



Inquiry into annual and financial reports 2024–2025

Answer to question taken on notice

Asked by: Mr James Milligan MLA

Addressed to: Chief Minister

Redirected to: CMTEDD

In relation to: Chief Minister and Consultation guidelines for Ministers

Hearing: 20 November 2025

Uncorrected Proof Transcript p 2-3

Transcript provided: 27 November 2025

Answer Due: 4 December 2025

THE CHAIR: And what we will do is I will allow each member to have around seven or eight minutes to ask their questions. The substantive may change during that seven or eight minutes. And then we will go to supplementaries and then we will pass on to the next member, just so each member gets to utilise as much time as possible and is effective and efficient. I will start off and as a whole-of-government, are there any guidelines for community and engagement for ministers when they go out and consult? Are there guidelines that are applied to when they do go out there and do consultation?

Mr Barr: So in an official government capacity or in their role as Members of the Assembly?

THE CHAIR: Official government capacity, yes.

Mr Barr: So in relation to a government project or just their—because obviously in their ministerial role they can—

THE CHAIR: Let us start with government project, yes?

Mr Barr: Sure, yes, but we do have a set of community engagement guidelines that do set a range of criteria around delivering an effective minimum time for consultation. We have a process and a dedicated community website called YourSay. We have regular surveys as well as project specific engagement. So perhaps the easiest way to answer the question might be, if you are interested in the detail rather than me reading it out, that we can provide that for the committee.

THE CHAIR: And take it on notice?

Mr Barr: So I will take the substantive detail on notice and provide the committee with some examples of the range of consultation guidelines that we have.

THE CHAIR: Well, thank you and are there any budgets that are allocated in terms of when they do go out to consult? You know, is there sort of—or does it depend on the projects?

Mr Barr: Well, to a certain extent there will be funding associated with individual projects as well as, I guess, a baseline capacity to maintain a website and a small team within Chief Minister's Directorate who have a central whole-of-government role and then within each ACT government directorate there would then be capacity for community engagement and communications. That will obviously vary, given the size of the directorate and the extent to which it is regularly involved in community engagement but again, if it is helpful I can endeavour to provide a snapshot of that for the committee.

THE CHAIR: Yes, no worries. Is it recorded anywhere as an overall budget spend for each department or each directorate?

Mr Barr: There would be a level of detail there. We will see what we can do to disaggregate that. So you are interested just particularly in the community engagement side?

THE CHAIR: The community. Yes, yes, yes.

Mr Barr: Okay, yes.

THE CHAIR: Thank you very much. Ms Carrick.

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

The ACT Government is committed to engaging effectively with Canberrans. Guidelines that support directorates in carrying out engagement planning and practice can be found here: [Community engagement](#) | [About](#) | [YourSay ACT](#)

The three main principles that directorates follow when conducting community engagement are:

- Consultations should be open for a minimum of six weeks to give the community ample opportunity to contribute.
- Consultation has to be accessible – provide a range of ways for the community to participate (online, face-to-face, etc).
- Transparent – outline what the consultation is about, what it will inform or be used for, and close the loop with the community.

Within the Communications and Engagement Division of Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate there is a team of 3 staff supporting Government engagement activity. This team provides advice and guidance to directorates and agencies across ACT Government about engagement and administers the YourSay Conversations digital engagement platform.

In 2024-25, staffing costs were \$323,274. Other costs including the operation of the YourSay Conversations platform and Community Council grants totalled \$233,669.

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Community engagement budgets are held in individual directorates and are project dependent. Directorates report on community engagement activities within their Annual Reports, under section B8.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts and Administration

Signature: 

Date: **5.12.25**

By the Chief Minister, Andrew Barr MLA