

Gender Equality Action Plan

2026 Progress report for: Alpine Shire Council

Organisation name (required)	Alpine Shire Council
Total number of employees (and full-time equivalent FTE), as at 30 June 2025	Total employees: 203 (Note: sourced from 2024/2025 Annual Report, as at 30 June 2025) Total FTE: 143.7
Response rate to employee experience survey	81 respondents (46%)
Contextual information	
Location (metropolitan, regional or rural. If other, please specify)	Rural

Attestation by head of organisation (required)

I confirm that:

- ☒ I am the head of organisation (CEO or equivalent).
- ☒ I have reviewed and approved the submission of this progress report on behalf of my organisation (as named above). I attest to providing truthful and accurate information.
- ☒ I attest that my organisation has completed all relevant gender impact assessments under the Gender Equality Act 2020, or I have explained why not in the comment box below.

Any comments?	
Name	Will Jeremy
Role title	Chief Executive Officer
Signed	
Date	28/4/2026

Step 1: Reporting on gender impact assessments (GIAs)

Section 1.1 Confirming GIA exemptions (required)

If you have not listed any GIAs, please choose one or more permitted reason:

- ☐ Reporting on the GIA(s) would make the progress report an exempt document. This is within the meaning of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*.
- ☐ Reporting on the GIA(s) would result in a disclosure prohibited by a different Act.
- ☐ Reporting on the GIA(s) would reveal confidential information.
- ☐ Your organisation had no policies, programs or services requiring a GIA. This is under the parameters of the *Gender Equality Act 2020*.
- ☒ None of these apply (**go to 1.2**).

Section 1.2 Describing policies, programs and services subject to a GIA (required and recommended)

Ref #	A: Title (required)	B: Subject (required)	C: Description of the policy, program or service (required)	D: Status (required)	E: Description of gendered impacts (recommended)
1.	Alpine Shire Asset Plan 2025-2026 to 2030- 2035 (Retrospective)	Program	The Asset Plan sets the long-term strategic and financial approach to managing Council's infrastructure assets, including roads, bridges, drainage, buildings and open spaces, and guides maintenance, renewal, upgrades and new investment over a 10 plus year period in alignment with the Council Plan and budget.	Up for review	The GIA highlighted a key opportunity to strengthen the Asset Plan by more intentionally applying a gender and intersectional lens. At present, the Plan has been developed without explicit use of gender-disaggregated data or intersectional analysis to shape engagement or asset decisions - which means there is significant opportunity to better understand and respond to the different needs, safety considerations and access requirements of women, men and gender diverse people. It also noted that explicitly referencing the Gender Equality Act 2020 and the role of GIAs within the Asset Plan and Council Plan would both support compliance and positively position Council's commitment to gender equality in infrastructure planning, renewal and investment. GIA recommendations: Strategic integration - Embed GIAs as a standard step for all new and renewed asset projects. - Apply gender-responsive budgeting and make GIAs a standing item in key governance meetings. - Include gender equity measures and references to the Gender Equality Act in core strategic and risk documents. Capability building - Provide targeted training for asset staff and leaders on gender equity, GIAs and gender-responsive budgeting. - Add gender equity responsibilities into relevant role descriptions and performance plans. - Supply simple tools and briefings to help staff and consultants apply a gender lens. Monitoring and continuous improvement - Align Asset Plan implementation and reporting with the GEAP. - Review progress regularly, using feedback and disaggregated data to refine approaches.
2.	Dealing with Difficult Customers Policy, Procedure and Toolkit	Policy	The Dealing with Difficult Customers Policy, Procedure and Toolkit sets out Council's approach to identifying, managing and responding to threatening, intimidating or extreme customer behaviour that poses occupational health and safety risks to staff, volunteers, contractors and Councillors. It balances the rights and needs of customers, the organisation and the wider community, and provides guidance, processes and tools to help staff manage incidents safely and recover afterwards.	New	The GIA found that difficult customer behaviour, while not systematically recorded, is often experienced differently across genders, with: - predominantly women in indoor customer facing teams (e.g. Customer Service, Libraries, Visitor Information Centres, Maternal and Child Health) and - predominantly men in outdoor and Transfer Station teams, exposed to different patterns and impacts of aggression. The GIA also: - highlighted that staff gender and bias can affect how similar behaviours are perceived, tolerated and escalated, and

					- identified that the policy framework and communication may disadvantage customers with lower literacy, mental ill-health, disability, culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds or lower socio-economic status, and - recommended that staff training, procedures and workflows be developed and delivered through a gender and intersectional lens, with clear, organisation-wide standards for acceptable behaviour and customer communication steps that ensure all customers understand the policy and next steps if it is applied to them.
3.	Community Engagement Policy	Policy	The Community Engagement Policy sets out Council's principles and commitments for when, how and to what extent Council will engage with the community in decision-making, and clarifies expectations around transparency, accountability and use of community input. It is read alongside the Community Engagement Procedure and Engagement and Communications Toolkit, which guide the design and delivery of specific engagement activities.	Up for review	The GIA identified that people of different genders do not access or engage with the policy and related engagement opportunities at the same rate, with social media analytics and exhibition feedback showing higher engagement from women. It also found that: - women and non-binary people facing overlapping barriers related to language, disability, caring roles and limited internet access experience additional barriers to understanding and participating in Council engagement processes, and - current formats - English only PDFs and online documents - and inconsistent internet access risk excluding culturally and linguistically diverse communities and people with disabilities.
4.	Alpine Shire Municipal Emergency Management Plan	Program	The Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP) 2024 - 2027 is a legislated, multi-agency plan that sets out how Alpine Shire will mitigate, respond to and recover from emergencies in the municipality. It establishes a clear foundation for emergency agencies, Council, and the community to understand local emergency management, including planning, response, relief, and recovery arrangements. The Plan also guides the development of complementary sub-plans and programs and is grounded in established emergency preparedness protocols that support coordinated and effective action.	Up for review	The GIA recognised that while the MEMP primarily targets emergency agencies, community members experience emergencies differently based on gender and other vulnerabilities, and that women, people with disabilities, older people, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities and First Nations people may face greater risks and barriers in accessing information, support and recovery. The GIA highlighted the need to more explicitly acknowledge these vulnerable cohorts and gender-based vulnerabilities in the Plan and related training. It recommended: - future MEMP cycles and sub-plans incorporate gender-disaggregated data and a stronger vulnerability lens in planning, assessment and evaluation, and - for GIAs to be undertaken for programs and initiatives arising from the MEMP so that response, relief and recovery services are more inclusive, equitable and responsive to diverse needs.
5.	The First 72 Hour Program	Program	The First 72 Hour Program is a community-facing emergency preparedness initiative designed to support households, businesses and community groups in Alpine Shire to plan for the first 72 hours following an emergency event. It responds to the State Emergency Management Plan (SEMP) acknowledgement that emergency services may take up to 72 hours to respond, by equipping community members with simple, practical tools to plan for essential needs such as food, water, shelter, medications and communications during this period.	Up for review	The GIA found that: - Emergencies and disasters have gendered impacts, with women, gender diverse people and marginalised cohorts often experiencing greater economic, safety and mental health risks. - Norms of 'heroic' masculinity and traditional gender roles influence who plans for emergencies, who makes decisions and who is most visible in response and recovery.

			Delivered through Council's Community Development – Emergency Management function, the Program provides adaptable planning templates and materials that can be tailored to the needs of individuals, families, local businesses and priority cohorts, and is intended to operate as an ongoing component of Council's resilience and preparedness activities. The Program has been developed and tested in collaboration with local emergency services, health agencies, CALD communities and the Alpine Community Resilience Committee, and is designed to be delivered in multiple community settings and formats to maximise accessibility and reach.		- Women, gender diverse people, people with disability, First Nations people and CALD communities may face barriers to preparedness, including access to information, mobility, language and safety. The GIA recommended that the Program explicitly integrate a gendered and intersectional lens into the design and delivery of the First 72 Hour Program, and future emergency management initiatives. It recommended that Council: - incorporate consideration of gender and vulnerable cohorts (including older adults, people with disability, CALD and First Nations communities, and LGBTIQ+ people) into Program collateral, planning and rollout, - use gender-neutral and inclusive language, and imagery that reflects the diversity of the community, in Program materials and delivery, - ensure gender-disaggregated data and contemporary research on gender in emergencies are routinely used to inform emergency management, relief and recovery planning, and - have the Emergency Management Coordinator regularly review equity implications across emergency management services and programs as a mitigation strategy.
6.	Alpine Shire Youth - The Lighthouse, Bright's Youth Hub	Service	Alpine Shire Youth Hub - The Lighthouse is a three-year youth hub initiative (2024–2027) based at Bright Community Centre, providing a relaxed, supervised space for young people aged 12 to 19 years to connect, study and spend time after school or work. The hub offers free snacks, water, Wi-Fi and a climate-controlled environment, and was established in response to local youth concerns and a lack of youth support services in the Alpine Shire. The Lighthouse specifically welcomes young people of all genders and backgrounds, with an emphasis on LGBTQIA+ youth, those experiencing mental health challenges and young people from vulnerable households. The program is youth-informed and supported by the Resilient Alpine Youth Squad and an emerging internal youth advisory group, who help shape activities, culture and improvements to ensure the hub remains safe, inclusive and responsive to local needs.	Up for review	Key GIA insights: - The Lighthouse functions as a safe and affirming “third space” (outside of home and school) for youth of all genders; girls and gender diverse young people are more consistently engaged, reflecting their greater need for inclusive, low-pressure environments. - Mission Australia Youth Survey data shows gender and sexuality are leading reasons for unfair treatment locally, with clear impacts on youth mental health and sense of belonging. - LGBTQIA+ and First Nations young people respond positively to visible inclusion measures (Pride and Aboriginal flags, youth voice in decisions), though some First Nations and vulnerable young people are still not attending. - Access remains uneven: young people with disability face partial physical inaccessibility, and those in Myrtleford and Mount Beauty experience transport barriers, compounding geographic and socio-economic disadvantage. GIA recommendations: - Embed gender-disaggregated data and the needs of vulnerable cohorts into all Lighthouse planning, delivery and evaluation, informed by ongoing data collection, consultation and youth engagement. - Ensure the hub actively meets the needs of young people across gender identities, abilities and backgrounds - particularly girls, LGBTQIA+ youth, First Nations young people and those with disability or mental health challenges - by keeping accessibility, inclusivity and safety core to design and any expansion or outreach (including to Myrtleford and Mount Beauty).

					Establish regular review of gender and equity impacts across youth services, with leaders using feedback from marginalised cohorts and gender-disaggregated data in future Lighthouse planning cycles to refine inclusivity and address emerging inequities.
7.	Child Safe Policy	Policy	The Child Safe Policy (2023) sets out Council's commitment and legislative obligations under the Victorian Child Safe Standards and Reportable Conduct Scheme to create an environment where children are safe and protected from harm and abuse across all Council services, programs, events and facilities. It applies to all Councillors, staff and volunteers, with particular relevance for predominantly female-staffed child-related services such as Maternal and Child Health (MCH), libraries and youth services, and outlines expectations for safe conduct, reporting, and embedding child safety into Council culture and everyday practice. The Policy was developed through internal consultation with key child-related service areas and organisation-wide stakeholders, and was publicly exhibited for community feedback, with implementation supported by an internal Action Plan that details responsibilities, training, communication and measures to ensure equitable access to policy information for children, families and staff.	Up for review	Key GIA insights: - Responsibility for child safety currently falls disproportionately on women, as women are more likely to provide unpaid care for children and to be employed or volunteer in child-related Council services. - The Policy is accessed more by women than men, reflecting patterns of service use (e.g. MCH, libraries, youth services) and workforce composition, which risks reinforcing the perception that child safety is 'women's work' rather than a whole-of-organisation obligation. - Children with disability, and children from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and CALD communities, may have a greater need for the protections of the Policy and require accessible formats (easy-to-read, translated versions) and visible availability in frequented locations. - Equitable access to the Policy is uneven: office-based staff can readily access the intranet version, while outdoor staff, some families and children may face barriers due to work location, literacy, internet access, language and disability. GIA recommendations: - Adopt and implement the Child Safe Policy alongside its associated Action Plan, ensuring actions clearly assign responsibility for making the Policy accessible, including easy-to-understand and translated versions, printed copies at libraries, MCH, depots, schools and other key sites. - Deliver ongoing organisation-wide communication and training so all staff and volunteers, regardless of gender or role, understand their child safety responsibilities, normalising child safety as a core obligation of every staff member rather than primarily women in child-related roles. - Use implementation of the Policy and Action Plan to reduce gender inequality by involving families and communities in child safety efforts and embedding child safety in Council culture, so that protecting children becomes a shared responsibility across all genders.
8.	Dad's Group	Service	The Alpine Shire Dads Group (2024) is a new, grant-funded peer-to-peer support program established under the Victorian Government's More Support for Mums, Dads and Babies initiative to expand support networks for fathers in the Alpine Shire. The program seeks to create nurturing group environments where dads can connect, share experiences and receive evidence-based information on parenting and child development, with the aim of increasing their confidence and skills in their roles as fathers. The program has been developed with input from MCH, Supported Playgroup and Community Development staff, as well as consultation with the Albury Wodonga Ethnic	New	GIA insights: - The Dad's Group program is intentionally gender-specific, funded and designed for fathers, and will therefore primarily benefit men who are parents, with flow-on benefits to mothers and children through more confident and engaged dads. - Evidence cited in the GIA shows that around 10% of fathers experience postnatal depression and significant proportions experience anxiety in the perinatal period, yet existing parenting support programs are often less accessible or appropriate for dads, particularly given work patterns and service design.

			Communities Council to ensure cultural safety and accessibility for fathers from CALD backgrounds. Session times and formats are informed by local family feedback, including the need for offerings outside standard business hours so working fathers can participate, and promotion will occur through MCH, early childhood services and targeted outreach.		- Current care patterns mean women still carry the bulk of unpaid care and are over-represented in lower-paid, insecure roles; the program is intended to support a shift toward more shared caregiving by building fathers' skills and confidence. - Intersectional factors (disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background, CALD background) shape how easily fathers and families can access the program and what supports they need, with specific attention to venue accessibility, literacy, language and use of trusted services and community leaders to reach CALD and Aboriginal families. - There is a risk that, if communication continues to flow mainly via mothers, the program could unintentionally add to women's mental load as intermediaries between services and fathers, despite being designed to support men. GIA recommendations: - Implement and deliver the Dads Group program, using the grant to provide ongoing, nurturing peer-to-peer spaces and evidence-based content that strengthen fathers' confidence, mental health and involvement in caregiving, thereby supporting more balanced sharing of the burden of care in households. - Design scheduling, venues and promotion to align with fathers' work patterns and diverse needs, including offering sessions outside standard business hours, ensuring physical accessibility, using easy-to-understand and (where possible) translated materials, and promoting through CALD, Aboriginal and disability support services and community leaders. - Actively explore and adopt ways to contact fathers directly (or have them as the primary contact where appropriate) to reduce reliance on women as the main communicators with services and to avoid increasing women's mental load, while still recognising the interconnected needs of the whole family.
9.	Tourism Strategy (2025)	Policy	The Tourism Strategy 2025 is a high-level, 10-year strategic framework that sets Council's overall direction for tourism in Alpine Shire. It aims to guide how tourism growth is managed to support economic resilience, protect the natural environment and strengthen community wellbeing, while positioning Alpine Shire as an attractive year-round destination. Phase 1 has focused on defining the purpose, intent and scope of tourism in the Shire, with later phases to translate this into more detailed actions and partnerships with industry. It uses current visitation, workforce and market data to guide future priorities and explicitly aims to make Alpine Shire a welcoming and accessible destination for a broader range of visitors, recognising that many outdoor-focused offerings have not been equitable or accessible for all. Key stakeholders (residents, business owners, community groups and targeted focus groups) are engaged in shaping the strategy, with an explicit intent to include women, Traditional	Up for review	GIA insights: - Visitor and participation data show clear gendered patterns: 62.5% of High-Country visitors are male, outdoor activities have higher male participation, while women make up the majority of the tourism workforce in Alpine Shire. - Women, men and non-binary people engage with tourism differently: women often prioritise safety and family-friendly options and carry more of the holiday-planning load, men are more activity-focused, and LGBTQ+ and non-binary visitors require visibly inclusive and safe spaces. - An intersectional lens highlights varying needs for people with disability, older and injured visitors, and CALD communities, who may require accessible infrastructure, culturally appropriate services and clearer information to participate fully in the visitor economy. GIA recommendations:

			Owners, people with disability, CALD communities and other under-represented groups in decision-making about the visitor experience.		- Strengthen marketing and digital information so diverse genders, abilities and cultural backgrounds are visibly represented, and so visitors can easily assess accessibility, safety and suitability of experiences (e.g. clearer icons, descriptions and accessible tourism content on Council websites and collateral). - Advocate for and support more accessible and equitable activities and infrastructure across Council and partner assets, including additional beginner/adaptive trails, accessible water-play options and a program of toilet upgrades focused on safety, accessibility and community need. - Work with accommodation providers and other operators to build equity capability through practical changes - such as publishing doorway widths, providing large-print or translated materials and improving lighting - and by actively promoting grant opportunities to fund access and inclusion upgrades. Without an intentional focus on gender equality and intersectionality, tourism growth risks reinforcing existing inequities in who benefits, who feels safe and welcome, and who bears the burdens of peak visitation, as well as insecure and seasonal tourism related jobs.
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Section 1.3 Describing actions taken as a result of a GIA (required and recommended)

Ref #	F: Were actions taken as a result of the GIA? (required)	G: Describe the actions taken as a result of the GIA in order to: - Meet the needs of people of different genders; and/or - Promote gender equality; and/or - Address gender inequality. If you did not take action, write N/A here and explain why in (H). (required)	H: If you did not take action, explain why. If you did take action, describe it in (G) and write N/A here. (required)	I: Describe: How and why intersectionality was considered (or not) (required)	J: Describe any actions taken specifically designed to address intersectional inequalities (compounded gender inequalities)? (recommended)
1.	Yes (go to column G)	The GIA identified the need to focus on strategic integration, capability building and monitoring as part of asset planning related activity. Based on this, recommendations and future planned actions include: Strategic integration: - Embedding GIAs as a standard planning tool in all new and renewed asset projects. Include gender-responsive budgeting and a standing GIA item in governance meetings. Capability building: - Delivering targeted training to asset teams and leadership. - Developing and providing practical resources and briefing tools to the Assets team to support implementation. Monitoring and continuous improvement: - Aligning efforts with the GEAP and establishing clear reporting processes. - Evaluating progress, incorporate feedback, and adapt strategies accordingly.	N/A	The development of an intersectional lens will progress over time, deepening as the process evolves and matures.	

2.	Yes (go to column G)	The GIA identified the need to clearly address gender and intersectional bias when training staff in the implementation of the Dealing with Difficult Customers Policy, and in general customer request management and interaction with our community. Action taken as a result of the GIA: This new Policy was drafted and refined with the GIA findings in mind, ensuring equitable access for all community members as far as practicable within Council resources.	N/A	Future planned actions: Ensure staff training on customer management intentionally considers varied communication styles and limitations to access of a diverse community, while ensuring gender and other bias does not impact the way each customer is supported by the organisation.	
3.	Yes (go to column G)	The Community Engagement Policy GIA identified the need for ongoing awareness of the intersectional impacts of communication and engagement activities, as well as the varied ways people access information. This awareness supports the continuous consideration and adaptation of engagement delivery to better meet diverse community needs. As a result of the GIA, the Policy was also updated to include Section 3.2.2, included below. 3.2.2 Who will Council engage with? <i>Council engages with a broad range of people, all with differing interests. For the purpose of this Policy we identify the community as anyone affected by the specific Council decision resulting from the engagement.</i> <i>Meaningful community engagement seeks to address barriers and build the capacity and confidence of all people to participate in, negotiate and partner with institutions that affect their lives.</i> <i>Everyone should feel supported and comfortable to have their say in Council decision making.</i> <i>Council recognises that some groups may face barriers to engage with us and we aim to use methods that enable and support their participation.</i> <i>Council will provide accessible information and genuine opportunities that invite and enable the community to participate, ensuring they feel valued and empowered.</i> <i>Council will allocate appropriate resources to support the needs of participants, particularly from underrepresented voices in the community, ensuring the methods, communication and spaces we use are culturally safe and accessible for all.</i>	N/A	See detail in column G. From an intersectional perspective, the Community Engagement Policy GIA recommended: - removing language that minimises engagement with smaller or less vocal communities, - ensuring the Community Engagement Procedure and Engagement and Communications Toolkit include specific methods to prioritise intersectional equity (including gender equity), and - implementing measures such as the UserWay accessibility and translation widget and translation of key policy elements so women, men and non-binary people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities and those with physical or cognitive disabilities can more easily access and understand when and how Council will engage. A further outcome of the GIA was to introduce UserWay on Council's corporate website to assist with accessibility needs for website users. UserWay has not been implemented at this stage, as the adoption of the new Access and Inclusion Plan is expected to provide a pathway for funding through identified actions.	See detail in Column G.
4.	Yes (go to column G)	GIAs are now undertaken for programs and initiatives arising from the MEMP. While the MEMP was not originally developed with a gender or intersectional lens, GIAs are now incorporated into MEMP activities to ensure more inclusive planning and response. It is recognised that access to and engagement with the Plan may be influenced by awareness, gendered roles, and differing levels of knowledge and lived experiences within the community.	N/A	GIAs to initiatives arising from the MEMP apply an intersectional lens to consider how factors such as gender, age, ability, culture, and socio-economic status may influence preparedness, access to information, and participation in emergency management.	

5.	Yes (go to column G)	Gender and intersectionality are now considered in planning emergency relief centres. Recognising that not everyone can easily access emergency preparedness information, program materials are available in multiple formats and translations.	N/A	Intersectionality was explicitly considered by recognising that emergency preparedness information is not equally accessible across different genders, language groups, abilities, and literacy levels. Program materials were therefore developed and tested with multicultural communities to understand how factors such as language, culture, migration experience, disability, and literacy intersect with gender to influence access to, and understanding of, emergency information. Materials were also designed to be accessible for people with colour blindness and dyslexia and supported with video resources for community members who may have difficulty reading or writing.	Actions included: - providing program materials in multiple formats and community languages, - co-design and testing of materials with multicultural groups, - encouraging multicultural organisations to share resources within their communities, - designing materials to be accessible for people with colour blindness and dyslexia, and - developing video resources to support people with low literacy or who may have difficulty reading or writing.
6.	Yes (go to column G)	The GIA led to several actions to better meet the needs of young people of different genders and to promote gender equality at The Lighthouse, including: - Optional data collection (for example, gender, cultural identity and living arrangements) was introduced to build a clearer picture of who is attending and whose needs may not yet be met. - The activity schedule was widened to include a wider mix of creative, social and physical options that appeal to diverse interests and genders, and the environment was adjusted to improve safety and comfort for quieter or less confident participants. - Visible inclusion measures, such as displaying Aboriginal and rainbow flags, were strengthened to affirm LGBTQIA+ and First Nations young people and show that all genders and backgrounds are welcome.		Intersectionality was considered by recognising that young people's experiences at the Youth Hub are influenced by the interaction of gender with other factors such as sexuality, First Nations identity, disability, mental health, socio-economic status and where they live. The GIA drew on local survey data and youth consultation to understand how gendered experiences, mental health challenges and belonging intersect with being LGBTQIA+, First Nations, living with disability or coming from a vulnerable household, particularly in smaller rural communities. These insights informed decisions to focus on The Lighthouse as a safe "third space" for girls and gender diverse young people, and to pay particular attention to those facing compounded barriers such as partial physical inaccessibility or transport disadvantage from towns like Myrtleford and Mount Beauty.	Specific actions to address intersectional inequalities included: - prioritising visible inclusion for LGBTQIA+ and First Nations young people through the visible display of Pride and Aboriginal flags, - ensuring the youth voice forms part of decision-making, - embedding optional data collection to identify gaps in participation for groups such as First Nations youth, LGBTQIA+ youth, young people with disability and those from vulnerable households, and - tailoring activities and engagement approaches to better support girls and gender diverse young people who benefit from low-pressure, affirming environments. The program also committed to ongoing review of gender and equity impacts across youth services, using feedback from marginalised cohorts and gender-disaggregated data to refine accessibility, inclusivity, safety and outreach (including to Myrtleford and Mount Beauty) in future Lighthouse planning cycles.
7.	Yes (go to column G)	The GIA led to several actions to strengthen gender-equitable and inclusive implementation of the Child Safe Policy. Child safety considerations are planned to be embedded into recruitment processes, including clearer expectations about child safety responsibilities in	N/A	The GIA highlighted that women are more likely to carry responsibility for child safety at home and at work, and that children with disability and those from Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander	Actions to address potential intersectional and gender inequalities have included: ensuring the Child Safe Policy and key messages are communicated

		position descriptions, interviews and referee checks for staff and volunteers in child-related roles. Child safety, gender and intersectionality are now explicitly integrated into planning for child and youth programs and events, so that activities, environments and communications better reflect the needs of children and young people of diverse genders, cultures, abilities and family circumstances. Easy-to-read child safety reporting information is being developed and made available across key access points, including libraries, the Youth Hub and the Learn to Drive (L2P) program, to support children, young people and families to understand their rights and how to raise concerns.		and CALD communities may rely more on clear, accessible information and safe reporting pathways. It also identified uneven access to the Policy between office-based staff and outdoor staff, and between families who regularly use services such as MCH and libraries and those who do not, due to work location, literacy, language, internet access and disability. These intersectional insights informed the focus on varied formats, locations and communication methods to ensure the Child Safe Policy and reporting processes are genuinely accessible across different genders, communities and workforces.	as a whole-of-organisation obligation, rather than work that sits primarily with women in child-related services, • developing easy-to-read child safety reporting information for libraries, the Youth Hub and the L2P program to support children and families with lower literacy, disability or limited English, and • planning for translated and printed materials at locations used by diverse families and outdoor staff. • Recruitment and training processes to emphasise shared responsibility for child safety across all genders and roles, with child safety, gender and intersectionality embedded into program and event planning so that children and young people from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, CALD, disabled and vulnerable backgrounds can more safely access Council services and have their voices heard.
8.	Yes (go to column G)	Through the GIA, Council identified a risk of increasing the mental load on women, as Maternal and Child Health (MCH) primarily communicated with mothers or women carers and often did not hold current contact details for fathers/male carers. In response, MCH has improved its CDIS (MCH software) file-creation process to routinely seek and update fathers'/male carers' contact details, reinforced this expectation in monthly team meetings, and now uses those details (mobile or email) when inviting and communicating about Dad's Groups.	N/A	This will be a progressive build as the Dad's Group evolves and matures.	
9.	Yes (go to column G)	The current Tourism Strategy and GIA represent Phase 1 of the project and were used to clarify the purpose, intent and scope of Council's tourism approach. At this stage, the work has primarily been strategic and conceptual, with no detailed implementation actions or stakeholder engagement commenced.	N/A	Intersectionality was considered in the initial GIA by identifying that tourism is experienced differently depending on gender and other factors such as disability, age, cultural background and sexuality. This analysis was high level and exploratory, and further engagement will be required in the next phase to test these issues with affected groups and better understand compounded barriers and opportunities.	No specific actions to address intersectional inequalities have yet been implemented through this phase, as the work to date has focused on strategy definition rather than delivery. A further GIA is intended as part of the next stage of strategy development so that gender equality and intersectional considerations can be more directly embedded in engagement, planning and future actions.

Step 2: Reporting on progress against the indicators

Section 2.1 Describing progress against the workplace gender equality indicators (required and recommended)

K: Indicator *	L: Progress data (required)	M: Additional progress data (recommended)	N: Has progress been made? (required)	O: Explain how the data does (or does not) demonstrate progress. (required)
1	Critical performance measures Gender composition of the duty holder organisation: 2023: 58.4% Women (W), 41.6% Men (M), 0% Self-described (SD) 2025: 59.3% W, 40.7% M, 0% SD Gender composition of part time workers in the duty holder organisation: 2023: 42.2% W, 21.9% M, 0% SD 2025: 39% W, 16.7% M, 0% SD Gender composition of senior leaders in the duty holder organisation: 2023: 33.3% W, 66.7% M, 0% SD 2025: 50% W, 50% M, 0% SD		Yes	Key insights: Between 2023 and 2025, Council's overall workforce gender composition remained relatively stable, with women making up 58.4% of employees in 2023 and 59.3% in 2025, and men 41.6% in 2023 and 40.7% in 2025; no employees self-described their gender in either year. This means women continue to represent a majority of the workforce, with a slight increase over the reporting period. Over the same period, the proportion of women working part time decreased from 42.2% in 2023 to 39% in 2025, while the proportion of men working part time decreased from 21.9% to 16.7%; again, there were no self-described employees in this category. This suggests that while part-time work remains more common for women than men, part-time arrangements have reduced for both groups, which may have implications for flexibility, caring responsibilities and access to quality part-time roles. The gender composition of Council's senior leadership has shifted markedly towards parity over the reporting period. In 2023, women comprised 33.3% of senior leaders and men 66.7%, with no employees self-describing their gender. By 2025, the senior leadership cohort was evenly split at 50% women and 50% men. Across all leadership levels (CEO, Directors and Managers), Council has now achieved gender parity, with five women and five men in these roles. This demonstrates a sustained upward trend in women's representation in senior positions and continued progress towards a gender-balanced and inclusive leadership profile. No leaders currently self-describe their gender outside the male/female binary. While positive progress has been made, Council's capacity to track and measure change remains constrained by current data systems. Workforce data is still maintained through manual processes, and there is no dedicated HR information system to support comprehensive monitoring of gender equality indicators. The development of an accountability framework - including improved data infrastructure and collection of intersectional workforce data - is underway to strengthen Council's ability to measure progress and report on GEAP outcomes in future cycles. People Matter survey insights: - Participation in the 2025 People Matter Survey increased to 46%, compared with 43% in 2023 and 34% in 2021, providing a more representative view of employee experience and perceptions. - Survey responses indicate the workforce is predominantly cisgender, Australian born, and culturally Australian/Anglo Celtic, with a visible cohort of LGBTIQA+ employees, people with disability, culturally and linguistically diverse staff, and employees with caring responsibilities. - These findings highlight the importance of the next GEAP taking a broader view of diversity beyond binary gender (women and men), consistent with the Shire's role in serving a diverse community.

				- Respondent demographics included: - Age: 55.6% aged 35–54 years, 18.5% aged 15–34 years, and 23.5% aged 55+ years (2.5% preferred not to say). - Gender: 61.7% women, 34.6% men, 1.2% non-binary/another term, and 2.5% preferred not to say. 13.6% identify as LGBTIQ+. 85.2% born in Australia; 98.8% do not identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander; 12.3% born overseas. 61.7% work full time and 38.3% part time. Key opportunity: Overall, Council has made positive progress, with women and men each representing at least 40% of employees. There has also been a significant shift towards parity in senior leadership, where women’s representation has increased from one-third in 2023 to 50% in 2025. This progress provides a solid foundation on which to build. The 2026-2030 GEAP presents an opportunity to consolidate these gains, address ongoing structural barriers to equality (for staff of all genders), and ensure future growth in leadership and flexible work reflects the diversity of Council’s workforce and community.																												
2	Critical performance measures Gender composition of the duty holder organisation’s governing body: 2023: 42.9% W, 57.1% M, 0% SD 2025: 14.3% W, 85.7% M, 0% SD		No	Key insight: Council has no control over the election of Councillors, which is managed through the Victorian Electoral Commission’s local government election process. The 2025 data reflects the outcome of the October 2024 elections, where women’s representation on Council declined from 42.9% (three of seven) in 2023 to 14.3% (one of seven) in 2025, with no Councillors self-describing their gender. While this represents a decline overall, the sole female Councillor is the newly elected Mayor. Key opportunity: For Indicator 2, the 2026-2030 GEAP can progress the 2021–2025 commitment (2.1) to strengthen intersectional data collection for Councillors (not yet been implemented), by prioritising simple, compliant processes to gather demographic data on gender, First Nations identity, LGBTIQ+, disability and cultural/linguistic diversity to meet legislative requirements. This will enable Council to better understand and track representation, while embedding proactive actions - such as targeted encouragement and recruitment strategies for women and diverse candidates (e.g., First Nations people, LGBTIQ+ individuals, people with disability, and those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds) - ahead of future local government elections.																												
3	Critical performance measures Mean total remuneration gender pay gap by occupation group: <table><tr><td> <u>2023:</u> </td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Managers</td><td>30.8%</td></tr><tr><td>Professionals</td><td>-7.5%</td></tr><tr><td>Technicians and Trades Workers</td><td>15.4%</td></tr><tr><td>Community and Personal Service Workers</td><td>5.9%</td></tr><tr><td>Clerical and Administrative Workers</td><td>17.7%</td></tr><tr><td>Labourers</td><td>5.4%</td></tr><tr><td>All occupations</td><td>2.5%</td></tr><tr><td> <u>2025:</u> </td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Managers</td><td>29.7%</td></tr><tr><td>Professionals</td><td>-3.4%</td></tr><tr><td>Technicians and Trades Workers</td><td>20.9%</td></tr><tr><td>Community and Personal Service Workers</td><td>4.0%</td></tr><tr><td>Clerical and Administrative Workers</td><td>5.1%</td></tr></table>	<u>2023:</u>		Managers	30.8%	Professionals	-7.5%	Technicians and Trades Workers	15.4%	Community and Personal Service Workers	5.9%	Clerical and Administrative Workers	17.7%	Labourers	5.4%	All occupations	2.5%	<u>2025:</u>		Managers	29.7%	Professionals	-3.4%	Technicians and Trades Workers	20.9%	Community and Personal Service Workers	4.0%	Clerical and Administrative Workers	5.1%		No	Key Insight: Despite gender parity in workforce representation now achieved among senior leaders, Council has not made progress on Indicator 3: - The overall mean total remuneration gender pay gap increased from 2.5% in 2023 to 4.2% in 2025. - This has been influenced by deteriorations in occupational groups such as Technicians/Trades Workers (15.4% in 2023 to 20.9% in 2025) and especially senior leaders (9.9% to 21.9% over the same period). - Supplementary measures show a mixed picture with mean and median total remuneration gaps increasing (to 7.9% for the median gap), with the median base salary improving slightly (5.9% to 4.7%). Key Opportunity: The 2026-2030 GEAP provides the opportunity to address persistent inequities by prioritising low-cost, high-impact actions, including the carried forward 2021–2025 commitment to deliver practical training for HR, Finance and leadership staff on pay gap analysis using existing tools, alongside pay audits, transparent remuneration guidelines and occupation-specific strategies to close gaps at all levels.
<u>2023:</u>																																
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Professionals	-7.5%																															
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	Labourers 5.3% All occupations 4.2% Mean total remuneration senior leader gender pay gap: 2023: 9.9% W 2025: 21.9% W Supplementary measures Mean base salary pay gap: 2023: 1.8% W 2025: 3.4% W Median total remuneration pay gap: 2023: 6.7% W 2025: 7.9% W Median base salary pay gap: 2023: 5.9% W 2025: 4.7% W			
4	Critical performance measures Anonymous experience rate of sexual harassment: 2023: 6.4% W, 0% M, N/A SD 2025: 0% all genders Number of formal reports of sexual harassment: 2023: 0% All genders 2025: 0% All genders Supplementary measures Participants who said they reported sexual harassment: 2023: 0% All genders 2025: 0% All genders Reasons for not making a formal sexual harassment complaint: 2023: N/A 2025: N/A Satisfaction with handling of workplace sexual harassment complaint: 2023: N/A 2025: N/A Satisfaction with handling of formal workplace sexual harassment complaint: 2023: N/A 2025: N/A		Yes	Key insights: Available audit data indicates that formal reporting of workplace sexual harassment remains very low across the organisation, with no formal complaints recorded in either 2023 or 2025. - In 2023, 6.4% of women anonymously reported experiencing sexual harassment (via People Matter survey responses), while no men reported experience; in 2025, no anonymous experiences were reported by employees of any gender. - These results should be interpreted cautiously: 0% recorded experience and 0 formal complaints do not necessarily mean there are no issues, and may also reflect under-reporting, limited confidence in reporting pathways, or gaps in current data systems. - People Matter Survey results show generally positive perceptions of culture, with: 72% of women and 79% of men agreeing that the organisation encourages respectful workplace behaviours, 62% of women and 75% of men agreeing that Council takes steps to eliminate bullying, harassment and discrimination, and 76% of women and 79% of respondents overall indicating they feel safe to call out inappropriate behaviour at work. Taken together, the data suggests a foundation of commitment to respectful conduct, while highlighting the need to strengthen psychological safety, reporting confidence and data quality to understand the true prevalence and handling of workplace sexual harassment. Key opportunity: A key priority for the next GEAP cycle is closing current data gaps so Council can more accurately understand, monitor and respond to workplace sexual harassment. Strengthening systems for capturing and analysing information - including better use of existing platforms and any future HR information system - will support earlier identification of risks and more reliable tracking over time. Building leader and employee awareness of Council's positive duty to eliminate sexual harassment, bullying and discrimination, alongside strengthening person-centred, trauma-informed responses, will help to increase confidence in reporting and improve outcomes for people who experience harm. Together, these steps can shift the organisation from low reported rates towards a more proactive, evidence-informed approach aligned with Indicator 4.

5	Critical performance measures Gender composition of recruited employees: 2023: 65% W, 35% M, 0% SD 2025: 60.7% W, 39.3% M, 0% SD Gender composition of employees who were promoted: 2023: Data N/A 2025: 50% W, 50% M <u>Perceptions of recruitment, by gender:</u> In response to the People Matter Survey (PMS) question, 'I believe the recruitment processes in my organisation are fair', the following percentage of respondents Strongly Agreed/Agreed: 2023: 76.6% W, 61.1% M 2025: 68% W, 60.7% M <u>Perceptions of promotion, by gender:</u> In response to the PMS question, 'I believe the promotion processes in my organisation are fair', the following percentage of respondents Strongly Agreed/Agreed: 2023: 46.8% W, N/A M 2025: 46% W, 46.4% M		Yes	Key Insights: - Council has made positive progress on Indicator 5, with recruitment showing women consistently comprising the majority of hires (65% in 2023 and 60.7% in 2025, with men at 35% and 39.3% respectively, and no self-described employees), alongside the introduction of promotion data in 2025 achieving gender parity at 50% women and 50% men. - People Matter survey perceptions of fairness reflect ongoing challenges: recruitment processes were viewed as fair by 76.6% of women and 61.1% of men in 2023 (dropping to 68% and 60.7% in 2025), while promotion fairness held steady around 46–47% agreement for women (2023–2025) and men (46.4% in 2025). - These outcomes align with 2021-2025 GEAP achievements, including policy updates for transparent recruitment/selection, diverse panels, equitable shortlisting and enhanced performance development plans supporting career progression for all genders. Key Opportunity: - The 2026-2030 GEAP can build on this foundation by sustaining gender-balanced recruitment and promotions through continued use of diverse selection panels and role banding for transparency, while addressing persistent perception gaps in process fairness via targeted communication, leader training and employee feedback loops to build confidence and trust in the processes for people of all genders.
6	Critical performance measures Average weeks of parental leave, by gender: 2023: No parental leave taken 2025: No parental leave taken Uptake of flexible work, by gender: 2023: Data N/A 2025: 11.4% W, 14.6% M <u>Perceptions of flexible work culture, by gender:</u> PMS responses to the following question 'I am confident that if I requested a flexible work arrangement, it would be given due consideration' (% Agree/Strongly Agree): 2023: 80.9% W, 83.3% M 2025: 88% W, 85.7% M Supplementary measures Gender composition of parental leave takers: 2023: N/A 2025: N/A Gender gap in carer's leave: 2023: Data N/A 2025: Data N/A		Yes	Key insights: Council has made positive progress on Indicator 6, particularly in flexible work uptake and perceptions, with: 2025 data showing men (14.6%) slightly ahead of women (11.4%) in flexible work usage, and - People Matter Survey agreement that flexible requests would receive due consideration strengthening for both genders (women increasing from 80.9% to 88% from 2023 to 2025, men from 83.3% to 85.7% over the same period). - At the same time, no staff of any gender took parental leave in either 2023 or 2025, and structured data on carer's leave remains unavailable, limiting Council's ability to assess whether flexible work and leave provisions are supporting shared care in practice. 2021 - 2025 GEAP achievements such as the "Our Ways of Working" remote policy (up to 40% remote time), senior leaders modelling compressed fortnights, prioritised flexibility for parents of young children amid regional constraints, and Enterprise Agreement gains (including more flexibility for secondary carer leave and strengthened family violence provisions) provide a strong platform to normalise caring and encourage future uptake. As a thinly resourced regional council using spreadsheets for people data management, Council leverages Employment Hero - a cloud-based HR/payroll platform with leave tracking, self-service portals and basic reporting - to support flexible arrangements without a full HRIS. Key Opportunities: The 2026–2030 GEAP can now build on this momentum by configuring Employment Hero's leave and attendance modules to capture parental and carer's leave data (so 'no leave taken' is confirmed), benchmarking parental and secondary carer uptake against comparable councils, and running targeted communications to normalise the use of partner/secondary carer leave by men and all genders - ensuring flexible work and leave entitlements translate into visible, gender-equal caring patterns while meeting legislative and reporting needs.
7	Critical performance measures Occupational gender segregation:		Yes	Key Insights:

	There are no people who identify as SD (2023 or 2025) <u>2023:</u> Managers: 63.6% W, 36.4% M Professionals: 71.9%, 28.1% Technicians and Trades Workers: 15.0%, 85% M Community and Personal Service Workers: 90% W%, 10% M Clerical and Administrative Workers: 78% W, 22% M Labourers: 28% W%, 72% M All occupations: 58.4% W%, 41.6% M <u>2025:</u> Managers: 66.7% W, 33.3% M Professionals: 68.9% W, 31.1% M Technicians and Trades Workers: 10.7% W, 89.3% M Community and Personal Service Workers: 94.4% W, 5.6% M Clerical and Administrative Workers: 91.9% W, 8.1% M Labourers: 35.3% W, 64.7% M All occupations: 59.3% W, 40.7% M			Council has made incremental progress on Indicator 7 by: - maintaining a stable overall gender composition (59.3% women in 2025, up slightly from 58.4% in 2023) with no self-described employees, and - increasing women's representation in key non-traditional areas such as Managers (+3.1% to 66.7% in 2025) and Labourers (+7.3% to 35.3% in 2025). This progress has been supported by the 2021-2025 GEAP's early achievements in attracting more women to traditionally male outdoor roles. Alongside these gains, there is ongoing gender segregation in Technicians/Trades Workers roles (with 10.7% women's representation in 2025), female under-representation in outdoor leadership, and an over-representation of women in Clerical and Administrative roles (91.9% in 2025) and among Community and Personal Services Workers (94.4% in 2025). Key Opportunities: - The 2026-2030 GEAP has opportunity to build on this momentum by targeting further diversification through low-cost actions like skill-sharing for women in trades/labourer roles, male champions in female-dominated areas, and leadership pathways for outdoor roles, leveraging Employment Hero tracking and existing spreadsheet processes.
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*Indicators (column K)

1. Gender composition of all levels of the workforce
2. Gender composition of the governing body
3. Equal remuneration for work of equal or comparable value across all levels of the workforce, irrespective of gender
4. Sexual harassment in the workplace
5. Recruitment and promotion practices in the workplace
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
7. Gendered segregation within the workplace

Section 2.2 Describing factors limiting and contributing to progress (required)

P: Indicator	Q: Did any of the factors listed below limit or contribute to your progress?*(required)	R: Explain how any factor(s) limited or contributed to your progress. If 'none' is selected, write N/A and move to (S) (required)	S: List the strategies implemented that contributed to or aligned with the indicator. (required)
1	☐ None ☐ a ☐ b ☐ c ☒ d ☐ e ☐ f ☒ g	Council's genuine attempts to build an inclusive culture and strengthen leadership capability have supported a broadly gender-balanced workforce, with women and men each representing at least 40% of employees and gender parity across senior leaders. At the same time, limited HR data systems and reliance on manual spreadsheets constrain real-time trend tracking and more in-depth, intersectional analysis.	GEAP 2021-2025 strategies: 1.1 Diversity of leaders at Council (achieved/maintained balance). 1.2 Support leaders to build capacity to lead a gender equitable and inclusive workplace (leadership programs, 360 feedback, Leader-as-Coach, Change Champions). 3.3 Develop sustainable and appropriate resource plan to support delivery of the GEAP (HR Coordinator role, training investment). Leadership capability and culture initiatives, including the cultural transformation program (Leader-as-Coach, 360 feedback, Change Champions, refreshed values), have helped embed expectations for inclusive, gender-balanced leadership pipelines and decision-making.
2	☐ None ☒ a ☒ b ☒ c ☐ d ☐ e ☐ f ☐ g	Council does not control electoral outcomes, and the 2024 local government elections (managed externally) resulted in a significant decline in women's representation, limiting progress despite Council's commitment to gender equality.	GEAP 2021-2025 strategies: 2.2 Improve Councillor confidence to lead on workforce gender equality and inclusion (gender equality training for Councillors post-election). - Emerging commitment (2.1) to strengthen intersectional data collection for Councillors, to be progressed in the next GEAP.
3	☐ None ☐ a ☐ b ☐ c ☒ d ☒ e ☒ f ☒ g	Limited analytical capacity, manual data processes and competing operational priorities have constrained Council's ability to undertake detailed pay equity analysis and design targeted interventions across occupation groups. While genuine attempts were made to collect remuneration data and introduce more transparent role banding and pay assessment processes, these efforts have not yet translated into reduced gender pay gaps, particularly for senior leaders and Technicians/Trades roles.	GEAP 2021-2025 strategies: 3.1 Understand pay gaps at all levels with a view to eliminating these gaps (remuneration data collection as part of the 2025 audit). 5.1 Promote gender equality and inclusion through the recruitment process (role banding and pay assessment to support consistent remuneration decisions). 5.2 Improve career development opportunities for people of all genders (PDP enhancements, learning and development access) (ongoing).
4	☐ None ☐ a ☒ b ☐ c ☒ d ☐ e ☐ f ☒ g	Resource constraints and the absence of a full HRIS have limited the availability of comprehensive sexual harassment data, with significant gaps in reporting, outcomes and satisfaction measures. Nonetheless, genuine attempts to build a respectful and safe workplace – through mandatory induction, cultural transformation work and review of People Matter Survey results - have contributed to positive perceptions of respectful behaviours, even though under-reporting remains a concern.	GEAP 2021-2025 strategies: 4.1 Increase organisational commitment to addressing workplace sexual harassment (mandatory training, review of survey results, IDAHOBIT activities). 1.2 Support leaders to build capacity for a respectful and inclusive workplace (leadership development, culture program).
5	☐ None ☐ a ☐ b ☐ c ☒ d ☐ e ☐ f ☒ g	Resourcing for specialised HR analytics is limited; however, Council has made genuine efforts to embed gender-equitable recruitment and promotion practices within existing capacity. Policy reforms, diverse panels and clearer performance development processes have supported gender-balanced recruitment and promotions, even though perceptions of fairness in recruitment and promotion remain mixed.	GEAP 2021-2025 strategies: 5.1 Promote gender equality and inclusion through the recruitment process (updated policy, diverse panels, transparent shortlisting, relocation allowances). 5.2 Improve career development opportunities for people of all genders (enhanced PDP process, learning and development access, mentoring).

6	☐ None ☐ a ☐ b ☐ c ☒ d ☒ e ☒ f ☒ g	The lack of a dedicated HRIS and reliance on spreadsheets have limited Council's ability to capture detailed data on parental leave and carer's leave, resulting in N/A data for several measures. Despite these constraints, genuine attempts to expand flexible work - including "Our Ways of Working" remote working policy, senior leaders modelling compressed weeks and prioritising flexibility for parents in a constrained regional childcare context - have contributed to strong employee confidence in requesting flexible arrangements.	GEAP 2021-2025 strategies: 6.1 Provide people of all genders access to flexible working arrangements (flexible work promotion, "Our Ways of Working" remote work policy, leaders modelling flexibility). 6.2 Normalise family and caring responsibilities for people of all genders (Right to Disconnect briefings, prioritising flexible work for parents of young children). 6.3 Raise awareness around family violence and support those of all genders impacted by it (family violence leave guidance, 16 Days of Activism activities).
7	☐ None ☒ a ☒ b ☐ c ☒ d ☐ e ☐ f ☒ g	As a small regional council with a traditional mix of indoor and outdoor roles, Alpine Shire faces structural labour market constraints that contribute to persistent gender segregation in trades, outdoor roles and administrative positions. Within these constraints, genuine attempts - including targeted efforts to attract women into outdoor roles and a broader cultural transformation program - have supported incremental increases in women's representation in some non-traditional occupations, even though significant segregation remains.	GEAP 2021-2025 strategies: 7.1 Investigate a male- and female-dominated work area and develop an approach to increasing gender diversity (early progress attracting women into outdoor roles). 1.1 Diversity of leaders at Council and broader cultural transformation work, supporting more inclusive pathways into leadership across occupations.

*Factors (column Q):

- the size of the organisation, including the number of employees
- the nature and circumstances of the organisation, including any barriers to making progress
- requirements that apply to the organisation under any other Act, including an Act of the Commonwealth
- the organisation's resources
- the organisation's operational priorities and competing operational obligations
- the practicability and cost to the organisation of making progress; and
- genuine attempts made by the organisation to make progress.

Step 3: Reporting on GEAP strategies

Section 3.1 Explaining incomplete strategies (if any) (required)

Council has made considerable progress in implementing its gender equality strategies. Of the 15 strategies and measures tracked, approximately 25 per cent are fully or partially implemented, 40% are in progress, a further 30 per cent are being maintained on an ongoing basis, and one strategy is yet to be implemented. These proportions reflect a mix of foundational work that is now embedded (for example, leadership diversity and recruitment practices), longer-term initiatives that are still maturing (such as data and pay equity work), and a small number of actions that will need to be prioritised in the next GEAP cycle.

While all GEAP 2021-2025 strategies were progressed to some degree, several key initiatives remain incomplete or partially implemented at the close of the reporting period.

- **Strategy 1:** Develop accountability framework to measure progress remains in progress. Employee workforce data is currently captured through manual processes, and Council does not have a dedicated HR information system capable of supporting comprehensive reporting and monitoring of gender equality indicators. Intersectional workforce data collection has not yet been implemented. Strengthening data systems remains a priority to support improved measurement and reporting against GEAP targets in the next cycle.
- **Strategy 3:** Develop a sustainable and appropriate resource plan has been partially implemented, with a clearer and more intentional focus emerging over the current reporting period. Responsibility for coordinating the Gender Equality Program has been allocated to the Human Resources Coordinator, with funding provided to support training and external expertise to build organisational capability in conducting Gender Impact Assessments (GIAs). As a small regional council with competing operational priorities, Council is not in a position to establish a dedicated full-time gender equality role; instead, it is actively working to embed gender equality responsibilities more explicitly and sustainably within the HR Coordinator portfolio. This approach recognises the need to balance finite resources with Council's ongoing commitment to gender equality and has implications for the pace and sequencing of implementation, which will continue to be managed through careful prioritisation and planning.
- **Strategy 1.3:** Audit the physical workplace environment has seen limited progress. While flexible work arrangements and reasonable workplace adjustments continue to be provided where appropriate to support employee accessibility and inclusion, a comprehensive audit of the physical workplace environment to ensure it is safe, welcoming and accessible and meets the needs of people of all genders and identities has not yet been undertaken. This remains an identified need for the 2026-2030 GEAP.
- **Strategy 2.1:** Strengthen intersectional data collection for Councillors has not yet been implemented. This will be prioritised in the next GEAP cycle to meet legislative requirements to collect and report gender-disaggregated and, where available, intersectional data on Council's governing body, and to support targeted actions to encourage diverse candidates ahead of future local government elections.
- **Strategy 3.1:** Training on pay gap analysis has been progressed but not completed. While workforce remuneration data was collected as part of the 2025 Workplace Gender Audit, training for HR, Finance and leadership staff on pay gap analysis has not yet been undertaken. Given the deterioration in pay gaps across several occupational groups and at senior leader level, this will be a key priority for the 2026-2030 GEAP.
- **Strategy 6.2:** Benchmarking across the local government sector has not yet been completed. While flexible work arrangements have been successfully implemented and expanded, benchmarking activity to compare Council's approaches with similar regional councils has not been undertaken due to capacity constraints.
- **Strategy 7.1:** Develop an approach to increasing gender diversity in male- and female-dominated work areas has seen early progress but is not yet complete. Council has observed an increase in women joining traditionally male-dominated outdoor roles, which demonstrates promising momentum. Women, however, remain under-represented in outdoor leadership positions, and a targeted approach to reducing occupational gender segregation has not yet been developed. This highlights an area for future focus in the next GEAP.

These incomplete strategies reflect genuine resource and capacity constraints faced by a small regional council without a dedicated HRIS or specialised HR analytics capability. Nonetheless, Council has made genuine attempts across all areas of the GEAP and remains committed to progressing these priorities in the 2026-2030 cycle, building on the foundations established during 2021-2025.

Section 3.2 Describing achievements, challenges and learnings (recommended)

Key achievements

Council achieved several significant milestones during the 2021-2025 GEAP period that demonstrate genuine progress toward gender equality and workplace inclusion:

- **Leadership gender parity achieved:** Council reached gender parity across all leadership levels (CEO, Directors and Managers), with five women and five men in these roles as at June 2025. This represents substantial progress from 2023, when women comprised only 33.3% of senior leaders, and demonstrates Council's commitment to building gender-balanced leadership pipelines.
- **Cultural transformation program launched:** In partnership with The Dattner Group, Council commenced a comprehensive cultural transformation program focused on strengthening leadership capability, building trust and accountability, improving organisational systems and clarity, empowering staff, and fostering an inclusive, safe and collaborative workplace. Key initiatives delivered include 360-degree leadership development, emotional intelligence training, Leader-as-Coach training, organisation-wide staff engagement forums, development of a cross-organisational Change Champions group (15 women and 13 men), and a refresh of Council's corporate values. These initiatives have helped embed expectations for inclusive, gender-balanced leadership and decision-making.
- **Enterprise Agreement (EA) improvements:** The new EA adopted in 2024 strengthened gender-equitable employment conditions compared with the 2020 agreement, including greater flexibility for secondary carer leave, introducing family violence leave provisions, formalising return-to-work support following parental leave, reinforcing flexible work arrangements and hybrid working options, and introducing greater flexibility in working hours by allowing employees to vary their span of hours by agreement. These changes particularly support employees with caring responsibilities and improve workforce participation and inclusion for people of all genders.
- **Flexible work normalised:** Council successfully implemented the "Our Ways of Working" remote working policy, allowing employees to work remotely for up to 40% of their working week. Senior leaders have modelled flexible work arrangements, with two Directors and two Managers formally working compressed work weeks (nine-day fortnights). This has contributed to strong employee confidence in requesting flexible arrangements, with 88% of women and 85.7% of men agreeing they are confident their request would be given due consideration (up from 80.9% and 83.3% respectively in 2023).

- **Recruitment and promotion equity:** Council updated its Recruitment, Selection and Appointment Policy to strengthen transparency and equity, introducing requirements for diverse selection panels and equitable shortlisting practices. Council also implemented a formal role banding and pay assessment process to support transparent and consistent decisions regarding remuneration, promotion and career progression.
- **Increased workforce participation and development:** During 2024-25, 137 staff participated in 52 training and development activities across the organisation. Council enhanced its Performance Development Plan (PDP) process to strengthen reflection on learning needs, career aspirations and succession planning. Mental Health First Aid training was delivered to equip employees to support colleagues experiencing mental health challenges.
- **Gender equality capability built:** Managers and Coordinators were invited to participate in in-house GIA training, with strong participation across leadership cohorts. Additional technical support was provided through specialist consultancies to assist teams to apply the GIA framework in practice and strengthen the quality of assessments. These initiatives helped build organisational awareness of gender equality obligations and support leaders to integrate gender considerations into decision-making processes.
- **Progress in non-traditional roles:** Council observed an increase in women joining traditionally male-dominated outdoor roles, with women's representation in Labourer roles increasing from 28% in 2023 to 35.3% in 2025. While challenges remain, this demonstrates early success in attracting women to non-traditional occupations.

Challenges

Alongside these achievements, Council faced some key challenges during the GEAP implementation period:

- **Resource and capacity constraints:** As a small regional council with competing operational priorities, limited HR data systems (relying on manual spreadsheets rather than a dedicated HRIS), and constrained analytical capacity, Council faced ongoing challenges in undertaking detailed pay equity analysis, comprehensive data collection and reporting, and systematic monitoring of GEAP progress indicators. These constraints affected the pace and depth of implementation across several GEAP strategies.
- **Data systems limitations:** The absence of a dedicated HR information system has limited Council's ability to capture detailed data on parental leave, carers leave, sexual harassment reporting outcomes, and intersectional workforce characteristics. This has resulted in significant data gaps (NA values for several indicators) and constrained Council's capacity to track trends, identify emerging issues early, and design targeted, evidence-informed interventions.
- **Gender pay gap deterioration:** Despite achieving gender parity in representation at the leadership level, Council has not made progress on pay equity. The overall mean total remuneration gender pay gap increased from 2.5% in 2023 to 4.2% in 2025, with deteriorations in Technicians/Trades Workers (15.4% to 20.9%) and senior leaders (9.9% to 21.9%). This suggests that genuine attempts to introduce transparent role banding and pay assessment processes have not yet translated into reduced pay inequity, and that more targeted, occupation-specific interventions are needed.
- **Persistent occupational segregation:** Despite incremental progress, significant gender segregation remains in several occupational groups, including Technicians/Trades Workers (10.7% women in 2025), Community and Personal Service Workers (94.4% women), and Clerical and Administrative Workers (91.9% women). Women also remain under-represented in outdoor leadership positions despite increased representation in labourer roles. Structural labour market constraints and the traditional nature of regional council work contribute to these patterns.
- **Regional context constraints:** As a regional council, Council faces unique challenges including limited access to childcare services (requiring prioritisation of flexible work for parents of young children aged 0-5 years), difficulties attracting diverse candidates to a remote location (addressed through relocation allowances), and structural labour market patterns that contribute to occupational segregation. These contextual factors shape the pace and nature of progress possible.

Key learnings

Several key learnings have emerged from the 2021-2025 GEAP implementation:

- **Leadership capability investment is supporting positive outcomes:** Council's investment in leadership development through cultural transformation work, Leader-as-Coach training, 360-degree feedback and emotional intelligence training has demonstrably supported both gender parity in leadership and broader cultural improvements. This suggests that focusing on leadership capability as a lever for gender equality and inclusion is effective and should be sustained.
- **Data systems are essential:** The absence of a dedicated HRIS has been a significant barrier to monitoring, reporting and evidence-informed decision-making. Strengthening data infrastructure, including enhanced use of existing platforms like Employment Hero, is key to understanding true prevalence of issues, tracking change over time, and designing targeted interventions.
- **Policy change needs to be supported by practice and culture:** While Council successfully introduced transparent recruitment processes, role banding, pay assessment frameworks and flexible work policies, these policy reforms have not automatically translated into reduced pay gaps or eliminated perceptions of unfairness in recruitment and promotion. This suggests that policy change must be accompanied by targeted communication, ongoing leader capability building, regular review of implementation, and employee feedback loops to build confidence and achieve intended outcomes.
- **Cultural foundations matter:** Investments in culture change - including values refresh, Change Champions, staff engagement forums and Leader-as-Coach training - have created a foundation of commitment to respectful conduct and inclusion that supports gender equality work. Employee confidence in requesting flexible work, perceptions of respect, and willingness to call out inappropriate behaviour have all improved, suggesting that cultural transformation and gender equality work are mutually reinforcing.

Progress is uneven and requires sustained effort, highlighting the need for sustained, multi-year commitment rather than expecting linear improvement across all areas simultaneously.

Section 3.3 Providing other updates on implementation (recommended)

Awareness-raising activities:

- Council marked IDAHOBIT with a workplace event highlighting inclusion for LGBTIQ+ people, and participated in the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence through workplace activities, community engagement and a staff walking challenge.
- Information about family and domestic violence services is available on Council's website, and staff are supported through referrals to mental health and wellbeing services.
- Managers received guidance on new family violence leave provisions and were briefed on Right to Disconnect changes, ensuring leaders can support employees to access entitlements.

Section 3.4 Describing resourcing allocation (required)

Responsibility for coordinating the Gender Equality Program sits with the Human Resources Coordinator, who oversees GEAP implementation, workplace gender audits and progress reporting, gender impact assessments, and integration of gender equality into People and Culture policies and processes. Actions are supported through Council's People and Culture Business Partnering model, which embeds GEAP work into day-to-day HR practice rather than a separate, siloed function.

Council has allocated funding for training and external expertise to build capability in conducting GIAs, including in-house training for leaders and specialist consultancy support. Resources have also been directed to the cultural transformation program with The Dattner Group and broader learning and development, providing leadership development, staff engagement activities and training opportunities that support inclusive practice and career development for people of all genders.

While resources are limited for a small regional council, these investments have enabled initial implementation of key GEAP initiatives and established important foundations for future progress. Council is now exploring how to strengthen the prioritisation of gender equality within the HR Coordinator role and make better use of existing systems, recognising that more ambitious work on pay equity analysis, intersectional data collection and occupational desegregation will require additional resourcing over the 2026–2030 GEAP cycle.

Any other additions or comments (optional)