



## NOTICE OF 2019 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Victorian Women Lawyers Association Inc. (VWL) will be held on:

**Tuesday, 26 November 2019 at 5:30pm**

at

**the office of Herbert Smith Freehills, Level 42, 101 Collins Street, Melbourne**

All members are welcome to attend the AGM. To assist with catering and seating, please let us know in advance if you are planning to attend by registering to attend at [www.vwl.asn.au/events](http://www.vwl.asn.au/events).

Only **current ordinary members** are eligible to vote at the AGM and to nominate for Executive Committee positions. Associate members are not eligible to vote or nominate for Executive Committee positions. Members intending to vote are requested to confirm that their membership status is that of an ordinary member. If you have not yet renewed your membership, we encourage you to do so now.

Members who are unable to attend the meeting but who wish to appoint a proxy can do so by using the **enclosed** appointment of proxy form.

### Agenda

The Agenda for the meeting is **enclosed**.

### 2018-2019 Financial Reports

The VWL financial report for the year ending 30 June 2019 will be tabled at the AGM.

### Executive Committee elections

We are seeking nominations for all positions on the VWL Executive Committee.

A short description of the roles of the Executive Committee is **enclosed**. More information about Executive Committee member obligations and duties can be found on our website at: <https://www.vwl.asn.au/downloads/ExecutiveCharter.pdf>.

Please complete the enclosed nomination form and return it to the VWL Secretary (Emma Sestito at [emma.sestito@gmail.com](mailto:emma.sestito@gmail.com)) by **Tuesday, 19 November 2019** should you wish to stand for nomination.

If the number of nominations received exceed the positions available, a ballot will be held at the AGM and nominees will be asked to make a short speech. If insufficient nominations are received, those people nominating will stand elected and nominations will be sought at the AGM for any remaining vacancies.

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All candidates are required to provide a brief resume of no more than 100 words to be included on an information sheet containing the resumes of all candidates which will be provided to all members eligible to vote, in the event that a ballot is required.

### **Minutes of the 2018 AGM**

The minutes of the 2018 Annual General Meeting will be tabled at the AGM. The minutes are also **enclosed**.

### **Post-AGM end of year celebration**

VWL's end of year celebration will take place immediately following the AGM. You will receive a separate invitation to the end of year celebration shortly, but you can register now at [www.vwl.asn.au/events](http://www.vwl.asn.au/events).

If you have any queries regarding the AGM, please contact VWL Secretary Emma Sestito at [emma.sestito@gmail.com](mailto:emma.sestito@gmail.com).

**Ella van der Schans**  
President  
Victorian Women Lawyers  
8 November 2019

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## 2019 Annual General Meeting of the Victorian Women Lawyers Association Inc.

To be held at the office of Herbert Smith Freehills  
Level 42, 101 Collins Street, Melbourne Vic 3000

Tuesday 26 November 2018 at 5:30pm

### APPOINTMENT OF PROXY – 2019 VWL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

I, ....., an ordinary member of the Victorian Women Lawyers Association Inc., am unable to attend the 2019 VWL Annual General Meeting, to be held at the office of Herbert Smith Freehills, Level 42, 101 Collins Street, Melbourne, on 26 November 2019.

I appoint ..... or, failing them, the person presiding at the meeting, to be my proxy to attend the meeting and to vote on my behalf.

**Name:**

**Signature:**

**Date:**

Please complete and return this form to Emma Sestito, VWL Secretary, by email, post or fax using the details below. A proxy sent by post or electronically is of no effect unless it is received by VWL no later than **5:30 pm on Monday 25 November 2019**.

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## 2019 Annual General Meeting of the Victorian Women Lawyers Association Inc.

Herbert Smith Freehills, Level 42, 101 Collins Street, Melbourne

Tuesday 26 November 2019 at 5:30pm

### AGM AGENDA

- 1 **President's welcome**
- 2 **Attendance and apologies**
- 3 **Minutes of 2018 Annual General Meeting**
- 4 **Membership fees for the 2020-2021 financial year**
  - (a) To consider and resolve upon the following motion: to confirm the subscription and joining fees decided by the Executive Committee at its meeting of 23 October 2019 for each category of members for the 2020 – 2021 financial year in the following amounts:  
  
**Voting Member Fees**  
  
City: \$88.00  
  
Rural/Regional/Suburban: \$61.60  
  
City sponsor employees: \$61.60  
  
Regional sponsor employee: \$42.90  
  
Sponsor trainee/grad: \$0  
  
**Non-Voting Member Fees**  
  
Associate: \$47.00  
  
Student (LLB, JD or PLT): \$26.95
- 5 **Executive Committee Annual Report**
  - (a) Executive Committee members will report on Committee activities over the previous year as outlined in VWL's Portia publication.

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**6 Treasurer's Report**

- (a) The Treasurer of VWL, Elizabeth Cooper, will present audited financial statements for VWL in the 2018-2019 financial year.

**7 Election of VWL Executive Committee**

- (a) Election of Officers of the Association: President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary; and
- (b) Election of ordinary members

**8 Other business**

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## Nomination for Victorian Women Lawyers Association Inc. Executive Committee for 2019-2020

|          |                     |
|----------|---------------------|
| Name:    | Employer:           |
| Email:   | Business Telephone: |
| Address: |                     |

I am an ordinary member of the Victorian Women Lawyers Association Inc. and I hereby nominate for the following position on the Executive Committee for 2019-2020:

[please tick]

- President
- Vice President
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- General Member – responsibilities will include one of following portfolios (among other things):
  - Mentoring Program Coordinator
  - Mooting Competition Coordinator
  - Social Media/Website Officer
  - Regional/Suburban Liaison
  - Sponsorship Officer
  - Projects/Membership Engagement Officer

I enclose a brief resume (no more than 100 words) to be included on an information sheet to include the resumes of all candidates which will be provided to all members eligible to vote in the event that a ballot is required.

Signature:..... Date: .....

Please return form and resume to: The Secretary, VWL, at [emma.sestito@gmail.com](mailto:emma.sestito@gmail.com), or at Victorian Women Lawyers, GPO 2314 Melbourne VIC 3001.

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## VWL Executive Committee

### A. President

Convene and preside as Chairperson at general meetings of VWL and meetings of the Executive Committee:

- (a) Approve all outgoing correspondence
- (b) Act as spokesperson for VWL
- (c) Liaise with heads of other associations
- (d) Oversee activities of the committees
- (e) Be the principal point of contact for VWL's sponsors.

### B. Vice-President

In the absence of the President, preside as Chairperson at general meetings of VWL and meetings of the Executive Committee:

- (a) Assist the President in all the President's responsibilities
- (b) Act as contact person for sponsors and members in the absence of the President.

### C. Treasurer

Collect and receive all monies due to VWL, issue any receipts and make all payments authorised by VWL's Executive Committee:

- (a) Keep correct accounts and books showing the financial affairs of VWL with full details of all receipts and expenditure connected with the activities of VWL
- (b) Keep a register of all assets of VWL
- (c) Keep all general records, accounting books and records of receipt and expenditure connected with the operations and business of VWL in such a manner as the Executive Committee directs
- (d) Present a treasurer's report at each Executive Committee meeting
- (e) Ensure VWL's compliance with all legislation governing the financial status and activities of VWL.

### D. Secretary

Prepare and arrange for distribution of an agenda for Executive Committee meetings:

- (a) Advise members of general meetings
- (b) Keep minutes of the resolutions and proceedings of each Annual General Meeting and Executive Committee meeting, together with a record of the names of persons present at Executive Committee meetings

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- (c) Distribute minutes of each meeting to the Executive Committee or general members, as appropriate
- (d) Keep copies of all correspondence
- (e) Keep a record of the names and addresses of all members of VWL
- (f) Keep other such books and records as the Executive Committee may determine.

#### **E. General Members**

- (a) Manage one of following portfolios in consultation with Executive Committee and relevant Committee members:
  - (i) Mentoring Program Coordinator  
Organise and coordinate mentoring program
  - (ii) Mooting Competition Coordinator  
Organise and coordinate mooting competition
  - (iii) Social Media/Website Officer  
Maintain, update and coordinate all VWL social media and website, including promoting events and other content
  - (iv) Regional/Suburban Liaison  
Identify, pursue and coordinate projects of relevance to regional or suburban members in accordance with the general objectives of VWL
  - (v) Sponsorship Officer  
Manage and liaise with all VWL sponsors, in consultation with the President
  - (vi) Projects/Membership Engagement Officer  
Manage special projects and ensure that VWL attracts and retains a diverse membership
- (b) Assist the Executive Committee in managing the activities of the Association
- (c) Provide input into Executive Committee decisions
- (d) Vote on Executive Committee decisions.

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## 2018 Annual General Meeting of the Victorian Women Lawyers Association Inc.

Holding Redlich, Level 8, 555 Bourke Street, Melbourne

Wednesday 28 November 2018 at 5:30 pm

### MINUTES OF MEETING

#### 1. Convenor's welcome

Michelle Berry thanked all for support and listed VWL's achievements throughout the year.

#### 2. Attendance and apologies

Attendance and proxy register attached.

#### 3. Minutes of 2017 Annual General Meeting

Minutes for the 2017 AGM approved as a true and correct record and annexed to the minutes below.

#### 4. Membership fees for the 2019-2020 financial year

The resolution to ratify and confirm no change to annual membership fees or to the date for payment of annual membership fees for the 2019-2020 financial year was carried.

#### 5. Executive Committee Annual Report

##### **Communications: presented by Stephanie Pasharis**

The Communications Committee aims to promote VWL among the legal community and our members in number of ways, including by our email newsletter VWL List and publication of Portia. The theme of Portia this year is leadership. The Committee had the honour of meeting with VWL patron former Chief Justice Marilyn Warren on what constitutes good leadership.

The Committee would like to thank all who contributed to this edition of Portia. Especially the members of the Communications Committee. Portia would not be possible without their contribution and input.

##### **Cultural Diversity: presented by Naomi Hickey Humble and Oriana Torcasio**

The Cultural Diversity Committee has two different objectives:

1. disseminating legal information to women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (CALD)
2. promoting diversity amongst the legal profession.

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In April the Committee held a hugely successful event – Facing the Double Ceiling. A panel discussion exploring the dual barriers facing women from culturally diverse backgrounds in the workplace. A column was published in the LIV Journal following that event.

The Committee is now working to lay the groundwork for next year's events including an event on modern slavery. This is to follow a journal article published in the LIV Journal in October. The Committee is also working with the City of Melbourne to launch some exciting projects next year.

### **Law Reform: presented by Hayley Chester**

It was a very exciting year for the Law Reform Committee. The Committee kicked off year by giving evidence at the Senate inquiry into cyber bullying. They also did television and radio interviews on the topic.

The Committee held a panel discussion on sexual harassment and secrecy in the workplace. Focusing on the use of confidential settlements and non-disclosure agreements in settling sexual harassment claims. The event was held just a few weeks before the announcement of the Australian Human Rights Commission's inquiry into sexual harassment in Australian workplaces.

The Committee wrote a number of law reform submissions on topics including:

- family law
- assisted reproductive treatment
- Engage Victoria's Gender Equality Bill
- constitutional recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

The co-chairs are grateful to the Committee members who worked tirelessly to draft submissions, especially the submission to the Gender Equality Draft Bill as that was completed in very tight timeframe

### **Justice: presented by Marquita Nolan**

This year the Justice Committee hosted a number of events with a focus on women and homelessness. The Committee started the year by participating in Sleep at the G, raising funds for Melbourne City Mission. The Committee also held an event focusing on Older Women Lost in Housing. As well as recently holding a panel discussion on youth and female homelessness. The recent panel resulted in a very candid discussion with the panellists providing insights on what led them to work in the area.

The Committee also assisted with hosting a panel discussion regarding the importance of financial security for women.

Lastly, the Committee also ran a project for Share the Dignity, by collecting and donating sanitary items for women experiencing homelessness.

The co-chairs thank all the Committee members for their work in assisting people in need in the community.

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### **Membership: presented by Catherine Dorian**

The aim of the Membership Committee is to increase and diversify VWL membership across the state. This year the Committee worked towards this by holding a number of regional events and a LGBTIQ+ event. Next year the Committee is hoping to increase the number of regional events, particularly in areas where we have not held events before or may not have reached as often. The Committee is also currently planning to host a suburban event early next year.

The Committee is keen to have assistance in organising its events. Any prospective members welcome to get in touch with the co-chairs to express an interest in joining the Membership Committee next year.

### **Women in Government: presented by Sanishya Fernando and Pia White**

The purpose of the Women in Government Committee is to support women lawyers working in government through networking and other outreach events

The Committee's first event of the year was a panel discussion centred on leadership. The panel explored diverse models of leadership and enabled the audience to engage with prominent women in leadership. The panellists included Kylie Kilgour, Anna Brown and Susan Paxton, and moderator, barrister Áine Magee QC. The event was attended by over 150 people.

The Committee aims to hold an event with a substantive law focus for its second event. This year the event focused on information sharing. The panel included speakers working outside the law to ensure that attendees received practical advice. Speakers included Tracy Beaton, Elizabeth Murphy, Anita Courtney and moderator Rachel Dixon. The panellists had a nice mix of different perspectives, with the information shared very practical and useful.

The Committee also has an ongoing project reaching out to law students to advise on diverse careers in the law. This year, this included presenting at 'Beyond Commercial Careers Fair' at Monash University.

### **Networking: presented by Eleanor Weir and Hannah Dunai**

It was another busy year for the Networking Committee. The Committee held four key events in 2018:

- Members & Guests
- Cross industry networking event – bringing lawyers and accountants together to make new connections
- Raising the Bar – breakfast panel discussion providing many welcome tips on how to survive and thrive at the bar for women barristers
- AGM and Christmas drinks – supporting Sisterworks empowering women through work

The Committee also assisted with a wellbeing event, an ongoing important focus for VWL. The wellbeing event was an interactive workshop led by Elva Zhang on mindfulness to assist lawyers to build inner resources to reduce and manage stress.

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Next year the Committee will continue its focus on cross industry events, joining up with other female driven networks. The Committee is also proposing to work with male champions of change.

The co-chairs give a huge thank you to all Committee members, and are astounded by amount of their own time they are willing to contribute to VWL.

**Work practices: presented by Michelle Berry (on behalf of Claire de Koeuyer and Priya Wakhlu)**

This year the Work Practices Committee launched the inaugural Practitioner Mentoring program. The Committee matched 35 solicitors with more experienced mentors in areas of interest.

The Committee also contributed a large amount of work on publication on Returning to Work following pregnancy with the assistance of Maurice Blackburn.

**Sponsorship: presented by Michelle Berry (on behalf of Jackie Gillies)**

The VWL Executive Committee gives a huge congratulations and thank you to Jackie Gillies for all of her work in the Sponsorship portfolio. Jackie has represented the VWL Executive Committee for 10 years.

Would also like to give thanks to VWL's major, associate, and project sponsors as well as friends of VWL, including Holding Redlich who are hosting tonight's AGM and festivities.

This year VWL established the Sponsorship Committee to assist the sponsorship officer with managing and coordinating our sponsor firms, liaising with sponsors to facilitate events, and providing regular updates. The feedback to VWL from sponsors has been to focus on having greater communication. In response to this VWL is now publishing a regular sponsorship newsletter.

Next year we are looking to build VWL's sponsorship base, and also looking at other opportunities, including grants.

**Gender Pay Gap**

This year VWL undertook a project focused on the gender pay gap. As part of this VWL held two events, and conducted a gender pay gap survey.

VWL launched its gender pay gap project at its Gender on the Agenda Event. The event highlighted the need for pay gap analyses, the practicalities of analyses and responding productively. It was attended by managing partners and human resource managers.

VWL's second gender pay gap event was, Gender on the Agenda: In Discussion with Dr Anne Summers AO and Emma Alberici. The conversation at this event was focused on the persistent gender pay gap in professional services, and the systemic issues that lead to the gap.

The next component of VWL's Gender on the Agenda campaign was a survey of the Victorian Legal Profession which launched in September 2018. The survey was designed to test when and how women lawyers encounter a pay gap, how it is sustained and what measures have had success in reducing the overall pay gap. VWL intends to use the information gathered to develop best practice guidelines.

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A large thank you to Julianna Marshall and Marquita Nolan for all their efforts in coordinating the Gender Pay Gap survey. Would also like to thank LIV who provided a grant to conduct the project. An excellent example of how two organisations can work together to deliver fantastic results.

### **VWL Warren Moot**

This year the Warren Moot doubled in size, enabling greater participation. The success of this event is in large part due to the great support from members of the Bar and judiciary.

### **Law Student Mentoring program**

VWL ran its eleventh consecutive law student mentoring program in conjunction with WBA. Over 120 students were matched with members of legal profession based on their interests in the law. We hope the program can continue to foster lasting relationships between women in the law. And are also grateful for long term support of K&L Gates.

### **Wellbeing and Communications**

In 2018 VWL developed a new project focused on wellbeing. We hope it's just the start of continued wellbeing series for VWL. Two wellbeing events were held over the course of the year:

- a panel discussion on 'The Road to Resilience in the Law', including a reflective mediation session
- an interactive workshop intended to get attendees to reflect and pause in mindful meditation. Attendees walked away with a lot of tools to manage everyday stresses.

### **Regional and Suburban engagement**

Regional engagement was the primary focus this year. Including:

- an informal networking event in Ballarat, our third event in Ballarat over the last few years
- an event in Bendigo which coincided with the Court of Appeal circuit.

Our hope is that moving forward events held in Melbourne CBD may be replicated in regional areas.

### **VWL/WBA solicitor and barrister networking lunch series**

The solicitor and barrister networking lunch series is part of an initiative to promote equitable briefing. Enabling solicitors and other barristers to meet female barristers from a specific area of law and provide opportunity for networking. The series has been very well received by barristers, solicitors and judges. Thanks to Svenson Barristers for hosting the lunch series.

## **6. Treasurer's Report**

The Treasurer of VWL, Elizabeth Cooper presented audited financial statements for VWL in the 2017-2018 financial year to the membership for approval.

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Assets have grown by \$5000-\$6000. Revenue from membership fees have increased. VWL received a grant from LIV for regional and suburban events. Revenue is as expected following our decision not to be involved with Dame Roma Memorial Lunch this year. There has been a drop in sponsorship revenue, having lost two major sponsors, and the LIV. However, we have since brought on a number of associate sponsors and project sponsors. VWL paid off its brand costs this year.

#### **7. Approval of election of six general members**

The resolution to ratify and confirm the addition of another general member (total six) to the VWL Executive Committee was carried.

#### **8. Election of VWL Executive Committee**

Election of Officers of the Association:

- Ella van der Schans – President
- Deborah Kliger – Vice-President
- Patricia McMullan – Secretary
- Elizabeth Cooper – Treasurer

Election of ordinary members of the Committee (six):

- Marquita Nolan
- Vanessa Shambrook
- Bonnie Phillips
- Natalie Plumridge
- Sophie Lefebevre
- Priya Wakhlu
- Michelle Berry (Immediate past President)

#### **9. Other business**

The VWL Executive Committee would like to thank Judy Nutter for all her support and commitment to VWL. We would also like to recognise Jackie Gillies for ten years as sponsorship officer. Lastly, the VWL Executive Committee for all their work, and delivering an amazing year for VWL.

No other business was raised and the meeting was closed.

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## VWL 2018 Annual General Meeting Attendance Register

| First name | Surname      | Organisation              |
|------------|--------------|---------------------------|
| Louisa     | Ashton       | MinterEllison             |
| Michelle   | Berry        | Victorian Women Lawyers   |
| Emily      | Booth        | Holding Redlich           |
| Grace      | Bowran-Burge | Adviceline Injury Lawyers |
| Clare      | Bradin       | Allens                    |
| Isobel     | Carmody      | MinterEllison             |
| Hayley     | Chester      | Forte Family Lawyers      |
| Lucinda    | Cook         |                           |
| Alessandra | Daly-Sutton  | Consultant                |
| Rani       | Donohue      | HWL Ebsworth Lawyers      |
| Hannah     | Dunai        |                           |
| Bec        | Elphinstone  | PCI Partners              |
| Fiona      | Garton       | Victoria University       |
| Meredith   | Gibbs        | Baker McKenzie            |
| Emily      | Hart         | Maurice Blackburn         |
| Rowdy      | Johnson      | Moores                    |
| Amy        | Johnstone    | Maurice Blackburn Lawyers |
| Lisa       | Jueres       | Allens                    |
| Lydia      | Keating      | Maurice Blackburn Lawyers |
| Alice      | Kennedy      | University of Melbourne   |
| Deborah    | Kliger       |                           |
| Sophie     | Lefebvre     | Nicholson Ryan Lawyers    |
| Jemma      | Mackenzie    | CE Family Lawyers         |
| Abbey      | Mason        | BP Lawyers                |
| Siobhan    | McGee        | Gadens                    |
| Patricia   | McMullan     | Justice Co-Chair, VWL     |
| Erin       | Meeking      | Aitken Partners           |
| Therese    | Montalto     | Moray & Agnew             |
| Catherine  | Moroney      |                           |
| Ashleigh   | Morris       | County Court of Victoria  |

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**VICTORIAN  
WOMEN  
LAWYERS**

| <b>First name</b> | <b>Surname</b>     | <b>Organisation</b>         |
|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| Grace             | Ness               | Clayton Utz                 |
| Marquita          | Nolan              |                             |
| Bridie            | O'Shannessy        | Maddocks                    |
| Thelma            | Palbas             | Thelma Palbas & Associates  |
| Stephanie         | Pasharis           | Ernst & Young               |
| Bonnie            | Phillips           | KHQ Lawyers                 |
| Shivani           | Pillai             | Victorian Bar, Foley's List |
| Phoebe            | Pitt               | Mills Oakley                |
| Natalie           | Plumridge          | ACCC                        |
| Lucy              | Prowse             | Hall & Wilcox               |
| Bianca            | Quan               | Cornwall Stodart            |
| Pia               | Rossignuolo        | Hall & Wilcox               |
| Sarah             | Saliba             | Mills Oakley                |
| Suzy              | Schmitz            | Keypoint Law                |
| Isabella          | Serafica           | Maurice Blackburn           |
| Vanessa           | Shambrook          | Mills Oakley                |
| Polat             | Siva               | HWL Ebsworth                |
| Merryn            | Skehan             | Cornwall Stodart            |
| Kerry-Ann         | Smith              | Maurice Blackburn Lawyers   |
| Anna              | Svenson            | Svenson Barristers          |
| Theresa           | Tezengi            | ASIC                        |
| Ella              | van der Schans     | Victorian Women Lawyers     |
| Laura             | Villemagne-Sanchez | Forte Family Lawyers        |
| Lucy              | Wang               | MinterEllison               |
| Eleanor           | Weir               | SBA Law                     |
| Pia               | White              | DELWP                       |
| Anne              | Winckel            | Delta Partners              |
| Sara              | Zokaei Fard        | K&L Gates                   |

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## VWL 2018 Annual General Meeting Proxy Register

| <b>Member</b>      | <b>Appointed proxy</b>     |
|--------------------|----------------------------|
| Polat Siva         | Ella van der Shans         |
| Anina Rose Nowak   | Michelle Berry (presiding) |
| Nikita Goodwill    | Michelle Berry (presiding) |
| Nakita Wilkinson   | Michelle Berry (presiding) |
| Alex Virgo         | Michelle Berry (presiding) |
| Allison Wallace    | Michelle Berry (presiding) |
| Olivia Coburn      | Michelle Berry (presiding) |
| Elise Hamblin      | Michelle Berry (presiding) |
| David Markham      | Michelle Berry             |
| Rowdy Johnson      | Eleanor Weir               |
| Olivia Roslaniec   | Catherine Moroney          |
| Elva Zhang         | Vanessa Shambrook          |
| Brooke Dellavedova | Patricia McMullan          |
| Liberty Sanger     | Patricia McMullan          |
| Katerina Patras    | Patricia McMullan          |
| Claire de Koeyer   | Natalie Plumridge          |

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