

Monday, 29 November 2010

## RYDE'S 50:50 GENDER EQUITY VISION AWARD

The City of Ryde was among the 20 Councils recognised for their gender equity platform at the Australian Local Government Women's Association (ALGWA) 'Women Going Places' national conference (25-27 November).

The gender imbalance of Local Government leadership, at both the political and managerial levels, was one of the main topics of discussion at the Conference, which brought together women and like-minded men from across Australia.

Accepting the *50:50 Vision - Councils for Gender Equity Bronze Award* from the Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government, City of Ryde General Manager, John Neish, said: "Delivering the best outcomes for our increasingly diverse communities demands a gender balanced approach in all decision making.

"Our leadership teams are at their best when male and female energies and views are brought to the table and the best of both are harnessed," he said.

Conference organiser and City of Ryde's Community Life Group Manager, Simone Schwarz, described the forum as a 'unifying' success. "The presentations were of the highest quality, thought provoking and entertaining.

"The free flow of ideas and experiences created an atmosphere of great purpose which helped formulate an invigorated program of actions and advocacy to improve opportunity for women in Local Government."

The adopted agenda of positive change to help break down the barriers to women Councillors and staff, include:

- gender/pay equity
- flexible workplace and political structures
- work-life balance/ motherhood and careers
- leadership and support for other women

- changing the management approach of Local Government
- self empowerment - confronting and rejecting negative behaviours towards women.

At a Mayoral Reception, held at Brush Farm House prior to the Conference, the Mayor, Clr Artin Etmekdjian said: “I am very proud that my Council and the wider community has benefited from our gender equity platform.

“The formation of a Women’s Advisory Committee has given local women a voice on community issues, and recently Council voted to provide staff a women-friendly workplace environment with appropriate facilities such as breast feeding amenities.

“It was also the City of Ryde’s ground breaking action in 2008 of first adopting increased paid parental leave, and later taken up by other Councils, that led the Federal Government to recently introduce this as a right for all Australian workers.”

He went on to say: “Respect and equality does not always happen spontaneously. To achieve desired outcomes, committed people have to work hard to ensure that the right policies, opportunities and conditions are put in place, both politically and at a managerial level.”

For full details of the ALGWA National Conference outcomes, go to: [www.algwa.org.au](http://www.algwa.org.au)

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**Photo Opportunity: Tuesday 7 December – time tba. Mayoral Chambers, Civic Centre. Presentation of “Body Painting” by Immaculata Tipiloura (in traditional dot style) from Tiwi Island ALGWA Delegation - Gift of Appreciation to City of Ryde.**

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