



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

SELECT COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES 2022-2023

Mr James Milligan MLA (Chair), Mr Andrew Braddock MLA (Deputy Chair),
Dr Marisa Paterson MLA

ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE DURING PUBLIC HEARINGS

Asked by Dr Paterson MLA on 30 August 2022: Kieran Lawton took on notice the following question(s):

In relation to: Extension of the Sustainable Households Scheme to community groups.

DR PATERSON: Yes, my question is just in relation to the extension of the scheme to community groups, the announcement of that this morning. Can you speak to, you know, what you predict the uptake will be? Is there—have you done consultation on this prior to—

Mr Barr: Sure, yes. Well, certainly, there is a number of keen entities who are people—will be very active early on. As to what the new positions—

Mr Lawton: Thanks, minister. Yes, so that was great to finish off the PAGA commitment, if you like, by including the community organisations today. And we are defining community organisations either using the Access Canberra list which is the incorporated associations in the ACT and there is several hundred of those. And/or being on the Australian charity's register.

And there has been consultation, and I would need to take that on notice to tell you exactly what consultation has gone on over the last 12 months. But I know that we have had plenty of interest and we have been talking with at least five that are ready to go today, organisations. And from memory, there was a church there and other community groups.

So yes, so what the uptake will be, we are not sure yet. Obviously, the scheme has been very successful with 7,000 households who are participating already. And we are—we have set it up, at the moment, with community organisations so that it is just handholding on the way through. So they will get a service where it is face to face and they will just have the conversations, if you like, and then, we will set up business systems behind that. So time will tell, I guess, it is novel, it is new.

Mr Andrew Barr MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows: –

The Sustainable Household Scheme (SHS) eligibility criteria for community organisations match the criteria for existing sustainability programs targeting community groups delivered by the ACT Government. These include the Community Zero Emissions Grants and the Business Energy and Water programs delivered by Environment Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate. The eligibility criteria were chosen to make it easy for community groups to self-assess and then demonstrate their eligibility, to be inclusive, and so that the program team and the loans provider can apply a straightforward eligibility assessment process.

Inclusion of community groups in the SHS is a commitment in the *Parliamentary and Governing Agreement for the 10th Legislative Assembly* (1.A1.i.), and has been flagged in subsequent

communications during the development of the scheme. The inclusion of community groups was discussed at several ACT Energy Consumers Policy Consortium meetings over the development and early implementation period. Consortium members include the Conservation Council, ACT Council of Social Services, SEE-Change, Care Financial Counselling Service and the Small Business Taskforce of the Canberra Business Chamber.

Several community groups independently registered their interest in participating during this period. The SHS team contacted and sought feedback on the proposed eligibility and implementation process with each one.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates 2022-2023

Signature: 

Date: 8.9.22

By the Minister for Climate Action, Mr Andrew Barr MLA