



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

STANDING COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND COMMUNITY WELLBEING
Mr Johnathan Davis MLA (Chair), Mr James Milligan MLA (Deputy Chair), Mr Michael Pettersson MLA

Inquiry into ACT Budget 2021–22
ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

QoN No - 38

MARK PARTON MLA: To ask the Minister for Housing and Suburban Development

Ref: Budget Statement G, Page 52 indicates \$22,297 million has been budgeted for the 2021-22 year to construct a second Common ground Facility in Dickson.

1. In relation to finalising this project:
 - a) Construction started in 2020 so why was the \$11 million budgeted 2020-21 not paid?
 - b) What other avenues for expanding homelessness housing services are being considered given the Common Ground construction is not due for completion until 2023
 - c) What other funding is provided to Homelessness Housing services given the delay in completion of Common Ground?
 - d) Why is Common Ground now going to take nearly 2 years longer to finalise?

YVETTE BERRY MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:– .

- a) The 2021-22 budget was set prior to construction contract award. Delay in achieving construction milestones delayed payment from 2020-21 to 2021-22.
- b) Through the Parliamentary and Governing Agreement, the ACT Government continues its commitment of addressing homelessness in the ACT by investing \$18 million over four years to expand the capacity of the specialist homelessness sector.

As part of this commitment, on 16 September 2021, the Government announced \$8.63 million over three years to expand the capacity of *all* existing specialist Homelessness services. This includes specialist homelessness programs that commenced operation during the COVID-19 pandemic, building on funding of \$1.948 million in the 2020-21 Budget for five specialist homelessness programs in response to COVID-19, including:

- i. The Winter Lodge for men, Mackillop House for women (with or without accompanying children) and the Axial Housing First program received additional funding to ensure continued support for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.
- ii. providing additional funding to OneLink to increase its capacity to

manage emergency accommodation and support to assist Canberrans who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness during or due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

iii. increase funding to expand the Early Morning Centre to a seven day per week service.

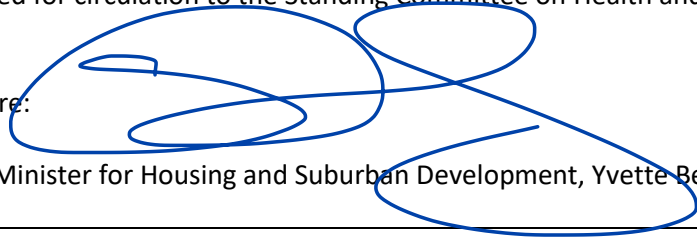
c) In addition to expanding the capacity of existing services and continued commitment to specialist homelessness programs that commenced operation during the COVID-19 pandemic, the ACT Government is providing over \$27 million funding to the sector in 2021-22 for 55 programs to better focus on outcomes and balance between early support and crisis response for those most vulnerable in our community.

This is committed funding and is not contingent on the completion or delivery of any program/project/service, so is not linked to the completion of Common Ground Dickson.

d) Although the project has been subject to delays through planning and construction (COVID 19, excessive wet weather, material and labour supply shortages) it is not taking 2 years longer to construct. Construction of the building was always scheduled to be completed in 2021-22 and is on track to be completed in 2021-22.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Health and Community Wellbeing

Signature:



Date:

11/11/21

By the Minister for Housing and Suburban Development, Yvette Berry MLA