

Diversity

COUNCIL POLICY NO.129

1. POLICY STATEMENT

To demonstrate Gannawarra Shire Council's commitment to community diversity. Gannawarra Shire Council believes in the inherent strength of a vibrant, diverse and inclusive community where the backgrounds, perspectives and life experiences of our people help us to forge strong, respectful connections.

2. POLICY

Gannawarra Shire Council is committed to:

- Supporting and encouraging diversity in the community. The policy has been developed in recognition of the changing population of Gannawarra Shire and of the richness that diversity brings to social, political and community life.
- Addressing gender-based violence and economic inequality through engagement with diverse groups and maintaining and strengthening regional partnerships.
- Providing adequate, equitable and appropriate services and facilities to the local community taking into account their diverse needs and community cohesion; and encouraging active participation in public and civic life.

This policy is underpinned by the following principles:

- *Respect*: The need to respect and make provision for the culture, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical and mental abilities, religious beliefs and political beliefs within an Australian legal and institutional framework.
- *Intersectional Inclusion*: Gannawarra Shire Council recognises that diversity is multidimensional and that individuals may experience distinct and compounded barriers at the intersection of multiple identities. An intersectional understanding guides how Council views equity, access, and inclusion are understood, ensuring that policies, programs, and community engagement are informed by the lived experiences of all community members. *Community Relations and Civic Engagement*: All individuals in the Gannawarra Shire should have an equal opportunity to contribute to and participate in all aspects of public and civic life.
- *Accessible and Equitable Service Provision*: All individuals should have equal opportunity to make use of and participate in relevant activities and services provided by Gannawarra Shire Council.
- *Economic Drivers: Using Diversity for Competitive Advantage*: Recognise the diverse population of Gannawarra Shire Council as a valuable resource and promote this resource to maximise the social and economic development of the community.

3. DEFINITIONS

Diversity: Relates to race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical and mental abilities, religious beliefs and political beliefs within Australian law.

Intersectionality: is a framework for understanding how various aspects of a person's identity—such as race, gender, class, sexuality, or disability—intersect and combine to create unique, overlapping experiences of privilege, discrimination, or disadvantage.

4. RELATED LEGISLATION

- *Local Government Act 2020*
- *Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001*
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*
- *Victorian Equal Opportunity Act 2010*
- *Gender Equality Act 2020*
- *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006.*

5. POLICY REVIEW

Council will review this policy as required but always within two years after a general election.

At the time it was developed, this policy was compliant with the *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

6. FURTHER INFORMATION

Members of the public may inspect all Council policies at Gannawarra Shire Council's Kerang and Cohuna office or online at www.gannawarra.vic.gov.au.

Any enquiries, in relation to this policy should be directed to the Chief Executive Officer on (03) 5450 9333.