

Media Release

The Hon Shaun Leane MLC
Minister for Local Government
Minister for Suburban Development
Minister for Veterans



Thursday, 11 March 2021

SUPPORT FOR NEXT GENERATION OF WOMEN ON COUNCILS

Women elected to their first term on council will have the chance to develop skills and learn from experienced and capable mentors over the next three years, thanks to the Andrews Labor Government.

Minister for Local Government Shaun Leane this week welcomed participants to the launch of the Australian Local Government Women's Association – Victoria (ALGWA Victoria) mentorship program.

The Labor Government has provided \$29,000 to ALGWA Victoria to continue and expand the mentoring program after a successful first term from 2016-20, which was also supported with Government funding.

The program has paired 43 newly elected female councillors with experienced mentors from across the state.

The mentors – all current or former councillors – will share advice, support, guidance and coaching to help the new councillors develop governance skills, grow in the role and make a difference in their communities.

The 43 mentees are among the 272 women elected to council at the 2020 local government elections – representing 43.8 per cent of councillors, a record high for Australia.

The program is part of the Labor Government's work to reach its target of 50 per cent female mayors and councillors by 2025.

The newly established Gender Equality Advisory Committee, co-chaired by Labor MPs Juliana Addison and Kat Theophanous, will focus on achieving the 50-50 target and improving gender equality across the sector, including implementation of the Australian-first *Gender Equality Act 2020*.

ALGWA Victoria is a standing member of the new committee and the Government will continue to support its leadership role for women in the sector.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Local Government Shaun Leane

"It's fitting the mentor program begins in the week of International Women's Day. The Government supports this program because we know it makes a real difference for the next generation of female leaders in local government."

"It's important to have more women on councils, but to also support women once they get there. This program helps to develop the skills of newly elected councillors, helping them to deliver for their communities."

Quote attributable to Minister for Women Gabrielle Williams

"Gender equality benefits everyone and makes councils, communities and Victoria stronger. That's why the Government has a target of 50-50 representation by 2025."