

NSW Women's Advisory Council – 9 February 2026 – Communique

Attendance and Apologies:

Members who attended the meeting included:

- Associate Professor Jill Duncan OAM
- Ms Janine Farah
- Ms Karen Price
- Ms Tara Hunter
- Ms Mariam Mourad
- Ms Belinda Cashman PSM
- Professor Elizabeth Hill
- Ms Elise Coppins
- Ms Julie Perkins
- Ms Violet Roumeliotis AM
- Dr Marlene Krasovitsky
- Ms Georgia Shakeshaft
- Ms Gill White (Deputy Secretary, Social Policy and National Reform, TCO) – ex-officio
- Ms Tanya Smyth (Director, Women NSW) – ex-officio

Other attendees included:

- The Hon. Jodie Harrison MP – Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault
- Claudia Wee – Senior Advisor, AI Risk and Enablement, Office for Artificial Intelligence, Department of Customer Service
- Sophie Bartlett – Advisor, AI Policy and Adoption, Office for Artificial Intelligence, Department of Customer Service
- Lisa Minchella – Associate Director, Policy and Strategy, Women's Economic Outcomes, NSW Treasury
- Marsha Guthrie – Executive Director, Strategy Delivery and Reviews, NSW Treasury
- Daniel Dinale – Senior Associate, Policy and Strategy, Women's Economic Outcomes, NSW Treasury
- Julie Dixon – Director, System Reform, Mental Health Commission of New South Wales
- Tanisha Hutchinson – Manager, Mental Health and Wellbeing Reform, Mental Health Commission of New South Wales
- Ms Gemma Worboys – Associate Director, Women NSW
- Mr Alex Haigh – Associate, Women NSW
- Mr Lucian Lax – Assistant Project Officer, Women NSW
- Emelie Houston – Policy Advisor, Office of the Hon. Jodie Harrison MP

Chair's Update:

The Chair updated the Council on progress from two recent consultations: last year the Council consulted on the review of the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977, and submissions are now available on the NSW Law Reform Commission's website. In 2025 the Council also consulted on the NSW Homelessness Strategy; the NSW Homelessness Strategy Action Plan 2025-2027 is now available online.

The Chair also provided a summary of the Council's progress in 2025. In 2025, the Council contributed to seven major NSW Government initiatives and tracked 49 actions linked to its Strategic Plan. 33 actions were completed, with 16 still underway.

Survey responses and Council Strategic Plan priorities:

Tanya Smyth from Women NSW led a discussion on the formation of three focus groups for three focus areas: gender norms, gendered data and language, and inquiries and reviews. The Council discussed next steps for progressing each of these areas in the remainder of their term.

Minister's Portfolio Update:

The Minister for Women updated the Council on her recent work and priorities. The Minister updated on the Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Portfolio, as well as the Seniors Portfolio.

Member Updates:

Council members shared key updates from their work and networks since the 8 December meeting.

Office for AI – AI Governance, Gender, and Fairness:

Claudia Wee and Sophie Bartlett from the Office for AI, in the Department of Customer Service, presented on gender and AI governance, and the NSW AI Assessment Framework. The presentation highlighted risks of algorithmic bias in AI, such as gendered representation in generative image tools, and the importance of early assessment to prevent harm. Members discussed diversity in AI regulation, the drivers for using AI to improve service delivery, and broader concerns around diversity and equity in AI.

GEAP Presentation – NSW Treasury – Gender Impact Assessment Update:

NSW Treasury presented on the first full-year implementation of the Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) Policy. In the 2025-26 NSW Budget, GIAs were required for all new policy proposals with expenditure over \$10 million, with exemptions for certain categories. The presentation outlined the GIA process and learnings from the implementation, as well as the sector-wide capability uplift Treasury is undertaking to support this. Members discussed GIA exemptions, and data and intersectionality requirements.

External Presentation – Mental Health Commission – Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy:

Julie Dixon and Tanisha Hutchinson from the Mental Health Commission presented on the NSW Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy, seeking consultation from the Council. They spoke to the consultation process for the Strategy, and some of their findings. Council members discussed the Strategy's timeline, as well as the consultation approach for certain groups of women, and pressures and barriers women face regarding mental health and wellbeing.

Member-led presentation – Janine Farah: WAGEC and KWOOP:

Member Janine Farah presented on her work with Women and Girls' Emergency Centre (WAGEC), discussing gendered data through the case study of their From Now program. Data gaps for women in custody emerge through factors such as hidden homelessness, compliance-focused justice data, and misclassification of violence around coercive control. The From Now program aims to respond to these gaps, avoiding rigid eligibility criteria by structuring itself around women's lived experiences. It demonstrates what is possible when women's lived realities are involved in system design.

End of Communique