

Media Release

The Hon Nick Staikos MP
Minister for Consumer Affairs
Minister for Local Government



Monday, 19 May 2025

COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO WHITTLESEA COUNCIL LAUNCHED

Minister for Local Government Nick Staikos today launched a Commission of Inquiry into Whittlesea City Council to ensure it can provide the best possible service to the local community.

The Minister determined that an inquiry with broad powers was necessary to address potentially serious and systemic governance issues within the council and identify necessary improvements to ensure it can function effectively.

Prue Digby has been appointed as Chair of the Commission of Inquiry, while Jim Gifford has been appointed as Commissioner.

Ms Digby brings a wealth of knowledge to the role, with more than 40 years' experience as a senior executive and director in state, local and non-government sectors. Mr Gifford has extensive experience in supporting councils through governance issues and implementing effective changes.

Ms Digby and Mr Gifford will lead the inquiry for a period of four months to better understand the council's current governance practices, and determine if reform is needed to address ongoing issues.

The Minister thanked outgoing municipal monitors Jude Munro and Peita Duncan, who were appointed to the council in November 2024.

The Commission of Inquiry follows the suspension of Whittlesea City Council Mayor Aiden McLindon, as a councillor for a period of 6 months, on 16 April 2025.

A report will be provided to the Minister in September 2025, upon completion of the Commission of Inquiry.

Whittlesea City Council will continue to operate as usual while the Commission of Inquiry is underway.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Local Government Nick Staikos

"We are taking immediate action to ensure the Whittlesea community can have confidence in their council moving forward. I welcome Prue Digby and Jim Gifford, who bring a wealth of knowledge and expertise in leading this Commission of Inquiry."

"Victorians deserve a council that represents their best interests and serves them with respect, and we are ensuring our councils uphold these values."

"I thank outgoing municipal monitors Jude Munro and Peita Duncan for their dedication and service to the Whittlesea City Council and community."