

7<sup>th</sup> September 2021

### **Kiersten Fishburn – the right person for the job**

Urban Taskforce CEO, Tom Forrest, today welcomed the appointment of Kiersten Fishburn to the role of Secretary of the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment.

“Kiersten Fishburn is the right person for the times. Ms Fishburn has been the rising star of the Planning portfolio since she was recruited by Jim Betts to join DPIE in July last year. Ms Fishburn previously held the role of CEO of Liverpool Council in Sydney’s Southwest”, Mr Forrest said.

“Ms Fishburn has been acknowledged by the Urban Taskforce as playing a leading role in driving cultural change in DPIE and State agencies through her work as Co-ordinator General of the Planning Delivery Unit (PDU). Earlier this year, Ms Fishburn was promoted as her role was expanded to oversee the administration of Local Government.”

“The Secretary of DPIE is a critical position for the NSW economy. Navigating through competing Ministerial imperatives and policy conundrums is critical to the role. Ms Fishburn has shown herself to be a bridge-builder and a ‘*key influencer*’ in her role as Co-ordinator General of the Planning Delivery Unit. She has assisted with the un-blocking of many significant development proposals in consultation with Government agencies and Councils and was critical to the relative economic success of NSW in 2020.” Mr Forrest said.

Urban Taskforce looks forward to Ms Fishburn showing the same drive in leading this massive and complicated Department.

DPIE reports to four Ministers:

- Rob Stokes (Liberal), Minister for Planning and Open Spaces
- Melinda Pavey (National), Minister for Water, Property and Housing
- Matthew Kean (Liberal), Minister for Energy and the Environment
- Shelley Hancock (Liberal), Minister for Local Government

“Ms Fishburn will now be a critical decision maker. Urban Taskforce has confidence in her capacity to navigate the challenges and work with the whole of Government to deliver change.

“Ms Fishburn has shown that she can work with the confidence of Jim Betts, the Secretary (in waiting) of the Department of Premier and Cabinet. Having a public service leadership team which understands the difficulties and complexities associated with the NSW Planning System bodes well for the delivery of much needed new employment and housing supply.

“As CEO of the Urban Taskforce, I look forward to working with Ms Fishburn towards a renewed and re-doubled focus on the delivery of housing supply to alleviate the ongoing housing affordability crisis”, Mr Forrest said.

**End**

*The above can be attributed to Tom Forrest, CEO, Urban Taskforce*

*The **Urban Taskforce Australia** is a property development industry group, representing Australia's most prominent property developers and equity financiers.*

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