

ANNUAL AND FINANCIAL REPORTS 2019-2020 AND APPROPRIATION BILL 2020-2021

STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY INCLUSION

APRIL 2021

REPORT 1

THE COMMITTEE

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RESOLUTION OF APPOINTMENT

On 2 December 2020, the Legislative Assembly for the ACT resolved to establish a Standing Committee on Education and Community Inclusion ‘to enhance the scrutiny of the Executive, to examine and suggest improvements to any bills referred to it, to enable the citizens of the Territory to engage and to participate in law-making and policy review, to enable financial scrutiny of the Executive’s budget proposals and to review annual reports of taxpayer funded agencies’.¹

The Standing Committee on Education and Community Inclusion has responsibility over the following policy areas:

- Early Childhood Development
- Education
- Youth Affairs
- Skills
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs
- Multicultural Affairs
- Women (including the Office for Women)
- Seniors
- Veterans
- LGBTIQ+
- Sport and Recreation²

TERMS OF REFERENCE

On 2 December 2020, the Assembly resolved the following:

- 3) calendar and financial year annual and financial reports stand referred to the relevant standing committee for inquiry and report by 31 March of the year after the presentation of the report to the Assembly pursuant to the *Annual Reports (Government Agencies) Act 2004*;
- 7) the committees so established are required to examine the expenditure proposals contained in the main appropriation bills for the Territory and any revenue estimates proposed by the Government in the annual budget and prepare a report to the Assembly within 60 days of the presentation of the budget bills.³

¹ *Minutes of Proceedings*, No. 2, 2 December 2020, pp. 17-21.

² *Minutes of Proceedings*, No. 2, 2 December 2020, pp. 17-21

³ *Minutes of Proceedings*, No. 2, 2 December 2020, pp. 17-21.

On 11 February 2021, the Assembly made the following amendment to the motion of 2 December 2020:

In paragraph (3), omit “report by 31 March” and substitute “report by 9 April”.⁴

⁴ *Minutes of Proceedings*, No. 6, 11 February 2021, p. 72.

The Following Annual Reports (or report sections) were referred to the Standing Committee on Education and Community Inclusion:

Annual Report (in alphabetical order)	Reporting area	Ministerial Portfolio(s)
ACT Building and Construction Industry Training Fund Authority		Minister for Skills
Canberra Institute of Technology [including CIT Solutions Pty Ltd]		Minister for Skills
Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate	Community Sport infrastructure	Minister for Sport and Recreation
Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate	Higher Education, Training and Research	Minister for Skills
Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate	Office of LGBTIQ Affairs	Chief Minister
Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate	Property Services (Aquatic facilities management)	Minister for Sport and Recreation
Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate	Sport and Recreation	Minister for Sport and Recreation
Community Services Directorate	Child Development Services	Minister for Early Childhood Development
Community Services Directorate	Child and Family Centres	Minister for Early Childhood Development
Community Services Directorate	Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs	Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs
Community Services Directorate	Office for Disability	Minister for Disability
Community Services Directorate	Office for Multicultural Affairs	Minister for Multicultural Affairs
Community Services Directorate	Office for Seniors and Veterans	Assistant Minister for Seniors, Veterans, Families and Community Services
Community Services Directorate	Office for Women	Minister for Women
Community Services Directorate	Office for Youth	Minister for Education and Youth Affairs

Education Directorate	ACT Teacher Quality Institute	Minister for Education and Youth Affairs
Education Directorate	Board of Senior Secondary Studies	Minister for Education and Youth Affairs
Education Directorate	Early childhood development and education (including early childhood education and care regulated services; preschool programs; and Koori preschool programs)	Minister for Early Childhood Development
Education Directorate	Non-Government School Education	Minister for Education and Youth Affairs
Education Directorate	Public High School Education	Minister for Education and Youth Affairs
Education Directorate	Public Primary School Education	Minister for Education and Youth Affairs
Education Directorate	Public Secondary College Education	Minister for Education and Youth Affairs
University of Canberra		Chief Minister

ACRONYMS

ACARA	Australian Curriculum, Reporting and Assessment Authority
ATAR	Australia Tertiary Admission Rank
CIT	Canberra Institute of Technology
CMTEDD	Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate
CSD	Community Services Directorate
GSO	Government Solicitor's Office
NAPLAN	National Assessment Program—Literacy and Numeracy
NDIS	National Disability Insurance Scheme
OATSIA	Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
QoN	Question on Notice
QToN	Question Taken on Notice
RTO	Registered Training Organisation
YAC	Youth Advisory Council

TABLE OF CONTENTS

THE COMMITTEE	I
Committee Membership	i
Secretariat	i
Contact Information.....	i
Resolution of appointment	ii
Terms of reference.....	ii
ACRONYMS	VI
RECOMMENDATIONS	IX
1. INTRODUCTION	1
Background	1
Annual Reporting Requirements	1
Scope of Inquiries.....	3
Conduct of the Inquires.....	7
Acknowledgements.....	7
Structure of the Report	7
2 EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT	9
Outputs Examined.....	9
Matters Discussed	9
Program offerings at Child and Family Centres.....	10
3 EDUCATION AND SKILLS	12
Outputs and Entities Examined	12
Matters Discussed	15
Legal support services in schools.....	18
Teacher librarians	20
College facilities in Canberra's north.....	21
Literacy and Numeracy.....	23
Registered Training Organisations.....	28
4 COMMUNITY INCLUSION	30
Outputs Considered	30
Matters Discussed	33
2020 Young Canberra Citizen of the Year Awards.....	36
Women's Safety	37

5	SPORT AND RECREATION	39
	Matters Discussed	39
	Gungahlin Leisure Centre	40
6	CONCLUSION	46
	APPENDIX A - WITNESSES.....	47
	1 March 2021	47
	5 March 2021	48
	APPENDIX C – QUESTIONS TAKEN ON NOTICE/ QUESTIONS ON NOTICE.....	50

RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 1

- 2.10 The Committee recommends that the ACT Government ensure that Child and Family Centres provide program offerings simultaneously on the north and south sides of Canberra.

RECOMMENDATION 2

- 3.22 The Committee recommends that the ACT Government continue to provide free legal services in ACT public colleges and look to further opportunities to expand this service to ACT public high schools in the future.

RECOMMENDATION 3

- 3.25 The Committee recommends that the Education Directorate expands its partnership with Legal Aid to provide education sessions in ACT public high schools on legal issues relevant to high school-aged children.

RECOMMENDATION 4

- 3.33 The Committee recommends that the ACT Government continues to support teacher librarians and considers further ways to enhance libraries in ACT public schools.

RECOMMENDATION 5

- 3.43 The Committee recommends that the ACT Government expedite the feasibility study for further college capacity in north Canberra, and if required, construction of further college facilities in Canberra's north.

RECOMMENDATION 6

- 3.45 The Committee recommends that the ACT Government more carefully plans the construction of new schools to better meet size demands at the initial point of construction to avoid further construction work in the early life of the school.

RECOMMENDATION 7

- 3.63 The Committee recommends that the ACT Government outline its plans to improve literacy and numeracy skills among ACT public school students.

RECOMMENDATION 8

- 3.71 The Committee recommends that the ACT Government provide additional financial support for Registered Training Organisations to deliver training in the ACT.

RECOMMENDATION 9

- 4.17 The Committee recommends that the ACT Government connect with the 2020 Young Canberra Citizen of the Year Awards winners and ensure that they are given appropriate opportunities in light of the disruptions experienced in 2020.

RECOMMENDATION 10

- 4.26 The Committee recommends that the ACT Government improve referral and feedback processes when women's safety issues are reported to ACT Government directorates and agencies.

RECOMMENDATION 11

- 5.22 The Committee recommends that the ACT Government continue to provide updates to the Assembly on the repair work on the pool at Gungahlin Leisure Centre.

RECOMMENDATION 12

- 5.24 The Committee recommends that the ACT Government ensure that all future procurement processes adequately consider previous work of companies tendering for work.

1 INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

- 1.1 On 2 December 2020, the Legislative Assembly for the ACT referred the Annual and Financial Reports for the calendar year 2019 and the financial year 2019-2020 of all ACT Government agencies to the relevant standing committees for inquiry and report by 31 March 2021.⁵ On 11 February 2021, the Assembly amended this motion to allow the standing committees to table the report on the Annual and Financial Reports Inquiry by 9 April 2021.⁶
- 1.2 Also in the 2 December 2020 motion, the main appropriation bills for the Territory and revenue estimates by the Government in the annual budget were referred to the relevant standing committees for inquiry and report within 60 days of the presentation of the budget bills.⁷ The Treasurer presented the main budget bill for 2020-2021 to the Assembly on 9 February 2021.⁸ Consequentially, for the current Estimates Inquiry (Appropriation Bill 2020-2021) this reporting date is 9 April 2021.
- 1.3 To ensure a coherent hearing and inquiry process, the Standing Committee on Education and Community Inclusion (the Committee) resolved on 16 February 2021 to combine the questioning for the Annual and Financial Reports Inquiry and the Estimates Inquiry during the hearing sessions. The Committee also resolved to combine the two inquiries into a single report (the current report).

ANNUAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

- 1.4 The *Annual Reports (Government Agencies) Act 2004* sets the framework for annual reporting across the ACT public sector. In accordance with the *Annual Reports (Government Agencies) Act 2004*, the Chief Minister issues Annual Reports Directions (the Directions) to outline agency reporting requirements.
- 1.5 As specified in the Directions, annual reports are ‘reports from agency heads to their responsible Minister, the Legislative Assembly and the public that provide a detailed description of the agency’s activities during a reporting year’. Annual reports enable agencies to provide an account of their performance, through Ministers, to the Legislative Assembly and

⁵ *Minutes of Proceedings*, No. 2, 2 December 2020, pp. 17-21.

⁶ *Minutes of Proceedings*, No. 6, 11 February 2021, p. 72.

⁷ *Minutes of Proceedings*, No. 2, 2 December 2020, pp. 17-21.

⁸ *Minutes of Proceedings*, No. 4, 9 February 2021, pp. 54-55.

the wider community.⁹ Annual reports, according to the Directions, should focus on the agency's:

1. long term strategic direction and context;
2. performance analysis against its short term budget outputs; and
3. financial management.¹⁰

1.6 The Directions state that an effective annual report will:

- provide clear information about the reporting entity's purpose, priorities, outputs and achievements;
- focus on results and outcomes - communicate the success or shortfalls of the reporting entity's activities in pursuing government objectives in the reporting year, while accounting for the resources used in the process and explaining changes in performance over time;
- discuss results against expectations - provide sufficient information and analysis for the Legislative Assembly and community to make a fully informed judgment on the reporting entity's performance;
- clearly identify any changes to structures or functions of the reporting entity during the reporting year;
- report on the reporting entity's financial and operational performance and clearly link this with budgeted priorities and financial projections as set out in annual Budget Estimate Papers and the entity Statement of Intent and Corporate Plan;
- provide performance information that is complete and informative, linking costs and results to provide evidence of value for money;
- discuss risks and environmental factors affecting the reporting entity's ability to achieve objectives including any strategies employed to manage these factors, and forecast future needs and expectations;
- recognise the diverse needs and backgrounds of stakeholder groups and present information in a manner that is useful to the maximum number of users while maintaining a suitable level of detail; and

⁹ Annual Reports (Government Agencies) Directions 2019, Notifiable Instrument NI2019–296, p. 5.

¹⁰ Annual Reports (Government Agencies) Directions 2019, Notifiable Instrument NI2019–296, p. 5.

- comply with legislative reporting requirements including the *Annual Reports (Government Agencies) Act 2004* and the Annual Report Directions.¹¹
- 1.7 Annual reports are public documents and available for use by stakeholders, including educational and research institutions, and the broader community. They provide a valuable tool for public reporting, accountability and transparency.
 - 1.8 Section 13 of the Annual Reports Act requires that responsible ministers present annual reports to the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly 'within 15 weeks after the end of the reporting year' and on a day (if any) stipulated by the Chief Minister under section 13(2) of the Act.¹²
 - 1.9 Section 14 of the Act provides for an extension of time for presenting annual reports. Under this section, responsible ministers can request an extension of time to present annual reports and must produce 'a written statement of the reasons for the failure to meet the time'.¹³ Section 14(4) provides for the Chief Minister to grant extensions.¹⁴
 - 1.10 On 20 August 2020, the ACT Government tabled a statement of reasons for the extension of time for the presentation of the 2019-2020 annual reports to the Legislative Assembly.¹⁵
 - 1.11 According to this statement, ACT Government ministers requested an extension of time until 18 December 2020 for the presentation of the annual reports. The statement noted that '[a] Public Health Emergency was declared in the ACT on 16 March to combat coronavirus (COVID-19)' and that '[a]n extension of time to present the ACT Government's Annual Reports is necessary to address the operational impacts of the COVID-19 public health emergency on the ACT Government'.¹⁶

SCOPE OF INQUIRIES

- 1.12 The following Annual and Financial Reports, or section of the reports, were referred to and examined by the Committee (in alphabetical order):

¹¹ Annual Reports (Government Agencies) Directions 2019, Notifiable Instrument NI2019-296, p. 10.

¹² *Annual Reports (Government Agencies) Act 2004*, s. 13.

¹³ *Annual Reports (Government Agencies) Act 2004*, s. 14.

¹⁴ *Annual Reports (Government Agencies) Act 2004*, s. 14.

¹⁵ Statement of Reasons – Extension of time for presenting the 2019-2020 Annual Reports, 20 August 2020, https://www.parliament.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/1621861/LIST_Pursuant-to-Section-14-of-the-Annual-Reports-Government-Agencies-Act-2004-Statement-of-Reasons-Extension-of-time-for-presenting-the-2019-20-Annual-Reports.pdf, viewed 12 March 2021.

¹⁶ Statement of Reasons – Extension of time for presenting the 2019-2020 Annual Reports, 20 August 2020, p. 1, https://www.parliament.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/1621861/LIST_Pursuant-to-Section-14-of-the-Annual-Reports-Government-Agencies-Act-2004-Statement-of-Reasons-Extension-of-time-for-presenting-the-2019-20-Annual-Reports.pdf, viewed 12 March 2021.

- ACT Building and Construction Industry Training Fund Authority Annual Report, 2019-2020;¹⁷
- Canberra Institute of Technology Annual Report 2019;¹⁸
- Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate Annual Report, 2019-2020;¹⁹
- Community Services Directorate Annual Report, 2019-2020;²⁰
- Education Directorate Annual Report 2019-2020;²¹
- University of Canberra Annual Report, 2019.²²

1.13 The following budgetary output classes and outputs, and their associated units, and Statements of Intent fall within the remit of the Committee's inquiry:

- ❖ Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate
 - Output Class 1: Government Strategy
 - Output 1.1—Government Policy and Reform
 - Office of LGBTIQ Affairs²³
 - Output Class 3: Economic Development
 - Output 3.3—Sport and Recreation²⁴
 - Output 3.6—Higher Education, Training and Research²⁵
 - Output Class 9: Property Services and Venues

¹⁷ <https://www.trainingfund.com.au/storage/actbcitfa-ar-2019-20-web.pdf>

¹⁸ https://cit.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/205744/CIT_2019_Annual_Report_WEB.pdf

¹⁹ https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/1677425/CMTEDD-2019-20-Annual-Report-Volume-1.pdf; https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/1677424/FINAL-ONLINE-VERSION-Volume-2.1-CMTEDD-Annual-Report-2019-20.pdf; https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/1677423/FINAL-ONLINE-VERSION-Volume-2.2-2019-20-CMTEDD-Annual-Report.pdf

²⁰ https://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/1668338/CSD-AR2019-20_Acc_01.1.pdf

²¹ https://www.education.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/1677058/Education-Annual-Report-2019-20_web.pdf

²² https://www.canberra.edu.au/about-uc/policy-and-legislation/key-university-documents/annual-reports/docs/UCCOR0538_AR2019-V1_Digital_200526.pdf

²³ ACT Budget 2020-21, *Budget Statements B, Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate (CMTEDD) together with associated agencies*, pp. 18-19.

²⁴ ACT Budget 2020-21, *Budget Statements B, Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate (CMTEDD) together with associated agencies*, p. 23.

²⁵ ACT Budget 2020-21, *Budget Statements B, Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate (CMTEDD) together with associated agencies*, pp. 24-25.

- Output 9.1—Property Service²⁶
 - Aquatic facilities management
- Output Class 1: Canberra Institute of Technology
 - Output 1.1 Provision of Vocational Education and Training Services²⁷
 - Canberra Institute of Technology (Statement of Intent) [including CIT Solutions Pty Ltd].
- ❖ Community Services Directorate
 - Output Class 1: Strategic Policy, Inclusion and Participation²⁸
 - Output 1.1—Inclusion and Participation²⁹
 - Office for Women
 - Office for Seniors and Veterans
 - Office for Multicultural Affairs
 - Office for Youth.
 - Output 1.2—Office for Disability³⁰
 - Output 1.3—Strategic Policy³¹
 - Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs

²⁶ ACT Budget 2020-21, *Budget Statements B, Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate (CMTEDD) together with associated agencies*, p. 31.

²⁷ ACT Budget 2020-21, *Budget Statements B, Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate (CMTEDD) together with associated agencies*, p. 156.

²⁸ For the Community Services Directorates Annual Report 2019-2020 this output class is 2: Strategic Policy, Inclusion and Participation. The renumbering of the output class for the 2020-2021 Budget reflects the discontinuation of former Output Class 1: National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Implementation.

²⁹ For the Community Services Directorates Annual Report 2019-2020 this output is 2.1 Inclusion and Participation. The renumbering of the output for the 2020-2021 Budget reflects the discontinuation of former Output 1.1 National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Implementation. ACT Budget 2020-21, *Budget Statements G, Community Services Directorate/Housing ACT*, p. 13.

³⁰ For the Community Services Directorates Annual Report 2019-2020 this output is 2.2 Office for Disability. The renumbering of the output for the 2020-2021 Budget reflects the discontinuation of former Output 1.1 National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Implementation. ACT Budget 2020-21, *Budget Statements G, Community Services Directorate/Housing ACT*, p. 14.

³¹ For the Community Services Directorates Annual Report 2019-2020 this output is 2.3 Strategic Policy. The renumbering of the output for the 2020-2021 Budget reflects the discontinuation of former Output 1.1 National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Implementation. ACT Budget 2020-21, *Budget Statements G, Community Services Directorate/Housing ACT*, p. 14.

- Output 1.4—Quality, Complaints, and Regulation³²
- Output Class 2: Children, Youth and Families³³
 - Output 2.1—Child and Family Centres³⁴
 - Output 2.2—Child Development Services.³⁵
- ❖ Education Directorate
 - Output Class 1: Public School Education
 - Output 1.1—Public Primary School Education³⁶
 - Output 1.2—Public High School Education³⁷
 - Output 1.3—Public Secondary College Education³⁸
 - Output 1.4—Disability Education in Public Schools³⁹
 - Output Class 2: Non-Government Education
 - Output 2.1—Non-Government Education.⁴⁰
- ❖ ACT Building and Construction Industry Training Fund Authority (Statement of Intent).⁴¹

³² For the Community Services Directorates Annual Report 2019-2020 this output is 2.4 Quality, Complaints and Regulation. The renumbering of the output for the 2020-2021 Budget reflects the discontinuation of former Output 1.1 National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Implementation. ACT Budget 2020-21, *Budget Statements G, Community Services Directorate/Housing ACT*, p. 15.

³³ For the Community Services Directorates Annual Report 2019-2020 this output class is 3: Children, Youth and Families. The renumbering of the output class for the 2020-2021 Budget reflects the discontinuation of former Output Class 1: National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Implementation.

³⁴ For the Community Services Directorates Annual Report 2019-2020 this output is 3.1 Child and Family Centres. The renumbering of the output for the 2020-2021 Budget reflects the discontinuation of former Output 1.1 National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Implementation. ACT Budget 2020-21, *Budget Statements G, Community Services Directorate/Housing ACT*, p. 16.

³⁵ For the Community Services Directorates Annual Report 2019-2020 this output is 3.2 Child and Development Services. The renumbering of the output for the 2020-2021 Budget reflects the discontinuation of former Output 1.1 National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Implementation. ACT Budget 2020-21, *Budget Statements G, Community Services Directorate/Housing ACT*, p. 16.

³⁶ ACT Budget 2020-21, *Budget Statements F, Education Directorate*, p. 11.

³⁷ ACT Budget 2020-21, *Budget Statements F, Education Directorate*, p. 12.

³⁸ ACT Budget 2020-21, *Budget Statements F, Education Directorate*, pp. 12-13.

³⁹ ACT Budget 2020-21, *Budget Statements F, Education Directorate*, p. 13.

⁴⁰ ACT Budget 2020-21, *Budget Statements F, Education Directorate*, p. 14.

⁴¹ ACT Budget 2020-21, *Building and Construction Industry Training Fund Authority Statement of Intent*.

CONDUCT OF THE INQUIRES

- 1.14 The Committee held public hearings on Monday 1 March and Friday 5 March 2021. A list of witnesses who appeared before the Committee at those hearings is available at Appendix A.
- 1.15 The transcripts for these hearings are available on the Hansard page of the Legislative Assembly for the ACT's website.⁴²
- 1.16 The Committee did not call for public submissions for these Inquires.
- 1.17 There were 35 questions taken on notice (QToN) by witnesses and 80 question provided on notice (QoN) by Members following the hearings. A full list of all QToNs and QoNs stemming from the hearings is available at Appendix B. The full answers to all QToNs and QoNs, that were received by the Committee, are available on the Committee's website.⁴³

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 1.18 The Committee thanks the Chief Minister Andrew Barr MLA; Minister Yvette Berry MLA (in her capacities as Minister for Education and Youth Affairs, Minister for Early Childhood Development, Minister for Women and Minister for Sport and Recreation); Minister Chris Steel MLA (in his capacity as Minister for Skills); Minister Tara Cheyne MLA (in her capacity as the Minister for Multicultural Affairs); Minister Rachel Stephen-Smith MLA (in her capacity as Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs); Minister Emma Davidson MLA (in her capacities as Minister for Disabilities and Assistant Minister for Seniors, Veterans, Families and Community Services); and Professor Paddy Nixon, Vice-Chancellor and President of the University of Canberra, and their officers, for attending hearings and cooperating with the inquiry process.

STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

- 1.19 The report consists of the following chapters:
- Chapter One—Introduction (the present chapter);
 - Chapter Two—Early Childhood Development;
 - Chapter Three—Education and Skills;

⁴² <http://www.hansard.act.gov.au/hansard/2021/comms/default.htm>

⁴³ <https://www.parliament.act.gov.au/parliamentary-business/in-committees/committees/eci/inquiries-into-annual-and-financial-reports-20192020-and-act-budget-20202021>

- Chapter Four—Community Inclusion;
- Chapter Five—Sport and Recreation; and
- Chapter Six—Conclusion.

2 EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

- 2.1 The Minister for Early Childhood Development, Ms Yvette Berry MLA, and her supporting officials, appeared before the Committee on Monday 1 March 2021 to answer questions related to the Early Childhood Development portfolio area.

OUTPUTS EXAMINED

CHILD AND FAMILY CENTRES (OUTPUT 2.1)

- 2.2 The Community Services Directorate's Child and Family Centres provide early intervention and prevention services through a 'universal platform with targeted services for vulnerable families'.⁴⁴ Services provided by Child and Family Centres 'include parenting groups, advice and support, sustained home visiting, specialist clinical services, and community development and education programs. Services are delivered in partnership with other agencies, local community organisations and services providers.'⁴⁵

CHILD DEVELOPMENT SERVICES (OUTPUT 2.2)

- 2.3 The Community Services Directorate's Child Development Service
- ...has a focus on early identification and intervention and provides assessment, referral, information and linkages for children birth to six years living in the ACT, where there are concerns relating to their development. Autism assessments are provided for children up to twelve years. Children seven to eight years with complex needs who have not had a previous assessment by allied health professionals can access the services.⁴⁶

MATTERS DISCUSSED

- 2.4 The following matters were discussed during the course of the hearing:

- Closing of West Belconnen Early Childhood Centre;⁴⁷

⁴⁴ Community Services Directorate Annual Report 2019-2020, p. 57; ACT Budget 2020-21, *Budget Statements G, Community Services Directorate/Housing ACT*, p. 16.

⁴⁵ Community Services Directorate Annual Report 2019-2020, p. 57; ACT Budget 2020-21, *Budget Statements G, Community Services Directorate/Housing ACT*, p. 16.

⁴⁶ Community Services Directorate Annual Report 2019-2020, p. 57; ACT Budget 2020-21, *Budget Statements G, Community Services Directorate/Housing ACT*, p. 16.

⁴⁷ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, pp. 55-58.

- Impact of the closure of the West Belconnen Early Childhood Centre on the Strong Women's Group, the Koori Girls Group, and the Koori Boys Group;⁴⁸
- Impact of the COVID-19 experience on Child and Family Centre operations;⁴⁹
- Community Services Directorate's occupational therapy drop-in centres trial;⁵⁰
- Mindful Motherhood program;⁵¹
- Community Services Directorate's Digital Resource Library;⁵²
- Work of various government committees/councils in supporting the community during COVID-19 response period;⁵³
- Need for a COVID-19 community recovery advisory body;⁵⁴
- Infrastructure improvements to Child and Family Centres;⁵⁵
- Autism assessments;⁵⁶
- Culturally safe and inclusive services and programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families in Child and Family Centres;⁵⁷

PROGRAM OFFERINGS AT CHILD AND FAMILY CENTRES

- 2.5 The Committee discussed the new Mindful Motherhood program which runs out of the Gungahlin Child and Family Centre. The Committee heard the following details about the new program:

Mindful Mothering is an eight-week program aiming to support pregnant and new mothers. The sessions are very practical. They combine yoga with a licensed instructor and mindfulness approaches. And the real focus is to increase confidence and skills to cope with stress, promote emotional balances and assist with regulating emotions;

⁴⁸ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 58.

⁴⁹ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, pp. 58-60, 61-62, 71.

⁵⁰ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, pp. 60-61.

⁵¹ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, pp. 62-64.

⁵² *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, pp. 64-65.

⁵³ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, pp. 65-66.

⁵⁴ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, pp. 66-67.

⁵⁵ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 67.

⁵⁶ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, pp. 67-69.

⁵⁷ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, pp. 69-71.

increase acceptance of emotions and thoughts; approach experiences with a calm, non-judgmental approach; and assist in responding to baby's thoughts and emotions.⁵⁸

- 2.6 The Committee queried why the program is run out of the Gungahlin Child and Family Centre and was informed that

...the data from Gungahlin was driving that analysis. There is a gap here. This is what we are hearing from this particular part of the community. That is not to say that that need might not exist elsewhere, but we need to actually test these programs and get people skilled up to run them, to see if they are successful. If there is need elsewhere, we can consider that in the future.⁵⁹

- 2.7 The Committee was told about the expansion of the program to other Child and Family Centres:

The program was delivered at the Gungahlin Child and Family Centre in term 3 of last year and then at the Tuggeranong Child and Family Centre in term 4 of last year. In 2021 we are going to continue to roll out the program. We are looking to have another one at the Gungahlin Child and Family Centre and then a program at the West Belconnen Child and Family Centre as well. ...in the child and family centres we have a core suite of programs that we deliver but there is always opportunity to look at what is new and innovative and active that suite of programs. This is an example of that.⁶⁰

COMMITTEE COMMENT

- 2.8 The Committee is aware that it may be impractical for some people to travel from one side of Canberra to another to attend programs on offer at the various Child and Family Centres. In order to maximise accessibility to the range of program offerings at the Child and Family Centres, the Committee believes that, at a minimum, programs should be offered simultaneously on the north and south sides of Canberra.
- 2.9 This recommendation related to the Annual and Financial Reports 2019-2020.

Recommendation 1

- 2.10 The Committee recommends that the ACT Government ensure that Child and Family Centres provide program offerings simultaneously on the north and south sides of Canberra.**

⁵⁸ Ms Melanie Saballa, Executive Branch Manager, Strategy and Management, Community Services Directorate, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 63.

⁵⁹ Ms Jo Wood, Director General, Community Services Directorate, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 63.

⁶⁰ Ms Melanie Saballa, Executive Branch Manager, Strategy and Management, Community Services Directorate, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 64.

3 EDUCATION AND SKILLS

- 3.1 The Minister for Education and Youth Affairs and Minister for Early Childhood Development, Ms Yvette Berry MLA, and her supporting officials, appeared before the Committee on Monday 1 March 2021 to answer questions related to the Education portfolio (including early childhood education).
- 3.2 The Minister for Skills, Mr Chris Steel MLA, and his supporting officers, appeared before the Committee on Friday 5 March 2021 to answer questions relating to the Skills portfolio area.
- 3.3 The Vice-Chancellor of the University of Canberra, Professor Paddy Nixon, and his supporting officials, appeared before the Committee on Friday 5 March 2021 to answer questions relating to the Annual Report of the University of Canberra.

OUTPUTS AND ENTITIES EXAMINED

PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL EDUCATION (OUTPUT 1.1)

- 3.4 The Education Directorate is responsible for the delivery of public primary education (from Preschool to Year 6) in the Territory. The Directorate is also responsible for the regulation of early childhood education and care services.⁶¹

PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION (OUTPUT 1.2)

- 3.5 The Education Directorate is responsible for the delivery of public high school education (Years 7 to 10) in the Territory.

PUBLIC SECONDARY COLLEGE EDUCATION (OUTPUT 1.3)

- 3.6 The Education Directorate is responsible for the delivery of public secondary college education (Years 11 and 12) in the Territory.

DISABILITY EDUCATION IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS (OUTPUT 1.4)

- 3.7 ACT public schools offer a range of programs for students with a disability:
- These include access to specialist schools, specific classes or units in mainstream schools, and participation in mainstream classes with the support to access the

⁶¹ ACT Budget 2020-21, *Budget Statements F, Education Directorate*, p. 11.

educational programs offered by the school. Students accessing a disability program have an Individual Learning Plan (ILP). The ILP is developed in partnership between the school, family, student (where appropriate) and other professionals.⁶²

NON-GOVERNMENT EDUCATION (OUTPUT 2.1)

3.8 The Education Directorate

...contributes to the maintenance of standards in non-government schools and home education through registration and the BSSS [Board of Senior Secondary Studies] accreditation and certification of senior secondary courses. The Directorate also undertakes the administration and payment of Commonwealth and ACT Government grants.⁶³

CANBERRA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY (STATEMENT OF INTENT)

3.9 The Canberra Institute of Technology is the

...largest publically funded Registered Training Organisation (RTO) in the ACT and is a Territory Authority established under the *Canberra Institute of Technology Act 1987*.

CIT is responsible for providing training and education that meets the needs of students, industry, business and the ACT community.⁶⁴

3.10 Section 6(1) of the Act stipulates the following functions of the CIT:

- a) to conduct an educational institution to provide excellence in study in the fields of vocational education and training and higher education that—
 - the CIT board, with the Minister's written approval, decides; or
 - the Minister directs;
- b) to provide educational products and services, and use the facilities and resources of the CIT, to advance and develop knowledge and skills in the community;
- c) to support ACT industry and business in pursuing economic growth and sustainability for the community;
- d) to perform the role of public provider of vocational education and training in the ACT;

⁶² ACT Budget 2020-21, *Budget Statements F, Education Directorate*, p. 13.

⁶³ ACT Budget 2020-21, *Budget Statements F, Education Directorate*, p. 14.

⁶⁴ Canberra Institute of Technology Annual Report, 2019, p. 14.

- e) to issue awards to people who have satisfactorily completed a course of study at the CIT;
- f) to issue awards posthumously and to issue honorary awards;
- g) to consult and cooperate with other entities and businesses to promote education and training and employment pathways for learners;
- h) to make suitable financial arrangements with industry and business for the purposes of the CIT's functions under paragraphs (a) and (e).⁶⁵

THE ACT BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY TRAINING FUND AUTHORITY (STATEMENT OF INTENT)

3.11 The ACT Building and Construction Industry Training Fund Authority is a statutory body that ...provides funding for the training of eligible workers and for the development of skills identified as being in short supply in the building and construction industry. It aims to improve the culture, level and access to training and to support the entry of new people into the building and construction industry.⁶⁶

3.12 The Authority has four objectives:

- to promote, through training, increased productivity, career opportunities, personal satisfaction and work health and safety within the building and construction industry;
- to ensure an equitable distribution of funds to employers and employees in employment related training in the building and construction industry;
- to allocate funds against determined priorities and outcomes for training delivery, not capital or administrative costs; and
- to encourage employment and skills development in the building and construction industry.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ *Canberra Institute of Technology Act 1987*, s 6(1).

⁶⁶ ACT Building and Construction Industry Training Fund Authority Annual Report, 2019-2020, p. 7.

⁶⁷ ACT Building and Construction Industry Training Fund Authority Annual Report, 2019-2020, p. 7.

UNIVERSITY OF CANBERRA

3.13 The University of Canberra was established as a university on 1 January 1990.⁶⁸ The University is governed under the *University of Canberra Act 1989*. According to section 6(1) of the Act, the University's functions include the following:

- to transmit and advance knowledge by undertaking teaching and research of the highest quality; and
- to encourage, and provide facilities for, postgraduate study and research; and
- to provide facilities and course for higher education generally, including education appropriate to professional and other occupations, for students from within Australia and overseas; and
- to award and confer degrees, diploma and certificates, whether in its own right, jointly with other institutions or as otherwise decided by the council; and
- to provide opportunities for people, including those who already have post-secondary qualifications, to obtain higher education qualifications; and
- to develop and provide cultural, sporting, professional, technical, and vocational services to the community; and
- to participate in public discourse; and
- to engage in extension activities; and
- to commercially exploit or develop, for the university's benefit, and property of the university including any facility, resource, real property or other right or interest.⁶⁹

3.14 Under section 6(2) of the Act, the University 'must pay special attention to the needs of the ACT and the surrounding regions' in carrying out these functions.⁷⁰

MATTERS DISCUSSED

3.15 The Following matters were discussed during the course of the hearing:

⁶⁸ University of Canberra, 'University Legislation', <https://www.canberra.edu.au/about-uc/policy-and-legislation/legislation>, viewed 26 March 2021.

⁶⁹ *University of Canberra Act 1989*, s. 6(1).

⁷⁰ *University of Canberra Act 1989*, s. 6(2).

- Budget announcements concerning schools in Gungahlin;⁷¹
- Safe and Supportive Schools initiative and support for LGBTIQ+ students;⁷²
- Use of temporary buildings in public schools;⁷³
- Literacy and numeracy performance of ACT public schools;⁷⁴
- Dealing with complaints within schools;⁷⁵
- Sensory spaces within schools;⁷⁶
- Social and emotional learning programs available in schools;⁷⁷
- School counsellors and psychologists;⁷⁸
- Legal Liaison Officers in schools;⁷⁹
- School Chaplaincy Program funding;⁸⁰
- Priority Enrolment Areas;⁸¹
- Language pathways between primary and secondary schools;⁸²
- Recurrent funding per-student;⁸³
- Teacher Librarians;⁸⁴
- Use of mainstream and specialised schools for children with disability;⁸⁵
- Suspension policy;⁸⁶

⁷¹ *Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, pp. 2-3.

⁷² *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, pp. 3-7.

⁷³ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, pp. 7-12.

⁷⁴ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, pp. 12-20.

⁷⁵ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 20.

⁷⁶ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 21.

⁷⁷ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 21.

⁷⁸ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, pp. 22-26.

⁷⁹ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, pp. 26-27.

⁸⁰ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 27.

⁸¹ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, pp. 28-32.

⁸² *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, pp. 32-33.

⁸³ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, pp. 33-34.

⁸⁴ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, pp. 34-37.

⁸⁵ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, pp. 37-41.

⁸⁶ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, pp. 41-43.

- Education Directorate's management of the COVID-19 crisis;⁸⁷
- Cost of Chromebooks provided to students for the COVID-19 response;⁸⁸
- Money-smart teaching funding;⁸⁹
- Impact of COVID-19 on the University of Canberra;⁹⁰
- The Educated Life Plan;⁹¹
- ATAR requirements for teacher qualifications;⁹²
- University of Canberra's world universities rank;⁹³
- *Change the Course: National Report on Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment at Australian Universities*, 2017 review;⁹⁴
- Revenue increase and budget trend for the ACT Building and Construction Industry Training Fund Authority;⁹⁵
- Emerging trends in training courses on offer in the ACT;⁹⁶
- Governance structure of the CIT;⁹⁷
- Impact of COVID-19 on the CIT;⁹⁸
- JobTrainer Program, Registered Training Organisations and the Ginninderry SPARK Training and Employment program;⁹⁹
- Staffing profile at the CIT;¹⁰⁰
- Social and peer support for CIT students;¹⁰¹

⁸⁷ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, pp. 44-50.

⁸⁸ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, pp. 50-51.

⁸⁹ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, pp. 51-54.

⁹⁰ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 5 March 2021, pp. 115-116.

⁹¹ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 5 March 2021, p. 116.

⁹² *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 5 March 2021, pp. 116-118.

⁹³ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 5 March 2021, pp. 118-119.

⁹⁴ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 5 March 2021, pp. 119-120.

⁹⁵ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 5 March 2021, pp. 121-123.

⁹⁶ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 5 March 2021, pp. 123-124.

⁹⁷ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 5 March 2021, pp. 124-125.

⁹⁸ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 5 March 2021, pp. 125-128.

⁹⁹ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 5 March 2021, pp. 128-138.

¹⁰⁰ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 5 March 2021, pp. 138-141.

¹⁰¹ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 5 March 2021, pp. 141-143.

- Campus modernisation and the movement of CIT campus and courses that will be offered at the new campus;¹⁰²
- CIT Strategic Compass;¹⁰³
- CIT's role in meeting skills shortages;¹⁰⁴
- CIT at the 2020 Australian Training Awards;¹⁰⁵
- Staffing at CIT Solutions Pty Ltd;¹⁰⁶
- Bullying and harassment at the CIT;¹⁰⁷
- CIT's support to women to pursue vocational education;¹⁰⁸
- Apprenticeships in the ACT and ACT Government programs to support apprenticeships.¹⁰⁹

LEGAL SUPPORT SERVICES IN SCHOOLS

3.16 In the context of a discussion on how schools manage cases of students seeking support due to domestic violence, the Committee was informed about the partnership between the Education Directorate and Legal Aid for the provision of legal support services to students in schools. The Minister told the Committee that through the partnership, 'we have a professional lawyer/solicitor in our schools and who can provide legal advice'.¹¹⁰ The Committee heard that the service is still in pilot form and only available across colleges on a rotating basis currently.

3.17 The Minister explained how the service operates:

Students are able to self-refer or are referred by teachers to get legal advice. The school community is a mandatory reporter and legal advice is protected, so students can feel safe getting advice from a legal professional without any other concerns that they might have with talking to a teacher.¹¹¹

¹⁰² *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 5 March 2021, pp. 143-144.

¹⁰³ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 5 March 2021, pp. 144-146.

¹⁰⁴ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 5 March 2021, pp. 146-147.

¹⁰⁵ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 5 March 2021, pp. 147-148.

¹⁰⁶ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 5 March 2021, pp. 148-150, 153.

¹⁰⁷ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 5 March 2021, pp. 150-151.

¹⁰⁸ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 5 March 2021, pp. 151-153.

¹⁰⁹ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 5 March 2021, pp. 153-159.

¹¹⁰ Ms Yvette Berry MLA, Minister for Education and Youth Affairs, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 26.

¹¹¹ Ms Yvette Berry MLA, Minister for Education and Youth Affairs, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 26.

- 3.18 The Committee was told that since the commencement of the service in September 2020, 71 consultations had taken place, that feedback from students and staff has been positive and that there had been calls to extend the service into ‘the high ends of high school’.¹¹² The Committee also heard about the types of advice the legal liaison officers provide students:

They provide advice on family violence, tenancy agreements, employment, migration, care and protection orders, personal protection orders, parenting disputes and criminal matters.¹¹³

- 3.19 In terms of the Directorate’s relationship with Legal Aid for the provision of the services, the Committee was told that the Directorate funds Legal Aid through its budget and there is a Memorandum of Understanding in place for Legal Aid to provide a legal liaison officer to rotate through colleges on a full-time basis. The Directorate noted the following:

Whilst that is an individual person, we know Legal Aid ACT also support our colleges more broadly. If colleges want to run a session on issues around gaming or online issues around intimate image abuse and talking to college kids around what their liabilities are, they also run those group-based sessions for us as well.¹¹⁴

COMMITTEE COMMENT

- 3.20 The Committee see much merit in the legal services provided by Legal Aid to ACT colleges. Without such services available, students face great difficulties in accessing reliable and professional legal advice, potentially resulting in harmful and tragic outcomes. The Committee would welcome the expansion of the service beyond colleges to ACT public high schools.
- 3.21 This recommendation relates to the Appropriation Bill 2020-2021.

Recommendation 2

- 3.22 The Committee recommends that the ACT Government continue to provide free legal services in ACT public colleges and look to further opportunities to expand this service to ACT public high schools in the future.**
- 3.23 The Committee, further, sees merit in the Education Directorate partnering with Legal Aid to provide more general supports to high schools in the form of sessions on topical legal issues affecting high school-aged children, as it currently does in colleges.

¹¹² Mr Ross Hawkins, Executive Group Manager, Service Design and Delivery, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 26.

¹¹³ Mr Ross Hawkins, Executive Group Manager, Service Design and Delivery, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 26.

¹¹⁴ Mr Ross Hawkins, Executive Group Manager, Service Design and Delivery, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 27.

3.24 This recommendation relates to the Appropriation Bill 2020-2021.

Recommendation 3

3.25 The Committee recommends that the Education Directorate expands its partnership with Legal Aid to provide education sessions in ACT public high schools on legal issues relevant to high school-aged children.

TEACHER LIBRARIANS

3.26 The Committee heard that the Education Directorate will increase the number of teacher librarians in ACT public schools by ‘engaging 25 teacher librarians or providing 25 teacher librarian scholarships’.¹¹⁵ The Minister explained:

The funding for the master’s degree that a teacher librarian requires to be a specialist in their trade is a 12-month scholarship on top of the four-year degree that they are required to do as a teacher. So the funding that the ACT government is providing is to address that gap in the specialist teacher librarian workforce and to train people up to take that master’s education and then offer them employment with it or, if they are not working with us yet but they are working, to offer them employment with us, and to work with schools in the meantime as well about what their needs are around teacher librarianship.¹¹⁶

3.27 The Committee was told that the Directorate was offering the 25 scholarships because these places could not be filled by the marketplace. Instead the Directorate will ‘invest 10 scholarship places per year for those teachers that are currently in our system than want to apply to do their master’s program.’¹¹⁷

3.28 At present there are 33 master’s degree-qualified teacher librarians working in ACT public schools.¹¹⁸

3.29 The Committee heard about the role of qualified teacher librarians within schools: ‘...the technical and professional skills of a teacher librarian go right the way through. They can help in terms of some of the early-year literacy programs and supports ... right through to the quite

¹¹⁵ Ms Yvette Berry MLA, Minister for Education and Youth Affairs, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 26.

¹¹⁶ Ms Yvette Berry MLA, Minister for Education and Youth Affairs, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 35.

¹¹⁷ Mr Ross Hawkins, Executive Group Manager, Service Design and Delivery, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 35.

¹¹⁸ Mr Ross Hawkins, Executive Group Manager, Service Design and Delivery, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 35.

rigorous evidence-based research skills to help our college students ensure that all their work is appropriately referenced and managed.’¹¹⁹

- 3.30 The Committee was told about the more general importance of the library for school life and the work of the teacher librarian within this:

Often we find that our school libraries become kind of the beating heart of the school—that it is a place where there is an immense amount of activity and that students are really proud of that space. Our teacher librarians will work with students to make it a place that is welcoming, that students want to come to and engage with learning. So we often find our teacher librarians getting involved in a range of supports to our students, because we want people to come to that location as a place to learn.¹²⁰

COMMITTEE COMMENT

- 3.31 The Committee recognises the important role played by teacher librarians within ACT public schools as well as the place of the library as the centre of much of school life. The Committee welcomes the Government’s announcement of 25 additional teacher librarian places for schools and hopes the Government continues to support these teacher librarians in their roles. The Committee would also like to see libraries further enhanced to provide even more support for students in their learning programs.
- 3.32 This recommendation relates to the Appropriation Bill 2020-2021.

Recommendation 4

- 3.33 The Committee recommends that the ACT Government continues to support teacher librarians and considers further ways to enhance libraries in ACT public schools.**

COLLEGE FACILITIES IN CANBERRA’S NORTH

- 3.34 In the context of a discussion on budget announcements in relation to Gungahlin, the Committee heard that Gungahlin is ‘one of the fastest-growing areas in Australia’ and that the Directorate has ‘increased capacity across a range of schools, as well as new schools being built every year’ in the area.¹²¹

¹¹⁹ Mr Ross Hawkins, Executive Group Manager, Service Design and Delivery, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 37.

¹²⁰ Mr Ross Hawkins, Executive Group Manager, Service Design and Delivery, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 37.

¹²¹ Ms Yvette Berry MLA, Minister for Education and Youth Affairs, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 2.

3.35 The Minister provided the following details on these increases:

We have a new school at Throsby, a new school at Kenny, and more space at Margaret Hendry School.

The Throsby school will be for around 800 students. The Margaret Hendry School will grow by 600. In addition to the primary school, there will be a high school at Taylor, and at Kenny there will be an additional 600 spaces, I think... There are transportable classrooms as well.¹²²

3.36 According to the Budget Papers, the ACT Government will:

- provide ‘additional funding to meet the full construction cost of the new 800 permanent places for the Year 7 to Year 10 high school in East Gungahlin (Kenny), with the ability to expand to 1,000 students’;¹²³
- ‘commence work in preparation for a new high school in Taylor... The new high school will provide 800 permanent places (and potential for up to 1,000 places) for Year 7 to Year 10 and provide additional enrolment capacity in the North Gungahlin region’;¹²⁴ and
- ‘expand the Margaret Handry School to accommodate expected future enrolment growth in the North Gungahlin area’.¹²⁵

3.37 When asked to clarify why Margaret Hendry School, which opened only in 2019, already requires capital funding for expansion, the Minister explained that ‘...because Gungahlin is continuing to grow. That school was built for expansion in the future, but as the community is growing much faster, we are able to expand that school’s capacity sooner than expected’.¹²⁶

COMMITTEE COMMENT

3.38 The Committee notes that the 2019-2020 budget set aside funding for the early planning ‘for a new secondary college on Canberra’s Northside’.¹²⁷ Funding allocation of \$760,000 for this purpose was also included in the 2020-2021 Budget.¹²⁸

¹²² Ms Yvette Berry MLA, Minister for Education and Youth Affairs, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 2.

¹²³ ACT Budget 2020-21, *Budget Outlook*, p. 81.

¹²⁴ ACT Budget 2020-21, *Budget Outlook*, p. 82.

¹²⁵ ACT Budget 2020-21, *Budget Outlook*, p. 82.

¹²⁶ Ms Yvette Berry MLA, Minister for Education and Youth Affairs, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 2.

¹²⁷ ACT Budget 2019-20, *Budget Outlook*, p. 198.

¹²⁸ ACT Budget 2020-21, *Budget Outlook*, p. 244.

- 3.39 In response to a Question Taken on Notice during the Standing Committee on Education and Youth Affairs inquiry into the Annual and Financial Reports 2018-2019 on this matter, the Minister told that committee that:

The ACT Government has commenced a feasibility and design study for further college capacity in North Canberra. This will cater for continuing growth in college enrolments and respond to the changing demographics of the Gungahlin and Inner North. Results of this study are not yet available. The study was funded over two years in the 2019-2020 Budget.¹²⁹

- 3.40 Noting that Gungahlin is currently one of the fastest growing areas in Australia and the ACT Government's efforts to expand primary and high school capacity in the region, the Committee believes it is time to expedite consideration of the needs for a new public secondary college in Canberra's north.
- 3.41 In relation to the expansion of still new schools, the Committee believes that cost savings can be achieved through more careful planning and construction of schools to a size that more appropriately meets future demands.
- 3.42 This recommendation relates to the Appropriation Bill 2020-2021.

Recommendation 5

- 3.43 The Committee recommends that the ACT Government expedite the feasibility study for further college capacity in north Canberra, and if required, construction of further college facilities in Canberra's north.**

- 3.44 This recommendation relates to the Annual and Financial Reports 2019-2020.

Recommendation 6

- 3.45 The Committee recommends that the ACT Government more carefully plans the construction of new schools to better meet size demands at the initial point of construction to avoid further construction work in the early life of the school.**

LITERACY AND NUMERACY

- 3.46 Within the context of a discussion on National Assessment Program—Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) testing and the issue of literacy and numeracy in ACT public schools, the Committee

¹²⁹ Standing Committee on Education and Youth Affairs, Inquiry into the Annual and Financial Reports 2018-2019, QTON No. 15, https://www.parliament.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0011/1478450/QTON-EEYA-15-14-November-Northside-School-scoping-study.pdf, viewed 11 March 2021.

made reference to reports from the Australian National University, the Grattan Institute, the Australia Institute, and the ACT Auditor-General which pointed to issues with literacy and numeracy within ACT public schools since 2008. In illustration of this point, the Committee quoted from an ACT Auditor-General's report which noted that:

ACT Public Schools are performing below similar schools in other jurisdictions despite expenditure on a per student basis for public schools being one of the highest in the country. Since 2014 reviews of ACT public schools have consistently identified shortcomings in their analysis of student performance information and their use of data to inform educational practice. These shortcomings indicate a systemic problem.¹³⁰

3.47 Later in the hearing the Committee also made note of Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) results which indicated that Australia, in general terms, has declined relative to other countries in terms of literacy and numeracy skills. The Committee inquired how the ACT Government was addressing the issues raised in these reports.

3.48 On NAPLAN, the Minister responded that:

I am always happy to talk about NAPLAN and remind everybody that it is a point in time test and really only shows a very limited picture of a child's learning. The ACT government takes a broader perspective around our students' learning and growth across all of our schools, which is not just a point in time snapshot picture on a very narrow focus. There is an issue around the comparisons as well and whether or not they are effective or fair comparisons for ACT public schools compared to other schools across the country, or like schools, as they are described.¹³¹

3.49 The Directorate further responded that, in general terms, the ACT 'perform[s] well': 'We are always amongst the top performers. The outright performance that we get for our students is extremely good.'¹³²

3.50 Specifically in relation to the recommendations of the Auditor-General's report, the Directorate noted the following:

One of the recommendations in that report went to issues of measuring growth, rather than measuring raw scores. We now put a great focus on the rate of learning growth for our children. The raw scores are dependent on a range of other factors, including

¹³⁰ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 12. For the original source, see: ACT Auditor-General's Report, Performance Information in ACT Public Schools, Report No. 4 of 2017, p. 1, https://www.audit.act.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0017/1180007/Report-No-4-of-2017-Performance-information-in-ACT-public-schools.pdf, viewed 19 March 2021.

¹³¹ Ms Yvette Berry MLA, Minister for Education and Youth Affairs, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, pp. 12-13.

¹³² Mr Robert Gotts, Executive Branch Manager, Analytics and Evaluation, Education Directorate, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 13.

what we all know is an advantaged society, by and large, in the ACT, but not exclusively, so that tends to give us those high scores.¹³³

- 3.51 In relation to the other reports raised by the Committee and the interjurisdictional comparison between the ACT and other locales, the Directorate said:

What I can say is that in the ACT we are very conscious of the interjurisdictional comparisons. We do have some questions as to how they are constructed. Those questions have been put to ACARA [Australian Curriculum, Reporting and Assessment Authority] and resulted in a project that was agreed by Education Council ministers at the end of 2019, or it might have been March 2020.

We have been working with ACARA over the last 12 months, with the assistance of Victoria University, which you also mentioned. We have been working very closely to explore the way in which interjurisdictional comparisons are undertaken. There have been other jurisdictions as part of that exploration. The results are not quite ready yet, so I am not able to talk about them. When they are, something will go back to education ministers—it is not Education Council anymore—to inform them of the results of that and suggest what might be the next steps.¹³⁴

- 3.52 On NAPLAN, the Directorate cited a number of factors that needed to be accounted for in understanding the ACT's relative position within the NAPLAN results. The Directorate official claimed that the first year NAPLAN results were 'a bit of an anomaly' and that the Directorate tends 'to look at NAPLAN results over multiple years'. The official stated that 'ACARA run an equating process that balances out the results of NAPLAN with previous years, because they want them to be comparable, and that causes little adjustments to the scores here and there.'¹³⁵

- 3.53 Additionally, the Directorate official noted the relatively small size of the ACT compared with the other jurisdictions. Statistically, '[s]mall amounts...lead to greater levels of volatility'. Due to this, '[t]he ACT, the Northern Territory and Tasmania are always a little bit more volatile than New South Wales, Victoria or Queensland, which are much bigger jurisdictions with much bigger populations.'¹³⁶

- 3.54 The Directorate official noted a final factor for consideration in understanding the ACT's relative position within NAPLAN testing results:

¹³³ Mr Robert Gotts, Executive Branch Manager, Analytics and Evaluation, Education Directorate, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 13.

¹³⁴ Mr Robert Gotts, Executive Branch Manager, Analytics and Evaluation, Education Directorate, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 13.

¹³⁵ Mr Robert Gotts, Executive Branch Manager, Analytics and Evaluation, Education Directorate, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 14.

¹³⁶ Mr Robert Gotts, Executive Branch Manager, Analytics and Evaluation, Education Directorate, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 14.

I guess the final factor that we have to take into account here is that the ACT was an early adopter with regard to NAPLAN online. About 90 per cent of the ACT's schools and students went on NAPLAN online in 2018, and only a tiny handful of schools were not on board. They are now all on board. The equating exercise for those jurisdictions that had only half of their students online was a much more significant process than the normal equating when everyone was on paper.

In another couple of years, I think 2022, all jurisdictions are supposed to be online for everyone. This issue of having to equate between a group of paper scores and a group of online scores will be over. That will eliminate the extent to which that may or may not impact on ACT scores. It is a moving feast with multiple parts, and we try and keep track of all of those.¹³⁷

3.55 Noting that there is no consensus, either among the community or educators, on the efficacy of NAPLAN testing, the Committee inquired about the other strategic indicators the Directorate uses to track student outcomes.

3.56 The Directorate official gave the following answer:

One of the other strategic indicators is student identity, which is really shorthand for student belonging. The model we work with is that the more that students identify with their school and the more the school is important to them in their lives, then it has a positive impact on students' emotional engagement with the school. Students who are more emotionally engaged are more likely to do well, and that is all students. It does not matter which group of students they may fall into; but the more students are engaged, the more likely they are to do well. We track that level of belonging, basically. If that level goes up, it gives us confidence that it will lead to more engaged students et cetera.¹³⁸

3.57 The Minister added to this that

...every step of the way through a child's education, teachers are assessing a student's learning and growth every single day. They do that using a multiple range of tools. The professionals are already doing that work with each individual student and we want to see that continue as well.¹³⁹

3.58 Elaborating on this response, a Directorate official stated that

...the teaching profession tell us that the most valuable thing is measuring children's learning every week, every day and through the course of the year through the assessments that we have against the Australian curriculum. There are achievement

¹³⁷ Mr Robert Gotts, Executive Branch Manager, Analytics and Evaluation, Education Directorate, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 14.

¹³⁸ Mr Robert Gotts, Executive Branch Manager, Analytics and Evaluation, Education Directorate, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 15.

¹³⁹ Ms Yvette Berry MLA, Minister for Education and Youth Affairs, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, pp. 16-17.

standards against the Australian curriculum and that is what teachers are monitoring all day, every day, in terms of being able to measure student progress and also differentiate their teaching and learning. Building on that, the directorate identifies areas where we think we can make a strong impact through additional system-wide interventions. Literacy and numeracy, of course, is one of those areas.¹⁴⁰

- 3.59 The Directorate also mentioned the early years literacy program, which commenced in 2017. For this program, the Directorate

...worked with 97 per cent of our schools in developing the efficacy of their teachers and their leaders to lead a balanced literacy program within their schools—balanced literacy meaning that we look at all aspects of literacy, not just reading, not just writing, not just one aspect; we put all of that information together and we use the 10 essential literacy practices to be able to support teachers in doing that fulsome work around literacy.¹⁴¹

- 3.60 In relation to numeracy, the Directorate acknowledged that ‘maths is probably an area that we have to improve as well’, and noted a new program commencing this year ‘around mathematics to support our teachers in teaching maths’.¹⁴²

COMMITTEE COMMENT

- 3.61 While some acknowledge that standardised literacy and numeracy testing, such as NAPLAN, are often blunt instruments that fail to adequately capture the complexities and nuances of student learning needs and outcomes, the Committee sees merit in programs that aim to improve literacy and numeracy skills among ACT public school children.

- 3.62 This recommendation relates to the Annual and Financial Reports 2019-2020.

Recommendation 7

- 3.63 The Committee recommends that the ACT Government outline its plans to improve literacy and numeracy skills among ACT public school students.**

¹⁴⁰ Mr David Matthews, Deputy Director-General, Education Directorate, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 18.

¹⁴¹ Ms Kate McMahon, Executive Branch Manager, Learning and Wellbeing Policy and Design, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 19.

¹⁴² Ms Kate McMahon, Executive Branch Manager, Learning and Wellbeing Policy and Design, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 19.

REGISTERED TRAINING ORGANISATIONS

- 3.64 The Committee discussed ACT Government funding of private Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) within the context of the \$16.75 million JobTrainer Fund. The Committee mentioned that the Skills Canberra website¹⁴³ states that the Fund will fund up to 3,500 training places and that the ACT Government had contributed \$8.375 million to this funding. The Committee noted that while this ACT Government finding had been announced on 4 February, that the enrolments for JobTrainer courses were closed sometime soon after this. The Committee sought clarification on the funding circumstances around JobTrainer.¹⁴⁴
- 3.65 The Minister clarified that the program ‘has not been cut. We have massively increased funding through this program so that trainees can take up free training through RTOs throughout Canberra.’¹⁴⁵ He explained that the JobTrainer program
- ...has been incredibly popular since it opened. It is not surprising that a program that delivers free training targeted at those cohorts has been popular. We have been encouraging people to get in early. There have been significant advertising campaigns, run both by the commonwealth government and the ACT government, and also by RTOs, promoting the scheme to potential trainees and people wanting to take up training. We have seen a huge response. It has been incredibly popular, with very significant numbers.¹⁴⁶
- 3.66 A Directorate official added that ‘there has not been any withdrawal of funding’ and explained that
- [t]he JobTrainer program was set up along the lines of three streams. There was a stream that CIT would deliver, a stream that the Ginninderry SPARK program would deliver and a stream under our existing Skilled Capital mechanism that private RTOs would deliver. There was funding allocated to each of those streams.¹⁴⁷
- 3.67 For the three streams the Directorate had allocated funding for, the notional course numbers were 2,500 CIT-related courses, 190 Ginninderry SPARK-related courses and 800 courses through the Skilled Capital pathway. In money terms, the allocation was \$9.5 million to the CIT, \$1.25 million to the Ginninderry SPARK program, and \$6 million for the Skilled Capital release.¹⁴⁸ In terms of actual enrolment numbers, the Directorate informed the Committee that there had been 794 enrolments for CIT-related courses, 20 course completions for the

¹⁴³ For reference, see: <https://www.skills.act.gov.au/JobTrainer>, viewed 19 March 2021.

¹⁴⁴ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 5 March 2021, pp. 128-129.

¹⁴⁵ Mr Chris Steel MLA, Minister for Skills, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 5 March 2021, p. 130.

¹⁴⁶ Mr Chris Steel MLA, Minister for Skills, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 5 March 2021, p. 129.

¹⁴⁷ Ms Josephine Andersen, Executive Branch Manager, Skills Canberra, Economic Development, Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 5 March 2021, p. 130.

¹⁴⁸ Ms Josephine Andersen, Executive Branch Manager, Skills Canberra, Economic Development, Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 5 March 2021, p. 132.

Ginninderry SPARK program and 554 enrolments through the Skilled Capital program.¹⁴⁹ Under the current funding arrangement, course enrolments must be completed by September this year.

- 3.68 When asked about the discrepancy between the 3,500 figure, as stated on the Skills Canberra website, and the actual enrolment numbers, the Minister explained the following:

It was always dependent on what types of courses people enrolled in as to how many would be delivered. What we have seen is that people are enrolling in those longer courses that cost more money. The full funding allocation of \$16.75 million is there. We thought that we would deliver up to 3,500 places and what we have seen is people taking on longer courses, so it will be a slightly lower amount than that.¹⁵⁰

COMMITTEE COMMENT

- 3.69 The Committee welcomes the ACT Government's \$8.375 million contribution to the \$16.75 million JobTrainer Fund. Noting the apparent popularity of this scheme and the large number of enrolments received by private RTOs through the Skilled Capital pathway, the Committee sees further scope for the ACT Government to provide additional funding to these organisations to provide training courses where there is demand for this.

- 3.70 This recommendation relates to the Appropriation Bill 2020-2021.

Recommendation 8

- 3.71 The Committee recommends that the ACT Government provide additional financial support for Registered Training Organisations to deliver training in the ACT.**

¹⁴⁹ Ms Josephine Andersen, Executive Branch Manager, Skills Canberra, Economic Development, Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 5 March 2021, pp. 130-131.

¹⁵⁰ Mr Chris Steel MLA, Minister for Skills, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 5 March 2021, p. 131.

4 COMMUNITY INCLUSION

4.1 The ACT Government promotes community inclusion and participation through a number of offices in the Community Services Directorate and the Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Directorate:

- Office for Women (CSD);
- Office for Seniors and Veterans (CSD);
- Office for Multicultural Affairs (CSD);
- Office for Youth (CSD);
- Office for Disability (CSD);
- Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs (CSD); and
- Office of LGBTIQ Affairs (CMTEDD).

4.2 Ms Yvette Berry MLA, in her capacities as Minister for Education and Youth Affairs and Minister for Women appeared before the Committee on 1 March 2021 to discuss issues on youth affairs and women's affairs. Ms Emma Davidson MLA, in her capacities as Minister for Disability and Assistant Minister for Seniors, Veterans, Families and Community Services appeared before the Committee on 5 March 2021 to discuss issues around disability, seniors and veteran's affairs. Ms Tara Cheyne MLA, in her capacity as Minister for Multicultural Affairs, appeared before the Committee on 5 March 2021 to discuss matters related to multicultural affairs. Ms Rachel Stephen-Smith MLA, in her capacity as Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, appeared before the Committee on 5 March 2021 to discuss matters related to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs portfolio. Mr Andrew Barr MLA, in his capacity as Chief Minister, appeared before the Committee on 1 March 2021 to discuss issues related to LGBTIQ+ affairs.

OUTPUTS CONSIDERED

OFFICE FOR WOMEN (CSD OUTPUT 1.1)

4.3 The Office for Women aims 'to support in the community, progress gender equality and equal participation of women and girls in the ACT'.¹⁵¹

¹⁵¹ Community Services Directorate Annual Report, 2019-2020, p. 59.

OFFICE FOR SENIORS AND VETERANS (CSD OUTPUT 1.1)

4.4 The Office for Seniors and Veterans aims 'to enhance the interests, wellbeing and participation of seniors and veterans living in the ACT'.¹⁵² In doing so, the Office:

- guides whole of government work on developing Canberra as an age-friendly city;
- provides policy advice on seniors to the ACT Government;
- advises on seniors issues through participation in Government and community committees and forums;
- administers funding for the Seniors Card and Seniors Week;
- manages the Seniors Grants Program; and
- provides secretarial support to the ACT Ministerial Advisory Council on Ageing.¹⁵³

OFFICE FOR MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS (CSD OUTPUT 1.1)

4.5 The Office for Multicultural Affairs aims 'to support an inclusive city which embraces cultural and linguistic diversity to enhance the social, economic, cultural and civic development of the ACT'.¹⁵⁴ The Office performs the following functions:

- coordinating a whole-of-government approach to issues affecting culturally and linguistically diverse residents;
- providing secretariat and administrative support to the Refugee, Asylum Seeker and Humanitarian Coordination Committee;
- hosting of Australian Citizenship Ceremonies;
- ACT Service Access Card applications;
- administration of the Overseas Qualifications Assessment program;
- administration of the ACT Multicultural Awards;
- administration of the Register of Multicultural Advisers;

¹⁵² Community Services Directorate Annual Report, 2019-2020, p. 60.

¹⁵³ ACT Government, Community Services Directorate, 'Ministerial Seniors Roundtable', <https://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/wac/seniors>, viewed 25 February 2021.

¹⁵⁴ Community Services Directorate Annual Report, 2019-2020, p. 63.

- management of Work Experience Support Program; and
- administration of multicultural grants.¹⁵⁵

OFFICE FOR YOUTH (CSD OUTPUT 1.1)

- 4.6 The Office for Youth aims are ‘strengthening youth engagement and participation by supporting young people from all backgrounds to share their thoughts, ideas and concerns about issues that impact them’.¹⁵⁶

OFFICE FOR DISABILITY (CSD OUTPUT 1.2)

- 4.7 The Office for Disability ‘provides strategic advice and practical implementation to support the inclusion of people with disability as citizens of the ACT’.¹⁵⁷ The Office does this through ‘supporting the implementation of the NDIS; progressing the objectives of the National Disability Strategy including equal access to justice for people with disability through the Disability Justice Strategy, equal access to services and participation in mainstream community activities; promoting the International Day of People with Disability; and supporting the Disability Reference Group, the ACT Inclusion Council and the Chief Minister’s Inclusion Awards’.¹⁵⁸

OFFICE FOR ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER AFFAIRS (CSD OUTPUT 1.1)

- 4.8 The Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs (OATSIA) aims ‘to support work at both the Directorate and whole of government levels to improve the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members’.¹⁵⁹ The Office

...drives whole of government work to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities to lead the development of culturally appropriate responses and solutions to matters of importance to the community. OATSIA advises both government and non-government agencies on governance, policy development, engagement and consultation, strategy and frameworks to support delivery of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander appropriate services and supports.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁵ ACT Government, Access Canberra, ‘Office of Multicultural Affairs’, https://www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au/app/answers/detail/a_id/115/~/office-of-multicultural-affairs, viewed 25 February 2021.

¹⁵⁶ Community Services Directorate Annual Report, 2019-2020, p. 65.

¹⁵⁷ Community Services Directorate Annual Report, 2019-2020, p. 69.

¹⁵⁸ ACT Budget 2020-21, *Budget Statements G, Community Services Directorate/Housing ACT*, p. 14.

¹⁵⁹ Community Services Directorate Annual Report 2019-2020, p. 57.

¹⁶⁰ Community Services Directorate Annual Report 2019-2020, p. 77.

- 4.9 The Office also provides secretarial services to the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body and the United Ngunnawal Elders Council and administers the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Grants Program.¹⁶¹

OFFICE FOR LGBTIQ AFFAIRS (CMTEDD OUTPUT 1.1)

- 4.10 The Office for LGBTIQ Affairs is responsible for 'implementing the ACT Government's vision of Canberra being the most LGBTIQ friendly city in Australia'.¹⁶² The Office:

- coordinates a whole of government approach for promoting Canberra as the most LGBTIQ+ welcoming and inclusive city in the country
- engages relevant areas of government with subject matter expertise to implement legislative reform, promote inclusive events, and appropriately targeted services for LGBTIQ+ people
- supports and engages with the LGBTIQ+ Ministerial Advisory Council on matters where the government is seeking advice and guidance
- provides policy advice to the Chief Minister on LGBTIQ+ matters.¹⁶³

MATTERS DISCUSSED

- 4.11 The Following matters were discussed during the course of the hearing:

- Youth Week Grants;¹⁶⁴
- Key priorities for government identified by the Youth Advisory Council (YAC);¹⁶⁵
- Youth Advisory Council advice on Healthy Relationships Education;¹⁶⁶
- Resourcing of the Youth Advisory Council for community outreach;¹⁶⁷

¹⁶¹ Community Services Directorate Annual Report 2019-2020, p. 77

¹⁶² ACT Budget 2020-21, *Budget Statements B, Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate (CMTEDD) together with associated agencies*, p. 19.

¹⁶³ ACT Government, Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate, 'The Office for LGBTIQ+ Affairs', <https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/policystrategic/the-office-for-lgbtqi-affairs>, viewed 23 February 2021.

¹⁶⁴ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, pp. 71-72, 75-76.

¹⁶⁵ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, pp. 72-73.

¹⁶⁶ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, pp. 73-74.

¹⁶⁷ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 74.

- Collaboration between the Office of Youth Affairs and the Office for Mental Health and Wellbeing;¹⁶⁸
- Young Canberran Citizen of the Year Awards;¹⁶⁹
- Back to School Appeal;¹⁷⁰
- Recovery of youth employment from the COVID-19 period;¹⁷¹
- LGBTIQ+ Action Plan (Capital of Equality Strategy);¹⁷²
- Resourcing of the Office for LGBTIQ+ Affairs;¹⁷³
- Removal of discriminations around sexually active gay men donating blood;¹⁷⁴
- Second ACT Women's Action Plan;¹⁷⁵
- Impact of the COVID-19 crisis on the Second ACT Women's Plan;¹⁷⁶
- Directorate target for women feeling safe at night in public spaces;¹⁷⁷
- Female sanitation product supply in schools.¹⁷⁸
- Cancellation of the National Multicultural Festival and plans for the 2022 National Multicultural Festival;¹⁷⁹
- Ministerial Advisory Council on Multicultural Affairs;¹⁸⁰
- Racism within the ACT;¹⁸¹
- Multicultural Centre;¹⁸²

¹⁶⁸ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, pp. 74-75.

¹⁶⁹ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, pp. 76-77.

¹⁷⁰ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, pp. 77-78.

¹⁷¹ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 79.

¹⁷² *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, pp. 80-85.

¹⁷³ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, pp. 85-86.

¹⁷⁴ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 86.

¹⁷⁵ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, pp. 87-88.

¹⁷⁶ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, pp. 88-89.

¹⁷⁷ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, pp. 89-94.

¹⁷⁸ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, pp. 94-95.

¹⁷⁹ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 5 March 2021, pp. 160-162.

¹⁸⁰ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 5 March 2021, p. 162.

¹⁸¹ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 5 March 2021, pp. 162-163.

¹⁸² *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 5 March 2021, pp. 163-166.

- Canberra as a community that accepts people from different cultures;¹⁸³
- Healing and Reconciliation Fund;¹⁸⁴
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Co-Design Network;¹⁸⁵
- Family Group Conferencing and Functional Family Therapy—Child Welfare;¹⁸⁶
- New Gugan Gulwan building;¹⁸⁷
- Companion Card Scheme for disabled people;¹⁸⁸
- Connect and Participate Expo;¹⁸⁹
- Taxi Subsidy Scheme;¹⁹⁰
- Integrated Service Response Program;¹⁹¹
- Disability Justice Strategy;¹⁹²
- Funded services visited by a relationship manager;¹⁹³
- Disability employment;¹⁹⁴
- Women with Disabilities;¹⁹⁵
- Phase Two of the ACT COVID-19 Disability Strategy;¹⁹⁶
- Initiatives to keep seniors informed during the COVID-19 period.¹⁹⁷

¹⁸³ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 5 March 2021, pp. 167-169.

¹⁸⁴ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 5 March 2021, pp. 170-172.

¹⁸⁵ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 5 March 2021, pp. 172-175.

¹⁸⁶ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 5 March 2021, pp. 175-177.

¹⁸⁷ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 5 March 2021, pp. 177-179.

¹⁸⁸ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 5 March 2021, pp. 180-181.

¹⁸⁹ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 5 March 2021, pp. 181-182.

¹⁹⁰ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 5 March 2021, pp. 182-183.

¹⁹¹ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 5 March 2021, pp. 183-187.

¹⁹² *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 5 March 2021, pp. 187-189.

¹⁹³ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 5 March 2021, pp. 189-190.

¹⁹⁴ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 5 March 2021, pp. 190-192.

¹⁹⁵ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 5 March 2021, pp. 192-193.

¹⁹⁶ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 5 March 2021, p. 193.

¹⁹⁷ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 5 March 2021, pp. 193-195.

2020 YOUNG CANBERRA CITIZEN OF THE YEAR AWARDS

- 4.12 In the context of a discussion on the prizes that Young Canberra Citizen of the Year Awards winners receive, the Committee was told the following:

There is an award event where certificates are provided. Often, at times, there will be a trophy. The trophy might vary from year to year, or the acknowledgement might vary from year to year. I have participated in awards where it has been from a lovely local glasswork through to a local Aboriginal artist undertaking a painting. There is usually a certificate and a trophy.¹⁹⁸

- 4.13 Additionally, the Committee was informed that award recipients are given opportunities to 'participate in conversations and representation'.¹⁹⁹ Elaborating on this, the Minister told the Committee:

I used to invite the young Canberra citizens of the year to come and present at citizenship ceremonies. Those were the kinds of things that those individuals at that time wanted; they wanted to get more experience in public speaking and delivering to a diverse audience. That has not happened for a while now. Those are the kinds of things that some young citizens of the year might be keen on.

There are probably other opportunities that are untapped that we have not had the chance to explore, either, for them to be more creative around. That is something I am keen to do with the YAC, understanding that most of the people who are on the Youth Advisory Committee [sic] or in any of those categories of the young citizens of the year are incredibly busy and are working, studying and being amazing as well. Their time is very limited in what other opportunities they can have as well.²⁰⁰

- 4.14 When asked whether the COVID-19 situation had resulted in 2020 award recipients missing out on any of these types of opportunities, the Minister replied that '[p]robably. As for the rest of the community, with COVID everything changed. It is a good question. I think we can check back in with them and see if there is something we can do with them. That is good; very thoughtful'.²⁰¹

COMMITTEE COMMENT

- 4.15 The Committee welcomes the Minister's willingness to connect with the 2020 Young Canberra Citizen of the Year Awards winners and provide them with further opportunities related to the

¹⁹⁸ Ms Christine Murray, Executive Group Manager, Inclusion and Participation, Community Services Directorate, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 76.

¹⁹⁹ Ms Christine Murray, Executive Group Manager, Inclusion and Participation, Community Services Directorate, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 76.

²⁰⁰ Ms Yvette Berry MLA, Minister for Education and Youth Affairs, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, pp. 76-77.

²⁰¹ Ms Yvette Berry MLA, Minister for Education and Youth Affairs, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 77.

awards that they may have otherwise missed out on due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

4.16 This recommendation relates to the Annual and Financial Reports 2019-2020.

Recommendation 9

4.17 The Committee recommends that the ACT Government connect with the 2020 Young Canberra Citizen of the Year Awards winners and ensure that they are given appropriate opportunities in light of the disruptions experienced in 2020.

WOMEN'S SAFETY

4.18 The Committee noted that the Community Services Directorate's annual report indicated a 40 per cent target for women feeling safe when they are walking in the neighbourhood by themselves at night, under Strategic Indicator 5.²⁰² The Committee asked why the target was only 40 per cent.

4.19 A Directorate official replied that '[t]his is internationally one of the biggest issues I think we have in the women's space: that women are not feeling safe in public spaces and women are not feeling safe in their homes, at a disproportionate rate'.²⁰³

4.20 The Committee noted that this Strategic Indicator target is improving over the forward estimates, including an estimate of 42 per cent for 2021-2022.²⁰⁴ The Committee asked what improvements had been made and whether the Directorate was on track to meet this target.

4.21 The Minister responded:

I think we are. The work that the second women's plan identifies goes towards making those improvements so that women and girls do feel safe in their neighbourhoods. The work that has been identified by the Women's Centre for Health Matters gets down to what an individual woman feels, not what everybody else thinks they might feel. So we will be talking with the Women's Centre for Health Matters about how we can expand the whole survey that they are doing, how we can help promote it and then work with the community on where those places are that need to have lighting improved. You have identified spaces at Tuggeranong, in the car park out there. If we can get more and more women identifying these spaces across the city and we can prioritise that

²⁰² Community Services Directorate Annual Report 2019-2020, p. 51.

²⁰³ Ms Christine Murray, Executive Group Manager, Inclusion and Participation, Community Services Directorate, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 89.

²⁰⁴ See: ACT Budget 2020-21, *Budget Statements G, Community Services Directorate/Housing ACT*, p. 10.

then you will see an improvement, I think, in women feeling safer, at least with regard to that.²⁰⁵

4.22 The Committee asked about what type of referral and feedback processes are in place between relevant ACT Government directorates when people report issues concerning women's safety, such as lighting conditions in a given location.

4.23 The Minister replied:

If that was one of the recommendations that this committee came to, I think it would be worth investigating a bit more of a joined-up approach around all of that. We certainly see that being the case around our schools and sports fields. When you put in lighting, when you have murals, when it is clean and tidy and there is more activity, there is less likelihood of bad behaviour around the place. So it makes sense. And, yes, a more coordinated approach might help with that.²⁰⁶

COMMITTEE COMMENT

4.24 The Committee welcomes the Minister for Women's openness to the suggestion that feedback and reporting processes between ACT Government directorates, in particular to and from the Transport Canberra and City Services Directorate, be improved to maximise the outcomes of measures designed to improve women's safety at night in public spaces.

4.25 This recommendation relates to the Annual and Financial Reports 2019-2020.

Recommendation 10

4.26 The Committee recommends that the ACT Government improve referral and feedback processes when women's safety issues are reported to ACT Government directorates and agencies.

²⁰⁵ Ms Yvette Berry MLA, Minister for Women, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 93.

²⁰⁶ Ms Yvette Berry MLA, Minister for Women, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 93.

5 SPORT AND RECREATION

5.1 The Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate ‘supports Canberra’s participation in organised sport and recreation through delivery of programs, facility planning development and pathways’ through the Sport and Recreation output. Sport and Recreation delivers this output by

- providing support services to local high-performance athletes and teams;
- administering grants and delivering education and training opportunities to maintain and enhance the capabilities of the community sport and recreation sector in the ACT; and
- planning and developing sporting infrastructure to broaden access to participation opportunities.²⁰⁷

5.2 The Minister for Sport and Recreation, Ms Yvette Berry MLA, and her supporting officers, appeared before the Committee on Monday 1 March 2021 to answer questions related to the Sport and Recreation portfolio area.

MATTERS DISCUSSED

5.3 The Following matters were discussed during the course of the hearing:

- Update on repairs to the Gungahlin pool;²⁰⁸
- Timeframe for repair of Gungahlin pool;²⁰⁹
- Nature of the problem with the Gungahlin pool;²¹⁰
- Recouping of repair costs for Gungahlin pool;²¹¹
- Contract to repair Gungahlin pool;²¹²
- Compensation to pool users during pool repair;²¹³

²⁰⁷ ACT Budget 2020-21, *Budget Statements B, Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate (CMTEDD) together with associated agencies*, p. 23.

²⁰⁸ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 96.

²⁰⁹ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, pp. 97-98, 99-100.

²¹⁰ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, pp. 98, 100, 106-107.

²¹¹ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, pp. 98-99.

²¹² *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, pp. 99, 100-101, 103-104, 107-109.

²¹³ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 100.

- Measures to ensure other similar large-scale repairs of pools will not be necessary;²¹⁴
- Stromlo Forest Park pool;²¹⁵
- Possibility of litigation concerning original pool contractor;²¹⁶
- Including lessons learned from the Gungahlin pool situation for future procurement processes;²¹⁷
- Efforts to identify other government works the original Gungahlin pool contractors has been involved in;²¹⁸
- Reason the Gungahlin pool contractor was awarded the original contract to undertake the pool works;²¹⁹
- Removal of sports ground hire fees;²²⁰
- Safer and higher-quality football fields for women's football.²²¹

GUNG AHLIN LEISURE CENTRE

- 5.4 The Committee devoted a significant amount of time discussing the issues surrounding the closure of the pool at the Gungahlin Leisure Centre and the implications this issue has for other existing and future government assets.
- 5.5 The Committee heard that the Directorate became aware of the extent of the problems with the pool in June 2020, as the COVID-19 restrictions allowed for a more detailed examination of the site:

When the tiling issues emerged in the middle of 2020, there were issues on the northern face of the pool. With the pool closed for COVID-19, as part of the process of looking at the tiles, we were able to get in and find that there were issues with some of the flooring tiles as well.²²²

²¹⁴ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, pp. 100, 101-103.

²¹⁵ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 101.

²¹⁶ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 104.

²¹⁷ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, pp. 104-105.

²¹⁸ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, pp. 105-106.

²¹⁹ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, pp. 106, 107.

²²⁰ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, pp. 109-112.

²²¹ *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, pp. 113-114.

²²² Mr Duncan Edgehill, Chief Project Officer, Major Projects Canberra, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 97.

- 5.6 By late 2020, experts engaged by the Directorate had completed their assessment of the site and produced a report which was provided to the Government Solicitor's Office, allowing the Directorate to 'progress those legal, commercial conversations with the original builder of the pool (Adco Construction Pty Ltd)²²³, which has culminated in finalising arrangements with the original builder of the pool'.²²⁴
- 5.7 The Committee was told that as an outcome of those conversations with the original builder (Adco Constructions), the ACT Government had reached a commercial settlement for the payment by Adco Constructions of \$400,000 to the ACT Government.²²⁵
- 5.8 When asked to explain how this outcome was reached, the Committee was told that '[t]he idea behind the negotiations with the original builder was to come to a satisfactory resolution as quickly as possible so that we could actually focus on fixing and reopening the pool'.²²⁶
- 5.9 Adding to this, the Committee later heard that the government wanted to avoid a situation where there would be
- ...protracted litigation and at the same time leaving the pool fallow so that experts on either side can get in there and kind of argue about it... So the desirability of getting the pool back open as quickly as possible is certainly one of the factors that has played into the decision making.²²⁷
- 5.10 Adding to this, the Minister later noted that 'if we had gone through a process of litigation the pool would have remained closed for an indefinite period of time whilst we went through that process. At least, this is the advice from the Government Solicitor's office'.²²⁸
- 5.11 The Committee sought clarification about the cause of the problem with the pool and was told that there 'is no clear answer as to what exactly caused the issues at the pool'. The Committee heard about some of the possible causes:

There could have been issues which co-contributed to causing the issue—everything from problems with the adhesive that was used to attach the tiles in the first place to the way in which the tiles were applied.

Other issues that the technical experts considered were around the design and construction of movement joints in the pool. The question was asked as to whether there was a structural movement of the pool, which may have caused the issue. The

²²³ For the original contract with Adco Construction Pty Ltd for the construction of the pool, see: https://www.procurement.act.gov.au/registers/contracts-register/contracts_register/contracts/contracts/economic_development_directorate/2012.xxxx.xxx/2012.19447.510, viewed 19 March 2021.

²²⁴ Mr Duncan Edgehill, Chief Project Officer, Major Projects Canberra, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 97.

²²⁵ Mr Duncan Edgehill, Chief Project Officer, Major Projects Canberra, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 99.

²²⁶ Mr Duncan Edgehill, Chief Project Officer, Major Projects Canberra, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 98.

²²⁷ Mr Duncan Edgehill, Chief Project Officer, Major Projects Canberra, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 101.

²²⁸ Ms Yvette Berry MLA, Minister for Sport and Recreation, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 104.

question was asked as to whether there were potential issues associated with the amount of time that the concrete cured underneath the tiles in the first instance.

The way that the pool environment was operated was a question that was looked at also. Certainly, when you have changing temperatures in the pool and in the water the concrete and the tiles can move at different rates.²²⁹

- 5.12 The Committee was told that, in short, ‘there may have been multiple causes. Unfortunately, we do not know and the experts are not able to pinpoint exactly what the cause was, as a single cause’.²³⁰

- 5.13 When asked what measures the Directorate had taken to ensure that the pool would not have the same problems again following repair, the Directorate official told the Committee:

Our understanding, from the technical assessment that has been undertaken so far, is that it is not a structural issue with the pool. So that would tend to suggest it is something to do with the tiles or the adhesive or the way that they were attached. The way that we are maximising the chance that we are not going to be back here again—because none of us want to be back here again on this—is that we are not simply patching up the job that was done in the first place. We are going to take all the tiles off and sandblast all of the concrete. That is the first thing.

The second thing is that we are putting in a new tiling system. It will not be done the same way it was done the first time. There will be different layering and a different technical approach to what happens underneath the tile itself. As the minister mentioned before, we will not be using the original company. We will be using a different company to do the work and one that will have done this work before. As well as the contractors, there will be different designers. In terms of the way that the pool is operated, we will, of course, ensure that it is being operated properly. That is the best that we can do to give ourselves as much comfort that we are not going to find ourselves in this position again.²³¹

- 5.14 The Committee asked what lessons the government had learned from the Gungahlin pool situation concerning contractual conditions for future tender processes in the ACT. In response, the Directorate told the Committee that the issue with ‘the pool was not so much the form of contract that we used. We used a reasonably standard contract that is used by other jurisdictions as well as us’. Rather, the Committee was told, ‘[t]he core challenge was what actually caused the tiles to fail in the first place; it was really a technical issue that was the real challenge here’.²³²

²²⁹ Mr Duncan Edgehill, Chief Project Officer, Major Projects Canberra, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 98.

²³⁰ Mr Duncan Edgehill, Chief Project Officer, Major Projects Canberra, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 98.

²³¹ Mr Duncan Edgehill, Chief Project Officer, Major Projects Canberra, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 100.

²³² Mr Duncan Edgehill, Chief Project Officer, Major Projects Canberra, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 101.

5.15 Following on this line of questioning, the Committee inquired about how this situation would be taken into account when considering the original pool builder for other government tender processes. The Directorate official responded:

I do not want to get too far into the specifics of the original builder, but of course all of our tender processes look not only at the availability of relevant experts to undertake the works and an understanding of the design scope but also at the past performance on different projects. We do take references from within the ACT government and elsewhere. So without pre-empting any future procurement processes, obviously the past performance of all contractors is something that we take into account.²³³

5.16 The Committee asked what other ACT Government assets the original builder of the pool had delivered and whether there had been any issues with these. On notice, the Minister informed the Committee that the original pool contractor had undertaken three previous projects for the ACT Government:

1. Fire and Rescue Station South Tuggeranong, contract signed 12 December 2013;
2. Calvary Hospital Carpark, contract signed 3 September 2014; and
3. Ambulance and Fire Station Aranda, contract signed 3 November 2014.²³⁴

5.17 In this response, the government noted that

ACT Government contracts in the infrastructure sector generally contemplate a defects rectification period following the construction period and various matter were worked through and resolved with the contractor on these projects.²³⁵

5.18 On 10 March 2021, the ACT Government released a contract with Kynetic Pty Ltd for rectification works on the pool. This contract, for \$1,519,200, makes the following requirements of Kynetic:

- Establish a complete scope and manage the works for remediation following investigation of the 50m pool, surrounding concourse, ramps, and all ancillary tasks required to return the pool to the operator;
- Administer the Pool Tiling Trade procurement as a Trade Contract with the Territory;

²³³ Mr Duncan Edgehill, Chief Project Officer, Major Projects Canberra, *Proof Transcript of Evidence*, 1 March 2021, p. 104.

²³⁴ Ms Yvette Berry MLA, Minister for Sport and Recreation, Response to Question Taken on Notice, QTON No. 17, 11 March 2021.

²³⁵ Ms Yvette Berry MLA, Minister for Sport and Recreation, Response to Question Taken on Notice, QTON No. 17, 11 March 2021.

- Assist Major Projects to establish a scope of works for consultants as nominated by the Territory;
- Engage other consultants as and when required to facilitate the works;
- Procure all other sundry resources to complete the works; and
- The Gungahlin Leisure Centre is to remain operational during project delivery, and full time onsite supervision must be provided for the duration of the works.

Review pool plant equipment and maintain and recommission as required. Ancillary tasks including but not limited to:

- Survey works including; as built prior to demolition, setout works, as built up on completion;
- Demolition Works;
- Rubbish removal;
- Dust control;
- Make good works to pool structure;
- Make good works to pool joints;
- Assessment of Plant and Equipment for hibernation purposes;
- Re-commissioning [sic] of Plant and Equipment;
- Pool filling including heating and chemicals;
- Wet edge remediation works;
- Maintenance Manuals, training etc;
- Electrical (earthing and any lighting if applicable);
- As built post completion of works, including completion survey data; and
- Tile, adhesive, additive, membrane product samples to be transferred to ACT Government for future reference/storage.²³⁶

²³⁶ Project Management Agreement Work Order, Work No. 57174, Project Title: Gungahlin Leisure Centre Pool Repair, <https://tenders.act.gov.au/contract/view?id=162490>, viewed 19 March 2021.

COMMITTEE COMMENT

- 5.19 The Committee recognises that the Gungahlin pool situation is vexing for residents of Gungahlin, who have been left without easy access to a pool facility. The Committee believes that the ACT Government should keep the community, through the Assembly, regularly updated on the progression of repair work to the Gungahlin pool.
- 5.20 The Committee also recognises that the failure of the original construction work, and the costs associated with rectifying this, has ramifications for future tender processes for the construction of ACT Government assets. The Committee believes that the work record of companies tendering for work with the ACT Government should be given adequate consideration in all future procurement processes.
- 5.21 This recommendation relates to the Appropriation Bill 2020-2021.

Recommendation 11

- 5.22 The Committee recommends that the ACT Government continue to provide updates to the Assembly on the repair work on the pool at Gungahlin Leisure Centre.**
- 5.23 This recommendation relates to the Annual and Financial Reports 2019-2020.

Recommendation 12

- 5.24 The Committee recommends that the ACT Government ensure that all future procurement processes adequately consider previous work of companies tendering for work.**

6 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The Committee makes 12 recommendations.
- 6.2 The Committee again thanks the Chief Minister, Minister Berry, Minister Steel, Minister Stephen-Smith, Minister Cheyne, Minister Davidson, and Professor Nixon, and their supporting officials, for cooperating with the Committee for the hearings and inquiry processes.

Mr Michael Pettersson MLA

Chair

6 April 2021

APPENDIX A - WITNESSES

1 MARCH 2021

➤ **Mr Andrew Barr MLA, Chief Minister**

❖ Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate

- Mr Andrew Mehrton, Executive Branch Manager, Social Policy Branch, Policy and Cabinet, Chief Minister, Treasury, and Economic Development Directorate

➤ **Ms Yvette Berry MLA, Minister for Education and Youth Affairs, Minister for Early Childhood Development, Minister for Women, Minister for Sport and Recreation**

❖ Education Directorate

- Ms Katy Haire, Director-General, Education Directorate
- Mr David Matthews, Deputy Director-General, Education Directorate
- Mr Ross Hawkins, Executive Group Manager, Service Design and Delivery, Education Directorate
- Mr Andrew Parkinson, Executive Branch Manager, Infrastructure and Capital Works, Education Directorate
- Mr Robert Gotts, Executive Branch Manager, Analytics and Evaluation, Education Directorate
- Ms Kate McMahon, Executive Branch Manager, Learning, Wellbeing Policy and Design, Education Directorate
- Ms Margaret McKinnon, Executive Group Manager, Business Services Division, Education Directorate
- Ms Lynette Daly, Chief Finance Officer, Strategic Finance, Education Directorate
- Mr Martin Watson, Executive Director Board of Senior Secondary Studies

❖ Community Services Directorate

- Ms Jo Wood, Director-General, Community Services Directorate
- Ms Melanie Saballa, Acting Executive Group Manager (Deputy), Child and Youth Protection Services, Community Services Directorate
- Ms Janet Plater, Acting Executive Branch Manager, Children and Families, Community Services Directorate
- Ms Christine Murray, Executive Group Manager, Inclusion and Participation, Community Services Directorate
- Ms Jessica Summerrell, Executive Branch Manager, Inclusion and Participation, Community Services Directorate

❖ Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate

- Mr Shaun Strachan, Deputy Under Treasurer, Commercial Services and Infrastructure Group, Chief Minister, Treasury, and Economic Development Directorate

- Ms Rebecca Kelley, Executive Branch Manager, Sport and Recreation, Economic Development, Chief Minister, Treasury, and Economic Development Directorate
- ❖ Major Projects Canberra
 - Mr Duncan Edghill, Chief Project Officer, Major Projects Canberra

5 MARCH 2021

➤ **Mr Chris Steel MLA, Minister for Skills**

- ❖ Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate
 - Ms Kareena Arthy, Deputy Director-General, Economic Development, Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate
 - Ms Josephine Andersen, Executive Branch Manager, Office of the Executive, Skills Canberra, Economic Development, Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate
- ❖ ACT Building and Construction Industry Training Fund Authority
 - Mr Glenn Carter, Chief Executive Officer, ACT Building and Construction Industry Training Fund Authority
- ❖ Canberra Institute of Technology
 - Ms Leanne Cover, Chief Executive Officer, Canberra Institute of Technology
 - Mr Andrew Whale, Executive Director, Education and Training Services, Canberra Institute of Technology
 - Mr Paul Ryan, Executive Director, Industry Engagement and Strategic Relations, Canberra Institute of Technology
- ❖ Major Projects Canberra
 - Mr Wayne Ford, Project Director, Canberra Institute of Technology Campus—Woden, Major Projects Canberra

➤ **Ms Tara Cheyne MLA, Minister for Multicultural Affairs**

- ❖ Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate
 - Ms Jessica Summerrell, Executive Branch Manager, Inclusion and Participation, Community Services Directorate

➤ **Ms Rachel Stephen-Smith MLA, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs**

- ❖ Community Services Directorate
 - Jo Wood, Director-General, Community Services Directorate
 - Ms Lisa Charles, Executive Branch Manager, Strategic Policy, Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, Community Services Directorate

➤ **Ms Emma Davidson MLA, Minister for Disability, Assistant Minister for Seniors, Veterans, Families and Community Services**

❖ Community Services Directorate

- Ms Amanda Charles, Senior Manager, Office for Disability, Community Services Directorate
- Ms Christine Murray, Executive Group Manager, Inclusion and Participation, Community Services Directorate
- Ms Jessica Summerrell, Executive Branch Manager, Inclusion and Participation, Community Services Directorate

➤ **University of Canberra**

- Professor Paddy Nixon, Vice-Chancellor, University of Canberra
- Professor Geoff Crisp, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, University of Canberra

APPENDIX C – QUESTIONS TAKEN ON NOTICE/ QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Questions Taken on Notice 1 March 2021

No.	Hearing date	Asked by	Directorate/ Portfolio	Subject	Answer date
1	1 March 2021	Mr Peter Cain MLA	Education Directorate	Oldest transportable classroom in use	18/03/2021
2	1 March 2021	Mr Peter Cain MLA	Education Directorate	Year 6 literacy and numeracy levels	18/03/2021
3	1 March 2021	Mr Michael Pettersson MLA	Education Directorate	Sensory spaces in schools	18/03/2021
4	1 March 2021	Mr Johnathan Davis MLA	Education Directorate	Case load of school psychologists and psychologist to student ratio	18/03/2021
5	1 March 2021	Mr Johnathan Davis MLA	Education Directorate	Referrals by school psychologists to outside providers	18/03/2021
6	1 March 2021	Mr Peter Cain MLA	Education Directorate	Timeframe for determining enrolment disputes	18/03/2021
7	1 March 2021	Mr Michael Pettersson MLA	Education Directorate	Category A and B schools	18/03/2021
8	1 March 2021	Mr Jeremy Hanson MLA	Education Directorate	Recurrent aggregated funding per student	18/03/2021
9	1 March 2021	Mr Johnathan Davis MLA	Education Directorate	Student movement between specialist and mainstream schools	01/04/2021

No.	Hearing date	Asked by	Directorate/ Portfolio	Subject	Answer date
10	1 March 2021	Mr Peter Cain MLA	Education Directorate	Per unit price of Chromebooks supplied during the COVID-19 period	18/03/2021
11	1 March 2021	Mr Johnathan Davis MLA	Education Directorate	Professional learning for teachers in relation to the Money Smart program	18/03/2021
12	1 March 2021	Mr Peter Cain MLA	Community Services Directorate	Expansion of Mindful Motherhood program	19/03/2021
13	1 March 2021	Mr Peter Cain MLA	Community Services Directorate	Infrastructure improvements to Child and Family Centres and Child Development Centre at Holder	19/03/2021
14	1 March 2021	Mr Peter Cain MLA	Community Services Directorate	Youth Week grant money	17/03/2021
15	1 March 2021	Mr Johnathan Davis MLA	Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate	Removal of discrimination around sexually active gay men donating blood	12/03/2021
16	1 March 2021	Ms Leanne Castley MLA	Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate	Settlement money for Gungahlin pool and cost for expert evaluations of the pool's condition	12/03/2021
17	1 March 2021	Mr Johnathan Davis MLA	Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate	Other government assets built by the original builders of Gungahlin pool	12/03/2021

No.	Hearing date	Asked by	Directorate/ Portfolio	Subject	Answer date
18	1 March 2021	Mr Johnathan Davis MLA	Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate	Review of previous work for the government by the original builders of Gungahlin pool	12/03/2021
19	1 March 2021	Mr Johnathan Davis MLA	Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate	Other pools in Australia built by the original builder of Gungahlin pool	12/03/2021
20	1 March 2021	Mr Peter Cain MLA	Community Services Directorate	Drop in ACT youth employment	01/04/2021

Questions Taken on Notice 5 March 2021

No.	Hearing date	Asked by	Directorate/ Portfolio	Subject	Answer date
21	5 March 2021	Mr Peter Cain MLA	University of Canberra	Comparison of the University of Canberra's Australia Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) for education courses with other Australian universities	16/03/2021
22	5 March 2021	Mr Peter Cain MLA	University of Canberra	Impact on the University of Canberra of raising the ATAR for education to 70	16/03/2021
23	5 March 2021	Mr Jeremy Hanson MLA	Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate	Training provided by private Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) not available at the Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT)	16/03/2021

No.	Hearing date	Asked by	Directorate/ Portfolio	Subject	Answer date
24	5 March 2021	Mr Jeremy Hanson MLA	Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate	RTO funding breakdown	16/03/2021
25	5 March 2021	Mr Peter Cain MLA	Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate	Ginninderry SPARK Training and Employment Program	16/03/2021
26	5 March 2021	Mr Michael Pettersson MLA	Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate	Cuts to CIT staff	15/03/2021
27	5 March 2021	Mr Johnathan Davis MLA	Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate	Full-time equivalent number of psychologists and councillors at CIT	15/03/2021
28	5 March 2021	Mr Johnathan Davis MLA	Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate	Change in demand for psychologist and councillor services at the CIT during the COVID-19 period	15/03/2021
29	5 March 2021	Mr Jeremy Hanson MLA	Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate	CIT Solutions Pty Ltd staff figures	15/03/2021

No.	Hearing date	Asked by	Directorate/ Portfolio	Subject	Answer date
30	5 March 2021	Mr Jeremy Hanson MLA	Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate	Gender breakdown of students enrolled in childcare courses at the CIT	15/03/2021
31	5 March 2021	Mr Jeremy Hanson MLA	Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate	User Choice Program funding breakdown between Commonwealth and ACT Government	16/03/2021
32	5 March 2021	Mrs Gulia Jones MLA	Community Services Directorate	Self-catering facilities at the new multicultural facility at EPIC	12/03/2021
33	5 March 2021	Mr Johnathan Davis MLA	Community Services Directorate	Number of people on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Co-Design Network	17/03/2021
34	5 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	Age brackets and young people on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Co-Design Network	17/03/2021
35	5 March 2021	Mr Peter Cain MLA	Community Services Directorate	Funding for Family Group Conferencing	22/03/2021

Questions on Notice 1 March 2021

No.	Hearing date	Asked by	Directorate/ Portfolio	Subject	Answer date
1	1 March 2021	Mr Michael Pettersson MLA	Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate	Gungahlin Leisure Centre	18/03/2021

No.	Hearing date	Asked by	Directorate/ Portfolio	Subject	Answer date
2	1 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	Update on Future Directions at the Child and Family Centres and Community Services Directorate	No answer received at time of tabling
3	1 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	Culturally Safe and Inclusive Services and Programs at the Child and Family Centres and the Community Services Directorate	01/04/2021
4	1 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	Attempts to Increase Autism Assessments	01/04/2021
5	1 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	Reduced Service for the Child Development Service	No answer received at time of tabling
6	1 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	Occupational Therapy Drop-In Clinics	01/04/2021
7	1 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	Temporarily closure of the West Belconnen Child and Family Centre	No answer received at time of tabling
8	1 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	Planning for Increased use of Child and Family Centres	01/04/2021

No.	Hearing date	Asked by	Directorate/ Portfolio	Subject	Answer date
9	1 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate – Redirected to Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate	Youth Unemployment	No answer received at time of tabling
10	1 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	Youth Engagement	No answer received at time of tabling
11	1 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	2020 Youth Week Grants	16/03/2021
12	1 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Education Directorate	Decision to stop teaching French and Indonesian at Belconnen High School	18/03/2021
13	1 March 2021	Ms Elizabeth Lee MLA	Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate	Sport and Recreation (multipart)	18/03/2021
14	1 March 2021	Ms Nicole Lawder MLA	Community Services Directorate	Age-Friendly City Plan	25/03/2021
15	1 March 2021	Mr Jeremy Hanson MLA	Education Directorate	Childcare and Preschool	No answer received at time of tabling

No.	Hearing date	Asked by	Directorate/ Portfolio	Subject	Answer date
16	1 March 2021	Mr Jeremy Hanson MLA	Education Directorate	Future of Education Strategy and Set up for Success	25/03/2021
17	1 March 2021	Mr Jeremy Hanson MLA	Education Directorate	Chromebooks and Early Years Literacy Initiative	25/03/2021
18	1 March 2021	Mr Jeremy Hanson MLA	Education Directorate	Teacher numbers and relief teachers	01/04/2021
19	1 March 2021	Mr Jeremy Hanson MLA	Education Directorate	Strategic objectives	01/04/2021
20	1 March 2021	Mr Jeremy Hanson MLA	Education Directorate	Enabling pedagogies, Safe and Supportive Schools	06/04/2021
21	1 March 2021	Mr Jeremy Hanson MLA	Education Directorate	Affiliated School Program, Health Promotion, Use of Data	25/03/2021
22	1 March 2021	Mr Jeremy Hanson MLA	Education Directorate	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	25/03/2021
23	1 March 2021	Mr Jeremy Hanson MLA	Education Directorate	Curriculum, Careers and Transitions	No answer received at time of tabling
24	1 March 2021	Mr Jeremy Hanson MLA	Education Directorate	New College in North, Gungahlin high school and primary	25/03/2021
25	1 March 2021	Mr Jeremy Hanson MLA	Education Directorate	Disability education	25/03/2021
26	1 March 2021	Mr Jeremy Hanson MLA	Education Directorate	Alternative school settings, Priority Enrolment Area, Suspension policy	25/03/2021

No.	Hearing date	Asked by	Directorate/ Portfolio	Subject	Answer date
27	1 March 2021	Mr Jeremy Hanson MLA	Education Directorate	Complaints, Year 12 outcomes	No answer received at time of tabling
28	1 March 2021	Mr Jeremy Hanson MLA	Education Directorate	Standardised testing, community engagement, teachers	25/03/2021
29	1 March 2021	Mr Jeremy Hanson MLA	Education Directorate	Vocational education, tertiary entrance statement, non-gov schools	25/03/2021
30	1 March 2021	Mr Jeremy Hanson MLA	Education Directorate	Funding	25/03/2021
31	1 March 2021	Mr Jeremy Hanson MLA	Education Directorate	Brindabella Christian College	No answer received at time of tabling
32	1 March 2021	Mr Jeremy Hanson MLA	Education Directorate	Computer information systems	25/03/2021
33	1 March 2021	Mr Johnathan Davis MLA	Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate	Sexuality and gender diversity wellbeing indicators	19/03/2021
35	1 March 2021	Mr Johnathan Davis MLA	Education Directorate	Capital works in ACT schools	25/03/2021
36	1 March 2021	Mr Johnathan Davis MLA	Education Directorate	Restrictive practices in ACT schools	01/04/2021

Questions on Notice 5 March 2021

No.	Hearing date	Asked by	Directorate/ Portfolio	Subject	Answer date
34	5 March 2021	Mr Johnathan Davis MLA	Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate	Workplace health and safety	19/03/2021
37	5 March 2021	Mr Jeremy Hanson MLA	Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate	Spark Training and Employment Program	23/03/2021
38	5 March 2021	Mr Jeremy Hanson MLA	Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate	Canberra Institute of Technology	23/03/2021
39	5 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	ACT COVID-19 Disability Strategy	26/03/2021
40	5 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	Better health outcomes for Canberrans with disability	26/03/2021
41	5 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) statistics on children	26/03/2021
42	5 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	Companion Card Program	26/03/2021
43	5 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	Connect and Participate Expo	26/03/2021

No.	Hearing date	Asked by	Directorate/ Portfolio	Subject	Answer date
44	5 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	Disability funding	30/03/2021
45	5 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	Disability statistics regarding no or non-active NDIS plans	No answer received at time of tabling
46	5 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	Expansion of Taxi Subsidy Scheme to Uber	31/03/2021
47	5 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	Funded services that were visited by a Relationship Manager	23/03/2021
48	5 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	Housing for people with disabilities	31/03/2021
49	5 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	Increasing disability employment	26/03/2021
50	5 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	In-kind services not managed under NDIS	No answer received at time of tabling
51	5 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	Integrated Service Response Program	No answer received at time of tabling
52	5 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	NDIS-registered behaviour support practitioners	30/03/2021

No.	Hearing date	Asked by	Directorate/ Portfolio	Subject	Answer date
53	5 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	Official Visitors for Disability Services Register	26/03/2021
54	5 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	Phase 2 ACT Covid-19 Disability Strategy	26/03/2021
55	5 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	Provision of Personal Protective Equipment	25/03/2021
56	5 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	Psychosocial Recovery and the NDIS course	No answer received at time of tabling
57	5 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	Indigenous Competency Framework	30/03/2021
58	5 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	New and Emerging Organisations Program	29/03/2021
59	5 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	New facility for Gugan Gulwan	No answer received at time of tabling
60	5 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	Our Booris, Our Way	No answer received at time of tabling
61	5 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	Outcomes Framework for the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement	No answer received at time of tabling

No.	Hearing date	Asked by	Directorate/ Portfolio	Subject	Answer date
62	5 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	Poverty in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders	29/03/2021
63	5 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	Reconciliation Day 2021	29/03/2021
64	5 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	Strengthening services of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people	06/04/2021
65	5 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	We Don't Shoot Out Wounded; Share What You Know	No answer received at time of tabling
66	5 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	Working in partnership with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community	No answer received at time of tabling
67	5 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander bulk recruitment round	22/03/2021
68	5 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Co-Design Network	06/04/2021
69	5 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body Elections	29/03/2021
70	5 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Grants Program	No answer received at time of tabling

No.	Hearing date	Asked by	Directorate/ Portfolio	Subject	Answer date
71	5 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Job Readiness Support Program	No answer received at time of tabling
72	5 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Procurement Policy	No answer received at time of tabling
73	5 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	ACT Greens Campaign Promises	No answer received at time of tabling
74	5 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	Boomanulla Oval	23/03/2021
75	5 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	Building Community-Controlled Organisations	29/03/2021
76	5 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	Closing the Gap, Reading and Numeracy Targets	No answer received at time of tabling
77	5 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	Child and Youth Protection Services New Practice Initiatives	No answer received at time of tabling
78	5 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	Functional Family Therapy and Family Group Conferencing	No answer received at time of tabling

No.	Hearing date	Asked by	Directorate/ Portfolio	Subject	Answer date
79	5 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	Healing and Reconciliation Fund	06/04/2021
80	5 March 2021	Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert MLA	Community Services Directorate	Yarramundi Cultural Centre	29/03/2021