



# **STATUS OF WOMEN ADVISORY GROUP**

**07 December 2023**



# COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2028

**ONE – CENTRAL COAST IS THE COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN (CSP) FOR THE CENTRAL COAST LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA**

**ONE – CENTRAL COAST DEFINES THE COMMUNITY'S VISION AND IS OUR ROADMAP FOR THE FUTURE**

**ONE – CENTRAL COAST BRINGS TOGETHER EXTENSIVE COMMUNITY FEEDBACK TO SET KEY DIRECTIONS AND PRIORITIES**

One - Central Coast will shape and inform Council's business activities, future plans, services and expenditure. Where actions are the responsibility of other organisations, sectors and groups to deliver, Council will work with key partners to advocate on behalf of our community.

Ultimately, every one of us who live on the Central Coast has an opportunity and responsibility to create a sustainable future from which we can all benefit. Working together we can make a difference.

## RESPONSIBLE

**WE'RE A RESPONSIBLE COUNCIL AND COMMUNITY, COMMITTED TO BUILDING STRONG RELATIONSHIPS AND DELIVERING A GREAT CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE IN ALL OUR INTERACTIONS.**

We value transparent and meaningful communication and use community feedback to drive strategic decision making and expenditure, particularly around the delivery of essential infrastructure projects that increase the safety, liveability and sustainability of our region. We're taking a strategic approach to ensure our planning and development processes are sustainable and accessible and are designed to preserve the unique character of the coast.

 **Good governance and great partnerships**

**G2** Engage and communicate openly and honestly with the community to build a relationship based on trust, transparency, respect and use community participation and feedback to inform decision making

There are 5 themes, 12 focus areas and 48 objectives

### COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2028 FRAMEWORK

All council reports contained within the Business Paper are now aligned to the Community Strategic Plan. Each report will contain a cross reference to a Theme, Focus Area and Objective within the framework of the Plan.

The infographic details the following structure:

- THEME: BELONGING**
  - Focus Area: OUR COMMUNITY (Objectives: G1, G2, G3, G4)
  - Focus Area: COMMUNITY CONNECTION AND LOCAL IDENTITY (Objectives: G5, G6, G7, G8)
- THEME: SMART**
  - Focus Area: A GROWING AND COMPETITIVE REGION (Objectives: C1, C2, C3, C4)
  - Focus Area: A PLACE OF OPPORTUNITY FOR PEOPLE (Objectives: C5, C6, C7, C8)
- THEME: GREEN**
  - Focus Area: ENVIRONMENTAL WELL-BEING FOR THE FUTURE (Objectives: E1, E2, E3, E4)
  - Focus Area: INCREASED RAIN WATER RESILIENCE (Objectives: E5, E6, E7, E8)
- THEME: RESPONSIBLE**
  - Focus Area: GOOD GOVERNANCE AND GREAT PARTNERSHIPS (Objectives: R1, R2, R3, R4)
  - Focus Area: BELONGING THROUGH INFRASTRUCTURE (Objectives: R5, R6, R7, R8)
  - Focus Area: SAFETY AND WELLBEING DEVELOPMENT (Objectives: R9, R10, R11, R12)
- THEME: LIVEABLE**
  - Focus Area: RELIABLE PUBLIC TRANSPORT AND CONNECTIONS (Objectives: L1, L2, L3, L4)
  - Focus Area: SAFE AND HEALTHY LIVES (Objectives: L5, L6, L7, L8)
  - Focus Area: WELL-BEING, RESILIENCE AND SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITIES (Objectives: L9, L10, L11, L12)



# Meeting Notice

**The Status of Women Advisory Group  
of Central Coast Council  
will be held Remotely – Via Teams,  
on Thursday 7 December 2023 at 4:00pm,  
for the transaction of the business listed below:**

## **1 Procedural Items**

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Melanie Smith  
**Chairperson**

**1.1 INTRODUCTION: WELCOME, ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY,  
APOLOGIES, DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST**

Chairperson

**Welcome, Acknowledgement of Country, Receipt of Apologies**

*We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we live, work and play.*

*We pay our respects to Elders, past, present and emerging and recognise their continued connection to these lands and waterways.*



*We acknowledge our shared responsibility to care for and protect our place and people.*

## 1.2 PREVIOUS BUSINESS: CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES, REVIEW ACTION LOG

Chairperson

15 June 2023 meeting minutes for approval

### **Attachments**

1   SOWAG unconfirmed minutes 15 June 2023      D15817081



Central Coast Council

## Status of Women Advisory Group

Held on  
Microsoft Teams

15 June 2023

# MINUTES

## Attendance

### Members

Margot Castles  
Belinda Field  
Sharon Walsh  
Sally Jope  
Danielle Habib  
Heather Irvine-Rundle  
Victoria Collins  
Kylie Smith  
Vickie Parry

### Status

Absent  
Absent  
Present  
Apology  
Absent  
Present  
Present  
Apology  
Present

### Staff

Melanie Smith – Director – Community and Recreation Services  
Marissa Racomelara – Director – Corporate Services  
Belinda McRobie – Section Manager – Community Development  
Holly Moltzen – Community Development Worker  
Anna Baer - Engagement Officer  
Rachel Gibson – Team Leader - Civic Support  
Angela Russell – Civic Support Officer

### Status

Present  
Present  
Present  
Present  
Present  
Present  
Present

**Minutes of the Status of Women Advisory Group of Council 15 June 2023 contd**

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**PROCEDURAL ITEMS**

**1.1 Introduction: Welcome, Acknowledgement of Country, Apologies, Disclosure of Interest**

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The Chairperson, Melanie Smith, declared the meeting open at 4:04pm.

The Chair read an Acknowledgement of Country statement.

Apologies received and members absent without apology were noted.

The Chairperson called for any disclosures of interest. No disclosures were received.

**1.2 Previous business: Confirmation of minutes, review action log**

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The group confirmed the minutes for the previous meeting as noted below, which were distributed to members via email and uploaded to Council's website:

[Status of Women Advisory Group Minutes – 15 March 2023](#)

Moved: Sharon Walsh

Seconded: Heather Irvine-Rundle

The Action log was reviewed and items can be marked as complete.

**REPORTS**

**2.1 Safer Cities Update**

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Presentation provided by Anna Baer.

**Query** – Will the members of SOWAG get a copy of your report when it's finalised?

**Answer** – It will be public and Anna will come back and present with the findings.

**Minutes of the Status of Women Advisory Group of Council 15 June 2023 contd**

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**2.2 Female Participation in the Central Coast Council Workforce**

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Verbal presentation provided by Central Coast Council, Director Corporate Services, Marissa Racomelara.

**Query** – Request for figures or information about Indigenous women who are being mentored or coming through the system into leadership positions at Council.

**Answer** – Not at this stage. Council are looking at what data we collect. We are looking at improving our baseline data.

**Query** – Regarding Terms of Reference. Clarification was sort as to the role of SOWAG members. Is it to promote initiatives in other organisations and the broader community or is it to just receive the information presented.

**Answer** – The ToR refer to members promoting initiatives throughout the broader community and expand the presence of SOWAG to be influencers in promoting the Status of Women in the broader community.

**Query** – How do the initiatives/programs/projects get shared at present?

**Answer** – At present minutes of meetings are listed on Council's Website. Dissemination of information is a topic that needs further exploration at SOWAG meetings.

**2.3 International Women's Day 2023 and 2024**

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Presentation provided by Belinda McRobie.

**2.4 Council Project Updates/Information for Discussion**

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Verbal presentation provided by Belinda McRobie.

Council's 2 Major Grant programs are now open – **close on 30<sup>th</sup> of June:**

- Community Event and Place Activation Grant; and
- Community Development Grant.
- Monthly Community Support Grant Program (CSP)

Links to the grant programs: <https://www.centralcoast.nsw.gov.au/residents/support-programs/grants>

- Flag raising ceremony for NAIDOC week is the 3<sup>rd</sup> of July at 9:30am outside Council Chambers in Wyong. There will be performances, speeches and morning tea.



**Minutes of the Status of Women Advisory Group of Council 15 June 2023 contd**

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**2.5 Update from Members**

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**Victoria Collins** – Working with a Young Indigenous Women to bring on the board of the executive team of an NSW Agency. Facilitated bringing her to the Coast into a Leadership position from WA.

**Vickie Parry** – Voice Referendum 2023 – Educate the community around the Referendum and what it means for the Aboriginal community. There will be a forum on the 10<sup>th</sup> of July 2023 at Erina. There will be some guest speakers and a constitutional lawyer who will talk about what the voice means. It's about starting the conversation.

**Sharon Walsh** – Central Coast Domestic Violence Committee are working on a grant to host another walk against domestic violence later this year on the main road of Gosford. We're also working on another 'Reclaim the Night' event possibly in the Entrance.

**Heather Irvine-Rundle** – Psychological Services – Primary Health Network has a head to health programme which is a free service accessible to all and appointments are needed. This could help the issue of the mental health sessions being reduced from 20 to 10 by the Government.

**2.6 General business**

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Nil

**2.7 Next Meeting date**

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Next Meeting Date: 27<sup>th</sup> of September at 4:00pm in person.

**The Meeting** concluded at 5.28PM.

## Action log

### Status of Women Advisory Group



Action Number	Meeting Date	Action	Responsible Party	Action Update	Status
97	31/03/2021	Advisory Group Support Officer to share updates about pre-election info sessions and opportunities for women with members as available.	Advisory Group Support Officer	<p>Sessions will be held closer to elections as part of usual business.</p> <p>7/9/21: Item still pending and will be revisited after the Public Inquiry and Referendum</p> <p>7/06/2022- Background on this matter provided, Action update is that this matter is Ongoing, and also on hold, as LG election to be held in September 2024.</p> <p>10/1/2023 – still on hold 15/03/2023 – still on hold until 2024</p>	On hold
102	7/9/2021	Staff to check with engagement team about members being included in alert notices for documents on public exhibition via YourVoiceOurCoast.	Meeting Support Officer	<p>8/10: Emailed Comms with contact list</p> <p>7/6/2022 – Follow up regarding alert notices for public exhibition via YourVoiceOurCoast(?). Additional alert mechanisms(?). Check new members</p>	Completed

**Minutes of the Status of Women Advisory Group of Council 15 June 2023 contd**

<b>Action Number</b>	<b>Meeting Date</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Action Update</b>	<b>Status</b>
				are included.  17/1/2023 send out process on who to register to get the alerts. 15/3/23 Link to YVOC 'on exhibition' documents provided to group	
103	7/9/2021	Project updates and documents on exhibition to be standing item on future agendas.	Unit Manager Community and Culture / Meeting Support Officer	Update provided on 7 December 2021 meeting  7/6/2022 - Draft First Nations Accord and Draft Acknowledgement of Country – remains on exhibition. Report to August 2022 on outcomes of exhibition and recommendation/s.  July Council meeting – seeking endorsement for exhibition and public comment – Council's flag and street banner policies.	Ongoing

Minutes of the Status of Women Advisory Group of Council 15 June 2023 contd

Action Number	Meeting Date	Action	Responsible Party	Action Update	Status
				<p>CRS finalising public art policy (internal document/policy) – how art is managed internally, procurement, decommission etc., Public forum and workshop and Regional Gallery. Looking to establish a panel of artists. Separate series and workshop/s regarding public policies will occur.</p> <p>Grant funding – Community Development Grants and Place Activation Grants, monthly.</p> <p>Overview of documents and policies current under public exhibition via YVOC engagement website. <b>Action: query regarding 'Let's Talk Woy Woy' and whether the session will be recorded/made publicly available.</b></p> <p>Feedback regarding timing of sessions – different hours of the day etc. – community engagement and reach.</p>	

**Minutes of the Status of Women Advisory Group of Council 15 June 2023 contd**

Action Number	Meeting Date	Action	Responsible Party	Action Update	Status
				<p>10/1/2023 – Belinda and Melanie to continue to give ongoing updates to information that they feel is pertinent to the group.</p> <p>15/3/2023 – March 30 Let's Talk Gosford at Parkside building in Kibble Park</p>	
104	7/06/2022	Options to be explored in relation to discuss the work of Australian Psychological Society, and potential to invite to discuss and have attendees if possible.	Heather Irvine-Rundle	<p>12/09/2022 – To be discussed further at next meeting.</p> <p>10/1/2023 – Heather an apology at the meeting holding over to next meeting</p> <p>15/03/2023 – Heather sent an email Thursday 16/03/2023 4:37 PM to all committee members that provided details around the provision of psychological services and Interventions to the Central Coast Committee.</p> <p>The email requests for committee members to share their experiences of</p>	Ongoing

**Minutes of the Status of Women Advisory Group of Council 15 June 2023 contd**

<b>Action Number</b>	<b>Meeting Date</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Action Update</b>	<b>Status</b>
				people they work with being unable to access psychological therapies with Emma McBride or Gordon Reid.	
105	12/09/2023	Mel Smith, Director Community and Recreation Services and Krystie Bryant, Acting Director Corporate Services to be invited to the next meeting to discuss options regarding potential interest at a Director/Management level to support the women's leadership concepts and leadership development programs in the organisation, respectively.	Unit Manager Community and Culture	10/1/2023 Krystie keen to attend to discuss opportunity, gender recruitment etc. In the upcoming meeting.  15/03/2023 Invite Krystie Bryant to the June SOWAG meeting.  Central Coast Council Director Corporate Services, Marissa Racomelara attended and provided information.	Completed
106	10/1/2023	Send the group out a link to access the Council meeting agenda.	Rachel Gibson	Link sent to the committee 27/03/2023 @ 4:46pm.	Completed
107	10/1/2023	Revisit the Terms of reference to make the advisory group a more grounded peak body as a voice for women.	Melanie Smith	Terms of reference were reviewed 15/3/2023 meeting and will be shared with Edward Hock to determine if they need to go before Council to be resolved.	Completed

Minutes of the Status of Women Advisory Group of Council 15 June 2023 contd

Action Number	Meeting Date	Action	Responsible Party	Action Update	Status
108	15/6/2023	Vickie Parry to provide a flyer for the forum on the 10 <sup>th</sup> of July 2023 at Erina regarding the Voice Referendum 2023	Vickie Parry		Ongoing
109	15/6/2023	Anna to provide further resources with the Safer Cities flyer for the committee members to distribute	Melanie Smith		Ongoing
110	15/6/2023	Send the committee members the flyer on Council's NAIDOC Week Celebrations, the Voice Referendum 2023 and Safer Cities.	Angela Russell		Ongoing

## 2.1 MEETING DATES FOR 2024

Chairperson

- **Committee meeting dates for 2024**

**March**

**June**

**October\***

**December\***

- Meeting dates are subject to change. The meeting ordinarily held in September is proposed to be moved to October, date to be confirmed, as the Local Government Elections will occur on 14 September 2024. Further information regarding meetings in the second half of the year will be provided once available.



## **2.2 SAFER CITIES HER WAY**

Presentation by Beth Burgess

## **2.3 COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN REVIEW**

Presented by Merindah Overhaul



**Item No:** 2.4  
**Title:** International Womens Day 2024 Planning  
**Department:** Corporate Services

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7 December 2023 Status of Women Advisory Group

Reference: F2017/00176 - D15846240  
Author: Rachel Gibson, Team Leader Civic Support  
Executive: Melanie Smith, Director.Community and Recreation Services

## **Recommendation**

***To establish a plan for the 2024 International Women's Day – Friday 8 March 2024***

### **Report purpose**

Beginning the discussion and planning for events and activities that will take place on IWD. Start the planning now so the event is a success.

## **Background**

Review summary notes from 2022 IWD.

## **Link to Community Strategic Plan**

Theme 1: Belonging



### **Goal A: Our community spirit is our strength**

R-G1: Build strong relationships and ensure our partners and community share the responsibilities and benefits of putting plans into practice.

**Critical Dates or Timeframes**

IWD 2024 is scheduled for 8 March 2024

**Attachments**

1   IWD Forum 2022 summary notes D15089222

IWD Forum 2022 summary notes

## Community

SOWAG members: Margot Castles, Belinda Field

CCC scribe: Belinda McRobie

Session 1 attendees: Cheryl Amery, Jill Goodwin, Nicole Harvey

Session 2 attendees: Joy Cooper, Carole Davidson, Jackie Klarkowski, Kim McIntyre, Deb Tipper

## Scribe notes - Summary

### Experience/knowledge

Perceptions – that men are the bosses, not women e.g., CEO, Principal

Imposter syndrome – feeling that you're not good enough as a woman.

Status of professions – why aren't they recognised and paid well prior to men joining the profession?

Women often don't see what they're capable of – they think are limited & fear

Bias and community perceptions are still happening – so much feedback on social media e.g. Why do we even need an IWD? your choice to work in a career that doesn't pay well. Staying at home is a choice.

Male white privilege – overt bias still continues

Amplifying women's voices – still not being heard

Severe disadvantage – women and children being raised in poverty and with violence

Use of language – some men don't understand the language – "what do you mean equity"??

Education piece around younger men – bringing them along with us

Marginalisation of the organisation as well as extremely disadvantaged clients e.g., DV services, sexual abuse, homelessness – these are people that are marginalised and not heard.

Marginalisation of services reflect that things are getting worse not better – permeates everything – including wage inequity.

### Strengths

All these wonderful women who just get in and have a crack and work tirelessly

Using every-day situations to empower and teach

Existing programs and activities

Increase in men taking up humanities type education e.g., at TAFE.

### Practical examples

ASPIRE program – Soroptimists – support and continue programs like these.

Schools life skills program – practical every day based.

IWD Forum 2022 summary notes

Join up the dots of what is going on -talk more to each other. Links have already been made today!!

Asset mapping exercise as a SOWAG – woman focused and community controlled.

Challenge/ Question men - What are men going to do to rectify behaviours, so it isn't perpetuated currently and in the future? Its ok to have a celebration on IWD but need men to change behaviours.

Collective voice - 1 voice reflecting disadvantage, inequity and bias from a whole of Central Coast approach.

### **Scribe notes - Session 1**

Jill – soroptimist – international worm's group the best for women

Equity at the heart of everything we do.

Education background. Inequities: Hanging around the admin office – people assumed that she was the admin officer and not the principal.

Cheryl – Brought up in matriarchal family. Mother had 6 girls.

Raised to be a strong woman.

Early stages of work in commercial field. Lots of Bias. Got older & started to work in community service sector – found tribe & worked with strong women.

Worked alongside men – hierarchical lots of men in higher positions are men.

Working with women – bring each other up

Teaching at TAFE – half and half women/men – good balance. Is this because it is more acceptable for men to be involved? Seems more equitable - Only change seeing this semester that men are staying in the course.

Students in the past – working in hospitality – male bosses – having issues in that industry – treated poorly & transferred to community services at TAFE to get away from that Bias.

Jill – preservice teachers – most were women – not a lot of men who could have taken up careers in other areas (men frightened off teaching because of the child protection issues

Aboriginal community – nurturing men to be more respectful

Imposter syndrome – we know we have the skills & knowledge but tell ourselves that we aren't good enough for the role

Status of professions once men join is raised – benefits but double-edged sword – is it only because men are involved that it gets some status?

Fight for any pay increases- especially in the community sector & female dominated – fight for years and years.

Nicole – Co-chair DV Committee. Long involvement in dv and homelessness.

Still see a disconnect for women in isolated communities – disconnected, isolated. So much potential but low sense of self-worth & identity

Casualise workforce – taking on burden of caring for children & family responsibilities

IWD Forum 2022 summary notes

Disengaged from workforce for long periods – impact on super

Young women often Can't identify skills and abilities

If they are doing a TAFE course – often young

### **Practical examples**

ASPIRE program – for girls who are disengaged from school.

7-week program – self-esteem, career path planning, healthy relationships program. Working with Karen Jones to get an Indigenous perspective within this program – any help would be appreciated

Schools life skills program - cooking program run by welfare teacher – allowing learning of practical skills while also talking about what is happening?

Join up the dots of what is going on

Mapping exercise as a SOWAG – WOMN FCUSED AND COMMUNITY CONTROLLED

### **Strengths**

Come together as women – amplify and lift the voices up

Women's group - Yerin

### **Scribe notes - Session 2**

#### **Experience of this issue**

Bias and community perceptions are still happening – so much feedback on social media e.g. your choice to work in a career that doesn't pay well. Staying at home is a choice

Seeing these kind of themes going on still.

Community perception around equal pay – not the same as men still

DV – people still aren't standing up & are still fearful

Perceptions are still strong and not based on the reality of the truth.

Most people don't even understand the language

Community perceptions – have we found a way to talk to men about this?

We care connect – provide material aid to disadvantaged. Children Help 3000 children with practical support. In the past 12 months.

61% from **women** single parent families= 3 times the chances of living in poverty. 39% presented as indigenous.

Family violence – 39% affected

28% with a teenage or very young

32% unemployed

Severe disadvantage in this area = how this impacts women's and families lives.

Army issue – be quite about sexual assault

IWD Forum 2022 summary notes

Marginalisation of the service you work for the more disadvantaged clients are e.g. DV services, sexual abuse, homelessness – marginalised and not heard – Marginalisation of services reflect that things are getting worse not better – permeates everything – including wage inequity. Reflected in sector.

Community: Joy Cooper – man she went to school with who used to make lewd comments – now a well-known businessman– talking about IWD. Joy called him & reminded him of what he used to say – he was horrified – challenged him to what he will do to stop that happening to others – take action to remedy this for others e.g. going to speak with sporting groups.

### **Ideas**

Challenge men - What are men going to do to rectify behaviours so it isn't perpetuated currently and in the future?

Collective voice 1 voice reflecting disadvantage, inequity and bias.

As you get older you are more willing to stand-up and speak out than when younger



IWD Forum 2022 summary notes

## Leadership

SOWAG members: Danielle Habib, Heather Irvine-Rundle

CCC scribe: Jen East

Session 1 attendees: Joy Cooper, Jackie Klarkowski, Paula Martin, Christine Mastello

Session 2 attendees: Bianca Elmir, Nicole Harvey Maisy Rae, Cathy Zervos

### Scribe notes – Session 1

#### Key themes

- MENTORING
- Leading /influencing /guiding others.
- Privilege: use it to inspire
- What are young people seeing from women as leaders
- VISABILITY- seeing female leaders. BUT not having to fit in as a male!
- Structural barriers
- Influencing men to be sitting at the table
- What is leadership?
- Not having to being the boss of a company to be a leader

#### Building people up

Community hair project is the largest hair charity in Australia. Would like to see bigger leadership role to develop more Partnering with other organisations and collaboration.

Groups too Competitive at times and it should be more inclusive and collaborative

Grants and joining together to Build relationships

Collaborative region or collaborative region

“Because people here don’t see or recognise themselves as Leaders”

Example: Central Coast Economic breakfast 1 leadership speaker is female.

Hard to find senior female leaders as experts often has to get OUT OF REGION FEMALE LEADERS

#### What is your experience/knowledge of this theme?

Females coming into the region during covid who have worked in leadership roles

Females I Leadership more “Visible” though Male leaders escalating in career

The innate feeling that....“If we work hard we will be recognised”. Males on the other hand will put themselves forward and be considered for jobs.

Women are not being recognised even when working so hard.

#### Leading /influencing /guiding others.

Just because you're the boss of the company doesn't mean you're a leader The person that's most recognised it's guiding other people.

IWD Forum 2022 summary notes

There are a lot of women who are leaders on the Central Coast they may not be recognised for that.

Women in leadership are also the people who take on leadership roles in situations such as canteens, community groups etc. it's not the people that make the most money or speak out the front of an event.

What leadership really is. Consider those people who are leading in non-leadership roles.

Council need to put more women in committee roles For example cultural arts committee roles - Council need to improve their lack of gender balance

We need to recognise people who are leaders who may not necessarily be the head of a company

- By showcasing leaders in all different levels it provides aspiration for young girls
- gender stereotypes for young people is still rampant in society
- Social media is infuriating for continuing their divide of gender

#### **What are the challenges relating to this theme on the CC?**

Why is the thought of a leader only limited female business leaders?

Females are their own worst promoters

Council also not promoting celebrating female leaders

Search GENDER EQUITY on council website: no results

Women search: some results

5 mentions of SOWAG

Mention of Julie winning an award.

Not many council news items on Central Coast Council relating to women in leadership

Other councils celebrate women in leadership on LinkedIn

Where is the women promoting leadership change in council?

Male managers of business and service provider: not taking women in leadership seriously

#### **What are some practical solutions?**

How do we as a region champion these great female leadership

Young people into business encouraging seeing more women in business

Larger mentoring program

Articles published by community news

Case stories

females can drive economic change

Increased equity in all committees

- A policy for gender equality for Central Coast council
- Improve visibility of people who may not see themselves as leaders

IWD Forum 2022 summary notes

- Promoting to council increased general managers with equity and equality encouraging future leaders in people at council
- Is there pipeline promoting and finding women's leadership within council?

We need those women who do things like run the P&C, are involved in community groups, who sit back, to realise that **they are leaders**.

we're all human we're not just men, we're not just women, we can **all** aspire at to the same thing

How do we get council to lead and frame leadership from the front?

Leadership with humility recognising all types of leaders

visibility of women in leadership can be in a number of ways

### **Scribe notes – Session 2**

#### **What is your experience/knowledge of this theme?**

Workforce development in relation to gender based violence /structural barriers for women that are driven by an economic system and a political system and social and cultural system that Create barriers for women

In the boardroom men will often lead the conversation and decision making even though there are other female board members

women undervalue themselves but the bar they set for themselves is high but the reverse is seen with men in the community

it is important to acknowledge privilege of what women to high middle socioeconomic status

northern end of the coast we see a lot of young women who Carry the caring load of parenting would be interesting to unpack that

Lower paid casual workforce

Women work more productively under good female mentors

Working under women is a more collaborative experience

Stop asking women to change

The disability sector is often women dominated but the positions of leadership are often men

#### **What are the strengths relating to this theme on the CC?**

we can play a role in advocacy

femininity is a strength in least leadership women have many roles in leadership though they may not realise it as leadership

#### **What are the challenges relating to this theme on the CC?**

Gender based and intersectional barriers that women impose on themselves moving into leadership roles

IWD Forum 2022 summary notes

Privilege and disadvantage That people experience

Absence of strong women in leadership positions being filled with images of social media there are huge challenges with objectifying young girls in social media

Social constraints

Lower paid casual workforce

#### **How does this affect what you do?**

Women's feel like they can't promote what their strengths are and there is a difference between how women respond 2 leadership as opposed to men

#### **What are some practical solutions?**

Examining barriers that people have compared to those people who are more privileged

Minority groups and diversity represented in issues for women

Young women need exposure to people who are powerful and strong in leadership positions

If young people say more people in leadership, they will be inspired to make change

Grassroots exposure for young girls seeing people in leadership roles give girls permission to lean into this space

For young women in the community, We may need to put a lens on those communities and try to engage young women who would be feeling disconnected an isolated.

Mentoring other young women

Mentorship programmes to build self-esteem

Challenge expectation of women growing up in today's society

How can we open things up completely so women can see that the world is their oyster!

shifting the gender role expectations

Leadership circles

not allowing systems to divide us

Including men in discussion circles in leadership circles that build women up

Influence men and empowered them to speak up for minority groups and incorporate them into these conversation discussions

All of us don't want to lose our femininity but do we have to be more masculine to have a position of leadership

There's nothing with wrong with femininity and female leadership developing an alternative of masculine style and patriarchy stall leadership

we need an alternative too patriarchal leadership work alone side each other

We need to yeah see emotion as strength

say that femininity and can be a strength in leadership

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More inclusive of diversity embracing diversity be willing to work with rather than exclude difference

**Additional feedback – Nicole Harvey**

We cannot create the change without male peers, colleagues and leaders sharing this objective, purpose and without a passion for the cultural change needed.

Engaging men in these conversations is critical. Of course this raises the question, how do we do this? And who would we talk to?

There are some men who have consciously created the space for women to move into leadership roles. This has happened in my business.

There are also male leaders on the Central Coast who are exemplary. I work for one. What are the key qualities here and do these transcend gender?

The importance of mentoring was mentioned but I feel it's important to point out that not all female leaders would be suitable mentors.

Being female does not automatically mean you are a great leader.

Female leader attributes however, should be celebrated and there are leadership lessons men can learn from women.

What if we recalibrated what makes a good leader, recentering from the stereotypical attributes viewed as best qualities for leadership?

A Harvard Study stated that male leaders (many of them incompetent) would benefit from taking some guidance from female counterparts:

**Key attributes:**

- Don't lean in when you've got nothing to lean in about
- Know your own limitations
- Motivate through transformation.
- Put people ahead of yourself
- Don't command: empathise
- Elevate others
- Don't say "you're humbled". Be humble.

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## Safety

SOWAG members: Victoria Collins, Sharon Walsh

CCC scribe: Ellen Bridge

Session 1 attendees: Carole Davidson, Bianca Elmir, Maisy Rae, Deb Tipper

Session 2 attendees: Cheryl Amery, Christine Mastello, Nellie Srisurapon

## Scribe notes

### Concerns

Family and Domestic Violence and elder abuse and homelessness and insecure housing

Lack of affordable options available for women

Current flooding situation is making it worse.

People will be displaced as a result of what has happened in the recent weeks

Home has become less safe for women and there needs to be more options and more resources

It flows on to women's families and children and throughout the community

Safety in relation to home.

**Personal safety in the public space** is a concern also that can be addressed through street lighting.

There is a lack of safety for women in the public space.

There is better recognition of the group of highly education men who **practice coercive control**.

The media industry is monogynist it permeates all levels of our social sphere.

Gendered conversations are happening at an earlier and earlier age.

How does the Central Coast compare in terms of personal safety compared to other areas???

Is there anything that makes the central coast safe – only 30 years ago it felt safe. The **stats are increasing and that is contributing to feelings of insecurity. Geography contributes to a watering down of safety measures.**

Street lighting and roads are horrendous. With many potholes which is more of an issue for women who have poorer physical outcomes.

**BAD STATS** contribute to feelings of insecurity - Elder abuse program has been extended to cover a bigger region which means it is needed more than other areas.

Some women contribute to the sexual division of labour – it's hard to challenge socialisation

Rates of DV are **significantly higher** in women with a disability and compounded when women **experience other levels of intersectionality** such as aboriginality and culturally diversity

Women's safety is **seen as a women's issue** and not a boarder cultural issue

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Safety about **gender identification** and 'coming out' in our local context – a young girl recently committed suicide because she didn't feel safe.

**Recognising safety and danger** is different in CALD communities because of language and cultural barriers. Often people who are culturally diverse cannot identify when a situation is dangerous. Lack of recognition for diversity.

**Young people** take **more risks** because they have an underdeveloped radar for personal safety.

**First responders/police** need to **better understand women's protection** to better uphold their responsibility.

**E=safety and online safety** is an emerging issue for older women.

Women in **more isolated communities** feel more disempowered than others. Which is an issue for the central coast and its geography.

**Rough sleeping women** are treated even more unfairly, and their safety is hugely compromised.

What it means to be safe is multifaceted.

### Solutions

Draft submission on the **national plan** to eliminate violence against women came out with glaring omissions in regard to role of local government and also the CCDV responded firmly to support an all of government approach.

We need to see the whole picture of how to make women safe – there are many intersections – housing – sexual violence in the workforce – personal safety

**Primary prevention as a methodology** in DV starting to begin to be spoken about and we are now having a national conversation. Primary prevention needs to be broader based to include safety on the streets for women.

It is positive that we are now having a conversation about elder abuse at least.

Strengths – **structural changes** have been addressed but when we talk about women's safety, we need to talk **about changing men's attitudes**. A positive program is Top Bloke which goes into schools and challenges the attitudes of men towards women.

Whole of region strategy – were community and government work in partnership.

While we **can change the material outcomes for women**, it's also important to understand that DV does not discriminate and that these issues are **inherent to the misogynistic culture**. We need to tackle misogynistic behaviours, and we need to be doing this from a young age.

If we invested more in programs like this, we would have better outcomes.

These are primary prevention programs that are developmentally appropriate in age and have an evidence base and are delivered by skilled people.

The primary prevention approach addresses women's vulnerability both in the home and outside of the home through cultural change that is embedded throughout society.

**SOWAG is a strength** on the central coast and there is not one similar at other councils.

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Simple salutations are - Council needs to fix the pavements. And better lighting.

**Journalism/storytelling** can be used as a **tool to change people's minds** and highlight the challenges that women face as safety on the central coast. It important to **consider the language** that is being used when writing.

**Community education** is a solution to equip people with the **tools to act** in a safer manner. Campaign about 'is this safe' or 'is this not safe'.

Strengths for the central coast around this issue of safety – **good services network** who are well connected.

Our women are resilient, and we all jump in to help one another.

Individual change is one thing, but structural change requires resourcing.

Women who turn their lives around should be celebrated – **lived experience** has become a new approach to **tackling social issues**. Overcoming adversity is a strength.



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## Workforce and Education

SOWAG members: Sally Jope

CCC scribe: Glenn Cannard

Session 1 attendees: Jo Boccalatte, Kim McIntyre, Nellie Srisurapon, Cathy Zervos

Session 2 attendees: Jill Goodwin, Paula Martin

### Scribe notes

Glenn to provide

### Notes from Sally

Covered lifetime experiences of women and girls engagement with education and workforce, from initiating talks about 'careers' in primary school, from year 3/4 to the impact of family friendly workplaces (or lack of them) and the cost and availability of childcare on retirement savings and the impact of violence against women and coercive control on women's engagement with workforce and education.

### Experience/Knowledge

As a parent, inflexible workplaces, especially around school hours, access to childcare (geographical, times, cost), impact on superannuation

Difficulties getting staff, especially qualified staff, trained in DV and Mental Health,

COVID forced more flexible work options.

Cost of housing impacting on employment as some staff forced to move away to more affordable housing.

Impact of 'work from home' on households to share scarce resources e.g. devices, internet. Some older students struggle with online learning (TAFE)

As SCHADS Award has increased rates of pay, some services turning to Business Managers without background in Community Services.

Majority of workers in community sector are women and most community services are under resourced especially when working with women with multiple dimensions of disadvantage e.g. DV and settlement issues.

New arrivals need work; they don't have informal safety nets and face barriers including language and lack of existing networks. At increased risk of exploitation.

Cost is a barrier to further education and training;

Perceptions of roles of women held by community: not leaders, skills not valued as highly as those perceived to be 'male' skills and how to change those from childhood.

Uncertainty about what flexible working conditions look like

Bias in workforce

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### **Strengths on CC**

CC services tend to work collaboratively; the Coast is a discreet area that has a history of being a self-supporting space.

Services can work well with TAFE; could explore traineeships and volunteering to improve employment options.

There are a lot of specialists on the coast and a lot of expertise.

Presentations to new arrivals re services available has been good

Women in business and voluntary women's organisations

SIBW working in schools with disengaged young women; potential to be extended to disengaged older women?

### **Challenges on CC**

Competitive tendering has had an impact on collaboration between services.

Not enough workers or worker's availability to build on strengths

Presupposition of importance of male dominated industries, including higher pay rates, to be greater than that of female dominated industries, particularly care industries.

Need additional funds/resources to be able to collaborate

Education and employment don't factor in the lives of some women, who are not permitted to work or train, especially in relationships characterised by violence and control.

Need to coach young women for leadership and for recognition of skills and expertise

### **How does it affect what you do**

A women's state of crisis has to be overcome before she can consider work or training which then becomes a longer-term issue and not necessarily covered by existing support services.

### **Practical solutions**

Explore ways to cross-reference between organisations with existing specialists when working with women with complex needs; trial of coordinated practice with focus on workforce, education and training. Kim M

Advocacy into policy space; acknowledging the diversity of gender base, intersectional nature of disadvantage; acknowledging privileges

Advocate for career information to be more connected with preparation for work

Advocate for career information to be started earlier, e.g. year 3/4

SIBW looking for mentors – could connect up with Business NSW (or CBWN)

## **2.5 COUNCIL PROJECT UPDATES/INFORMATION FOR DISCUSSION**

Presentation by Belinda McRobie

## **2.6 GENERAL BUSINESS**

Chairperson

[2024 NSW Women's Week Grant Program](#)

Member/ Sector updates