Monthly Report

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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 Workplace Gender Audit has been completed and is current being analysed in line with The Gender Equality Commissions audit guide.

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 & significantly impacts the public. These assessments consider how Cardinia's work affects different people in our community.

Gender Impact Assessments continue to be conducted and will contribute to the GEAP. The Commission for Gender Equality [Gender Impact Assessment Toolkit and Templates](#) will be utilised for this purpose. Guidelines and processes for policy developers are under development and being streamlined to merge with existing process. Training on following these guidelines and processes will commence in 2022.

Gender Survey

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

Cardinia received a 30% response rate to this survey (Local Councils overall achieved a 32% response rate). The dominant respondent persona for this survey across local government was:

- Female
- Aged between 35 – 54 years
- University degree +/- honours
- Heterosexual
- Born in Australian with Australian heritage
- English speaker
- No religion
- Full time
- \$65K - \$95K p.a. (gross base)
- Tenure of 2 – 5 years
- Non-manager
- Ongoing position
- School aged children

On initial analysis, this persona is confirmed by the gender equity audit of the whole organisation where comparable information has been able to be sourced.

In response to the question '*Gender not a barrier to success at Cardinia*' the responses were:

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
2%	8%	14%	45%	27%	3%

The following responses were received in relation to gender equality supporting measures.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
In my workgroup work is allocated fairly, regardless of gender	7%	10%	12%	38%	33%	0%
My organisation uses inclusive and respectful images and language	4%	5%	14%	46%	30%	1%
My organisation would support me if I needed to take family violence leave	0%	1%	7%	45%	42%	5%

The results of this survey will contribute towards the development of Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) which aims to further improve this strong positive result. Comparison data from across local government is not available at this time.

Gender Audit

The gender equality audit data is being reassessed in light of new guidance notes from the Commission for Gender Equality. This information is still on track to be submitted to the Commission prior to the 1 December 2021 deadline. Preliminary results are being collated for Council prior to submission to the Commission. The results of this audit will contribute to the GEAP.

Respectful Workplaces Training

In light of the ongoing impacts of COVID restrictions on 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 light of the sexual harassment survey. Improved training will form one of the actions in the GEAP currently under development.

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

No 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 to report

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.