



MINUTES

Women's Advisory Committee

held at

Council Administration Centre
Council Chambers
180 Mort Street, Lithgow

on

Tuesday 11 July 2023

at 4:00 PM

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DRAFT

The Chairperson declared the meeting open at 4:10pm.

1. Present

Councillor Maree Statham (Mayor), Glenda Anthes, Councillor Almudena Bryce, Sandrine Stepien, Karina Dodd, Councillor Coleman, Cristina Portilla and Craig Butler

2. Apologies

Leanne Walding

3. Acknowledgement of Country

Lithgow City Council acknowledges Wiradjuri Elders past and present of the Wiradjuri nation - the original custodians of the land on which the Lithgow's communities reside. The Council also extends our respects to our neighbouring nations.

4. Confirmation of Minutes

No minutes were discussed.

5. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

There was no business arising.

6. Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made.

7. Discussion Items

7.1. Women's Advisory Committee terms of reference

Summary

The Committee was asked to review the attached Lithgow City Council Women's Advisory Committee Terms of Reference.

Commentary

The administration responsible for supporting this committee has observed that there appear to be some performance matters holding back the committee.

It was considered important that the members of the committee are familiar with the Terms of Reference. This is an opportunity to review and recommend their update, if needed.

It was also put that it is timely for each member to reflect on their views about the committee and bring these forward for discussion as to opportunities for improvement.

The committee reviewed the TOR, with some discussion about moving the time for the committee meetings. No decision was made though.

In light of a recent history of non-participation by some members, the Mayor appealed to the Committee to reaffirm their commitment to the committee. The Terms of Reference state that members cease to be a member of the Committee if the member:

- Has been absent for 3 consecutive meetings of the committee without having given reasons acceptable to the Committee for the members absences or
- Has been absent from at least half of the meetings of the Committee held during the immediately preceding year without having given to the Committee acceptable reasons for the member's absence.

Cr. Coleman suggested that the Community Development Officer send an email to the absent members of the WAC requesting that they express their Interest in remaining part of the committee.

Those present ratified their commitment and admitted they do not hold full knowledge regarding women's issues but would like to learn more about them.

Cr Bryce stated her interest in the Committee working to promote education regarding women in not traditional roles, since she has observed the situation in Lithgow has continued the same over 40 years ago.

Sandrine Stepien stated her interest in having continuing discussion about the role of the Committee.

Karina Dodd said she is interested in remaining a member of the Committee and would like to consult with the women of Lithgow to understand what their issues are, maybe creating a women's network.

The Community Development Officer clarified that while the Committee has no powers to commit nor expend any Council funds, coordinated actions with Council's Community Development Department are possible with approval. Karina also suggested contacting schools to gather interest from younger women to attend the WAC meetings.

Action

THAT The Community Development Officer contact absent members of the WAC and request them to ratify their commitment to the Committee with discussion about the opportunities of improvement to be continued.

7.2. Women Issues in Lithgow LGA

Summary

A discussion was held on the issues impacting women in the Lithgow LGA to inform the direction/s and focus of the Women's Advisory Committee.

Commentary

A brief discussion was facilitated on the Status of Women Report Card (by the Australian Government), and its relevance for women in the Lithgow LGA and how these issues might inform the work of the committee.

The group briefly reviewed the mentioned document and its report card data. Australia is ranked 43rd out of 143 nations for gender equality internationally. Some of the higher ranked countries are in Europe and a number are developing countries from Africa, Eastern Europe, and Latin America. Despite Australia ranking high, the reality of the better candidates in other countries gave the WAC information for reflection.

The group identified the absence of expert members in the group and discussed the possibility of inviting representatives from organisations working with women and school representatives.

From the Status of Women Report Card, concerns were raised about jobs for women and young women, domestic violence, homelessness, health, and mental health.

ACTIONS

THAT the committee review the Status of Women Report Card and discuss how its findings might inform the work of the committee.

The Community Development Officer to send the link to Lithgow Community ID profile to committee members.

Council consider the development of a status of women report card for Lithgow.

7.3. Opportunities for women in Lithgow

Summary

The committee was provided with the attached NSW Government Women's Strategy which aims to advance social and economic equality between women and men, and girls and boys and identify opportunities for actively encouraging the full and equal participation of Lithgow women and girls in community life.

Commentary

The NSW Government Women's Strategy vision is that:

Women and girls in NSW have full access to opportunity and choice, their diversity is recognised, they are valued for their contribution and are able to participate in all aspects of life freely and safely. Women and girls in NSW are supported by government and the community to achieve this vision.

Targeted priorities of the Women's Strategy based on consultations with women across NSW are:

- Economic opportunity and advancement
- Health and wellbeing
- Participation and empowerment

Women discussed the opportunity to use this framework to inform the work of the WAC.

ACTION

THAT the committee review the NSW Government Women's Strategy to identify opportunities for actively encouraging the full and equal participation of Lithgow women and girls in economic and community life. If council decides to proceed with a status of women report, then consideration be given to the development of a Lithgow Women's Strategy.

7.4. General Business

Nil

8. General Business

9. Meeting Close

There being no further business the Chairperson declared the meeting closed at 5:30pm.
