



Gender Equity Leadership Statement – Berrigan Shire Council

Introduction

Berrigan Shire Council is committed to fostering an inclusive and diverse community where all individuals, regardless of gender, have equal opportunities to participate, lead, and thrive. As a local government authority, we recognise the importance of promoting gender equity not only within our organisation but in the broader community we serve. This Gender Equity Leadership Statement outlines our commitment to creating a workplace culture that champions equality, diversity, and inclusivity.

Core Values

At the heart of our commitment to gender equity are the values of fairness, respect, and collaboration. We believe a diverse and inclusive leadership team is essential for effective governance and community development. By valuing and leveraging the unique perspectives and experiences of individuals of all genders, we aim to create a vibrant and responsive local government that addresses the needs and aspirations of everyone.

Policy Framework

Berrigan Shire Council is dedicated to implementing policies and initiatives that advance gender equity across all aspects of our operations. Recruitment and promotion processes that ensure equal opportunities for all individuals are key to this work, as well as proactive measures to address any existing gender disparities within our workforce. We will regularly review and update our policies to adapt to evolving best practices and community expectations.

We as a team have a positive duty under the *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* to ensure our workplace actively prevents workplace sexual harassment, sex discrimination and other relevant unlawful conduct. For more information please click on the following link [Resources on Positive Duty \(humanrights.gov.au\)](https://www.humanrights.gov.au/positive-duty).

Leadership Commitment

The leadership of Berrigan Shire Council is committed to leading by example when it comes to gender equity. We recognise diversity in leadership enhances decision-making processes and leads to more innovative and effective outcomes. We will actively promote the development and advancement of women and individuals of all genders within our organisation. Our commitment extends to supporting flexible work arrangements that accommodate diverse personal and family needs.



Education and Awareness

We acknowledge the importance of ongoing education and awareness initiatives to promote gender equity. Berrigan Shire Council will provide training programs to raise awareness about unconscious biases, gender stereotypes, and the benefits of diversity. We will also engage with the community to foster a broader understanding of the importance of gender equity and encourage community-wide participation in promoting inclusive practices.

We as community leaders, understand inherently what constitutes professional and appropriate conversation and behaviour. It is an integral, critical component of our roles, including knowing how to speak respectfully and courteously to a wide variety of people, in many diverse situations. It is part of our Code of Conduct that we treat all employees with dignity and respect. If any leader or staff members realises in themselves that they are not meeting that expectation, then they must consider how that reflects on their professionalism.

Accountability and Reporting

To ensure transparency and accountability, Berrigan Shire Council will establish mechanisms for monitoring and reporting on progress towards gender equity goals. Regular assessments of workforce demographics, pay equity, and leadership representation will be conducted. The findings will be communicated openly to staff, the community, and other stakeholders, demonstrating our commitment to continuous improvement.

The positive duty requirement means, for all employees, particularly any employee supervising another, that should they see behaviour that would or might constitute sexual harassment or sexual discrimination, then they **MUST** be addressed that behaviour immediately.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Berrigan Shire Council is unwavering in its dedication to foster gender equity internally and in the broader community. Through proactive policies, leadership commitment, education initiatives, and accountability measures, we aim to create a workplace and community where all individuals, regardless of gender, can thrive and contribute to the shared success of our region. By championing gender equity, Berrigan Shire Council is taking a crucial step towards building a more just, inclusive, and vibrant future for all.

Karina Ewer MBA, MCDR, GAICD, MAHRI
Chief Executive Officer