

SELECT COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES 2010-2011

Questions on Notice

Minister for Children and Young People

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Bimberi youth justice centre

VICKI DUNNE MLA : To ask the Minister for Children and Young People

Ref: Department of Disability, Housing and Family Services, BP4, p374, Output 4.1 – Youth Services

In relation to : Bimberi Youth Justice Centre

1. Have there been any incidents at Bimberi Youth Justice Centre in which one or more detainees climbed onto the roof or escaped either from the roof or elsewhere to the outside of the perimeter?
 - (a) If yes, on what dates did the incidents occur;
2. In relation to each incident:
 - (a) how did the detainees climb to the roof;
 - (b) how did the detainees escape to the outside of the perimeter;
 - (c) were security alarms triggered as a result;
 - (i) if no, why;
 - (d) how long were the detainees on the outside of the perimeter before security personnel returned them into custody;
 - (e) what disciplinary actions were taken against the detainees;
 - (i) if no action was taken, why;
 - (f) what review was made of the facility design to discover any security flaws;
 - (i) if no review was made, why;
 - (g) what modifications were made to prevent future similar escapes, either to the roof of the facility or to outside the perimeter; and
 - (i) if no modifications were made, why?

Minister Burch: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

1. In the 2009-10 financial year, there were four occasions on which young detainees accessed the roofline at Bimberi, being 9 January 2010, 4 February 2010, 4 March 2010 and 7 March 2010. There have been no occasions in which young detainees have escaped or attempted to escape lawful custody at Bimberi.
2.
 - (a) This question will not be answered on the grounds that release of this information will compromise safety and security at Bimberi Youth Justice Centre.
 - (b) Refer to answer to question 2(a) above.
 - (c) Refer to answer to question 2(a) above.
 - (d) Refer to answer to question 2(a) above.

- (e) Disciplinary consequences were imposed on the young detainees involved in the incidents. The consequences involved loss of privileges for 60 days and in one instance, a fine.
- (f) An internal investigation is being undertaken to examine all aspects related to the incidents including structural, physical and human factors.
- (g) Structural modifications will be made to rectify access points to the roof. This will involve energised wiring around access points to ensure that young detainees can not gain access to the roofline. This work will commence in the near future.

Early intervention

VICKI DUNNE MLA : To ask the Minister for Disability, Housing & Community Services and the Minister for Children and Young People

Ref: DHCS, BP4, p367, Output Class 2 – Early Intervention

In relation to : Output 2.2 – Children Services

1. In relation to the new childcare ratio requirements from 2012:
 - (a) What assurances can the government give that the regulatory changes relating to child-to-space ratios in childcare centres to be introduced in 2012 will not result in less childcare places being available at existing centres?
 - (b) What support is the ACT Government giving to community based non-profit childcare centres to assist them to accommodate all the regulatory changes that will occur in 2012?
 - (c) What measures does the ACT Government have in place to ensure that there is enough staff available in 2012 if centres decide to expand?
 - (d) How is the ACT Government supporting childcare centres that wish to expand their rooms to accommodate more children under the new policies from 2012?
2. In relation to the impact of portable long service leave on childcare centres.
 - (a) Phil Collins, CEO of the ACT Long Service Leave Authority stated before the Estimates Committee that *“There is no doubt that organisations generally are aware that their costs are going to increase to some extent.”* To what extent will cost increases arising from the introduction of the portable long service leave scheme for the community sector impact on childcare fees?
3. In relation to childcare vacancies:
 - (a) How many vacancies are there currently in childcare in the ACT?
 - (b) Where are these vacancies?
 - (c) Given that the ACT doesn’t keep data on waiting lists, how does the Government plan where new childcare centres should be built?

Minister Burch: The answer to the Member’s question is as follows:–

1. In relation to the new childcare ratio requirements from 2012:
 - a) There are no changes to the child- to- space ratio with the introduction of the National Quality Standards from 1 January 2012. The current requirement is 3.25 square metres unencumbered floor space per child. This will remain as the standard for space.
 - b) The ACT Government is keeping services well informed about the implementation of the National Quality Framework through a range of communication channels.

To date this information has been provided to childcare services through:

- relevant Commonwealth and ACT Government websites;
- updates and information at the ACT Children's Services Forum and the

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- Children's Services Directors meetings; and quarterly newsletters to the child care sector.

On April 20 the first of a series of National Forums on the National Quality Framework was held in Canberra. This was well attended by the child care sector and provided an opportunity for the sector to ask questions about the National Quality Framework.

Children's services advisers with the Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services have commenced discussions with individual centres about the implementation of the National Quality Framework at regular service visits. Advisers will focus on the plans by the centre to move to a 1:4 staff child ratio for children under 2 years. Advisers will work with services to determine the best use of space and allocation of staff to comply with the new ratio requirements.

In June 2010 advisers are participating in national training on the assessment and rating of services prior to trials of the new assessment and rating system to be carried out from June 2010 until December 2010. This training will further assist advisers in supporting services in moving to the new system.

c) Recent initiatives to increase opportunities for training is improving child care staff numbers with a significant increase over the last 2 years. The Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services has advised that there has been a 30% increase in the degree and diploma qualified staff working in long day care over the last 2 years.

The Canberra Institutes of Technology's enrolments in the Diploma in Children's Services increased from 156 students in 2008 to 385 students in 2009. Many of these students will be graduating in early 2011 and seeking employment in 2012.

Figures for 2010 indicate a continued increase in enrolments with a total of 500 students studying either Certificate 3 or a Diploma in Children's Services.

The ACT Government is contributing to national work being undertaken in relation to the development of a National Workforce Strategy. In mid 2010 the Australian Government is undertaking a Workforce survey on staff qualifications across Australia. This survey will provide valuable information on the current number of qualified staff and qualification levels of staff working in children's services and preschools.

In 2008, the ACT Children's Services Forum, examined options to address workforce issues in the ACT children's services sector.

Initiatives that have already been actioned include:

- Distribution of a *Contact List* of support services for children's services, management committees and proprietors;
- A *Workshop* on how to market and promote the children's services sector as an employment option of choice;
- Development of a sector-wide information sheet "*Would you like to work with young children?*" targeted to potential recruits to the children's services workforce. The information sheet was disseminated through the Canberra Careers Market in August 2009;

- Discussions with the Skilled and Business Migration Unit in the Chief Minister's Department to ensure that the *Skills in Demand* report for the ACT reflects the current and future workforce shortages in the children's services industry; and
- Collation of sector-wide data on enrolments in all early childhood training both vocational and tertiary in the ACT.

d) The Children's Policy and Regulation Unit will provide advice to services on options to expand or reconfigure current room arrangements to meet the new standards from January 2012. ACT Government owned services can apply to the Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services for capital upgrade funding if expansion is an option. In addition community based services are eligible to apply for Community Infrastructure Grants that may assist and any changes to existing infrastructure.

2. In relation to the impact of portable long service leave on childcare centres.

The determination of child care fees is a matter for individual childcare centre operators to determine, based on their business model.

Factors that contribute to the cost of child care are: staff wages, including long service leave, and conditions; training, food, rent, equipment and insurance, maintenance and buildings and other facility expenses.

3. In relation to childcare vacancies:

- a) The Australian Government collects vacancy data through the Childcare Management System. A recent report published by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations reported 890 vacancies across 105 centre based long day care services in the ACT in the September quarter 2009.
- b) Information on centre vacancies can be obtained from <http://mychild.gov.au/>. The Department of Education, Employment and Workforce Relations Report does not provide information on the location of the vacancies.
- c) Planning for the location of new child care centres takes into consideration demographic data including population projections, urban growth areas, transport routes and the location of major employment areas. The ACT Government has established a strategic Interdepartmental Committee which brings together a number of important stakeholders including the ACT Planning and Land Development Authority and the Department of Education and Training to focus on future child care planning needs for the government.

Bimberi Youth Justice centre

VICKI DUNNE MLA : To ask the Minister for Children & Young People

Ref: DHCS, BP4, p367, Output Class 4 – Children, Youth and Family Services

In relation to : Output 4.1 – Youth Services - Bimberi Youth Justice Centre

1. In relation to the use of the kitchen and manual arts facilities for teaching programs:
 - (a) Have these facilities been commissioned into full use?
 - (i) If no:
 - why;
 - why did the Minister announce in the media that they were in use;
 - when will they be commissioned?
 - (b) What training programs have been developed that utilise those facilities?
2. In relation to staffing:
 - (a) Does Bimberi currently carry a full complement of staff?
 - (b) Do situations arise when only one member of staff is supervising an area or a group of residents without immediate backup?
 - (i) If yes, what is being done to reduce the incidence of such occurrences?
 - (c) What is the staff turnover?
 - (d) What evaluation has been made of the rate of turnover?
 - (e) Are exit interviews conducted when staff leave?
 - (i) If yes:
 - what trends are emerging as to the reasons for leaving; and
 - what is being done to address those reasons?
 - (ii) If no, why?
 - (f) In relation to staff training and professional development:
 - (i) What programs are offered to staff?
 - (ii) What is the uptake?
 - (g) Is there an on-site workplace safety officer?
 - (i) If yes:
 - what qualifications does that officer hold;
 - what in-service training does that officer provide to staff; and
 - how frequently are those training programs run?
 - (ii) If no, why?

3. Average cost per custody day at Bimberi [ref BP4, p381, Accountability Indicator (e)]
 - (a) Is a decrease in the cost per custody day at Bimberi considered a positive outcome?
 - (i) If yes, why?

Minister Burch: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

1. In relation to the use of the kitchen and manual arts facilities for teaching programs:
 - (a) The kitchen and manual arts facilities at Bimberi are commissioned for use.
 - (b) The provision of any educational or vocational program at Bimberi is subject to the needs of the population and assessment of the suitability of individual young people to participate safely in the program. This is essential in order to address risks associated with access to tools, utensils and similar equipment.

Programs are provided at Bimberi which utilise facilities to assist young people to acquire and/or develop living skills. These include a semi-independent living program established in a residential unit to allow young people to develop skills such as planning and preparing meals, budgeting, hygiene and time management. To date, a small number of young people have participated in this program and it is intended that this program will be expanded to young people who are assessed as suitable to participate.

The programs available for young people at Bimberi are soon to include a barista program and a living skills program. The living skills program will cover a range of subjects such as nutrition, healthy cooking, budgeting, safe food handling and hygiene. The Program will utilise existing centre staff, support staff and external consultants to develop and deliver this program based on food, nutrition, health and physical activity.

A Strategic Reference Group comprising senior Executives from the Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services (DHCS), the Department of Education and Training (DET) and the Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT) are overseeing the development and provision of effective programs at Bimberi that meet the needs of the population which includes a high proportion of young people on short-term remand. This work has a strong focus on improving the literacy and numeracy skills of young people and building this into program delivery which is assessed and accredited.

2. In relation to staffing:

- (a) No.
- (b) No.
- (c) Four permanent staff have separated from Bimberi this financial year to 26 May 2010. Based on the fifty-six (56) positions at Bimberi, this represents a turnover rate of 7%.
- (d) A formal evaluation in relation to this turnover rate is considered unnecessary.
- (e) Yes, Exit Interviews are offered when staff separate from the Department.
 - (i) If yes:
 - Prior to their departure from Bimberi, staff have indicated in discussions with Centre management that they have found a sense of satisfaction working with young people, however, were leaving for personal reasons or to accept positions in other Government agencies with different conditions.
 - Not applicable
- (f) Prior to commencing work as Youth Detention Officers, all staff are required to satisfactorily complete an induction training program. The induction program covers a broad range of skills and knowledge necessary to undertake the role including:
 - Legislation, policy and procedures
 - Senior First Aid
 - Youth Mental Health First Aid
 - Response Ability Pathways (RAP)
 - Indigenous Cultural Awareness
 - Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect
 - Models of Intervention with young people
 - Anxiety and Depression – young people in custody
 - Ethical Decision making
 - Emergency management
 - Working with children and young people with cognitive impairment
 - Breathing Apparatus and fire hydrant training
 - Respond to Critical Situations (Use of Force)
 - On the floor practical experience (supernumerary)

The induction training program is coordinated by staff from DHCS Learning and Community Education. New recruits generally engage well in the training process and appreciate the opportunity it affords them to prepare for working in a justice centre. An induction program for new staff commenced on 3 May and will continue until 2 July 2010.

In addition, all staff at Bimberi have access to a range of internal and external training and professional development opportunities including, but not limited to, study leave and financial support to undertake approved courses of study; workplace trainer and assessor accreditation; juvenile justice certificate accreditation and workplace health and safety training. Internal training is scheduled to occur throughout the year and focuses on specific areas relevant

to working in a detention centre, such as first aid training, fire extinguisher training and breathing apparatus training.

- (g) Bimberi has six trained workplace safety officers and these staff members are representative on Bimberi's Workplace Health and Safety Committee.

3. Average cost per custody day at Bimberi [ref BP4, p381, Accountability Indicator (e)]

- (a) A decrease in the cost per custody day will generally be driven by higher numbers of young people and longer custodial episodes. The number of young people in detention and the length of their detention is determined by decisions made by police and judicial officers which are outside the control of the Department. Legislation and policy in the ACT requires detention to be a last resort for a young person and emphasises the need to divert a young person from detention at earlier points in the criminal justice continuum.

Child and Family Centre Program

VICKI DUNNE MLA : To ask the Minister for Children and Young People

Ref: DHCS, BP4, p367, Output Class 2 – Early Intervention

In relation to : Output 2.1 – Child and Family Centre Program

1. What programs and services are offered at child and family centres?
2. Is each program or service viable in terms of numbers of people accessing them vs the cost of running them?
3. When was the last time a comprehensive review of these programs and services undertaken?
4. Were any programs or services discontinued as a result of that review?
 - (a) If yes:
 - (i) why; and
 - (ii) what was the resultant cost saving?
5. Were any new programs or services added as a result of that review?
 - (a) If yes:
 - (i) what programs were added;
 - (ii) at what cost; and
 - (iii) for what fees to be paid by parents?
6. In relation to the cost per 1,000 head of population [ref BP4, p377, Accountability Indicator (g) and footnote 4]:
 - (a) What are the new initiatives that will cause this cost to increase from \$6.99 (2009-10 estimated outcome) to \$7.85 (2010-11 target), and increase of 12.3%?
 - (b) How much of that cost does each new initiative contribute?

Minister Burch: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

1. Centres directly provide the following programs and services:
 - a. Drop in parenting information (intake);
 - b. Paint and Play at Kambah, Richardson, Ngunnawal, Harrison and Florey;
 - c. Learn Giggle and Grow;
 - d. Triple P (Positive Parenting Program);
 - e. Topical Talks for Terrific Parents;
 - f. Welcome to Tuggeranong / Gungahlin;
 - g. Dads, Children and Play;
 - h. Poppy Play Group;
 - i. Growing Healthy Families program – incorporates a range of specific programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families;
 - j. Parents as Teachers home visiting program;
 - k. Parents as Teachers group program;

- l. Schools as Communities program;
- m. Integrated Family Support Project;
- n. ParentLink information service;
- o. Best Foot Forward;
- p. Parent and Infant Relationship Support (PAIRS); and
- q. Children's Behaviour and Wellbeing Clinic.

The majority of the programs and services listed above are delivered in partnership with a broad range of community, government and non-government agencies.

Services offered by other agencies at the Centres include:

- a. Maternal and Child Health Clinics – ACT Health;
 - b. New Parents Groups – ACT Health;
 - c. Sleep Groups – ACT Health;
 - d. Community Midwifery Clinics (Canberra Hospital) – ACT Health;
 - e. Canberra Midwifery Clinics (Birth Centre) – ACT Health;
 - f. Orthoptist – ACT Health;
 - g. Nutrition Clinic – ACT Health;
 - h. Child Health Medical Officer – ACT Health;
 - i. Physiotherapy drop in clinic – Therapy ACT (DHCS);
 - j. Speech Pathology drop in clinic – Therapy ACT (DHCS);
 - k. Family Counselling – Relationships Australia;
 - l. And Baby Makes 3 – Relationships Australia;
 - m. Coping with Fussy Eaters – ACT Health;
 - n. Talk about weight – ACT Health;
 - o. Housing advice (Housing ACT);
 - p. More Giggles – Playgroups Association;
 - q. Play Connect – Playgroups Association; and
 - r. Individual counseling and support for young people - Bungee (Belconnen Community Service).
2. Each program delivered by Child and Family Centres is in response to an identified need or demand for that program. As demand changes for programs adjustments are made for example, Topical Talks for Terrific Parents is provided as requested now rather than monthly because demand for the program (after two years) has reduced.
 3. The Child and Family Centre program was evaluated in May 2006 by the University of Canberra. The purpose of the evaluation was to assess the work that had occurred and provide support for future planning. The Child and Family Centre model was also included as part of the Australian Catholic University research into early intervention commissioned by the ACT Government in 2009. Evaluation also occurs on an ongoing basis. At the end of each group program feedback is sought from parents who attended and facilitators adjust the program according to feedback.
 4. No.
 5. Programs are developed, adjusted or added in response to identified need or identified gaps in service. For example, in response to the need of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families using the Centres, a range of new programs

6. a) The new initiative that increased the average cost in 2010–11 is the Early Childhood Reform (\$379,000) which includes two child and family workers for the West Belconnen Child and Family Centre, and a support resource related to the National Quality Agenda. This contributed \$1.05 to the cost per 1,000 head of population. The increase was partially offset by efficiency savings and increased utilisation of the Centres. It is envisaged the cost per head will decrease once the new Centre is operational and has established a full client base.
- b) The breakdown of the \$379,000 is \$256,425 for recurrent staffing and brokerage funding for West Belconnen Child and Family Centre and \$122,075 for recurrent staffing costs.

Care and Protection Services

VICKI DUNNE MLA : To ask the Minister for Children and Young People

Ref: DHCS, BP4, p367, Output Class 4 – Children, Youth and Family Services

In relation to : Output 4.2 – Care and Protection Services

1. Grandparents and Kinship Carers:

- (a) How many kinship carers has the Minister met and spoken with since her appointment?
 - (i) What were the outcomes of those meetings and discussions?
 - (ii) What policy and response/action decisions did the Minister make as a result of those meetings and discussions?
- (b) Children and young people in the courts
 - (i) Since the new Act came into operation, how many children and young people in the care of the Chief Executive have appeared before the courts on criminal matters?
 - (ii) Were any remanded or sentenced to Bimberi?
 - If yes:
 - how many; and
 - for how long?
 - (iii) How many children and young people in the care and protection system are currently before the courts?
 - (iv) What is the nature of matters that have brought these children and young people before the courts?
 - (v) When children and young people in the care of the Chief Executive appear before the courts on criminal matters, does that have to be reported under section 507 of the Act to the Public Advocate?
 - What reporting processes are in place in this context?
- (c) Data
 - (i) As at the date of this question on notice, how many children and young people are in care of the Chief Executive?
 - (ii) Of these children and young people how many are in:
 - home care;
 - foster care;
 - kinship care;
 - institutionalised care; and
 - group housing without an adult “*in loco parentis*”?

- (iii) In relation to children or young people in group housing without an adult “*in loco parentis*”:
 - why are they in that situation;
 - where are they accommodated; and
 - what supervision or mentoring is provided?
- (iv) Of the children and young people in out-of-home care:
 - What is the breakdown by age?
 - How many are indigenous?
 - How many are from non-English-speaking backgrounds?
 - How many were not born in Australia?
 - How many families are represented?
- (v) Has the Department undertaken any survey or research work to discover the extent of out-of-home care of all children and young people (not just in the care and protection of the chief executive) by grandparents and kin?
 - If no:
 - why; and
 - when will it be done?
 - If yes, what has been discovered?
- (d) Government budget commitment: “*an additional \$5.7 million over four years has been provided to support the increasing number of children who need to be provided with out-of-home care*” [ref Budget Speech 2010-11, p11]
 - (i) What programs, activities or other support services will this new funding provide?
 - (ii) How will those programs, activities or other support services be delivered?
 - (iii) By whom?
- (e) Services to kinship carers
 - (i) Does the Department, as parent, currently give an **information** kit to carers upon asking them to care for babies, children or young people in care and protection?
 - If yes:
 - when was that kit developed;
 - what information is provided in relation to carer entitlements, responsibilities and support; and
 - what other information is provided?
 - If no:
 - is a kit being developed; and
 - when will it become available?

- (ii) Is the information given to carers consistent across all case managers?
 - If no, why?
 - If yes, why is it that carers report receiving different information from different case managers?
- (iii) Does the department, as parent, currently give an **equipment** kit to carers upon asking them to care for babies, children and young people in care and protection?
 - If yes:
 - what equipment is provided for:
 - babies;
 - children; and
 - young people;
 - when was the kit developed; and
 - who was consulted on its contents?
 - If no:
 - is a kit being developed; and
 - when will it become available?
- (iv) Is the equipment provided consistent across all case managers?
 - If no, why?
- (v) Does the Department co-ordinate services, both inter- and intra-department, for carers of children and young people in care and protection?
 - If no, why?
 - If yes, what services are co-ordinated?
- (f) Training and support
 - (i) What training is provided to:
 - foster carers; and
 - grandparent and kinship carers?
 - (ii) What is the per head cost of training for:
 - foster carers; and
 - grandparent and kinship carers?
 - (iii) What is the range, nature and amount of financial support, including **but not limited to** allowances, provided to:
 - foster carers; and
 - grandparent and kinship carers?

- (iv) As at the date of this question on notice, are all:
- foster carers; and
 - grandparent and kinship carers
- caring for children and young people in the care of the Chief Executive receiving all financial support and allowances to which they are entitled?
- If no:
 - why; and
 - when will they receive their entitlements?
- (v) What is the application process for financial support and allowances for:
- foster carers, and
 - grandparent and kinship carers?
- (vi) What is the average turn-around time for processing those applications for:
- foster carers; and
 - grandparent and kinship carers?
- (vii) What other departmentally-funded support, including *but not limited to* legal and psychological support, is provided to:
- children and young people in care and protection;
 - if none, why;
 - foster carers;
 - if none, why;
 - grandparents and kinship carers; and
 - if none, why?
- (viii) If any differences arise as to the training and support given to foster carers vis-à-vis grandparent and kinship carers in the answers to the various parts of question (vii), explain why.
- (ix) In the Estimates hearing on 27 May 2010, the minister stated: “Part of the dialogue is the offer of assistance. Back in August, we saw practical assistance in response to comments made by carers around library, toys, car seats, those types of things. Groups chose not to take up that offer of funding, for their reasons, but certainly the offer was there.”
- What offer of assistance was given?
 - In what form?
 - To whom?
 - What documentary support for the offer exists?
 - Which groups took up the offer?
 - How much was given to each group that accepted the offer?

- What accountability arrangements are in place for that funding?
- (x) In the Estimates hearing on 27 May 2010, Mr Duggan stated: “We are in the process of developing a kinship carers handbook.” In the same hearing, Ms Lambert stated: “I think we have doubled our numbers in formal kin care in the last ... five years.”
- Why has it taken five years for the department to begin the “process of developing a kinship carers handbook”?
- (g) Permitted carer decision-making
- (i) What decision-making in relation to children and young people in the care of the Chief Executive is allowed to be made by:
- foster carers; and
 - grandparent and kinship carers;
- (ii) in relation to:
- education;
 - health, medical and hospital;
 - legal matters;
 - respite care;
 - recreation;
 - excursions and holidays outside the ACT;
 - clothing and other personal requirements; and
 - other matters?
- (iii) If any differences arise as to the decision-making powers of foster carers vis-à-vis grandparent and kinship carers, explain why.
- (iv) If the Chief Executive must make the decisions in any of the above categories:
- What consultation is undertaken with the:
 - foster carer; or
 - grandparent or kinship carer?
 - What is the process by which these matters are decided
- (h) Staff
- (i) What is the staff turnover in the care and protection agency?
- How does that staff turnover compare to other service provision areas in the department?
- (i) Care and transition plans
- (i) Does the department develop care plans for children and young people in care and protection?
- If no, why?
 - If yes, who is consulted in the development of those plans?

- (ii) Do those plans include management of and support for grandparents as they age to the point of being elderly or even frail when caring for children and young people?
 - If no, why?
 - If yes, what management and support elements are included?
- (iii) Do those plans include transition to adulthood and self-care for children and young people in care and protection?
 - If no, why?
 - If yes:
 - what issues are considered; and
 - who is consulted in the development of those transition plans?
- (iv) What post-care and protection support does the Department provide both to carers and young people formerly in care and protection?
- (j) Public Advocate
 - (i) Is it the case that the Public Advocate is soon to be seconded to DHCS?
 - If yes:
 - (ii) When will that secondment begin and end;
 - (iii) What will the officer's duties be; and
 - (iv) What is the risk of any perceived or actual conflict of interest in that secondment?

Minster Burch : The answer to the Member's question is as follows:–

After careful consideration of the question, and advice provided by my Department, I have determined that the information sought is excessive and that to collect and assemble the information sought solely for the purpose of answering the question would be a major task, requiring a considerable diversion of resources. In this instance, I do not believe that it would be appropriate to divert resources from the provision of direct services to clients, for the purposes of answering the Member's question.

Community development and policy

VICKI DUNNE MLA : To ask the Minister for the Disability, Housing and Community Services and the Minister for Women

Ref: DHCS, BP4, p367, Output Class 3 – Community Development and Policy

In relation to : Output 3.2 – Community Affairs

7. [ref BP4, p 374] How will the budget increase of \$354,000 (5.6%) on the estimated outcome for 2009-10 be spent?
8. [ref BP4, p380, Accountability Indicator(e) and footnote 4] What are the new initiatives that have caused the cost per 1,000 head of population to increase from the 2009-10 estimated outcome of \$17.62 to the 2010-11 budget of \$18.34 (an increase of 4%)?
 - (a) What cost has each new initiative contributed to this increase?
9. Status of Women:
 - (a) In relation to grants programs for women:
 - (i) How many such programs does the department administer?
 - (ii) What is the budget for each of those programs?
 - (iii) What is the nature of the programs and activities for women that received grant funding during 2009-10 to date?
 - (iv) Which of those programs and activities are on multi-year funding agreements?
 - (v) Typically for how many years do multi-year funding agreements run?
 - (vi) What governance requirements does the government place on grant recipients?
 - (b) In relation to the Ministerial Advisory Council on Women:
 - (i) What were the major achievements of the Council during 2009-10 to date?
 - (ii) What is the nature of the advice the Council provided to the Minister during 2009-10 to date?
 - (iii) What action did the Minister take in response to that advice?
 - (iv) How has this action advanced the cause of women in the ACT?
 - (v) What secretariat support is provided to the Council?
 - (vi) What is the cost of that support?
 - (vii) Do Council members receive any remuneration?
 - If yes:
 - how much; and
 - who determines the level of remuneration?
 - (c) In relation to the Women's Information and Referral Centre:

- (i) What does the centre cost to run?
 - (ii) What staffing resources are provided?
 - (iii) How many women access the centre each year?
 - (iv) What is the trend of that statistic over the past five years?
- (d) In relation to the Women's Plan:
- (i) What were the major achievements and outcomes for women in the ACT from the 2004-09 ACT Women's Plan?
 - (ii) Were any of the objectives of the 2004-09 plan not achieved?
 - If yes:
 - why; and
 - which of these were carried forward to the 2010-15 plan?
 - (iii) What new initiatives, objectives and outcomes will the 2010-15 ACT Women's Plan pursue?
 - When will progress of the plan be reviewed?
 - Who will undertake and report on that review?
- (e) In relation to International Women's Day:
- (i) How much does the ACT Government contribute to International Women's Day in the ACT:
 - in cash; and
 - in kind?
 - (ii) What kinds of programs and activities are offered during the day?
 - (iii) What is the participation rate for each program or activity?
 - (iv) To what extent in the ACT day integrated into the national and international programs and activities?
 - (v) What national or international programs and activities are based or hosted in Canberra?
- (f) In relation to the ACT Women's Register:
- (i) How many women are enrolled on the register?
 - (ii) On average, how many women register each year?
 - (iii) How often is the register reviewed for currency of registrants?
 - (iv) What does it cost to administer?
 - (v) How many women on the register have been appointed to ACT government boards and committees?
 - (vi) In percentage terms, how many women currently are serving on ACT government boards, committees, councils, or the like?

Minister Burch - The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

1. The budget increase on the 2009-10 estimated outcome will be mainly spent on the Prevention of Violence Against Women initiative.
2. The initiative that increased the cost in 2010–11 Budget is for Prevention of Violence Against Women.
 - a. This contributed \$0.95 to the cost per 1,000 head of population. The increase was partially offset by the impact of the efficiency dividend savings.
3. **a. In relation to grants programs for women:**
 - i. The Department administers two grants programs for women:
 - ACT Women’s Grants Program; and
 - ACT Women’s Return to Work Grants Program.
 - ii. In 2009-10, for the ACT Women’s Grants Program budget is \$100,000.
In 2009-10, for the ACT Women’s Return to Work Grants Program budget is \$193,000.
 - iii. Projects funded through the 2009-10 ACT Women’s Grants Program will provide activities that improve the status of women and girls in the ACT. A list of projects funded in the 2009-10 ACT Women’s Grant program is at:
http://www.dhcs.act.gov.au/women/grants_and_scholarships#women_sgrants
The Return to Work Grants Program has assisted applicants with education and training fees, IT expenses, transport to courses/study, work related expenses such as clothing, uniforms and equipment and childcare.
 - iv. Neither of these programs is on multi-year funding agreements.
 - v. Not applicable.
 - vi. Recipients of ACT Women’s Grants Program funding are required to:
 - Provide details of incorporation, have an Australian Business Number and appropriate public liability insurance; and
 - Enter into a Deed of Grant with the Australian Capital Territory and comply with the requirements of the Deed including financial acquittal and reporting requirements.

Recipients of the ACT Women’s Return to Work Grants Program funding are required to acquit the funds provided against the agreed expenditure for the grant.
- b. In relation to the Ministerial Advisory Council on Women:**
 - i. During 2009-2010, the Ministerial Advisory Council on Women engaged with Canberra women and girls in the consultation process to inform the next ACT Women’s Plan. Its members developed a targeted outreach strategy and undertook a ‘listening tour’ during August and September 2009 to ensure diverse groups of women had the opportunity to contribute and provide feedback.

- ii. During 2009-10, the Council provided the Minister with advice on the development of the second ACT Women's Plan including a snapshot of women's concerns.
- iii. The Council's advice is reflected in the *ACT Women's Plan 2010-2015* which was launched by the Minister on 31 March 2010.
- iv. *The ACT Women's Plan 2010-15* provides a strategic framework for ACT Government Departments to work with community organisations and business to progress gender equity and participation.
- v. Secretariat support provided to the Council includes attendance at meetings, administrative support, and catering arrangements and costs.
- vi. \$40,830.
- vii. No.

c. In relation to the Women's Information and Referral Centre(WiRC)

- i. The WiRC budget for 2009-10 is \$381,492.
- ii. There are 3.96 FTE staff at WiRC. The Manager, Office for Women is responsible for this team. The FTE does not include a portion of her time.
- iii. Each year the (WiRC) is accessed by clients visiting the centre, through telephone, e-mail and fax contact and through participation in courses and support groups. The total number of client contacts throughout the financial year of 2008-09 was 11,251.
- iv. The trend is upward.

d. In relation to the Women's Plan:

- i. The achievements of the *ACT Women's Plan 2004-2009* are detailed in the 2009 publications *Looking Forward – Informing a new plan for ACT women and girls* and *Taking Stock - Reporting on the ACT Women's Plan (2004-09) Indicators of Success*. Copies can be downloaded from the Women ACT website:
<http://www.dhcs.act.gov.au/women/publications#act>
- ii. While significant progress was made to progress the six objectives of the *ACT Women's Plan 2004-09*, the ACT Government acknowledged through the release of the *ACT Women's Plan 2010-15* that there is still more to be done to ensure 'that women in the ACT reach their potential, be recognised for their contribution and share the benefits of our community'.

Across social, economic and environmental areas, inequalities still exist between men and women and between different groups of women.

The *ACT Women's Plan 2010-15* builds on the objectives of the *ACT Women's Plan 2004-10*.

- iii. The *ACT Women's Plan 2010-15* outlines strategic outcomes, objectives and priority areas against the economic, social and environmental aspects of life. A critical focus of the Plan is to embed an understanding of the different needs of women and girls and men and boys into policy and

practice, as a mechanism for improving gender equity. A copy of the Plan is available at:

<http://www.dhcs.act.gov.au/women/publications#act>

iii.

- The process for measuring and reporting on progress are outlined on pages 15-17 of the *ACT Women's Plan 2010-15*. The indicators of progress will be revised during the reporting periods and updated where necessary to reflect emerging future priorities.
- ACT Government Departments will report against the objectives of the Plan in their Annual Reports. The Office for Women will publish two reports against the indicators of progress informed by ACT Government Departments and external sources, the first in November 2012 and the second in November 2014.

e. In relation to International Women's Day:

i.

- The total cost for ACT International Women's Day 2010 was \$11,224; and
- In kind staffing costs to organise and/or attend International Women's Day events are absorbed within existing resources of the Office for Women.

ii. Programs and activities to celebrate International Women's Day in Canberra are predominately external events. Organisation were invited to advertise their events in the 2010 International Women's Day Calendar of Events. Details are available at: http://www.dhcs.act.gov.au/women/iwd-calendar_of_events

iii. The ACT International Women's Day Awards Ceremony was attended by 98 guests. Screenings of the film 'For Love or Money' were attended by between 80- 95 people. The attendance levels at external events to celebrate International Women's Day are not known as organisations are not required to report participation numbers to Government.

iv. In the ACT, International Women's Day events tend to focus on activities which celebrate and honour local women and girls.

v. Organisations with a national or international focus are more likely to host activities with a national or international focus. Two examples are:

- the guest speaker at the 10th UNIFEM Canberra International Women's Day Lunch was Dr Hamidah Marican, Executive Director of the Malaysian organisation Sisters in Islam; and
- the Zonta Canberra Breakfast Club hosted a Preloved, Designer and Vintage Women's Clothing Sale to raise funds to support the Zonta Birthing Kit Project in developing countries.

f. In relation to the ACT Women's Register:

- i. 165 women are enrolled on the ACT Women's Register.
- ii. Approximately 10-15 women register each year.
- iii. All women who register on the ACT Register are encouraged to regularly review their details and advise the Office for Women if updates are required.
- iv. The cost to administer the ACT Women's Register is absorbed within existing resources of the Office for Women.
- v.
 - Women on the ACT Women's Register may be appointed to ACT Government Boards and Committees through several different pathways including via the ACT Women's Register.
 - To determine the number of women on the ACT Women's Register that have been appointed to ACT Government Boards and Committees would be a major task, requiring a considerable diversion of resources. In this instance, I do not believe that it would be appropriate to divert resources from the provision of direct services to clients, for the purposes of answering the Member's question.
- vi. Women's representation on ACT Government Boards and Committees is 48%.