



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

QTON No. 1

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM
JEREMY HANSON MLA (CHAIR), DEEPAK-RAJ GUPTA MLA, MICHAEL PETTERSSON MLA

Inquiry into referred 2018–19 Annual and Financial Reports
ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE
4 November 2019

Asked by Alistair Coe MLA:

In relation to governance arrangements for the Chief Minister's charitable fund:

MR COE: So what are the governance arrangements to make sure that the money is going out according to appropriate guidelines?

Mr Barr: Well, the guidelines are set. There is a reporting process required to government and it is publicly released. So that—

MR COE: Well, it is a pretty serious issue if—

Mr Barr: No, no—

MR COE: If there are no governance arrangements to ensure—

Mr Barr: I think you are in—there are governance arrangements in place. and you are—

MR COE: Well what are they?

Mr Barr: And you are—

MR COE: Well what are they?

Mr Barr: We will provide the full information in relation—I have just read out all of the priorities, all of the requirements that the government has put in place. There is a governance arrangement as around the operation of funding.

ANDREW BARR MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows: —

The Chief Minister's Charitable Fund is governed by an independent board and administered by Hands Across Canberra. The Fund is regulated under the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*.



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The ACT Government has a grant funding deed with the Fund stipulating the following governance arrangements:

- a) The Fund is required to issue a business plan and demonstrate through reports its adherence to that plan.
- b) The Fund is required to provide the ACT with an annual report which includes an independently audited financial report by a registered auditor.
- c) The Fund is required to disclose to the ACT all matters that are likely to materially affect the performance of the Fund.
- d) The Director-General of the Community Services Directorate is an independent observer to the board. The Director-General does not have decision making powers or fiduciary duties to the Fund.
- e) The ACT Government, and the ACT Auditor-General have unrestricted access to the Fund's systems and documents in order to audit compliance with the funding deed.

To be eligible for a grant from the Chief Minister's Charitable Fund, organisations must work with vulnerable people and be registered with Hands Across Canberra. Grants are made for projects delivered in Canberra and the nearby region. Funding is not available for vehicles, overseas study or travel, political activities, already completed projects or already acquitted expenses.

Alignment to the Chief Minister's Charitable Fund priorities is recommended but does not preclude organisations submitting applications for other important initiatives where need is evidenced.

I wrote to the Chair of the Chief Minister's Charitable Fund in October 2018 to indicate the areas on which the ACT Government would focus its own support for vulnerable people in our community in 2018-19. The Chief Minister's Charitable Fund priorities were subsequently determined by their independent board following a process of consultation by Hands Across Canberra. The ACT Government did not conduct this consultation.

The ACT Government was not involved in the design of the application process, the selection of successful grant applications or the determination of amounts to be granted.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Economic Development and Tourism

Signature: 

Date: 11.11.19

By the Chief Minister