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CITY COUNCIL

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Glen Eira City Council

Our commitment to equity and inclusion



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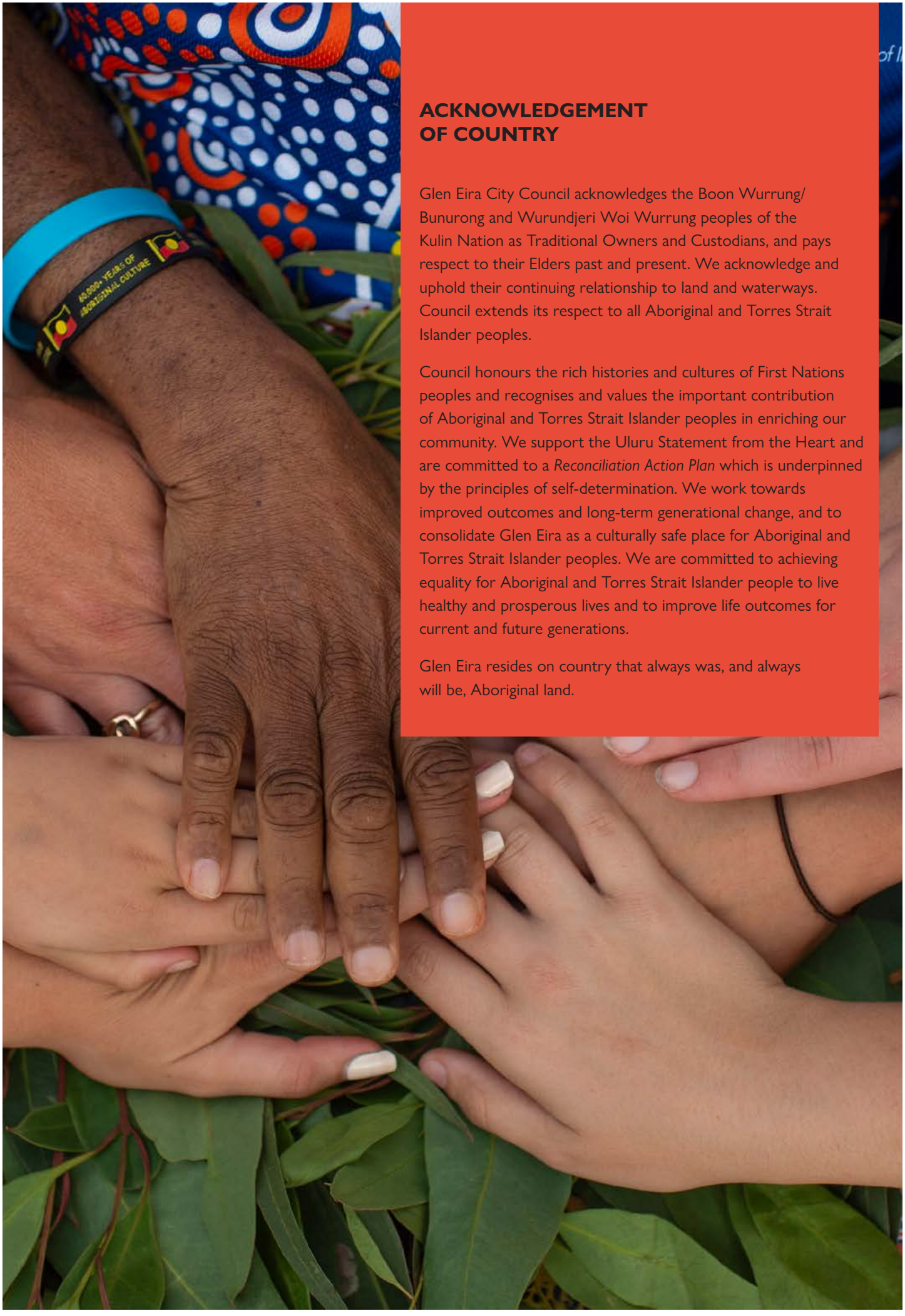
The *Glen Eira City Council Our commitment to equity and inclusion* was adopted by Glen Eira City Council at its ordinary Council meeting on Wednesday 4 November 2026.

Use of Artificial Intelligence

Glen Eira City Council used artificial intelligence tools to assist with drafting and editing this document. All content was reviewed, refined and approved by Council officers.

Cover image

A participant and facilitator from a cohosted event with Extended Families, May 2026.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Glen Eira City Council acknowledges the Boon Wurrung/ Bunurong and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung peoples of the Kulin Nation as Traditional Owners and Custodians, and pays respect to their Elders past and present. We acknowledge and uphold their continuing relationship to land and waterways. Council extends its respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Council honours the rich histories and cultures of First Nations peoples and recognises and values the important contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in enriching our community. We support the Uluru Statement from the Heart and are committed to a *Reconciliation Action Plan* which is underpinned by the principles of self-determination. We work towards improved outcomes and long-term generational change, and to consolidate Glen Eira as a culturally safe place for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We are committed to achieving equality for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to live healthy and prosperous lives and to improve life outcomes for current and future generations.

Glen Eira resides on country that always was, and always will be, Aboriginal land.

OUR COMMITMENT TO EQUITY AND INCLUSION

We believe that a truly vibrant and resilient community is one where everyone feels seen, heard and valued. We know that not everyone starts from the same place or has equal access to opportunities and resources. Our commitment is to support a city that is welcoming, accessible and equitable for all.

OUR SHARED VISION

Our *Community Vision*, shaped and shared by residents, is for a thriving and empowered community working together for an *inclusive* and sustainable future. We deliver on this not as a single initiative, but as a guiding principle embedded across our planning, services and civic life. We consider people's different circumstances, stage of life and the factors that shape their experiences, so everyone can participate, feel included, and be treated with dignity.

This *Commitment* is guided by principles that are consistent with the *Victorian Values Statement*, including inclusion and participation, fairness, freedom to be yourself, and a shared responsibility to reject discrimination and foster community cohesion so everyone can participate, experience a sense of belonging, and be treated with dignity.

Our community has told us that cultural diversity and respect matter, that information, services and infrastructure should be accessible to everyone, and that inclusive practices should be embedded in Council's decision-making. This *Commitment* reflects these priorities and sets out our approach to inclusion as proactive, consistent, and fundamental. It provides a shared language and guiding principles for how equity and inclusion are considered across Council's work.

WHAT WE MEAN BY EQUITY AND INCLUSION

Inclusion happens when people are safe, respected, valued and able to participate fully in community life, regardless of their background, identity, or life experience.

Equity is when we work towards fair outcomes by recognising people have different needs and may require different levels of support. This moves away from a one-size-fits-all approach and helps achieve just outcomes and opportunities for all.

Diversity is the presence of differences among people within a community, including across gender, culture, age, religion, education, ability, and sexuality.



WHY INCLUSION MATTERS

Embedding inclusion consistently and from the outset leads to more welcoming, connected, vibrant and productive communities.

For the Glen Eira community, this means:

> services and information can be easily accessed and used by people of all needs, abilities and backgrounds.

> public spaces and facilities work for a broad range of users, improving safety, comfort and participation.

> community engagement and consultation processes are fair and meaningful, so all people can have a say in decisions that affect them.

> people feel recognised, respected and able to participate, without obstacles that hinder involvement or wellbeing.

> outcomes are fairer over time, particularly for people whose experiences of exclusion have limited access to services or opportunities in the past.

> people have equitable opportunities to participate, contribute, connect and thrive within community life, regardless of their circumstances or background.

Inclusive practice supports a community where people feel seen, heard and valued, and where participation in civic life is not limited by avoidable barriers.



WHO WE ARE FOCUSED ON

We design services to be **accessible for everyone**, while responding to people who experience barriers to access, participation or outcomes.

This helps ensure our planning, services and advocacy respond to the lived experiences of people most impacted by exclusion. We also recognise that people with lived experience bring valuable expertise. We work alongside communities as partners in shaping decisions, designing solutions and improving outcomes.

We prioritise communities more likely to **experience systemic disadvantage**, including:

- Multicultural communities
- LGBTIQA+ communities
- People with a disability (visible and non-visible)
- First Nations peoples
- Others who experience marginalisation or exclusion, including children and young people

We apply an **intersectional lens**, recognising that people's experiences are shaped by overlapping social, economic and identity-related factors such as:

- Race and culture
- Gender
- Ability
- Age
- Sexuality
- Socio-economic status

We focus on **removing barriers** that affect participation, such as:

- Accessibility
- Language
- Safety
- Discrimination
- Recognition
- Economic

WHAT THIS COMMITMENT LOOKS LIKE IN PRACTICE

We apply this *Commitment* through our planning, decision-making and service delivery processes. This includes using evidence and community insight, identifying barriers early, considering equity impacts, engaging people with lived experience, building staff capability and monitoring progress over time. These approaches help ensure inclusion is considered consistently across Council's work.



INCLUSIVE INFRASTRUCTURE AND PLACE DESIGN

We plan, design and deliver infrastructure and public spaces, including streets, footpaths, parks and community facilities, so they are accessible, safe and usable for a wide range of people. We consider how people move through, use and experience places, and apply universal design principles from the outset.

We identify where the built environment creates barriers and make improvements to support access, safety and participation. This includes designing parks, facilities and public spaces that respond to different needs and experiences and requirements of the people who use them.

WHAT THIS LOOKS LIKE IN PRACTICE

Council upgrades parks, playgrounds and community facilities to make them more accessible, safe and usable for a wider range of people. **Booran Reserve** is a strong local example of this in practice.

The reserve is designed with gently sloped, continuous pathways that support easy movement for people using prams, wheelchairs or mobility aids. Pathways include clear sightlines and colour contrast, helping people navigate the space with more confidence.

The reserve also features soft lighting throughout, illuminating pathways, sightlines and key seating areas. This provides usability after dark, without compromising the safety or comfort of the reserve.

The playground features accessible and sensory play elements, including a raised sandpit and water pump that can be used from a seated position. Play areas are connected rather than separated, allowing children to move between activities in ways that suit their needs.

Planting, water features and quieter spaces support different play styles, while seating throughout the reserve allows families, carers and older people to use the space comfortably.

Overall, the design considers how the whole site is used, supporting more inclusive participation in everyday community life.

INCLUSIVE SERVICE DESIGN AND DELIVERY

We design and deliver services, programs and information so they are accessible, welcoming and responsive to the diverse needs of our community. We identify where standard approaches do not work for everyone and make adjustments to improve access and participation.

This includes providing accessible formats, tailoring services where needed and responding to community feedback to improve how services are experienced.



WHAT THIS LOOKS LIKE IN PRACTICE

The ***Hidden Disability Sunflower Program*** is available to support people with non-visible disabilities to access our services more confidently and comfortably. Staff participating in the program complete training to better understand non-visible disability and how to provide appropriate support. Trained staff wear a Sunflower badge or lanyard, helping community members identify people who can assist them if needed. The program helps staff recognise when someone may need additional support and respond in a respectful and appropriate way.

This includes making simple adjustments to how services are delivered, such as allowing more time, providing clearer communication, or offering alternative ways to access support. These actions can make a significant difference to people's experience, particularly for those whose needs may not be immediately visible.

By improving awareness and responsiveness across our services, we create more welcoming environments and reduce barriers to participation for people who may otherwise find it difficult to access our services.

INCLUSIVE ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION

We plan and deliver engagement so more people can participate, shape decisions and influence outcomes. We recognise community members as experts in their own experiences and seek opportunities for co-design and shared decision-making where appropriate. We use a range of accessible and culturally appropriate approaches and proactively reach people who are less often heard. We remove barriers to participation and make sure community input is reflected in how decisions are made.



WHAT THIS LOOKS LIKE IN PRACTICE

It was important to hear from a wide range of people when we developed our ***Council Plan 2025-2029***. We designed the *Our Place, Our Plan* engagement program to make it easier for more people to take part in ways that suited them.

We delivered more than 50 pop-up, drop-in and targeted activities, alongside online and print options. This gave people different ways to participate depending on their needs and preferences. We took engagement into the community by going to libraries, festivals and activity centres, so people could have their say in familiar and accessible settings.

We also ran 28 targeted activities focused on people who are often under-represented, including multicultural communities, people with disability, older residents, young people and LGBTIQA+ community members.

Accessibility was built in from the start, with translated materials, interpreters, Easy Read content, printed surveys and accessible online tools. This helped more people take part and ensured a broader range of community voices shaped our planning.

INCLUSIVE OPPORTUNITIES

We support fair access to opportunities that build participation, connection and wellbeing across the community. This includes learning, employment, volunteering and community activities. We work with partners and use our programs, funding and procurement to reduce barriers and improve access for people who may otherwise miss out.



WHAT THIS LOOKS LIKE IN PRACTICE

Glen Eira Libraries deliver programs and services that help people build **digital skills and confidence**, particularly for those who may not otherwise have access to technology or support.

This includes free access to computers, Wi-Fi and online resources, as well as guided support through one-on-one help sessions and small group workshops. Programs focus on practical, everyday skills, such as setting up and using a device, sending emails, accessing online services, staying safe online and using apps to stay connected with family and friends.

We also provide support for people to access essential services online, such as MyGov, Medicare and job applications, which can be a barrier for people without digital confidence or access.

These programs are particularly important for people who are socially isolated, older residents, or new to technology. By offering free, local and low-pressure support, libraries provide a safe and welcoming environment to learn at your own pace.

By providing inclusive and low-barrier opportunities through libraries, we support connection, independence and wellbeing across the community.

INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

We embed inclusion into our policies, strategies and decision-making processes. We build staff capability, use tools and evidence to inform decisions, and monitor progress over time. We are accountable for how this commitment is applied and continue to improve through feedback, data and reporting.



WHAT THIS LOOKS LIKE IN PRACTICE

Inclusive governance and leadership is embedded not only through staff and Councillor training, but also through the formal governance frameworks that set behavioural expectations and accountability.

Through mandatory training and ongoing professional development, we strengthen understanding of equity, diversity, inclusion and respectful engagement across all areas of Council. Staff complete mandatory training on topics such as anti-discrimination, equal opportunity, prevention of sexual harassment, bullying and inclusive practice. Councillors also undertake mandatory and ongoing professional development in areas including gender equality, cultural inclusion, reconciliation, disability inclusion, preventing discrimination and harassment.

Our commitment is also reinforced through governance frameworks including the *Staff Code of Conduct* and *Councillor Code of Conduct*. These frameworks establish clear expectations for respectful conduct, ethical decision-making, integrity, accountability and inclusion, helping to create a culture where discrimination, harassment and exclusion are not tolerated and where diverse perspectives are valued.

By embedding inclusion through leadership, capability building and governance, we help ensure that our decisions, services and opportunities are fair, accessible and responsive to the diverse needs of our community.

GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS

Term	Definition
Accessibility	Designing products, services, environments and information so they can be used by as many people as possible. Accessibility includes physical access, digital access and communication access.
Barriers	Factors that limit or prevent people from accessing services, participating in community life or achieving fair outcomes. Barriers can be physical, social, cultural, financial or systemic.
Community Vision	The *Glen Eira 2040 Community Vision* guides strategic planning and decision-making for the future of Glen Eira. Our vision for 'a thriving and empowered community working together for an inclusive and sustainable future' was developed through extensive community consultation and engagement.
Disability	Refers to both visible and non-visible disability. Visible disabilities are those that are immediately apparent to others, such as using a wheelchair or a service animal. Non-visible (or hidden/invisible) disabilities are those that are not obvious to others just by looking, and they encompass a wide range of physical, mental, and neurological conditions.
Diversity	The presence of differences among people within a group, including gender, culture, age, religion, education, ability and sexuality.
Equity	Achieving justice and fair conditions by providing people with support or adjustments that are relevant to their circumstance and need. This moves away from a one-size-fits-all approach to ensure comparable outcomes and opportunities for all.
Gender equity	The equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women, men, non-binary, trans and gender diverse people.
Inclusion	When people are safe, respected, valued and able to contribute and participate fully, regardless of their background, identity, or life experience.
Intersectionality	An approach that considers how multiple aspects of a person's identity (age, sexuality, gender, ability, etc.) overlap to form specific experiences of discrimination or exclusion.
Universal design	An approach to design that aims to create spaces, services and information that are usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialised design.

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National Relay Service

A phone solution for people who have a hearing or speech impairment. Internet relay users connect to NRS then ask for 03 9524 3333.

TTY dial 13 36 77 or Speak and Listen dial 1300 555 727 then ask for 03 9524 3333. https://internet-relay.nrscall.gov.au

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