



Inquiry into annual and financial reports 2024–25

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Ms Jo Clay MLA

Addressed to: Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development

Reference: CED

Hearing: 12 November 2025

In relation to: Community Engagement

Question received: 20 November 2025

Answer Due: 27 November 2025

The City and Environment Directorate Annual Report notes that the low level of community engagement was due to the caretaker period - with a target of 25 engagement opportunities but only 7 were carried out (pg72). Given that the date of the election was known for quite some time why wasn't a community engagement opportunities timeframe developed that factored in the caretaker period so that more community engagement activities were carried out?

Mr Chris Steel MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

As the Directorate matured as an organisation a number of changes were implemented to the way the Directorate engages with the community and key stakeholders. This has included establishing forums such as the Biodiversity Conservation Forum as a recognised consultation body. This means that a number of former community engagements included in the Strategic Indicator have been completed through direct stakeholder conversations rather than utilising the YourSay platform. An example of this change is the use of stakeholder forums and partnerships for the updating of single species action plans (Flying Fox Action Plan etc).

As a result of this maturing, the Directorate will be revising its community engagement targets for 2025-26 to prioritise the quality of engagement over quantity, ensuring alignment with the Government's strategic priorities.

The Directorate continues to engage with the community throughout the year, with block out for engagement only occurring during the Christmas and January period. The Caretaker Period impacts the end of engagement processes earlier in the calendar year (prior to September) to ensure that the Directorate abides by Caretaker Guidelines. This means, in practice that the last engagements are normally scheduled for July – August in an election year, re-commencing in February of the following year.

OFFICIAL

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Environment and Planning

Signature:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Chris Steel', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Date:

27/11/25

By the Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development, Chris Steel MLA