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ELIZABETH BRODERICK TO LEAD PARLIAMENT REVIEW

The Parliament of NSW has engaged former Sex Discrimination Commissioner Elizabeth Broderick AO to provide expert advice to the Parliament to ensure a workplace free from bullying, harassment and sexual misconduct.

President of the Legislative Council Matthew Mason-Cox MLC said the NSW Parliament has an opportunity to develop the most effective processes and procedures in Australia to address unacceptable behaviour.

“The Parliament is like any other workplace. The people who work for the NSW Parliament or visit Parliament House are entitled to feel safe, free of harassment and have any complaints heard and acted upon,” said Mr Mason-Cox.

“This is our opportunity to examine the current policies and practices as well as our culture, which is so important for an organisation as complex as the Parliament.”

Speaker of the Legislative Assembly Jonathan O’Dea MP said acting proactively is critical to ensuring that the support and practices of the NSW Parliament align with community expectations.

“The NSW Parliament must maintain a consistent standard of excellence and integrity in all that it does,” said Mr O’Dea.

“An important part of attracting and retaining quality staff is swiftly addressing any instances of bullying, harassment and sexual misconduct. A safe workplace applies to everyone who works for the Parliament or in the Parliamentary precinct, including cleaners, cooks, security, staffers and Members of Parliament.”

Ms Broderick has led 15 major cultural reviews into leading national institutions including the Australian Defence Force and NSW Police. She is currently a Special Rapporteur on the UN Working Group on Discrimination against Women and Girls.

“It is so important that our public institutions like the Parliament respond to workplace issues quickly and effectively,” Ms Broderick said.

“Part of achieving this is to listen to people working in and interacting with the Parliament, so as to better understand their experiences, the current culture and what needs to change.”

In March this year, the NSW Parliament established an Advisory Group on bullying, sexual harassment and sexual misconduct chaired by Deputy Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Leslie Williams MP.



PARLIAMENT OF NSW

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“The Advisory Group welcomes the appointment of Ms Broderick and looks forward to working closely with her to make certain that every person who works in the Parliament feels safe and supported,” said Mrs Williams.

The review will take place over six months and will be completed in February 2022.