



Speech By  
**Hon. Mark Furner**


**MEMBER FOR FERNY GROVE**

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Record of Proceedings, 1 March 2017

## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS**

### **Women in Local Government Strategy**

 **Hon. M FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Local Government and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (2.40 pm): The Palaszczuk government is a strong supporter of equal representation by women across government and industry. One important initiative to achieve this is the Women in Local Government Strategy. This strategy is designed to promote greater diversity and inclusion for women in local government across the state. The strategy provides a range of mentoring and professional development opportunities for female councillors and council officers.

Women currently make up around 33 per cent of councillors and 20 per cent of mayors, and only 16 per cent of all CEOs across Queensland's 77 councils are women. We are fortunate that more and more outstanding women are stepping up to take on significant local government roles. In Central and North Queensland alone we have six newly elected female mayors: Lyn McLaughlin for Burdekin, Liz Schmidt for Charters Towers, Jane McNamara for Flinders, Joyce McCulloch for Mount Isa, Vonda Malone for Torres shire and Aileen Addo in Mapoon. We also have our re-elected mayors in the north such as Margaret Strelow in Rockhampton, with whom I recently met—she is an inspiration to her fellow women in local government and of course to her community; and Jenny Hill in Townsville, who continually delivers results while still finding the time and energy to lead and mentor others.

The Palaszczuk government believes that we can, however, still do much better to promote greater opportunities for women in local government. My department is working collaboratively with Local Government Managers Australia, the Local Government Association of Queensland and the Australian Local Government Women's Association. Through the Women in Local Government Strategy, a \$200,000 professional development fund is promoting diversity by assisting women to access learning and development opportunities. This includes sponsoring places for women in professional development programs. Importantly, preference is given to female participants from predominantly rural and remote councils who face the challenge of distance and cost.

As Minister for Local Government I can say that I am passionate about this issue. I will be doing all I can to work with our councils and with local government organisations to encourage more women to be involved.