



# Gender Equality Action Plan 2021 - 2025



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## 1. Acknowledgement of Country

Murrindindi Shire Council is proud to acknowledge the Taungurung and Wurundjeri people as the traditional custodians of the land we now call Murrindindi Shire. We pay our respects to First Nations leaders and elders, past, present and emerging, who are the keepers of history, traditions, knowledge and culture of this land. We commit to working in collaboration with traditional owners of this land in a spirit of reconciliation and partnership.

## 2. Introduction

Murrindindi Shire Council recognises that improving gender equality within our organisation and wider community is one of the most important issues of our time. We support and promote that everyone in the Murrindindi Shire Council community enjoys the same opportunities, rights and respect, regardless of their gender.

The Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) is focused on Council as an organisation and as an employer. Whilst Council has a leadership role within its communities including as an advocate for change, the GEAP specifically outlines the steps that will be undertaken to increase gender and intersectionality awareness and support within our organisation.

Council has outlined 4 key priorities for our organisation that we will look to achieve by 2025 as outlined in this Action Plan:



**Build organisational capability awareness in gender equality**



**Gender equality is integrated into existing Council policies, plans, programs, services and infrastructure**



**Attract, retain and develop a gender diverse workforce applying inclusive and bias-free practices**



**Murrindindi Shire Council has a zero tolerance for discrimination, bullying, sexism and nepotism, with all staff empowered to recognise, address and respond to it**

### 3. Council Plan and Legislative Alignment

The *Gender Equality Act 2020* requires each Council to consider, promote and take positive action towards achieving gender equality when developing and delivering policies, programs and services that have an impact on the public.

As a 'defined entity' under the act, we are required to:

- develop and implement a Gender Equality Action Plan, which includes:
  - results of a workplace gender audit
  - strategies for achieving workplace gender equality
- publicly report on our progress in relation to workplace gender equality
- promote gender equality in policies, programs and services that impact the public
- complete gender impact assessments

In addition to the legislative requirements, Council has placed a focus on Gender Equality by referencing the Action Plan within Strategic Objective 5 in its Council Plan 2021-2025, which is: "Transparent, Inclusive and Accountable". This strategic objective aims to "ensure our services, people and systems deliver the best possible outcomes for our communities now and in the future".

The Gender Equality Action Plan is aligned with Council's Workforce Management Strategy, which is a requirement of the Local Government Act 2020. This alignment ensures that Council's efforts to support gender equality, diversity and inclusiveness are consistent with the objectives of our Council Plan and the relevant legislative Acts.

The Council Plan Annual Action Plan year one objectives were adopted by Council at its 27 October 2021 Scheduled Meeting. The Annual Action Plan includes reference to the Gender Equality focus Workforce Management Strategy.

Council Strategy	Priority Action
<p><b>5.4 Provide a workplace that is flexible and inclusive to support the health and wellbeing of our employees</b></p>	<p><b>5.4.1 Adopt a Workforce Plan and begin implementation</b></p> <p><b>5.4.2 Implement the requirements of the Gender Equality Act 2020, including adoption of Council's Gender Equality Action Plan</b></p> <p><b>5.4.3 Support gender equality and new talent acquisition through flexible work arrangements, including the adoption of a policy</b></p> <p><b>5.4.4 Build and implement a training and development plan that focuses on:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customer service delivery</li> <li>• Occupational Health and Safety</li> <li>• Wellbeing and staff accreditations</li> </ul>





## 4. Community Vision

Murrindindi Shire Council adopted a 10 Year Community Vision in 2021, it is reflective of the Murrindindi Shire community and the desire to promote, enhance and live the principles most important to us.

Council is committed to supporting our community to grow and meet its Community Vision objectives. Whilst Council's Gender Equality Action Plan is internally focused, implementation of the Plan will provide a strong foundation for Council to fulfil its advocacy role in encouraging and supporting the community to embrace the principles of gender equality.

As a leader, a large employer and key service delivery agent within the shire, as Council matures through the four year Gender Equality Action Plan, this will innately support an inclusive community that embraces diversity and encourages the participation of all.

# MURRINDINDI SHIRE 10-YEAR COMMUNITY VISION

**Through our combined efforts, our community is vibrant and resilient. We**

- are inclusive, embrace diversity and encourage the participation of all
- welcome new residents and visitors to enjoy and contribute to our Shire
- respect and celebrate the cultural heritage of our First Nations People and those who have come before us
- actively support the current and future needs and aspirations of people of all ages and abilities
- enjoy, participate in and promote culture and the arts, sport and recreation
- are leaders in waste reduction and combating climate change
- protect our natural environment and biodiversity and preserve our rural landscapes
- grow through managed land development, business entrepreneurship and enhanced learning opportunities

## 5. Gender Equality Principles

It is critical that our organisation aligns with the Gender Equality Principles developed by the Gender Equality Commission. Gender equality is not just about gender, for many people, it may be compounded by other forms of disadvantage or discrimination that a person may experience due to characteristics such as:

- Race
- Aboriginality
- Religion
- Ethnicity
- Disability
- Age
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender Identity

Our 4 year action plan takes these into consideration when developing strategies and measures to promote gender equality. As our organisation matures, we will review the plan to ensure that we are continuing to address disadvantages or discrimination that a person may experience.

The Gender Equality Principles are:

- 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 on the basis of Aboriginality, age, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, race, religion, sexual orientation and other attributes.
- Women have historically experienced discrimination and disadvantage on the basis of sex and gender.
- Special measures may be necessary to achieve gender equality.

## 6. Our Culture and the impacts of Gender Inequality

Gender inequality isn't just happening in our homes, it is happening in our workplaces, in our school yards and on our television screens and sporting fields. The journey towards a better culture within our organisation, starts with addressing gender inequality.

Murrindindi Shire Council aim to be bold and proactive within this Gender Equality Action Plan which will ensure we develop and foster a culture of inclusiveness for all. This plan focuses specifically on gender inclusiveness and the compounding factors that contribute a person to experiencing disadvantage or discrimination.

You will see specific genders mentioned at times throughout this plan due to the additional inequality that is recognised for that specific cohort of people. Our base line audit analysis of data captured during the Gender Equality Survey (completed December 2021) has provided us with an understanding on where we can improve gender equality. We recognise that gender inequality affects us all in one way or another and some examples of that are below:

### Children/ Young People

- Gender stereotypes affect children's sense of self from a young age, and young people's behaviour, study choices, ambitions and attitudes about relationships.
- Boys receive 8 times more attention in the classroom than girls.
- Girls receive 11% less pocket money than boys.
- Children classify jobs and activities as specific to boys or girls.
- Girls are less likely to do advanced maths subjects in their final years of school.
- 1 in 3 Australian women over 15 has experienced physical violence.

### Adults

- Victorian women earn 87.6 cents to every dollar earned by men.
- Although more women than men complete tertiary education, their graduate salaries are lower.
- 1 in every 2 mothers experiences discrimination during pregnancy, on parental leave or when returning to work.
- Victorian women do nearly twice as much unpaid work as men.

### Older people

- Women retire with half the superannuation savings of men. This affects women's financial security, health and wellbeing.
- More older women are at risk of homelessness than men.

### Aboriginal women

- Aboriginal women's experience of gender inequality is made worse by the impacts of colonisation and violent dispossession.
- They are 11 times more likely to die from family violence than other women.

### Culturally diverse communities

- Women from culturally diverse communities experience racism and discrimination on top of gender inequality.
- Migrant and refugee women are often in insecure, low-paid work or work they are overqualified for.

## Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) 2021 - 2025

- Women from non-English speaking backgrounds can face barriers to accessing services and understanding their rights.

### Men

- Traditional stereotypes create unrealistic expectations that are difficult for many men to live up to. They feel pressure to be a 'real man', to be physically and emotionally strong, and be the main income earner.
- Many workplaces don't offer men extended parental leave or flexible hours.
- Men are more likely to drink too much, take unhealthy risks and engage in violence.
- They are less likely to seek professional help or talk about their problems with friends or family.
- Men are more likely to commit suicide.

### Rural and regional women

- Women living outside of metropolitan areas often do not have access to public services.
- They are at greater risk of poor health outcomes and family violence.

### Trans and gender diverse people

- Trans and gender diverse people may feel forced to hide their gender identity when using services, at school or at work.
- They are at greater risk of mental illness, verbal and physical abuse and social exclusion.

### Women with disabilities

- Women with disabilities are more likely to experience family violence and sexual assault.
- They are more likely to be unemployed or underemployed.
- They are paid less than men with disabilities and women without disabilities.

This action plan will provide us with practical steps to take over the next 4 years that will result in our staff being educated, safe, aware and respected, no matter their background or individual circumstances.

Respect is at the core of our interactions with one another and increasing our knowledge as an organisation in gender equality will ensure we can ask questions respectfully to educate ourselves further without fear of reprisal, or being offended.

We want every staff member to feel empowered to call out language and behaviours that make them feel uncomfortable. The aim of this Gender Equality Action Plan is to ensure that we provide our staff with the education and culture to do so.

This education will create an even stronger culture that will ensure we make serious, long lasting change.



## 7. Key terms and definitions

### Gender equality

Is defined as the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women, men, trans and gender-diverse people. Equality does not mean that women, men, trans and gender diverse people will become the same but that their rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on their gender.

### Gender equity

Entails the provision of fairness and justice in the distribution of benefits and responsibilities on the basis of gender. The concept recognises that people may have different needs and power related to their gender and that these differences should be identified and addressed in a manner that rectifies gender related imbalances.

### Diversity

Diversity is about what makes each of us unique and includes our backgrounds, personality, life experiences and beliefs, all of the things that make us who we are. It is a combination of our differences that shape our view of the world, our perspective and our approach

### Intersectionality

Refers to a way of seeing people's experiences as shaped by (but not limited to) their race, socio-economic background, sex, gender, and sexuality all at the same time. This overlap or combination of differences makes up a person's unique identity. The point of understanding intersectionality is to also understand the variety of privileges and/or forms of discrimination or exclusion that one may experience simultaneously at any given time (for example gender and race together).

### Sex

Refers to a person's biological characteristics. A person's sex is usually described as being male or female. Some people may not be exclusively male or female, which is referred to as intersex. Some people identify as neither male nor female.

### Gender

Refers to the way in which a person identifies or expresses their masculine or feminine characteristics. Gender is generally understood as a social and cultural construction. A person's gender identity or gender expression is not always exclusively male or female and may or may not correspond to their sex.

### Trans and Gender Diverse

Is an umbrella term used to describe all those whose gender identity is at odds with their biological sex.

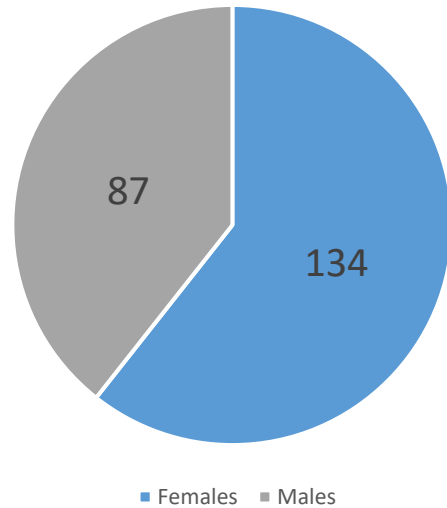
## 8. Our Workforce Profile & the Data

### 7.1 Gender

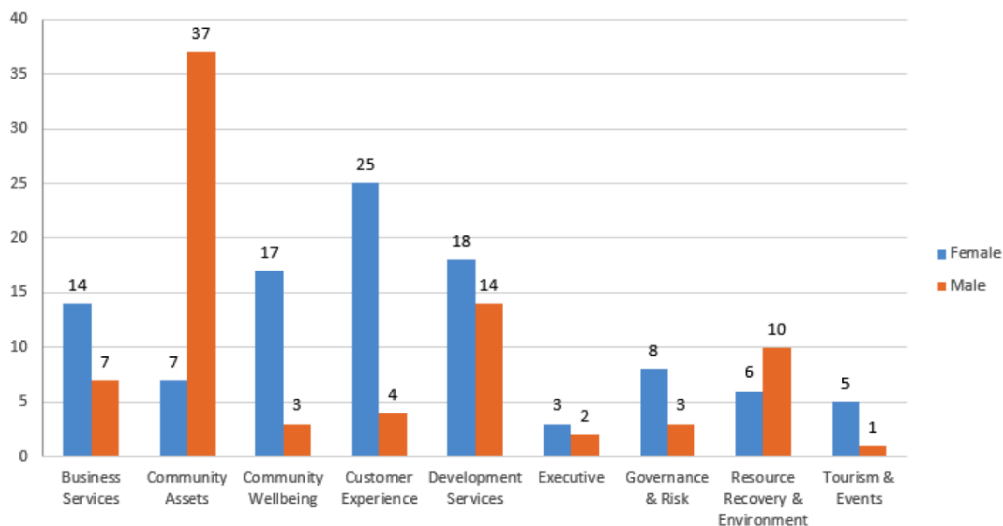
Overall, Council's workforce is made up of 54.9% female employees, 44.6% male employees and 0.5% self-described gender employees. This breakdown includes all employees, including casuals.

Whilst the breakdown is almost even, some workgroups are more heavily weighted towards specific genders and, weighted towards gendered roles. Specifically, the Community Assets Department has the highest number of male employees, while Customer Experience and Community Wellbeing have the highest number of female employees.

These gender imbalances tend to be historical however with new gender equality, inclusion and recruitment initiatives Council aims to see this trend shift over time.



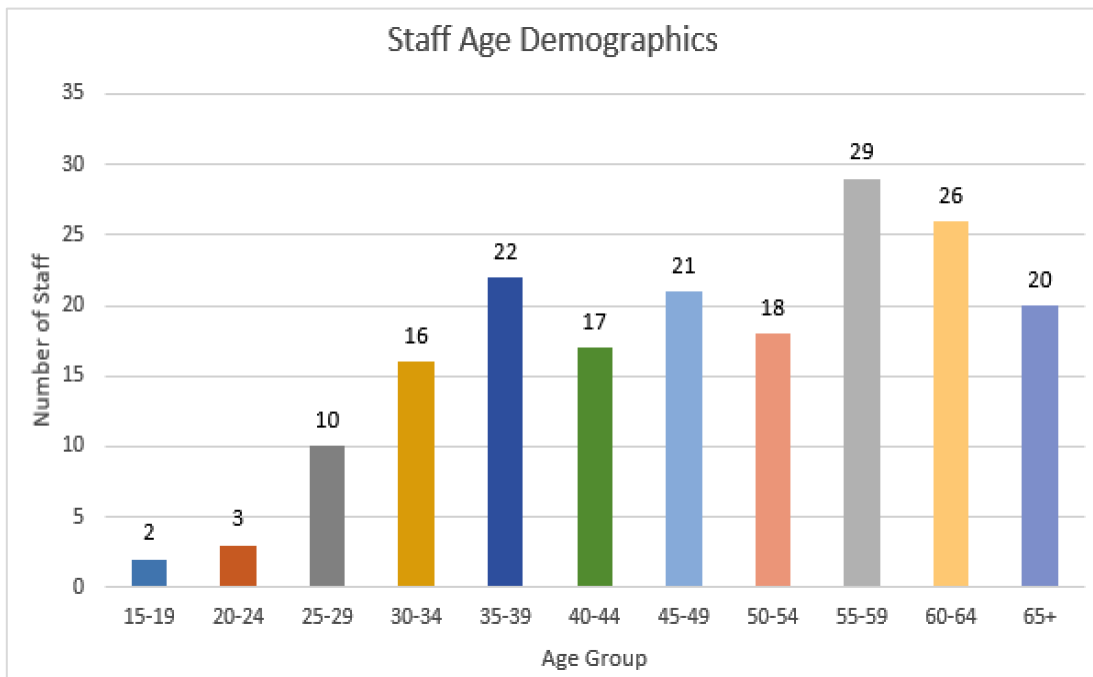
Gender by department



## 7.2 Age

Whilst there is a diverse spread of ages across Council’s workforce, 41% of employees are over the age of 50. There is a low number of employees under the age of 30. The highest percentage of workers within Council are 45-64 years of age (48.46%).

We recognise that age should not be a barrier to performing your role or having access to opportunities within the workforce or community. We aim to remove the barriers associated with age related discrimination within this Gender Equity plan.



## 7.3 English as a second language

99.34% of residents within Murrindindi Shire speak English at home. Whilst this measure is not directly captured within Council, 13% of employees indicated that they have a cultural identity other than Australian (People Matter Survey 2021).

Given the limited diversity of residents across the Murrindindi Shire, Council will need to consider how they can strategically engage and recruit a more diverse workforce.

## 9. People Matters Survey Results

In the last 12 months, Council has undertaken internal surveys with their employees. This has included the “Your Place of Work – Transitioning the New Normal” employee survey and the People Matter Survey, conducted by the Victorian Public Service Commission.

Following analysis of the survey results and information provided by our employees, we have identified key learnings and areas of opportunity which have been incorporated into this strategy and the associated action plan.

A summary of the survey results are below:

<b>Your Place of Work – Transitioning to the New Normal Survey</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>97 employees responded to the survey</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>41% of new employees rated their connection with their team as “satisfying”</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>58% of respondents would like to return to the office in some capacity</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>45% of employees indicated that they would like to return to the office for two (25 responses) or three (19 responses) days of the week</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>15% of employees indicated that they would like another type of flexible working arrangement e.g. working from home on a fortnightly or ad-hoc arrangement</li> </ul>

<b>People Matters Survey</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>79 employees responded to the survey</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>58% of respondents identified as a woman, with 3% of respondents identifying their gender as non-binary/self-described</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>92% of respondents indicated that they are not trans, non-binary or gender diverse</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10% of respondents indicated that they identify as a person with a disability</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8% of respondents indicated that their sexual orientation is not heterosexual</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a high proportion of employees who feel that they have an equal chance at promotion, and that the organisation makes fair recruitment and promotion decisions. However, there was a moderate percentage of respondents who were undecided.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Part time respondents have indicated that they feel considerably less safe to challenge inappropriate behaviours, when compared to full time respondents.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a strong percentage of respondents who are confident in the flexibility offered at Council however there may be opportunities to educate employees on the variety of flexibility options available.</li> </ul>



## 10. Baseline Audit Analysis

As part of our obligations under the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, we completed a Workplace Gender Audit. These results are attached as an annexure to this Action Plan (to be added in final copy).

## 11. Consultation

During the process of developing the GEAP we undertook consultation at various stages with a wide group of representatives. In the earlier period the actions were designed to increase employee, manager and councillor awareness and understanding of the need for the GEAP and its purpose. Once the plan was drafted the sessions focussed on sharing the document and seeking feedback on its content.

Councillors (the entity's governing body)	June 2021 – Workforce Planning and Gender Equality briefing session March 2022 – GEAP and discussion paper at Councillor briefing session
Councils Leadership Team	During sessions and meeting held in May 2021 – case for change discussion and paper June 2021 – knowledge sharing with Commissioner Dr Vincent February 2022 – copy of draft GEAP discussed
Employees	March 2021 – various gender equality awareness actions with employees March 2022 – daily update articles and tool box sessions on the GEAP, providing reasons for the plan, a copy of the plan and process for providing feedback. Feedback from this resulted in expanded actions designed at supporting employees seeking assistance to prevent their own perpetration of domestic violence. GEAP as an Agenda item and discussion in Leadership Team meeting
Council's representatives including Unions	July 2022 consultation with our three union organisations resulting in an update to the planned actions

## 12. Leadership and Resourcing

Councillors, our CEO and our Directors have all embraced the importance of the GEAP and its need to be appropriately resourced with both people and financial resources. The roles of Manager Governance & Risk, People & Culture Business Partner, HR officer, Manager

## Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) 2021 - 2025

Community Wellbeing and Coordinator Community Development all have identified roles to play in the leadership and resourcing of this plan. Council was also successful in securing grant funding which will support the appointment of an officer to focus on the governments Free from Family Violence initiative which will link our work in Council and community together. In addition, for the 2022/2023 Financial Year budget, Council has set aside a specific amount of funds derived from its training budget that will now be allocated specifically to the GEAP initiatives. This has included the setup of a separate ledger item to ensure its allocation for the GEAP.

### 13. Monitoring and Evaluation

The Gender Equality Action Plan 2021 – 2025 outlines a range of actions which will be undertaken over the next 4 years. Council is committed to ongoing monitoring, evaluation and adaption of Gender Equality Action Plan.

As changes in gender equality across the workforce can usually only be observed over an extended period of time, a range of indicators & metrics will be developed to support the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the plans goals.

As the organisation matures, the strategy and action plan may need to be adjusted to ensure it remains relevant.

This is especially important due to several organisational barriers that currently exist:

- Lack of access to subject matter experts in the gender equality field
- Geographical location of Murrindindi Shire Council and the diversity of the local community being reflected within the workforce
- Talent attraction and Council's ability to attract diverse groups of people to work within our organisation
- The risks outlined in our Workforce Management Strategy including:
  - an increasing difficulty to replace retiring outdoor workers
  - capability drain, for example, staff leave the local government sector
  - change in service level or service provision and
  - change to strategic plans
- Data integrity and lack of systems to support capturing of information needed to complete the Gender Equality Audits and Action Plan moving forward
- Identifying training gaps within Council's workforce and the ability to provide comprehensive training to all employees regarding gender equality
- Gender equality being adequately resourced in an industry that typically may be identified as continually under resourced due to budget constraints

The implementation of the Action Plan will be driven and overseen by the People and Culture unit within the Governance & Risk Department.

The Executive Team should review the assumptions underlying the Gender Equality Action Plan annually or where changes impact the outcomes of the plan.

## Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) 2021 - 2025

Outside of the annual monitoring and evaluation schedule, this Action Plan lasts for four years and therefore the plan must be reviewed for its effectiveness, resourcing requirements, engagement and success of implementation on a regular basis. These learnings will be considered and incorporated into the development of the next 4-year Action Plan, therefore supporting the continuing success of the organisation and its obligations under the *Gender Equality Act 2020*.

## 14. Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) 2021 – 2025

The priorities of the Gender Equality Action Plan have been developed as a result of the workplace gender audit, consultation and the People Matters survey. These have all driven the actions identified below. Specifically it was through the gender audit that we recognised that an important first step for our organisation is the quality and depth of the data we current have need to be improved and collected so we can increase the integrity of workplace data. This led to the inclusion of item 1.1.2.

### 11.1 Priority 1 – Building organisational capability and awareness in Gender Equality

**Priority 1: Building organisational capability and awareness in Gender Equality**

Key Area	Specific Outcomes	Actions	Year			
			1	2	3	4
1. Gender Equality Act 2020 Obligations	1.1 Build systems to support Council's obligations under the Act and increase organisational capability	1.1.1 Conduct an organisation-wide workplace gender audit, including pay audit to meet the requirements of the Gender Equality Act 2020	✓			✓
		1.1.2 Identify, source and implement a system which enables us to record gender diversity data to support the ongoing gender equality reporting requirements and allows the organisation to report on our progress with this plan	✓	✓		
		1.1.3 Develop an evaluation, monitoring and reporting framework to support the Gender Equality Action Plan	✓	✓		
		1.1.4 Scope potential for a gender responsive budget and establish the infrastructure that will be put in place to support a more inclusive and flexible workforce		✓	✓	
	1.2 Gender Impact Assessments conducted across all service delivery	1.2.1 Develop and implement a Gender Impact Assessment Framework that can be utilised across policies, service delivery and strategic plans	✓			
2.1 Gender Impact Awareness Training for all staff	2.1.1 Co-design and roll out basic gender equality training organisational wide, beginning with CEO, Executive and Leadership teams with the intention of improving organisational capability and understanding of this plan and our individual roles	✓	✓			





## Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) 2021 - 2025

2. Gender Impact Awareness		2.1.2 Co-design and roll out advanced gender equality training for all staff, building on the basic gender equality training with the intention of maintaining organisational capability and implementing ongoing strategies and initiatives in line with this plan			✓	✓
	2.2 Increase gender and intersectionality awareness and support	2.2.1 Opportunities presented for CEO and Leadership Team to champion gender equality	✓	✓	✓	✓
		2.2.2 Review the Enterprise Agreement during the enterprise bargaining process to incorporate gender neutral language and review and claims associate with gender equality in line with this action plan	✓	✓		

**11.2 Priority 2 – Gender equality is integrated in existing Council policies, plans, programs, services and infrastructure**

Priority 2: Gender equality is integrated in existing Council policies, plans, programs, services and infrastructure						
Key Area	Specific Outcomes	Actions	Year			
			1	2	3	4
3. Gender composition focus at all levels of the workforce	3.1 Implement gender equality policies and practices across all levels of the workforce	3.1.1 Implement the Gender Impact Assessment Framework – review policies, services and plans.	✓	✓	✓	✓
		3.1.2 Adopt gender neutral language in all policies, procedures, plans, frameworks, strategies and documentation		✓	✓	
4. Community engagement and awareness	4.1 Promote gender equality in all staff events, and run specific programs of awareness (IWD, 16 Days of Activism)	4.1.1 Implement a Health and Wellbeing committee that fosters inclusivity, and includes diverse representation with the intention of creating a Health and Wellbeing strategy/ action plan that will incorporate specific programs, action items and an overall strategy for the Health and Wellbeing of all staff. E.g. “16 days of Activism”	✓	✓	✓	✓
	4.2 Increase gender and intersectionality awareness and support	4.2.1 Develop a gender equality statement for Murrindindi Shire Council	✓			
		4.2.2 Develop an organisational communications and advocacy strategy promoting Murrindindi Shire Council’s commitment to gender equality	✓	✓		



## Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) 2021 - 2025

		4.2.3 Promote Murrindindi Shire Council's vision and commitment as a gender equality organisation through public statement on Murrindindi Shire Council's website and internal/ external communications		✓	✓	✓
		4.2.4 Promote diverse women/ genders through all multimedia images and content on website and documents	✓	✓	✓	✓
5. Physical safety	5.1 Ensure physical safety for all staff at all times	5.1.1 Conduct a yearly audit of Council worksites for lighting, safe areas, tree clearance etc. to ensure that sites maximise staff safety at all times including a review of Safe Work Practices to ensure work location is safe for all participants including working alone sites.	✓	✓	✓	✓

**11.3 Priority 3 – Attract, retain and develop a gender diverse workforce applying inclusive and bias-free practices**
**Priority 3: Attract, retain and develop a gender diverse workforce applying inclusive and bias-free practices**

Key Area	Specific Outcomes	Actions	Year			
			1	2	3	4
6. Attracting a diverse workforce	6.1 Integrate gender equality into recruitment and promotion practices	6.1.1 Complete a review of all HR documentation to ensure inclusivity and gender neutral language	✓	✓		
		6.1.2 Review the recruitment process to ensure that gender equality, diversity and inclusion are addressed in all actions e.g. advert language is inclusive and accessible, interview questions are inclusive and non-discriminatory, gender balance in panel and gender balance in shortlisted applicant pool.		✓		
		6.1.3 Review interview guides and questions to ensure that they are behavioural based, support diversity and inclusion and consistent across the organisation		✓		
		6.1.4 Implement the Workforce Management Strategy which supports organisational targets towards gender and intersectional balance composition of employees	✓	✓	✓	✓
	6.2 Develop opportunities for apprenticeships and traineeships across Council	6.2.1 Review procedures for apprentices and trainees	✓			



Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) 2021 - 2025

7. Developing our diverse workforce	7.1 Implement gender equality policies and practices across all levels of the workforce	7.1.1 Conduct an in-depth audit of our gender pay gap and consequently address any pay gap inequities, including transparent annual gender pay gap audits		✓	✓	
		7.1.2 Quantify the gender pay gap and establish mechanisms to reset the base line. Examine how the next Enterprise Agreement can be negotiated to ensure greater workplace equity and flexibility once the organisational capability			✓	✓
		7.1.3 Develop a Flexible Working Arrangement policy that works across all areas of Council to encourage retention of employees through work/life balance	✓			
		7.1.4 Strive for gender-balanced composition of executive, senior managers, managers, total workforce	✓	✓	✓	✓
	7.2 Build consensus and commitment to gender equality at all levels of Council	7.2.1 Investigate options for increasing gender and intersectional balance across the leadership and management cohort, including Committee and Working Groups where appropriate, and attendance at Council meetings			✓	✓
		7.2.2 Investigate options for increasing gender and intersectional balance in underrepresented departments (e.g. Community Wellbeing, Community Assets where we see a higher number of representation in one gender through historical)			✓	✓
	7.3 Entry Level Development - Recognise the value of entry level development positions in all areas	7.3.1 Review organisational requirements for entry level positions, including identification of talent pipeline gaps. Develop position requirements, with a focus on developing core skills of the incumbent and supporting opportunities for career progression		✓		

### 11.4 Priority 4 – Murrindindi Shire Council has a zero tolerance for discrimination, bullying, sexism and nepotism, with all staff empowered to recognise, address and respond to it

Priority 4: Murrindindi Shire Council has a zero tolerance for discrimination, bullying, sexism and nepotism, with all staff empowered to recognise, address and respond to it						
Key Area	Specific Outcomes	Actions	Year			
			1	2	3	4
8. Raise staff awareness on discrimination, bullying, sexual harassment	8.1 Ensure our workforce is educated and has the necessary tools to address and respond to sexual harassment, bullying and discrimination	8.1.1 Develop and distribute an internal campaign and tools that clearly articulate what sexism and discrimination looks like and how to call out/ prevent it in the workplace	✓	✓		
	8.2 Ensure a safe environment for the reporting of sexual harassment, bullying and discrimination	8.2.1 Review processes and implement changes as required to enable employee or bystander to report any unwanted or offensive behaviour within the workplace without fear of reprisals	✓	✓	✓	✓
	8.3 Maintain a workplace free from sexual harassment, bullying and discrimination	8.3.1 Review the employee appearance standards (Uniform Policy) to ensure that Council is ensuring people do not feel disrespected, vulnerable or deprived of opportunity	✓		✓	
		8.3.2 Ensure employees on flexible working arrangements (FWA) have access to meaningful and quality work. This includes the same benefits, training and promotional opportunities as other employees. *FWA are those on parental leave, primary caregiver leave, elder care, not those employees who fall under the Flexible Working Policy		✓	✓	
	8.4 Strong performance review processes to support an environment of safe disclosure	8.4.1 Evaluate the performance review process and make changes where necessary to ensure open, safe and productive conversations with all staff	✓	✓	✓	✓





Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) 2021 - 2025

	8.5 Eliminating stigmas associated with typical gender stereotypes	8.5.1 Investigate and implement resources for individuals who recognise they require support for family violence or behaviours perpetuating family violence	✓	✓		
	8.6 Create a culture that supports all genders accessing flexible work arrangements	8.6.1 Extend training to include unconscious bias associated with gender stereotypes around leave for caregiving, family responsibilities, medical or any other leave type attached to a gender stereotype	✓	✓		

