



## **Appendix 3**

### **12.1 Gender Equality Statement of Commitment**

*Gender Equality Statement of Commitment*

# **Ordinary Meeting of Council**

Wednesday 26 April 2023 at 7:00pm

Queenscliff Town Hall

## **Borough of Queenscliffe – Gender Equality Statement of Commitment**

### **Introduction**

The Victorian *Gender Equality Act 2020*, which came into effect in March 2020, has provided the Borough of Queenscliffe the opportunity to consider and recommit to achieving a fundamental human right, gender equality.

The *Gender Equality Act* obliges all Victorian councils to consider and promote gender equality as well as taking necessary and proportionate action towards achieving gender equality.

This Gender Equality Statement of Commitment affirms the Borough of Queenscliffe's commitment to gender equality, not because legislation requires this, but because it aligns with the values of Council and our Community Vision to be 'a welcoming, connected and diverse community'.

Inspired by the Borough's Latin motto, *Statio Tutissima Nautis*, that translates as 'the safest anchorage for seafarers', Council's vision for the future is that:

*The Borough remains a safe haven defined by its unique heritage, rich culture and significant natural environment. It is a special and restorative place for an involved and caring community and our visitors.*

A critical part of being a safe haven is providing a community where all people, regardless of their gender identity, can participate fully without disadvantage, discrimination or prejudice.

Council recognises women, girls, non-binary and gender diverse people face unacceptable levels of systemic inequality, gender-based discrimination and gender-based violence as a result of gender inequality. We also recognise that gender inequality can be further compounded by other forms of disadvantage or discrimination a person faces on the basis of Aboriginality, age, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, race, religion, sexual orientation and other attributes, and commit to addressing intersectional gender inequality wherever possible.

The Borough of Queenscliffe is committed to playing its part in the shared responsibility we all have in advancing gender equality. We commit to actively progressing gender equality in our work, our policies, programs and services, and our service delivery to the community.

### **Vision**

The Borough of Queenscliffe is a community where all people, regardless of their gender identity, can participate fully in all aspects of their lives without disadvantage, discrimination or prejudice.

### **Purpose**

This Gender Equality Statement of Commitment as well as the *Gender Equality Act 2020* will guide the Borough of Queenscliffe's actions to promote gender equality and take actions to achieve gender equality.

### **Context**

The Gender Equality Statement of Commitment aligns with the Borough of Queenscliffe's:

- Council Plan 2021–2025, particularly: Portfolio 1 Health and Wellbeing Priority 3: *Promote diversity and gender equality*;
- Community Vision, particularly *Encouraging an inclusive and engaged community*; and
- Gender Equality Action Plan 2021–2025.

## **Guiding principles**

The Borough of Queenscliffe commits to the gender equality principles contained in the *Gender Equality Act 2020*:

- All Victorians should live in a safe and equal society, have access to equal power, resources and opportunities and be treated with dignity, respect and fairness.
- Gender equality benefits all Victorians regardless of gender.
- Gender equality is a human right and precondition to social justice.
- Gender equality brings significant economic, social and health benefits for Victoria.
- Gender equality is a precondition for the prevention of family violence and other forms of violence against women and girls.
- Advancing gender equality is a shared responsibility across the Victorian community.
- All human beings, regardless of gender, should be free to develop their personal abilities, pursue their professional careers and make choices about their lives without being limited by gender stereotypes, gender roles or prejudices.
- Gender inequality may be compounded by other forms of disadvantage or discrimination that a person may experience on the basis of Aboriginality, age, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, race, religion, sexual orientation and other attributes.
- Women have historically experienced discrimination and disadvantage on the basis of sex and gender.
- Special measures may be necessary to achieve gender equality.

## **Commitments**

The Borough of Queenscliffe commits to positive action towards workplace gender equality through:

- Undertaking a biennial workplace gender audit
- Progressing our Gender Equality Action Plan based on the findings of our workplace gender audits
- Reporting on our progress in implementing the Gender Equality Action Plan and utilising the workplace gender equality indicators
- Applying a gender lens to all internal operational policies when being reviewed
- Including gender equality as a standing agenda item for Staff Consultative Committee meetings
- Implementing workplace initiatives that address structural barriers to gender equality
- Participating in the annual '16 days of activism against gender-based violence' global campaign that commences each year on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, 25 November, and runs until 10 December, Human Rights Day. Participation may include training for staff and the community on issues such as unconscious bias and active bystander training, or raising awareness on matters of gender-based violence.

The Borough of Queenscliffe commits to promoting gender equality in our community by:

- Undertaking gender impact assessments on all new Council policies, programs and services that directly and significantly impact the public, as well as those up for review
- Training Council staff and Councillors in gender equality
- Actively seeking diverse representation in Council's community advisory groups or any other Council-appointed committee/group

- Where possible and appropriate, having Councillors mentor and/or encourage potential Councillor candidates who could bring more diversity to Council
- Where practical, applying an intersectional approach to consider how gender inequality can be compounded by disadvantage or discrimination that a person may experience on the basis of other factors such as age, disability, ethnicity and so on
- Participating in regional gender equality initiatives, including being a member of G21's Respect 2040 program

The Borough of Queenscliffe encourages all members of our community, including residents, ratepayers and visitors, to consider and promote gender equality wherever possible. Community members are encouraged to utilise the following resources to assist in understanding and progressing gender equality:

[The Commission for Gender Equality in the Public Sector | Commission for Gender Equality in the Public Sector \(genderequalitycommission.vic.gov.au\)](https://www.genderequalitycommission.vic.gov.au)

[Gender-Equality-Resource-List-and-Links.pdf \(womenshealthbsw.org.au\)](https://www.womenshealthbsw.org.au/Gender-Equality-Resource-List-and-Links.pdf)