

Gender Equality Action Plan

2021-2025

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7 March 2022	v2	Draft for Exec Review
11 March 2022	v3	Draft presented to Staff for comment
12 April 2022	v4	Final version incorporating feedback

1. Message from the CEO

I am pleased to present to you the Alpine Shire Council Gender Equality Action Plan 2021-2025.

Our Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) outlines a range of initiatives that we will implement to achieve gender equality and inclusiveness in the workplace together with targets to help measure our achievements.

Gender equality and inclusiveness in our workplace will be achieved when all our staff, present and future, have equal access to resources, opportunities, and rewards within Alpine Shire Council regardless of their gender and social identity.

Key strategies that we will implement to progress the Gender Equality Action Plan by 2025 include:

1. Develop accountability framework to measure progress towards achieving the targets established in the GEAP.
2. Demonstrate clear leadership support for gender equality and inclusiveness.
3. Allocate resources to support delivery of the GEAP through the Workforce Plan.
4. Apply an intersectional gender lens to support the integration of gender equality and inclusiveness across all areas of the workplace.
5. Consistent and regular communication.

The GEAP supports our Community Vision 2040 and Council Plan 2021-2025. It will strengthen Alpine Shire Council's ability to attract, develop and retain an inclusive, engaged and high performing workforce so that we can continue to deliver critical services and initiatives which support our community.



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Charlie Bird

Chief Executive Officer

2. Legislative Framework

The *Gender Equality Act 2020* requires Councils 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 their progress in relation to workplace gender equality;
- Promote gender equality in policies, programs and services that impact the public;
- Complete gender impact assessments.

The *Local Government Act 2020* further requires Councils to develop a Workforce Plan, which also must include Council's commitment to gender equality in the workforce.

Council's Workforce Plan references this Gender Equality Action Plan to ensure that gender and intersectional issues are considered as part of Council's resourcing into the future.

2.1 GENDER EQUALITY PRINCIPLES

The *Gender Equality Act 2020* sets out ten Gender Equality Principles:

1. 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.
2. Gender equality benefits all Victorians regardless of gender.
3. Gender equality is a human right and precondition to social justice.
4. Gender equality brings significant economic, social and health benefits for Victoria.
5. Gender equality is a precondition for the prevention of family violence and other forms of violence against women and girls.
6. Advancing gender equality is a shared responsibility across the Victorian community.
7. 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.
8. 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.
9. Women have historically experienced discrimination and disadvantage on the basis of sex and gender.
10. Special measures may be necessary to achieve gender equality.

2.2 WORKPLACE GENDER EQUALITY INDICATORS

The *Gender Equality Act 2020* sets out seven workplace gender equality indicators:

1. Gender composition of all levels of the workforce;
2. Gender composition of governing bodies;
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 -
 - a. Family violence leave;
 - b. Flexible working arrangements; and
 - c. Working arrangements supporting employees with family or caring responsibilities;
7. Gendered segregation within the workplace.

This GEAP outlines a range of initiatives that we will implement to address each of the seven workplace gender equality indicators.

2.3 INTERSECTIONAL DISADVANTAGE

Section 4(c) of the *Gender Equality Act 2020* recognises that "*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*". This is referred to as "intersectional gender equality" and is covered by Gender Equality Principle 8.

3. Consultation Process

3.1 CONSULTATION PROCESS

This GEAP has been developed utilising consultation with councillors, employees, and employee representatives.

Council's approach to consultations was designed to ensure that the obligation under the *Gender Equality Act 2020* to undertake meaningful consultation was achieved. Council engaged a contractor to facilitate three sessions remotely across Council including:

- Employees (women and gender diverse staff)
- Employees (men)
- Alpine Shire Council management team

Key themes explored during consultation included:

- Visioning for gender equality
- Workplace culture and behaviours
- Flexible Working Arrangements and Caring Responsibilities
- Recruitment and Promotion
- Sexual Harassment and Bullying

Feedback from each of the themes have been incorporated into this GEAP.

3.1.1 What can Alpine Shire Council be most proud of in terms of gender equality?



3.1.2 What does a gender equitable Alpine Shire Council look like in the future?



4. Workplace Gender Audit

Council conducted a workplace gender audit as at 30 June 2021, which provides baseline data for comparing future growth and improvement in gender equality and inclusiveness. Collecting this data identifies where there is gender inequality and when measured against the gender equality indicators, provides insight of what Council needs to prioritise to improve gender equality.

Council does not currently have the ability to collect the intersectionality data recommended by the Commission for Gender Equality in the Public Sector (CGEPS). Intersectionality data further represents how gender inequality may be compounded by the impacts of disadvantage or discrimination that someone might experience on the basis of other factors such as Aboriginality, age, disability, or ethnicity. A focus over the term of this GEAP will be to improve Council's ability to collect this intersectional data, providing better insights into where Council can improve in the future.

4.1 OVERALL RESULTS

As at 30 June 2021, the following picture of the Alpine Shire Council workforce is shown:

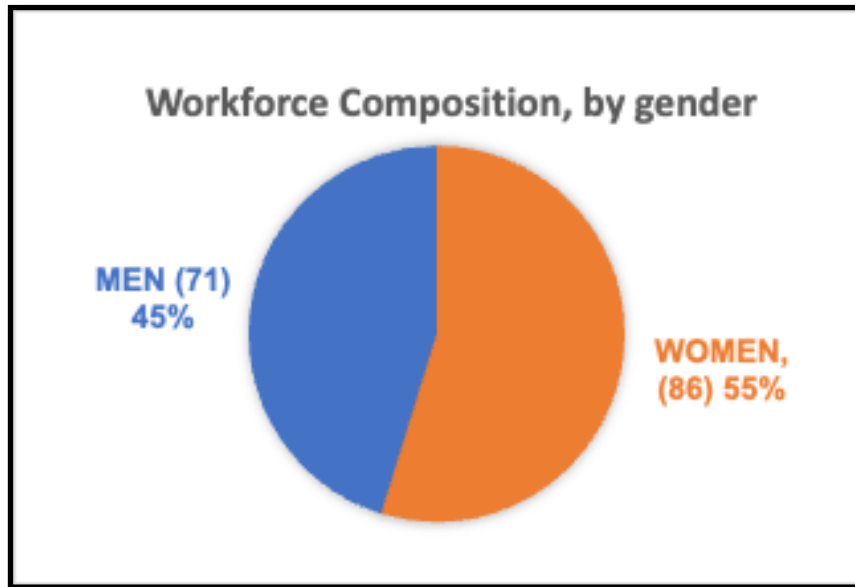


Figure 1: Workforce composition by gender (headcount) (30 June 2021)

Amongst men in the workforce,

- 69% of men work full-time
- 16% work part-time
- 14% work casually

Amongst women in the workforce,

- 25% of women work full-time
- 50% of women work part-time
- 24% work casually

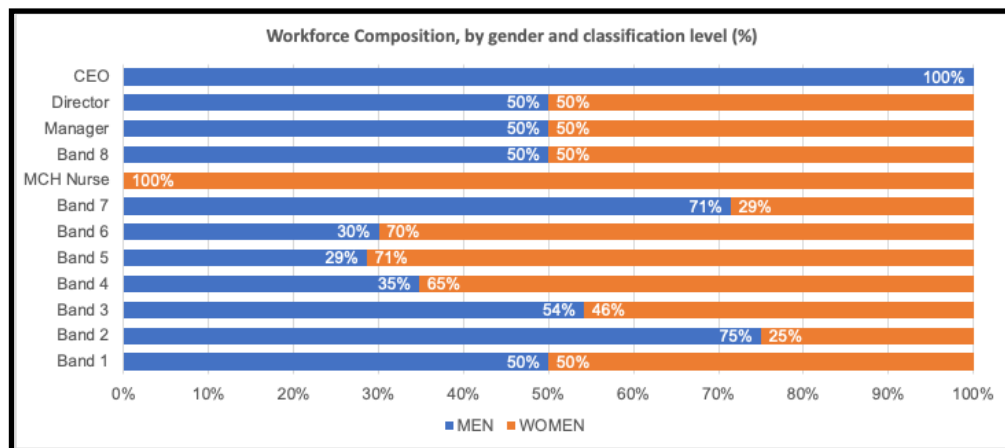


Figure 2: Workforce composition by gender and classification level (30 June 2021)

Further insight into the workforce composition is shown for each of the workforce indicators in this GEAP.

5. Case for Change

Gender equality and inclusiveness in our workforce means all our staff have equal access to resources, opportunities, and rewards within Alpine Shire Council regardless of their gender and social identity.

It will strengthen Alpine Shire Council's ability to attract, develop and retain an inclusive, engaged and high performing workforce so that we can continue to deliver critical services and initiatives which support our community and deliver the Council Plan Objectives.

This GEAP will be implemented every day by all staff through the application of our core values: Accountable, Leadership, Productive, Integrity, Nurture and Engaged.

6. Strategies and Measures

The Centre for Gender Equality in the Public Sector has provided generalised guidance on what is required and what is recommended in the development of strategies and measures in a GEAP.

As Alpine Shire Council (Council) is classified as a Small Rural Council, we have opted to ensure that this GEAP has all details as required by the CGEPS and have extended into the recommended inclusions where resources allow.

The strategies and measures in this GEAP will ensure that Council can deliver on the requirements of the *Gender Equality Act 2020* during the term of this plan, making progress towards improvements in gender equality not only in our own Council, but contributing to an improvement in gender equality across the Local Government sector.

6.1 KEY STRATEGIES

Strategies	Actions 2022-2025	2025 Target
1. Develop accountability framework to measure progress towards achieving the targets established in the GEAP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop accountability and reporting framework. Investigate and report on workforce data gaps. Make necessary systems and process changes. Annual campaign encouraging people to update their personal information as aligned to the legislation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accountability and reporting framework developed. Regular reporting to Executive against key measures. Annual campaign for employees to update their details.
2. Demonstrate clear leadership support for gender equality and inclusiveness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior Leadership to launch GEAP. 6 monthly progress review through AMT. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GEAP launched by CEO.
3. Develop sustainable and appropriate resource plan to support delivery of the GEAP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish necessary resource and explore sharing a resource with nearby Councils. Establish Gender Equality budget. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resource established (human and financial).
4. Apply an intersectional gender lens to support the integration of gender equality across all areas of the workplace.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training for HR and leaders on applying an intersectional gender lens to policies. Review key policies through an intersectional gender lens as they come up for review (OHS, HR, EA). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training for HR and Leaders.
5. Consistent and regular communication.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a communications plan to support the role out of actions under the GEAP. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communications plan developed and actioned.

6.2 INDICATOR 1: WORKFORCE COMPOSITION

6.2.1 Workplace Gender Audit findings

Workforce Data

- Overall workforce split is 55% women and 45% men, no data available for people of self-described gender
- 69% of men and 25% of women work full time.
- 16% of men and 50% of women work part-time
- 14% of men and 24% of women work casually

Employee Experience Data

- Completed by 67 employees or approximately 43% the organisation
- 55% of respondents identified as women, 43% as men and 4% prefer not to say
- 81% of women and men agree there is a positive culture in the organisation in relation to employees of different sexes / genders.
- 86% of women and 88% of men and people who prefer not to say believe there is a positive culture in the organisation in relation to employees of different ages.

6.2.2 Consultation Findings

Feedback from consultation with staff has been built into the strategies and actions for this Indicator.

6.2.3 Indicator 1: Workforce Composition

Measures	Actions 2022-2025	2025 Target
1. Diversity of leaders at Council.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor gender diversity representation in leadership roles. • Improve reporting on intersectional attributes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender and non-binary identification data collected for leaders.
2. Support leaders to build capacity to lead a gender equitable and inclusive workplace.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All leaders with direct reports participate in Gender Equity for Leaders training (year 1, prior to any training being conducted with staff). • Include capacity and commitment to lead a gender equitable and inclusive workforce in leaders position descriptions. • All leaders with direct reports participate in Inclusive Leadership practice training to lead an inclusive workplace. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All leaders complete Gender Equity for Leaders training. • Position Descriptions for leaders updated.
3. Audit the physical workplace environment to ensure it is safe, welcoming and accessible and meets the needs of people of all genders and identities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete workspace audit using an intersectional gender lens to determine barriers to gender equality and inclusion. • Develop prioritisation plan for addressing inequality that is identified. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan to make workspaces more inclusive, safe and welcoming of people of all genders and identities.

6.3 INDICATOR 2: COMPOSITION OF GOVERNING BODY

6.3.1 Workplace Gender Audit Findings

Workforce Data

Composition at 30 June 2021

- 43% men: 57% women (7 people in total).
- 100% of male Councillors are over 45 years old and 50% of women Councillors are aged under 35 years old.
- Council did not collect data for Councillors on aboriginality, age, cultural identity, disability, religion, sexual orientation.

Composition at 31 March 2022

Mayor and Deputy Mayor elections occurred in November 2021. In December 2021 one woman Councillor resigned. Resultant election countback in January 2022.

- 57% men: 43% women (7 people in total)
- 100% of male Councillors are over 45 years old and 67% of women Councillors are aged under 35 years old.

Employee Experience Data

Not applicable, no employee experience data under this indicator.

6.3.2 Consultation Findings

Feedback from consultation with staff has been built into the strategies and actions for this Indicator.

6.3.3 Indicator 2: Composition of Governing Body

Measures	Actions 2022-2025	2025 Target
1. Strengthen intersectional gender data collection for Councillors to meet legislative requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate the need for intersectional data collection to Councillors and address privacy issues. • Establish ongoing process for data collection • Offer Councillors the opportunity to update their personal details bi-annually. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor data collection is inclusive of intersectional attributes.
2. Improve Council confidence to lead on workforce gender equality and inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillors completes Gender Equitable and Inclusive Leadership training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillors complete Gender Equitable and Inclusive Leadership training

6.4 INDICATOR 3: EQUAL REMUNERATION

6.4.1 Workplace Gender Audit Findings

Workforce Data

- On average men at Alpine earn 0.2% (\$177) more than women on median base salary and 0.7% (\$588) on median total remuneration (salaries are annualised FTE)

Employee Experience Data

Not applicable, no employee experience data under this indicator.

6.4.2 Consultation Findings

Feedback from consultation with staff has been built into the strategies and actions for this Indicator.

6.4.3 Indicator 3: Equal Remuneration

Measures	Actions 2022-2025	2025 Target
1. Understand pay gaps at all levels with a view to eliminating these gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate and report on pay gaps across the organisation at all levels and eliminate any bias that might exist. • Training for HR and key leaders on pay gap analysis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarity on pay discrepancies at all levels across the organisation. • Increased literacy on pay gap across the organisation.

6.5 INDICATOR 4: SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN THE WORKPLACE

6.5.1 Workplace Gender Audit Findings

Workforce Data

- 0 formal complaints received in 2020/21.

Employee Experience Data

- 81% of women and 88% of men agree they feel safe to challenge inappropriate behaviour at work.
- 84% of women and 96% of men agree that Council encourages respectful workplace behaviours.
- 73% of women and 88% of men agree that Council takes steps to eliminate bullying, harassment and discrimination.

6.5.2 Consultation Findings

Feedback from consultation with staff has been built into the strategies and actions for this Indicator.

6.5.3 Indicator 4: Sexual Harassment in the Workplace

Measures	Actions 2022-2025	2025 Target
<p>1. Increase organisational commitment to addressing workplace sexual harassment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address underlying behaviours and attitudes that can lead to sexual harassment through rolling out organisation wide 'Gender Equity and Bystander' training. • Develop leaders guide on responding to sexual harassment and provide tailored, in-person, training for leaders. • Review Sexual Harassment Policy and ensure it is trauma informed and gender equitable and inclusive. • Annual whole of organisation communications regarding sexual harassment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 90% or more of women and men agree Council takes steps to eliminate bullying, harassment, and discrimination.

6.6 INDICATOR 5: RECRUITMENT AND PROMOTION PRACTICES

6.6.1 Workplace Gender Audit Findings

Workforce Data 2020/2021

- Composition of new recruits was 52% women and 48% men.
- 1.5 women exited the organisation for every 1 man.
- .

Employee Experience Data

- 59% of women and 65% of men agree that the organisation makes fair recruitment and promotion decisions, based on merit.
- 54% of women and 50% of men agree they have an equal chance at promotion in the organisations
- 70% of women and 81% of men agree they are satisfied with the way their learning and development needs have been addressed in the last 12 months.
- 89% of women and 92% of men agree that gender is not a barrier to success.

6.6.2 Consultation Findings

Feedback from consultation with staff has been built into the strategies and actions for this Indicator.

6.6.3 Indicator 5: Recruitment and Promotion Practices

Measures	Actions 2022-2025	2025 Target
1. Promote gender equality and inclusion through the recruitment process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore and unpack 'merit' based recruitment with HR and Leaders. • Review recruitment process end to end using an intersectional gender lens. • Implement recommendations from recruitment review. • Deliver Gender Equitable and Inclusive recruitment practices training for hiring managers, HR and leaders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review recruitment practices. • Hiring managers, HR and leaders are trained in Gender Equitable and Inclusive recruitment practices. • At least 55% of women and men feel they have an equal chance of promotion.
2. Improve career development opportunities for people of all genders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote Professional Development to employees as part of regular performance management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase career development opportunities.

6.7 INDICATOR 6: FLEXIBLE WORK AND LEAVE ARRANGEMENTS

6.7.1 Workplace Gender Audit Findings

Workforce Data

- 21% of the workforce are on formal flexible working arrangements
- 29% of women and 11% of men are on formal flexible working arrangements
- Of those that took parental leave, 75% were women, 25% were men. None exited the organisation during parental leave.

Employee Experience Data

- 72% of employees reported in the survey that they used some form of flexible work arrangement, noting that the survey was conducted during COVID restrictions where staff were working remotely.
- 70% of women and 81% of men were confident that their request for flexible work would be considered.
- 73 of women and 65% of men agree there is a positive culture around caring responsibilities.
- 78% of women and 69% of men agree there is a positive culture around family responsibilities.
- 92% of women and 85% of men agree Council would support them if they needed to take family violence leave.

6.7.2 Consultation Findings

Feedback from consultation with staff has been built into the strategies and actions for this Indicator.

6.7.3 Indicator 6: Flexible Work and Leave

Measures	Actions 2022-2025	2025 Target
1. Provide people of all genders access to flexible working arrangements and address perceived or identified barriers to career advancement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate flexible working arrangements available. • Implement Remote Work Policy. • Leaders to role model and promote own use of flexible work arrangements. • Promote career development opportunities to employees who use flexible work arrangements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 80% of women and 70% of men agreeing there is a positive culture around family and caring responsibilities.
2. Normalise family and caring responsibilities for people of all genders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benchmark parental leave conditions and support within the local government sector. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 80% of women and 70% of men agreeing there is a positive culture around family and caring responsibilities.
3. Raise awareness around family violence and support those of all genders impacted by it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual 16 Days of Activism campaign includes events focused on workforce. • Apply an intersectional gender lens to family violence training. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 90% of women and men agree Council would support them if they needed to take family violence leave. • Annual 16 Days of Activism campaign – internally facing.

6.8 INDICATOR 7: GENDERED SEGREGATION IN THE WORKPLACE

6.8.1 Workplace Gender Audit Findings

Workforce Data

- Gendered segregation of the workforce, by Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations groupings
- Men outnumber women among Technicians and Trades (85%), Machinery Operators and Drivers (83%) and Laborers (73%)
- Women outnumber men among Community and Personal Service Workers (91%), Clerical and Administrative (93%) and Professionals (71%)

ANZSCO category	Women	Men
1. Managers	45%	55%
2. Professionals	71%	29%
3. Technicians and Trade	15%	85%
4. Community and Personal Service Workers	91%	9%
5. Clerical and Administration	93%	7%
6. Sales	0%	0%
7. Machinery Operators & Drivers	17%	83%
8. Labourers	27%	73%
9. Other	0%	0%
Total	55%	45%

Employee Experience Data

76% of women and 81% of men agree that the organisation uses respectful images and language.

81% of women and 96% of men agree that in their workgroup work is allocated fairly, regardless of gender

6.8.2 Consultation Findings

Feedback from consultation with staff has been built into the strategies and actions for this Indicator.

6.8.3 Indicator 7: Gendered Segregation in the Workplace

Measure	Actions 2022-2025	2025 Target
1. Investigate a male and female dominated work area and develop an approach to increasing gender diversity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake additional investigation into more detailed levels of the ANZSCO hierarchy to determine areas of the workforce that are gender segregated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report on detailed levels of ANZSCO identifying gender segregated work areas.

7. Resourcing implementation of the GEAP

Council will determine resources (financial and human) to implement the GEAP as part of its annual budgeting process and review of its Workforce Plan.

8. Measuring progress

Council will report on progress in relation to the strategies and measures set out in this GEAP at least every second year as required by legislation.

9. Approval

Approved by the Chief Executive Officer on 13 April 2022



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CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER