

Gender Equality Advisory Committee

Co-Chairs Communique

The Gender Equality Advisory Committee (GEAC) held its first meeting for 2022 and fifth overall on Thursday, 3 March 2022.

This meeting focused on strategies to embed gender equality in Council Workforces. GEAC canvassed issues including workforce planning, capacity building, creating safe and respectful workplaces, and gender equality as an occupational health and safety issue.

GEAC invited the Hon. Gabrielle Williams MP, Minister for Women to address the Committee. The Minister provided an update on the government's work to revise the Victorian Gender Equality Strategy and broader Victorian initiatives to advance equality. The Minister discussed with members their recently submitted 2021 End of Year advice and noted the importance of the GEAC's recommendations.

Dr Niki Vincent, Public Sector Gender Equality Commissioner

GEAC heard from Dr Niki Vincent who provided an overview of key priorities in the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, the work of the Commission and progress on the Gender Equality Action Plans required by local governments.

Pia Cerveri, Victorian Trades Hall Council

GEAC heard from Ms Cerveri who provided a presentation on gender inequality as an OH&S Risk and a summary of the guide developed in partnership with WorkSafe to assist employers in addressing this risk.

Lisa Darmanin, Australian Services Union

Ms Darmanin led a facilitated discussion on the theme of Workforce Issues, covering matters including recruitment, workforce planning and capacity building.

Julie Reid, Executive Director of Local Government Victoria

Ms Reid provided an update on current projects underway in LGV, including the Leadership for Women in Local Government Program and the Local Government Culture Project.

Cr Sarah Race, Mornington Peninsula Shire

GEAC heard from Councillor Race on the submission made on behalf of GEAC to the Local Government Culture Project. Cr Race canvassed issues including creating safe and respectful council environments, managing the political nature of the role and maintaining good governance.

GEAC will next meet on the 19 May 2022, with discussion and presentations focused on the theme of Council Culture, Diversity and Structural Barriers and Systems.

For further information on the GEAC, please go to <https://www.localgovernment.vic.gov.au/our-programs/gender-equity>

GEAC Co-Chairs

Kat Theophanous MP and Juliana Addison MP