

LGMA National Women in Local Government Management Forum

Advisory Committee on Women in Local Government Western Australia



Department of Local Government
and Regional Development
Government of Western Australia

Aim of Advisory Committee

The aim of the Advisory Committee is to provide advice to the Minister on ways of encouraging and assisting women to seek employment and progress their careers in the Western Australian local government sector



Membership

- Mayor Paddi Creevey, City of Mandurah, Chair
- Joanne Abbiss, CEO, Shire of Serpentine-Jarrahdale
- Anne Banks-McAllister, Consultant, former Director Strategic Community Development, City of Melville
- Danika Chandler, Accountant/Senior Administration Officer, Shire of Irwin
- Adelle Cochran, Director Community Engagement, City of Gosnells
- Frank Edwards, CEO, City of Perth
- Cliff Frewing, CEO, City of South Perth



Membership contd

- Leonie Hollow, HR Advisor Recruitment, City of Perth
- Jennifer Mathews, Director General, Department of Local Government and Regional Development
- Noela Taylor, Director, Equal Opportunity in Public Employment
- Joanne Trezona, CEO, Shires of Tambellup and Broomehill
- Professor Elizabeth Walker, Director Small and Medium Business Enterprise Research Centre Edith Cowan University



Approach of Advisory Committee

- Commitment to guiding principles which encompass all local government employees and also relate to and are of benefit to elected members
- Partnerships with local governments, other industry bodies and groups, universities, public sector
- Strategies for 2004-2008 and 2008-2012



Areas of Focus 2004-2008

- Provision of professional development opportunities;
- Contribution to improvement of selection processes;
- Promotion of local government as a career choice;
- Encouragement and support of women to seek decision making positions in local governments and on boards and committees;
- Dealing with inappropriate behaviour in the workplace; and
- Promotion of flexible workplace policies and practices.



Initiatives 2004-2008

- Professional development events – metropolitan and regional;
- Women in Local Government Conference 2006
- Mentoring program;
- Selection of CEOs and Senior Staff publication
- Careers in Local Government materials for local governments and participation in WA State and University Careers Expos;



Initiatives 2004-2008 contd

- Articles and promotions in Departmental and other publications;
- Survey to test participation of women in selection processes for senior positions 12 metropolitan and regional local governments;
- Development of network/email contact list; and
- Development of links with local government HR Managers network.



Challenges

- Women (and men) not aspiring to senior positions
 - Not interested in higher level
 - Demands of higher level positions not attractive
 - Lack of confidence
 - Culture of local government not attractive
 - Disincentive of perception of women as unsuitable for senior management



Challenges contd

- Selection processes
 - Knowing how to win the job
 - Is your application “too good?”
 - Interview skills training for applicants and selection panels
 - Few applicants for senior positions overall
 - Applicants from outside the sector increasing
 - Do you have a profile in the industry?
 - Transferability of knowledge and skills



Challenges contd

- Culture change
 - Continuing difficulties within local governments
 - Benefits from elected members and staff working together on communication patterns and ways of improving them
 - Women able to make contribution here
 - Promotion of positive image for the sector



Proposed Vision 2008-2012

Better local government through
increased numbers of women in
executive decision making positions



Proposed Areas of Focus 2008-2010

- Recruitment and selection processes for senior management/decision making positions;
- Skills development and mentoring and coaching of women seeking senior positions;
- Culture change within local governments and across the sector;
- Employees and elected members working together;
- Marketing and promotion of the sector and of women as contributors to the sector.

