

# Terms of Reference

## Gender Equality Advisory Committee

### Establishment of Group

1. The Gender Equality Advisory Committee (GEAC) is a non-statutory advisory committee established by the Minister for Local Government (the Minister).

### Functions

2. The functions of the group are to:
  - a) advise the Minister and the Minister for Women on strategies aimed at advancing gender equality in local government and delivering the Victorian Government's target of 50 per cent female mayors and councillors by 2025;
  - b) progress state-wide strategies and frameworks that support women in council administration and women elected on council; and
  - c) advise on ways to build on the reforms in the *Gender Equality Act 2020* and *Local Government Act 2020*.

### Membership

3. The group consists of the Chair and up to 16 members.
4. The Minister may remove the Chair and members from office at any time and for any reason.
5. Vacancies may be filled by the Minister for Local Government for the remainder of the term of GEAC.

### Chair and Deputy Chair

6. The Chair will be appointed by the Minister.
7. The Minister may appoint one or more persons to be the Chair.
8. The Chair(s) will meet with the Minister and the Minister for Women together twice a year to provide the Committee's advice.
9. In the event that the Minister does not appoint more than one person to be the Chair, the Minister may appoint a Deputy Chair.
10. The Deputy Chair will assume the responsibilities of the Chair if the Chair is unable to perform those responsibilities.

### Members

11. Standing members will be nominated to represent:
  - a) the Victorian branch of the Australian Local Government Women's Association;
  - b) the Victorian/Tasmanian branch of the Australian Services Union;
  - c) the Municipal Association of Victoria;
  - d) the Victorian Local Governance Association;
  - e) Local Government Professionals; and
  - f) Reconciliation Victoria.

12. Additional members be selected from the following entities:

- a) councillors or mayors;
- b) council Chief Executive Officers (CEOs); or
- c) senior council officers.

13. In selecting the additional members to ensure a diversity of views, the Minister for Local Government will consider:

- experience and expertise;
- diversity balance;
- the need for representation across different council groupings; and
- existing participation in other committees and representation of constituencies to Government.

14. A standing member of GEAC ceases to be a member if they are no longer a part of the entity they were originally appointed to represent.

15. An additional member of GEAC ceases to be a member if they no longer hold a position set out in paragraph 12.

16. The Chair(s), in consultation with the Minister, can invite observers to the GEAC meetings.

### Term of Appointment

17. The term of appointment will be till 31 December 2025.

### Remuneration

18. All appointments to the GEAC are unpaid, including the position of Chair(s) and Deputy Chair.

### Meeting Schedule

19. The group will meet up to four times a year. The Chair(s) may schedule extraordinary meetings as required.

### Meeting Procedure

20. The meeting schedule and venue may be adjusted by the Chair(s). Where possible, members will be notified of any changes at least two weeks prior to the meeting date.

21. The Office for Women will have standing observer status at meetings.

22. The Chair(s) may invite others to meetings. Members may also request that the Chair(s) invite other participants.

23. A record of meeting proceedings will be kept. Circulation of such records will be restricted to members and the Minister for Local Government and the Minister for Women. The Minister for Local Government may authorise for the records to be released to external parties in consultation with the Chair.

24. The Chair(s), Deputy Chair (if appointed) and Members will be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses such as travel, accommodation, meals and other incidental expenses associated with attendance at meetings and other work related to GEAC. Written claims should be made to the Secretariat.

### Agenda

25. The agenda for each meeting will be set by the Chair(s) having regard for annual advice on expectations provided by the Minister and the Minister for Women.

26. Members of the group may propose agenda items for the Chair(s) to consider.

## Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest

27. The requirements of sections 79(2) & (3) and 81(1)(c) of the *Public Administration Act 2004* apply to the group and its members as if the member is a director of a public entity, and the group is a public entity and the board of a public entity for the purposes of these provisions.
28. Although the GEAC has no decision-making powers, members are expected to manage any potential conflicts of interest that arise in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*.

## Secretariat Support to the Group

29. Local Government Victoria will provide secretariat support to GEAC. The Secretariat will be responsible for supporting the Chair with meeting arrangements, correspondence, information management and financial issues related to the group's operations.