



POLICY

C004 Gender Equality Policy

1 Purpose

The purpose of the Gender Equality Policy (**the Policy**) is to demonstrate Hindmarsh Shire Council's commitment to promoting and encouraging gender equity and to addressing any gender imbalances that may exist within the Council workplace and the wider community.

Hindmarsh Shire Council commits to ensuring that everyone in the Hindmarsh Shire, regardless of their gender identity, has access to equal power, resources and opportunities, and is treated with dignity, respect and fairness.

This Policy Statement establishes the expectation that gender equality is considered and prioritised in all current and future Council planning, policy, service delivery and practice.

2 Scope

This policy applies to all Councillors and Council employees.

3 Definitions

CEO	means Chief Executive Officer of Hindmarsh Shire Council
Council	means the Hindmarsh Shire Council
HSC	Hindmarsh Shire Council

4 Gender equality principles

Council commits to the following the *Gender Equality Act 2020*'s 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 being regardless of gender, should be free to develop 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.

5 Gender equality indicators

Council will utilise the following indicators to measure gender-related changes over a period of time:

- Gender composition of all levels of the workforce and governing bodies such as Community Asset committees.
- Equal remuneration for work of equal or comparable value across all levels of the workforce irrespective of gender.
- Levels of sexual harassment in the workplace.
- Recruitment and promotion practices in the workplace.
- Availability and utilisation of terms, conditions and practices relating to family violence leave, flexible working arrangements, working arrangements supporting employees with family or caring responsibilities, gendered segregation within the workplace and any other prescribed matters.

6 Communication

This policy will be placed on Council's website.

7 Responsibility

Policy Owner: Chief Executive Officer

8 References

Legislation
<i>Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006</i>
<i>Gender Equality Act 2020</i>
<i>Local Government Act 2020</i>



GUIDELINES

Gender Equality Guidelines

1 Objective

Council, in developing policies, programs and delivering services to the public, that have a direct and/or significant impact on the public must consider, promote and take necessary and proportionate action towards achieving gender equality. This Guideline outline the processes required by Council to be compliant with the *Gender Equality Act 2020*.

2 Responsibility

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for implementing and actioning procedures relating to Gender Equality to ensure compliance, reporting and timelines are met.

3 Step 1 – Gender Equality Impact Assessment

Council must undertake a gender impact assessment when developing or reviewing any policy, program or service that has a direct and significant impact on the public.

The assessment must incorporate the process and format used to undertake the impact assessment and include the following –

- a) assess the effects that the policy, program or service may have on persons of different genders; and
- b) state how the policy, program or service will be developed or varied in order to—
 - (i) meet the needs of persons of different genders; and
 - (ii) address gender inequality; and
 - (iii) promote gender equality; and
- c) if practicable, take into account that gender inequality may be compounded by disadvantage or discrimination that a person may experience on the basis of any of the following-
 - (i) Aboriginality;
 - (ii) age;
 - (iii) disability;

- (iv) ethnicity;
- (v) gender identity;
- (vi) race;
- (vii) religion;
- (viii) sexual orientation.

4 Step 2 – Workplace Gender Equality Audit

Council must undertake a workplace gender audit before developing a Gender Equality Action Plan. The audit must assess the state and nature of gender inequality as at 30 June in the Gender Equality Action Plan report year to which the audit relates, having regard to the following-

- a) workplace gender equality indicators:
 - (i) gender composition of all levels of the workforce
 - (ii) gender composition of governing bodies
 - (iii) equal remuneration for work of equal or comparable value across all levels of the workforce, irrespective of gender
 - (iv) sexual harassment in the workplace
 - (v) recruitment and promotion practices in the workplace
 - (vi) availability and utilisation of terms, conditions and practices relating to—
 - family violence leave; and
 - flexible working arrangements; and
 - working arrangements supporting employees with family or caring responsibilities
 - (vii) gendered segregation within the workplace
 - (viii) any other prescribed matters.
- b) any gender equality targets or gender equality quotas set
- c) the disadvantage or discrimination that a person may experience on the basis of any of the following in addition to gender inequality-
 - (i) Aboriginality;
 - (ii) age;
 - (iii) disability;
 - (iv) ethnicity;
 - (v) gender identity;
 - (vi) race;
 - (vii) religion;
 - (viii) sexual orientation;
- d) any other matters that the CEO considers relevant

- e) must incorporate the process and format used to undertake the audit
- f) gender-disaggregated data; and
- g) if available, data about Aboriginality, age, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, race, religion and sexual orientation.

The following factors must be taken into account in determining whether Council has made reasonable and material progress in relation to the above Gender Equality Indicators-

- a) the size of Council and number of employees
- b) the nature and circumstances of Council, including any barriers to making progress
- c) requirements that apply to Council under any other Act
- d) Council's resources
- e) Council's operational priorities and operational obligations
- f) the practicability and cost to Council of making progress
- g) genuine attempts made by Council to make progress.

5 Step 3 – Preparing a Gender Equality Action Plan

In preparing the Hindmarsh Shire Council Gender Equality Action Plan, Council must take into account the gender equality principles, consult with employees and any other relevant stakeholders.

The CEO must prepare and include the following-

- a) results of the workplace gender audit
- b) strategies (actions) and measures for promoting and improving gender equality.

Council must allocate adequate resources to the development and implementation of the Gender Equality Action Plan.

6 Step 4 – publication and submission of plan

Council must submit a Gender Equality Action Plan to the Commissioner on or before the 31 October in each Gender Equality Action Plan reporting year.

Within a reasonable time after submitting the Gender Equality Action Plan Council must publish the plan on its website and notify Council and employees.

The Gender Equality Action Plan is only accepted if the following criteria is met and the Commission is satisfied-

- a) the report or document includes the matters set out in step 3
- b) the report or document has been prepared no more than 12 months before the Start of the Gender Equality Action Plan reporting year
- c) The Gender Equality Action Plan has been published on Council's website and Council and employees have been notified of the publication.

If the Gender Equality Action Plan requires an amendment the plan will need to be resubmitted to the Commissioner and again, publish the amended plan on Council's website and notify Council and employees.

7 Step 5 – Gender Equality Progress Reports

Council must submit a progress report to the Commissioner on or before 31 October in every second year after submitting a Gender Equality Action Plan.

The progress report must in relation to any gender impact assessment undertaken by Council within the relevant period-

- a) identify the policy, program or service that was the subject of the assessment and report on
 - o how the policy, program or service was varied in order to meet the needs of different genders
 - o how it addressed gender inequality
 - o promote gender equality
- b) report on Council's progress within the relevant period in relation to the strategies and measures set out in the Plan
- c) demonstrate Council's progress in relation to the indicators and meeting of targets and quotas
- d) must incorporate the process and format used to undertake the progress report.

*Council must not identify or report on a policy, program or service that includes information that would be an exempt document under the FOI Act 1982 or any other provision of another enactment or relating to confidential information.

8 Compliance

The Commission may issue a compliance notice to Council if the Commission reasonably believes that Council has failed to comply with the Act.

9 Communication

The guidelines will be placed on Council's website.

10 Responsibility

Owner: Chief Executive Officer

11 Supporting documents

Legislation
<i>Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006</i>
<i>Gender Equality Act 2020</i>

MAV Creating a Place for Women in Sport – a gender equity self-assessment for sport and recreation clubs

12 Document control

Gender Equality Policy and Guidelines		Policy Category	COUNCIL
Version Number	1.1	Policy Status	Adopted
Approved/Adopted By	COUNCIL	Approved/Adopted on:	6 March 2024
Responsible Officer	CEO	Review Date:	6 March 2027
Version History	Date	Version	Description
	March 2021	1.0	New Policy
	March 2024	1.1	Reviewed on Schedule