

Friday, 5 November 2010

COUNCIL RAISES WOMEN'S PROFILE

Gender equity was the key message of the City of Ryde's agenda at the recent Local Government Association (LGA) Conference.

Mayor, Cllr Artin Etmekdjian, said: "This is the Year of Women in Local Government and the City of Ryde is host to the Australian Local Government Women's Association (ALGWA) Conference November 25-27.

"With over 600 delegates from Councils across the State, the LGA Conference was the ideal forum to publicise this important event.

"We also demonstrated how the City of Ryde benefits from a gender equity philosophy and urged other Councils to follow our example by forming community-based Women's Advisory Committee and ensuring women-friendly workplace environments such as appropriate breastfeeding facilities."

Five of the nine City of Ryde resolutions adopted (see précis below) at the Conference related specifically to raising the profile of women in local government and supporting the role they have in shaping the workplace and community wellbeing.

Commenting on the upcoming ALGWA Conference, www.ryde.nsw.gov.au/algwa City of Ryde Group Manager - Community Life, Simone Schwarz, said: "The women's conference is a high profile event that offers a unique knowledge sharing and networking experience and a chance to gain insights into the achievements and wisdom of prominent women in the public and private sector."

ALGWA Conference guest speakers:

- Anne Summers (Author and journalist)
- Barbara Pocock (University of SA, Director – Centre for Work and Life Balance)
- Claire Braund (Executive Director, Women on Boards)
- Adele Horin (Columnist Sydney Morning Herald)
- Darriea Turley (ALGWA National President)
- Pru Goward MP (Member for Goulburn)
- Eva Cox (Feminist and social activist)

City of Ryde Motions Adopted at 2010 Local Government Conference

1. That the Local Government Association encourages all NSW Councils to send a delegation of staff and Councillors to the national ALGWA Women's Conference, which will be held in Ryde 25-27 November as a fitting finale to the Year of Women in Local government.
2. That the Local Government Association congratulates those Councils who are already members of the Australian Local Government Women's Association for their efforts to promote gender equity and the participation of women in local government; and, encourages other NSW Councils to consider membership of this important organisation as a strong and ongoing support mechanism for their existing women employees and elected representatives.
3. That the Local Government Association recognises the valuable and ongoing contribution of women in our local communities to the operation of local government and supports the voluntary establishment of community based Women's Advisory Committees to provide advice to Councils on decisions that have particular impacts on women.
4. That the Local Government Association, as a legacy initiative to the Year of Women in Local Government, encourages all NSW Councils to consider establishing their Council as a breastfeeding friendly workplace with appropriate facilities for expressing and storing breast milk and inclusion of lactation breaks for women employees.
5. That the Local Government Association provides a report to each LGA Conference on its efforts to increase the role of women (staff and elected Councillors) in local government.
6. That the Local Government Association works with the NSW Division of Local Government, ROCS and all member Council to implement public workshops to encourage citizens to consider standing for election at the 2012 Local Government election.
7. That the Local Government Association write to the Minister of transport and the Premier to seek allocation of funding for the North West Rail Link to enable the project as soon as is practicable.
8. That the Local Government Association endorse and lobby for the following changes to the Local Government Act 1993 that will provide a more streamlined approach to the leasing/licensing of community land to community groups (such as bowling clubs, RSL clubs).
9. That the Local Government Association, given that the State government is currently seeking comment, write to the Minister of Planning and the Premier to seek a review of the 2009 SEPP, in particular reference to boarding houses.

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