

Public Forum Question and Response

Subject: Women in Management roles and Corporate Training and Development for Women

Question From: Vincent De Luca

Meeting Date: 27 July 2004

Question:

I refer to my question of 11 November 2003 asking how many women are in senior management roles in the Council and what training and corporate development programs are being conducted by Council to encourage and promote the many talented women at this Council. Particularly, I noted with concern that within the senior Executive there were no women holding the roles and that out of eleven Service Unit Managers there were only two women holding the positions and from 25 supervisors there were only ten women. Could Council please advise of any initiatives since then to undertake Corporate Development and Training for female employees and how many women now hold management roles?

Response:

The Director Corporate Services advised that there are numerous corporate development programs accessible and well attended by female employees. A further initiative has been to provide female staff with training in how to train others and to then ensure that they have formal chances to apply their skills. The Director Corporate Services noted that training programs are not the only way to attract, retain and promote women. A comprehensive approach is required and steps have been taken towards this end. Council has a comprehensive review and promotion of the bullying and harassment-free workplace policy, which has sent a positive message to staff. The recent advertising campaign to select two new Directors to Council specifically targeted female applicants. The Administrator emphasised that, while women were targeted in the campaign, both Directors were ultimately appointed on their professional merits.

In response to Mr De Luca's second question, how many women now hold management roles, the Director Corporate Services replied that 66% of Directorships in Council are now held by women. A direct comparison of the response given in November regarding managers is impossible, as Service Unit Managers no longer exist under the Council restructure. Of the 17 positions that report to Directors, however, six are currently vacant and two of the remaining eleven positions are occupied by women; this is the same proportion as at November 2003. Among supervisors, eight positions are vacant and women occupy five of the remaining 23 roles, which equates to a 7% drop from 40% in November 2003 to 33% as at present. The Director Corporate Services stressed that recruitment is not yet finalised and may result in altered gender ratios, and that the current position is similar to that of November 2003 with a marked improvement at the Director level.

