



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE NO. 5

Budget Estimates 2024-2025

5



Report 63

June 2025

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Portfolio Committee No. 5 - Justice and Communities

Budget Estimates 2024-2025

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Budget Estimates 2024-2025

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Chair: Hon Robert Borsak MLC



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Terms of reference

Initial hearings

1. That the Budget Estimates and related papers for the financial year 2024-2025 presenting the amounts to be appropriated from the Consolidated Fund be referred to the Portfolio Committees for inquiry and report.
2. That, as per the resolution of the House on 21 November 2023 adopting the 2024 sitting calendar, the 2024-2025 supplementary budget estimates hearings are to be held from 2 December to 6 December 2024.
3. That, further to the resolution of the House of 21 November 2023 adopting the 2024 sitting calendar, the 2024-2025 initial budget estimates hearings be scheduled as follows:

Day One: Tuesday 27 August 2024

PC 3 Education and Early Learning, Western Sydney

PC 4 Agriculture, Regional New South Wales, Western New South Wales

Day Two: Wednesday 28 August 2024

PC 1 Premier

PC 4 Small Business, Lands and Property, Multiculturalism, Sport

Day Three: Thursday 29 August 2024

PC 1 Treasurer

PC 7 Climate Change, Energy, the Environment, Heritage

Day Four: Friday 30 August 2024

PC 5 Police and Counter Terrorism, the Hunter

PC 7 Planning and Public Spaces

PC 1 The Legislature

Day Five: Tuesday 3 September 2024

PC 6 Transport

PC 5 Families and Communities, Disability Inclusion

Day Six: Wednesday 4 September 2024

PC 5 Attorney-General

PC 3 Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education

Day Seven: Thursday 5 September 2024

PC 1 Finance, Domestic Manufacturing and Government Procurement,
Natural Resources

PC 8 Local Government

Day Eight: Friday 6 September 2024

- PC 6 Special Minister of State, Roads, Arts, Music and the Night-time Economy, Jobs and Tourism
- PC 1 Aboriginal Affairs & Treaty, Gaming & Racing, Veterans, Central Coast, Medical Research

Day Nine: Monday 9 September 2024

- PC 8 Emergency Services, Youth Justice, Customer Service & Digital Government
- PC 2 Water, Housing, Homelessness, Mental Health, Youth, the North Coast
- PC 6 Regional Transport and Roads

Day Ten: Tuesday 10 September 2024

- PC 2 Health, Regional Health, the Illawarra and the South Coast
- PC 8 Corrections, Better Regulation & Fair Trading, Industry & Trade, Innovation, Science & Technology, Building

Day Eleven: Wednesday 11 September 2024

- PC 5 Women, Seniors, Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault
- PC 1 Industrial Relations, Work Health and Safety

4. That for the purposes of the 2024-2025 initial budget estimates hearings:
 - (a) each portfolio, except The Legislature, be examined concurrently by opposition and crossbench members only from 9.15 am to 10.45 am, 11.15 am to 12.45 pm, 2.00 pm to 3.30 pm and 3.45 pm to 5.15 pm, and, if required, by Government members only from 10.45 am to 11.00 am, 12.45 pm to 1.00 pm, and 5.15 pm to 5.30 pm, and
 - (b) the portfolio of The Legislature be examined by opposition, crossbench and Government members from 9.15 am to 11.00 am, and from 11.15 am to 1.00 pm.
5. That, unless the committee decides otherwise:
 - (a) the sequence of questions to be asked at the hearings for the following portfolios alternate between opposition and crossbench members, in that order, with equal time allocated to each:
 - (i) Education and Early Learning, Western Sydney
 - (ii) Premier
 - (iii) Treasurer
 - (iv) Police and Counter Terrorism, the Hunter
 - (v) Transport
 - (vi) Attorney-General
 - (vii) Finance, Domestic Manufacturing and Government Procurement, Natural Resources

- (viii) Special Minister of State, Roads, Arts, Music and the Night-time Economy, Jobs and Tourism
 - (ix) Emergency Services, Youth Justice, Customer Service and Digital
 - (x) Regional Transport and Roads
 - (xi) Health, Regional Health, the Illawarra and the South Coast
 - (xii) Women, Seniors, Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault
- (b) the sequence of questions to be asked at the hearings for the following portfolios alternate between crossbench and opposition members, in that order, with equal time allocated to each:
- (i) Agriculture, Regional New South Wales, Western New South Wales
 - (ii) Small Business, Lands and Property, Multiculturalism, Sport
 - (iii) Climate Change, Energy, the Environment, Heritage
 - (iv) Planning and Public Spaces
 - (v) Families and Communities, Disability Inclusion
 - (vi) Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education
 - (vii) Local Government
 - (viii) Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Gaming and Racing, Veterans, Central Coast, Medical Research
 - (ix) Water, Housing, Homelessness, Mental Health, Youth, the North Coast
 - (x) Corrections, Better Regulation and Fair Trading, Industry and Trade, Innovation, Science and Technology, Building
 - (xi) Industrial Relations, Work Health and Safety.
6. That for the purposes of the 2024-2025 initial budget estimates hearings:
- (a) the committees must hear evidence in public
 - (b) the committees may ask for explanations from ministers, parliamentary secretaries or officers of departments, statutory bodies or corporations, relating to the items of proposed expenditure
 - (c) ministers be invited to appear for the morning sessions only unless requested by committees to appear also for the afternoon session
 - (d) witnesses, including ministers, may not make an opening statement before a committee commences questions
 - (e) members may lodge supplementary questions with the committee clerk by 5.00 pm within two business days following the receipt of the hearing transcript, and

- (f) answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions are to be published, except those answers for which confidentiality is requested, after they have been circulated to committee members.
- (g) That the committees report by 27 June 2025.¹

¹ *Minutes*, NSW Legislative Council, 20 June 2024, Item 4.

Additional hearings

1. That, further to the resolution of the House of 20 June 2024 referring Budget Estimates 2024-2025 to the Portfolio Committees for inquiry and report, and the resolution of the House of 12 November 2024 adopting the 2025 sitting calendar, the 2024-2025 additional budget estimates hearings be scheduled as follows:

Day One: Tuesday 25 February 2025

PC 3 Education and Early Learning, Western Sydney
PC 4 Agriculture, Regional New South Wales, Western New South Wales

Day Two: Wednesday 26 February 2025

PC 1 Premier
PC 4 Small Business, Lands and Property, Multiculturalism, Sport

Day Three: Thursday 27 February 2025

PC 2 Health, Regional Health, the Illawarra and the South Coast
PC 5 Women, Seniors, Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

Day Four: Friday 28 February 2025

PC 5 Attorney-General
PC 8 Local Government

Day Five: Monday 3 March 2025

PC 7 Climate Change, Energy, the Environment, Heritage
PC 1 Industrial Relations, Work Health and Safety

Day Six: Tuesday 4 March 2025

PC 7 Planning and Public Spaces
PC 1 Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Gaming and Racing, Veterans, the Central Coast, Medical Research

Day Seven: Wednesday 5 March 2025

PC 1 Treasurer
PC 8 Customer Service and Digital Government, Emergency Services, Youth Justice

Day Eight: Thursday 6 March 2025

PC 1 Finance, Domestic Manufacturing and Government Procurement, Natural Resources
PC 6 Regional Transport and Roads

Day Nine: Friday 7 March 2025

PC 2 Water, Housing, Homelessness, Mental Health, Youth, the North Coast
 PC 8 Better Regulation and Fair Trading, Industry and Trade, Innovation, Science and Technology, Building, Corrections

Day Ten: Monday 10 March 2025

PC 5 Families and Communities, Disability Inclusion
 PC 3 Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education

Day Eleven: Tuesday 11 March 2025

PC 6 Special Minister of State, Roads, Arts, Music and the Night-time Economy, Jobs and Tourism
 PC 1 The Legislature

Day Twelve: Wednesday 12 March 2025

PC 6 Transport
 PC 5 Police and Counter Terrorism, the Hunter

2. That, unless the committee decides otherwise:

- (a) the sequence of questions to be asked at the hearings for the following portfolios alternate between opposition and crossbench members, in that order, with equal time allocated to each:
 - (i) Education and Early Learning, Western Sydney,
 - (ii) Premier,
 - (iii) Health, Regional Health, the Illawarra and the South Coast,
 - (iv) Attorney-General,
 - (v) Climate Change, Energy, the Environment, Heritage,
 - (vi) Planning and Public Spaces,
 - (vii) Treasurer,
 - (viii) Finance, Domestic Manufacturing and Government Procurement, Natural Resources,
 - (ix) Water, Housing, Homelessness, Mental Health, Youth, the North Coast,
 - (x) Families and Communities, Disability Inclusion,
 - (xi) Special Minister of State, Roads, Arts, Music and the Night-time Economy, Jobs and Tourism,
 - (xii) Transport, and

- (b) the sequence of questions to be asked at the hearings for the following portfolios alternate between crossbench and opposition members, in that order, with equal time allocated to each:
 - (i) Agriculture, Regional New South Wales, Western New South Wales,
 - (ii) Small Business, Lands and Property, Multiculturalism, Sport,
 - (iii) Women, Seniors, Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault,
 - (iv) Local Government,
 - (v) Industrial Relations, Work Health and Safety,
 - (vi) Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Gaming and Racing, Veterans, the Central Coast, Medical Research,
 - (vii) Customer Service and Digital Government, Emergency Services, Youth Justice,
 - (viii) Regional Transport and Roads,
 - (ix) Better Regulation and Fair Trading, Industry and Trade, Innovation, Science and Technology, Building, Corrections,
 - (x) Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education,
 - (xi) The Legislature,
 - (xii) Police and Counter Terrorism, the Hunter.
- 3. That for the purposes of the 2024-2025 additional budget estimates hearings:
 - (a) each portfolio, except The Legislature, be examined concurrently by Opposition and Crossbench members only, from 9.15 am to 10.45 am, and from 11.15 am to 12.45 pm, then from 2.00 pm to 3.30 pm, and from 3.45 pm to 5.15 pm, with 15 minutes reserved for Government questions at 10.45 am, 12.45 pm and 5.15 pm, if required, and
 - (b) the portfolio of The Legislature be examined by Opposition, Crossbench and Government members from 9.15 am to 11.00 am, and from 11.15 am to 1.00 pm.
- 4. That for the purposes of the 2024-2025 additional budget estimates hearings:
 - (a) the committees must hear evidence in public,
 - (b) the committees may ask for explanations from ministers, parliamentary secretaries or officers of departments, statutory bodies or corporations, relating to the items of proposed expenditure,
 - (c) ministers be invited to appear for the morning sessions only unless requested by committees to appear also for the afternoon session,
 - (d) witnesses, including ministers, may not make an opening statement before a committee commences questions,
 - (e) members may lodge supplementary questions with the committee clerk by 5.00 pm within two business days following the receipt of the hearing transcript, and

- (f) answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions are to be published, except those answers for which confidentiality is requested, after they have been circulated to committee members.²

² *Minutes*, NSW Legislative Council, 21 November 2024, Item 3.

Further additional hearings

1. That this House notes that:

- (a) on 21 November 2024, the House adopted a schedule of additional budget estimates hearings for 2024-2025 over 12 working days from 25 February 2025 to 12 March 2025,
- (b) the following three hearings were unable to be conducted as scheduled by the relevant committees due to the impact of Cyclone Alfred and the unavailability of ministers and other witnesses:

Day Seven: Wednesday 5 March 2025

PC 8 Customer Service and Digital Government, Emergency Services, Youth Justice

Day Eight: Thursday 6 March 2025

PC 6 Regional Transport and Roads

Day Nine: Friday 7 March 2025

PC 2 Water, Housing, Homelessness, Mental Health, Youth, the North Coast

- (c) following this, that Portfolio Committee No. 2 – Health rescheduled the original additional hearing to the following date:

Day Thirteen: Friday 14 March 2025

PC 2 Water, Housing, Homelessness, Mental Health, Youth, the North Coast

2. That in view of the inability of Portfolio Committee No. 2 – Health, to conduct the original additional hearing, the House endorse the further additional hearing held on 14 March 2025.

3. That in view of the inability of Portfolio Committee No. 6 – Transport and the Arts and Portfolio Committee No. 8 – Customer Service to conduct the hearings, the committees be authorised to undertake the hearings as follows under the same arrangements as originally agreed to by the House on 21 November 2024:

Day Fourteen: Tuesday 1 April 2025

PC 6 Roads, Regional Transport

Day Fifteen: Friday 11 April 2025

PC 8 Customer Service and Digital Government, Emergency Services, Youth Justice

4. That the NSW Reconstruction Authority be invited to appear from 9.15 am to 5.30 pm at the rescheduled Portfolio Committee No. 8 – Customer Service additional budget estimates hearing to be held on Friday 11 April 2025.

5. That for the purposes of the 2024-2025 further additional budget estimates hearings, each portfolio, be examined concurrently by Opposition and Crossbench members only, from 9.15 am

to 10.45 am, and from 11.15 am to 12.45 pm, then from 2.00 pm to 3.30 pm, and from 3.45 pm to 5.15 pm, with 15 minutes reserved for Government questions at 10.45 am, 12.45 pm and 5.15 pm, if required.

6. That for the purposes of the 2024-2025 further additional budget estimates hearings:
- (a) the committees must hear evidence in public,
 - (b) the committees may ask for explanations from ministers, parliamentary secretaries or officers of departments, statutory bodies or corporations, relating to the items of proposed expenditure,
 - (c) ministers be invited to appear for the morning sessions only unless requested by committees to appear also for the afternoon session,
 - (d) witnesses, including ministers, may not make an opening statement before a committee commences questions,
 - (e) members may lodge supplementary questions with the committee clerk by 5.00 pm within two business days following the receipt of the hearing transcript, and
 - (f) answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions are to be published, except those answers for which confidentiality is requested, after they have been circulated to committee members.³

³ *Minutes*, NSW Legislative Council, 19 March 2025, Item 15.

Committee details

Committee members

Hon Robert Borsak MLC	Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party	<i>Chair</i>
Ms Sue Higginson MLC	The Greens	<i>Deputy Chair</i>
Hon Greg Donnelly MLC	Australian Labor Party	
Hon Stephen Lawrence MLC	Australian Labor Party	
Hon Natasha Maclaren-Jones MLC	Liberal Party	
Hon Cameron Murphy MLC	Australian Labor Party	
Hon Nichole Overall MLC *	The Nationals	

* The Hon Nichole Overall MLC replaced the Hon Scott Barrett MLC as a substantive member of the committee from 18 February 2025.

Non-substantive members who attended the hearings

Hon Scott Barrett MLC	The Nationals
Ms Abigail Boyd MLC	The Greens
Hon Mark Buttigieg MLC	Australian Labor Party
Hon Susan Carter MLC	Liberal Party
Dr Amanda Cohn MLC	The Greens
Hon Anthony D'Adam MLC	Australian Labor Party
Ms Cate Faehrmann MLC	The Greens
Hon Emma Hurst MLC	Animal Justice Party
Hon Dr Sarah Kaine MLC	Australian Labor Party
Hon Aileen MacDonald MLC	Liberal Party
Hon Rachel Merton MLC	Liberal Party
Hon Tania Mihailuk MLC	Independent
Hon Sarah Mitchell MLC	The Nationals
Hon Bob Nanva MLC	Australian Labor Party
Hon Rod Roberts MLC	Independent
Hon Emily Suvaal MLC	Australian Labor Party

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Chair's foreword

I am pleased to present this report on the inquiry into Budget Estimates 2024-2025. The annual inquiry into the Budget Estimates ensures parliamentary oversight of the Budget, and provides an important mechanism for the accountability of the executive government to the Legislative Council.

Portfolio Committee No. 5 – Justice and Communities is responsible for the scrutiny of the following portfolio areas:

- Attorney-General
- Police and Counter-terrorism, the Hunter
- Families and Communities, Disability Inclusion
- Women, Seniors, Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault.

The primary evidence gathering mechanism of this inquiry is through the conduct of public hearings. This report lists the key issues raised during the hearings. Transcripts, tabled documents and additional answers provided after the hearings are published on the [inquiry's webpage](#).

On behalf of the committee, I would like to thank the ministers and their officers who assisted the committee during this important inquiry. I am grateful to my fellow committee members and the secretariat staff for their contributions to the inquiry process.

Hon Robert Borsak MLC
Committee Chair

Chapter 1 Introduction

The inquiry into Budget Estimates is one of the key mechanisms for parliamentary committees to scrutinise government expenditure, performance and effectiveness. It holds ministers and government officials to account and provides a greater level of transparency to the public.

The inquiry is conducted annually by the Legislative Council's Portfolio Committees. Each committee examines the budget estimates of its responsible portfolios, with ministers and senior public servants as the primary witnesses. The evidence gathering process of the inquiry consists of answers provided during public hearings, including answers to questions on notice, and answers to post-hearing written questions (known as supplementary questions). There is no provision for written submissions.

Budget Estimates 2024-2025

- 1.1 On 20 June 2024, the Legislative Council referred the Budget Estimates for the 2024-2025 financial year to the portfolio committees for inquiry and report.⁴
- 1.2 The Legislative Council resolved that initial hearings for Budget Estimates 2024-2025 be held over 11 days from 27 August to 30 August 2024, 3 September to 6 September 2024 and 9 September to 11 September 2024 and that supplementary hearings be scheduled from 2 December to 6 December 2024.⁵
- 1.3 On 21 November 2024, the Legislative Council resolved that additional hearings for Budget Estimates 2024-2025 be held over 12 days from 25 February 2025 to 28 February 2025, 3 March 2025 to 7 March 2025, and 10 March 2025 to 12 March 2025.⁶
- 1.4 Three additional hearings were rescheduled due to the impact of Cyclone Alfred and the unavailability of ministers and other witnesses.⁷
- 1.5 The Budget Estimates resolution establishing the inquiry, which sets out the rules for the inquiry, is reproduced on page iv-xiii.

Hearings

- 1.6 The committee held public hearings as follows:
 - 30 August 2024 and 12 March 2025: Police and Counter-terrorism, the Hunter
 - 3 September 2024 and 10 March 2025: Families and Communities, Disability Inclusion
 - 4 September 2024 and 28 February 2025: Attorney General

⁴ Minutes, NSW Legislative Council, 20 June 2024, pp 1295-1298.

⁵ Minutes, NSW Legislative Council, 21 November 2023, pp 670-671; Minutes, NSW Legislative Council, 20 June 2024, pp 1295-1298.

⁶ Minutes, NSW Legislative Council, 21 November 2024, pp 1901-1904.

⁷ Minutes, NSW Legislative Council, 19 March 2025, pp 2154-2155.

- 11 September 2024 and 27 February 2025: Women, Seniors, Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault.

Transcripts, questions on notice and supplementary questions

- 1.7** Transcripts of the hearings, questions taken on notice, supplementary questions and answers to these questions are available on the Budget Estimates webpage at: www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/budgetestimates.

Chapter 2 Issues raised during hearings

This chapter provides a brief summary of key issues raised during the hearings.

Police and Counter-terrorism, the Hunter

2.1 A hearing examining the portfolios of Police and Counter-terrorism, the Hunter was held on Friday 30 August 2024. The following issues were raised during the committee's examination of these portfolios:

- the Police Commissioner's purchase and gifting of gin
- staff morale within the NSW Police Force
- policing of drug charges and the Early Drug Diversion Initiative
- terrorism risk of arrivals on tourist visas
- hand held metal detecting wands and Jack's Law (use of metal detection wands by police)
- unstaffed police stations and repair of police stations
- the ability to search police databases for connections between alleged perpetrators and victims
- the overrepresentation of Aboriginal people in the criminal justice system
- LGBTIQ+ hate crimes and the NSW Police Force Taskforce Atlas established to implement recommendations from the Special Commission of Inquiry into LGBTIQ hate crimes
- the number of regional coordinators for the Hunter region following the re-location of these roles to the Premier's Department.

2.2 An additional hearing was held on Wednesday 12 March 2025 and the following issues were raised:

- health risk assessment process for firearms licenses
- NSW Police Budget for recruitment, including in regional areas
- Operation Kissinger – the Dural caravan incident
- Strikeforce Pearl – investigation of potentially antisemitic incidents across NSW
- introduction of the *Crimes Amendment (Inciting Racial Hatred) Bill 2025*, *Crimes Amendment (Places of Worship) Bill 2025* and *Crimes Legislation Amendment (Racial and Religious Hatred) Bill 2025* in the context of the Dural caravan incident
- policing of drug charges and the Early Drug Diversion Initiative
- hand held metal detecting wands and Jack's Law (use of metal detection wands by police)
- unstaffed police stations and repair of police stations

- pill testing at Yours and Owls Festival
- employment of police officers found guilty of domestic and family violence, sexual violence or violent offences
- Operation Regional Mongoose – responding to serious property-related crime committed predominantly by young offenders.

Families and Communities, Disability Inclusion

2.3 A hearing examining the portfolios of Families and Communities, Disability Inclusion was held on Tuesday 3 September 2024. The following issues were raised during the committee's examination of these portfolios:

- ban on unaccredited alternative care arrangements
- the child protection system, including the High-Cost Emergency Arrangements and the Structured Decision-Making Framework
- children in out-of-home care (OOHC), including children exiting OOHC into homelessness and school enrolment and suspension rates
- First Nations children in OOHC including investment in Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisations, and the Family is Culture Independent Review of Aboriginal Children and Young People in OOHC in New South Wales
- matters related to foster carers including strategies to respond to a foster carer shortage, funding to support foster carers who are caring for children with complex needs, and support for foster carers to deal with cost of living pressures
- government funding and support for neighbourhood and community centres to provide services including those under the Targeted Earlier Intervention Program
- the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability, including the implementation of recommendations in New South Wales
- disability, including accessibility housing standards, employment rates, foundational supports for people with disability and disability action plan annual reporting
- caseworker vacancy rates, retention strategies and training
- the government's return to the office memorandum, action taken to support the return to the office policy within the Department of Communities and Justice, and concerns about vacant office space and agreed working hours of departmental employees to facilitate contact with clients.

2.4 An additional hearing was held on Monday 10 March 2025 and the following issues were raised:

- implementation of Disability Royal Commission recommendations, including improving social housing operational policy and processes, diverting of people with cognitive disability from criminal proceedings and the use of seclusion in the Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network
- closure of accessible toilets in Strathfield

- child abuse including the Australian Child Maltreatment Study, abuse prevention and intervention education and harmonisation of Working with Children Checks
- Inquiry into the Office of the Children's Guardian
- Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations
- care arrangements, including alternative care arrangements, residential care, foster care and Waratah Care Cottages
- alternatives to group homes
- Aboriginal children in OOHC, including the Aboriginal Authority For Restoring Children and Ministerial Aboriginal Partnership Group
- properties owned by the Department of Communities and Justice.

Attorney-General

2.5 A hearing examining the portfolio of Attorney-General was held on Wednesday 4 September 2024. The following issues were raised during the committee's examination of this portfolio:

- knife crime and laws – increase in penalties and effect on crime rates, and the implementation of Jack's Law (use of metal detection wands by police)
- anti-protest laws statutory review
- youth bail reforms - the impact on First Nations communities, Closing the Gap, and incarceration rates for First Nations young people
- bail laws, the centralised bail court and new bail accommodation in Moree
- protection for victim-survivors of domestic and family violence, including bail reforms for domestic violence offenders and additional judicial resources
- electronic monitoring of people charged with serious domestic violence offences who are on bail including implementation of, and responsibility and budget allocation for, electronic monitoring
- Review of the *Anti-Discrimination Act* by the NSW Law Reform Commission, the Equality Legislation Amendment (LGBTIQA+) Bill 2023, and protection based on sexual orientation
- prosecutions under section 93Z of the *Crimes Act 1900*
- audio-visual link facilities and safe waiting areas/rooms in New South Wales courts
- graffiti crime and budget allocation
- surrogacy laws, including connections with modern slavery
- extinguishment of convictions for historical homosexual offences.

2.6 An additional hearing was held on Friday 28 February 2025 and the following issues were raised:

- funding arrangements for New South Wales community legal centres

- the closure of New South Wales community justice centres
- matters surrounding modern slavery including the monitoring function of the NSW Anti-slavery Commissioner, the Commissioner's resources, reporting obligations, and international commercial surrogacy arrangements
- compensation for Kathleen Folbigg following her exoneration by the NSW Court of Criminal Appeal in December 2023
- youth bail laws and the deterrence of youth crime, the incarceration of juveniles, and youth diversionary programs
- the review of sexual assault matters conducted by the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions with the involvement of Sir Max Hill KC and Professor Julia Quilter
- the Crimes Amendment (Inciting Racial Hatred) Bill 2025 including the consultation process surrounding the Bill
- specialist LGBTQIA+ legal services in New South Wales.

Women, Seniors, Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

2.7 A hearing examining the portfolios of Women, Seniors, Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault was held on Wednesday 11 September 2024. The following issues were raised during the committee's examination of these portfolios:

- the 'Staying Home Leaving Violence' program
- the Cabinet Office review of interactions that Molly Ticehurst had with government agencies and domestic violence services
- funding and recruitment of domestic violence workers
- priority of funding to Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisations (ACCOs)
- bail reforms
- implementation of coercive control legislation and the coercive control education program
- release of, and funding for, the NSW Strategy for the Prevention of Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence 2024-2028
- the Core and Cluster program including the provision of new refuges, and pet-friendly refuges, and the provision of pet-friendly accommodation for victim-survivors of domestic and family violence more generally
- needle spiking
- support for volunteers and carers
- matters affecting seniors including access to seniors cards, development and implementation of a revised ageing strategy for New South Wales, the uptake of voluntary assisted dying amongst seniors particularly in regional areas, and the prevention of elder abuse

- the protection of women only spaces
- workplace sexual harassment and assault in parts of the night time economy
- government responses around recommendations related to domestic and family violence including the government response to the Domestic Violence Death Review Team Report 2021-2023, and the government response to recommendations of the Disability Royal Commission
- the implementation of recommendations of the Auditor-General regarding police responses to domestic and family violence and of the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission regarding police investigating domestic and family violence offences allegedly perpetrated by officers of the same police local area command
- domestic and family violence services for culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

2.8 An additional hearing was held on Thursday 27 February 2025 and the following issues were raised:

- the funding of domestic and family violence services
- government support for mothers not in paid employment
- support for Jewish women in the context of the rise in antisemitism
- police perpetrators of domestic and family violence
- male victim-survivors of domestic and family violence
- 'Staying Home, Leaving Violence' program
- people living with animals in situations of domestic and family violence
- the targeting of older people by scammers
- the impact of crime on women in regional areas
- seniors in regional areas
- update on implementation of actions under various domestic and family violence plans and timeframes for commencement of specific projects
- elder abuse and reports made to the Ageing and Disability Commission.

Appendix 1 Witnesses at hearings

Date	Name	Position and Organisation
Friday 30 August 2024 Jubilee Room Parliament House, Sydney	Hon Yasmin Catley MP	Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism, and Minister for the Hunter
	Commissioner Karen Webb	Commissioner, NSW Police Force
	Deputy Commissioner David Hudson	Deputy Commissioner, NSW Police Force
	Deputy Commissioner Paul Pisanos	Deputy Commissioner, NSW Police Force
	Deputy Commissioner Peter Thurtell	Deputy Commissioner, NSW Police Force
	Deputy Commissioner Dean Smith	Acting Deputy Commissioner, NSW Police Force
	Ms Kate Meagher	Deputy Secretary, Community Engagement Group, Premier's Department
Tuesday 3 September 2024 Jubilee Room Parliament House, Sydney	Hon Kate Washington MP	Minister for Families and Communities, and Minister for Disability Inclusion
	Mr Michael Tidball	Secretary, Department of Communities and Justice
	Ms Anne Campbell	Deputy Secretary, Strategy, Policy and Commissioning, Department of Communities and Justice
	Mr Paul O'Reilly	Deputy Secretary, System Reform, Department of Communities and Justice
	Ms Simone Czech	Deputy Secretary, Child Protection and Permanency, District and Youth Justice Services, Department of Communities and Justice

Date	Name	Position and Organisation
	Ms Zoe Dendle	Executive Director, Early Intervention, Disability and Inclusion Strategy, Department of Communities and Justice
	Ms Kathryn McKenzie	Acting NSW Ageing and Disability Commissioner, NSW Ageing and Disability Commission
	Mr Steve Kinmond OAM	Children's Guardian, Office of the Children's Guardian
Wednesday 4 September 2024 Macquarie Room Parliament House, Sydney	Hon Michael Daley MP	Attorney General
	Mr Michael Tidball	Secretary, Department of Communities and Justice
	Mr Paul McKnight	Deputy Secretary, Law Reform and Legal Services, Department of Communities and Justice
	Ms Anne Campbell	Deputy Secretary, Strategy, Policy and Commissioning, Department of Communities and Justice
	Ms Monique Hitter	Chief Executive Officer, Legal Aid NSW
	Ms Sally Dowling SC	Director of Public Prosecutions, Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions
	Dr James Cockayne	NSW Anti-slavery Commissioner
	Mr Chris D'Aeth	Acting Deputy Secretary, Courts, Tribunals and Service Delivery, Department of Communities and Justice
Wednesday 11 September 2024 Jubilee Room Parliament House, Sydney	Hon Jodie Harrison MP	Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault
	Mr Michael Tidball	Secretary, Department of Communities and Justice

Date	Name	Position and Organisation
	Ms Anne Campbell	Deputy Secretary, Strategy, Policy and Commissioning, Department of Communities and Justice
	Ms Hannah Tonkin	Women's Safety Commissioner, Department of Communities and Justice
	Ms Gillian White	Deputy Secretary, Social Policy and Intergovernmental Relations, The Cabinet Office
	Ms Tanya Smyth	Director, Women NSW, The Cabinet Office
	Ms Kathryn McKenzie	Acting NSW Ageing and Disability Commissioner, NSW Ageing and Disability Commission
Thursday 27 February 2025 Jubilee Room, Parliament House, Sydney	Hon Jodie Harrison MP	Minister for Women, Seniors, Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault
	Mr Michael Tidball	Secretary, Department of Communities and Justice
	Ms Anne Campbell	Deputy Secretary, Strategy, Policy and Commissioning, Department of Communities and Justice
	Ms Hannah Tonkin	Women's Safety Commissioner, Department of Communities and Justice
	Ms Gillian White	Deputy Secretary, Social Policy and Intergovernmental Relations, The Cabinet Office
	Ms Tanya Smyth	Director, Women NSW, The Cabinet Office
	Ms Kathryn McKenzie	Acting NSW Ageing and Disability Commissioner, NSW Ageing and Disability Commission
	Ms Bianca Jarrett	Executive Director, Transforming Aboriginal Outcomes,

Date	Name	Position and Organisation
Friday 28 February 2025 Macquarie Room, Parliament House, Sydney	Hon Michael Daley MP Mr Michael Tidball Mr Paul McKnight Ms Anne Campbell Mr Chris D'Aeth Ms Monique Hitter Ms Sally Dowling SC Dr James Cockayne	Department of Communities and Justice
		Attorney General
		Secretary, Department of Communities and Justice
		Deputy Secretary, Law Reform and Legal Services, Department of Communities and Justice
		Deputy Secretary, Strategy, Policy and Commissioning, Department of Communities and Justice
		Deputy Secretary, Courts, Tribunals and Service Delivery, Department of Communities and Justice
		Chief Executive Officer, Legal Aid NSW
Monday 10 March 2025 Macquarie Room, Parliament House, Sydney	Hon Kate Washington MP Mr Michael Tidball Ms Anne Campbell Ms Lauren Dean	Minister for Families and Communities, and Minister for Disability Inclusion
		Secretary, Department of Communities and Justice
		Deputy Secretary, Strategy, Policy and Commissioning, Department of Communities and Justice
		Acting Deputy Secretary, Child Protection and Permanency, Department of Communities and Justice

Date	Name	Position and Organisation
	Mr Paul O'Reilly	Deputy Secretary, System Reform, Department of Communities and Justice
	Ms Zoe Dendle	Executive Director, Early Intervention, Disability and Inclusion Strategy, Department of Communities and Justice
	Ms Bianca Jarrett	Executive Director, Transforming Aboriginal Outcomes, Department of Communities and Justice
	Ms Kathryn McKenzie	Acting NSW Ageing and Disability Commissioner, NSW Ageing and Disability Commission
	Ms Rachael Ward	Acting Children's Guardian, Office of the Children's Guardian
Wednesday 12 March 2025 Jubilee Room, Parliament House, Sydney	Hon Yasmin Catley MP	Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism, and Minister for the Hunter
	Commissioner Karen Webb	Commissioner, NSW Police Force
	Deputy Commissioner David Hudson	Deputy Commissioner, NSW Police Force
	Deputy Commissioner Paul Pisanos	Deputy Commissioner, NSW Police Force
	Deputy Commissioner Peter Thurtell	Deputy Commissioner, NSW Police Force
	Deputy Commissioner Dean Smith	Deputy Commissioner, NSW Police Force
	Ms Kate Meagher	Deputy Secretary, Delivery and Engagement Group, Premier's Department
	Commissioner Michael Barnes	Commissioner, NSW Crime Commission

Appendix 2 Minutes

Minutes no. 16

Wednesday 17 July 2024

Portfolio Committee No. 5 – Justice and Communities

Room 1043 Parliament House, Sydney at 10.30 am

1. Members present

Mr Borsak, *Chair*

Mr Donnelly

Mr Fang (via videoconference)

Mr Lawrence (via videoconference)

Mr Murphy

2. Apologies

Ms Higginson

3. Previous minutes

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Donnelly: That draft minutes nos. 13 and 15 be confirmed.

4. Inquiry into Budget Estimates 2024-2025 – procedural resolutions

The committee noted that the Budget Estimates timetable for 2024-2025 was agreed to by the House with hearings generally commencing at 9.15 am and concluding by 5.30 pm. The committee noted the following timetable of Portfolio Committee No. 5 hearings.

Date	Portfolio
Friday 30 August 2024	Police and Counter Terrorism, the Hunter
Tuesday 3 September 2024	Families and Communities, Disability Inclusion
Wednesday 4 September 2024	Attorney-General
Wednesday 11 September 2024	Women, Seniors, Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

4.1 Allocation of question time and total hearing time

The committee noted that under the Budget Estimates 2024-2025 resolution:

- (a) each portfolio, except The Legislature is to be examined concurrently by opposition and crossbench members only from 9.15 am to 10.45 am, 11.15 am to 12.45 pm, 2.00 pm to 3.30 pm and 3.45 pm to 5.15 pm, and, if required, by Government members only from 10.45 am to 11.00 am, 12.45 pm to 1.00 pm, and 5.15 pm to 5.30 pm, and
- (b) the portfolio of The Legislature is to be examined by opposition, crossbench and Government members from 9.15 am to 11.00 am, and from 11.15 am to 1.00 pm.

4.2 Sequence of questions

The committee noted that under the Budget Estimates 2024-2025 resolution, unless the committee decides otherwise, the sequence of questions to be asked at the hearings for the following portfolios is to alternate between *opposition and crossbench members, in that order*, with equal time allocated to each:

- Police and Counter Terrorism
- Attorney-General
- Women, Seniors, Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault.

The committee also noted that, unless the committee decides otherwise, the sequence of questions to be asked at the hearing for the following portfolio is to alternate between *crossbench and opposition members, in that order*, with equal time allocated to each:

- Families and Communities, Disability Inclusion.

5. Witness requests

The committee noted a list of witnesses who appeared at initial hearings for Budget Estimates 2023-2024 for the portfolios relevant to Portfolio Committee No. 5.

Police and Counter Terrorism, the Hunter

Witness	
Commissioner Karen Webb	Commissioner, NSW Police Force
Deputy Commissioner David Hudson	Deputy Commissioner, NSW Police Force
Deputy Commissioner Malcolm Lanyon	Deputy Commissioner, NSW Police Force
Deputy Commissioner Paul Pisanos	Deputy Commissioner, NSW Police Force
Deputy Commissioner Peter Thurtell	Deputy Commissioner, NSW Police Force
Ms Kenna Ackley	Acting Deputy Commissioner, NSW Police Force
Mr Jonathan Wheaton	Acting Deputy Secretary, Regional NSW
Commissioner Michael Barnes	Commissioner, Crime Commission

Families and Communities, Disability Inclusion

Witness	
Mr Michael Tidball	Secretary, Department of Communities and Justice
Ms Anne Campbell	Deputy Secretary, Strategy, Policy and Commissioning, Department of Communities and Justice
Ms Simone Czech	Deputy Secretary, Child Protection and Permanency, District and Youth Justice Services, Department of Communities and Justice
Mr Brendan Thomas	Deputy Secretary, Transforming Aboriginal Outcomes, Department of Communities and Justice
Mr Robert Fitzgerald	NSW Ageing and Disability Commissioner, NSW Ageing and Disability Commission
Ms Zoe Dendle	Executive Director Housing, Homelessness and Disability, Department of Communities and Justice

Attorney-General

Witness	
Mr Michael Tidball	Secretary, Department of Communities and Justice
Mr Paul McKnight	Deputy Secretary, Law Reform and Legal Services, Department of Communities and Justice

Ms Anne Campbell	Deputy Secretary, Strategy, Policy and Commissioning, Department of Communities and Justice
Mr Brendan Thomas	Deputy Secretary, Transforming Aboriginal Outcomes, Department of Communities and Justice
Ms Monique Hitter	Chief Executive Officer, Legal Aid NSW

Women, Seniors, Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

Witness	
Mr Michael Tidball	Secretary, Department of Communities and Justice
Ms Anne Campbell	Deputy Secretary, Strategy, Policy and Commissioning, Department of Communities and Justice
Ms Hannah Tonkin	Women's Safety Commissioner, Department of Communities and Justice
Ms Kate Meagher	Deputy Secretary Community Engagement Group, Premier's Department
Ms Tanya Smyth	Director Women NSW, Premier's Department
Mr Robert Fitzgerald	NSW Ageing and Disability Commissioner, NSW Ageing and Disability Commission

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Murphy: That:

- members be given 48 hours to consider the list of witnesses who appeared before portfolio committee no. 5 at initial hearings for Budget Estimates 2023-2024, and propose amendments or nominate additional witnesses by email (noting that where a witness no longer occupies a position their proposed inclusion in the witness list is taken to be a reference to their position)
- the committee agree to the witness list by email, unless a meeting of the committee is required to resolve any disagreement
- once the witness list is agreed, the secretariat write to the ministers of portfolios being examined by the committee to communicate the witness list and invite the nomination of any additional witnesses, for the committee's consideration, prior to it settling on a final witness list.

5.1 Witness appearance time

The committee noted that under the Budget Estimates 2024-2025 resolution Ministers are invited to appear for the morning sessions only, 9.15 am to 1.00 pm, unless requested by the committee to also appear for the afternoon session.

6. Adjournment

The committee adjourned at 10.33 am, *sine die*.

Elspeth Dyer
Committee Clerk

Minutes no. 17

Friday 30 August 2024

Portfolio Committee No. 5 – Justice and Communities

Jubilee Room, Parliament House, Sydney at 9.00 am

1. Members present

Mr Borsak, *Chair*

Ms Higginson, *Deputy Chair* (from 10.18 am, until 10.45 am; from 12.25 pm, until 12.45 pm; from 4.05 pm, until 4.30 pm; from 5.20 pm)

Ms Boyd (substituting for Ms Higginson from 11.20 am, until 11.55 am)
Mrs Carter (participating)
Dr Cohn (participating) (from 3.45 pm, until 4.05 pm; from 4.19 pm, until 5.00 pm)
Mr Donnelly
Ms Faehrmann (substituting for Ms Higginson from 9.02 am, until 10.16 am; from 2.55 pm, until 3.15 pm)
Mr Lawrence
Ms Merton (substituting for Mr Fang)
Mrs Mitchell (substituting for Mrs Maclaren-Jones)
Mr Roberts (participating) (from 9.06 am)
Mr Suvaal (substituting for Mr Murphy)

2. Previous minutes

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Donnelly: That draft minutes no. 16 be confirmed.

3. Correspondence

The committee noted the following items of correspondence:

Received

- 5 August 2024 – Email from Mark Boyd, office of the Hon Jodie Harrison MP, Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, providing the Minister's proposed amendments to the witness list for the PC5 Budget Estimates hearing for her portfolios, 11 September 2024
- 6 August 2024 - Email from Daniel Barakate, office of the Hon. Kate Washington MP, Minister for Families and Communities, Minister for Disability Inclusion, providing the Minister's proposed amendments to the witness list for PC5 Budget Estimates hearing for her portfolios, 3 September 2024
- 6 August 2024 – Email from Oliver Cumming, office of Hon Michael Daley MP, Attorney General, providing the Attorney General's proposed changes to the witness list for the PC5 Budget Estimates hearing for the Attorney General's portfolio, 4 September 2024
- 6 and 7 August 2024 – Further emails from Mark Boyd, office of Hon Jodie Harrison MP, Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, providing further detail concerning the Minister's proposed amendments to the witness list for the PC5 Budget Estimates hearing for her portfolios, 11 September 2024
- 8 August 2024 – Email from Tilly South, office of Hon. Yasmin Catley MP, Minister for Police and Counter-Terrorism, Minister for the Hunter, providing the Minister's proposed amendments to the witness list for the PC5 Budget Estimates hearing for her portfolios, 30 August 2024
- 8 August 2024 – Further email from Tilly South, office of Hon. Yasmin Catley MP, Minister for Police and Counter-Terrorism, Minister for the Hunter, providing further detail concerning the Minister's proposed amendments to the witness list for the PC5 Budget Estimates hearing for her portfolios, 30 August 2024
- 15 August 2024 – Email from Daniel Barakate, office of Hon. Kate Washington MP, Minister for Families and Communities, Minister for Disability Inclusion, providing a further proposed amendment of the Minister to the witness list for PC5 Budget Estimates hearing for her portfolios, 3 September 2024.

Sent

- 31 July 2024 – Email to the Hon. Yasmin Catley MP, Minister for Police and Counter-Terrorism, Minister for the Hunter, inviting her to appear at the PC5 Budget Estimates hearing for her portfolios, 30 August 2024 and attaching witness list agreed to by the committee
- 31 July 2024 - Email to the Hon Kate Washington MP, Minister for Families and Communities, Minister for Disability Inclusion, inviting her to appear at the PC5 Budget Estimates hearing for her portfolios, 3 September 2024 and attaching witness list agreed to by the committee

- 31 July 2024 – Email to the Hon Michael Daley MP, Attorney General inviting him to appear at the PC5 Budget Estimates hearing for Attorney General's portfolio, 4 September 2024 and attaching witness list agreed to by the committee
- 31 July 2024 – Email to the Hon Jodie Harrison MP, Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, inviting her to appear at the PC5 Budget Estimates hearing for her portfolios, 11 September 2024 and attaching witness list agreed to by the committee.

4. Inquiry into Budget Estimates 2024-2025

4.1 Order for examination of portfolios

The committee noted that under the Budget Estimates 2024-2025 resolution:

- (c) each portfolio, except The Legislature is to be examined concurrently by opposition and crossbench members only from 9.15 am to 10.45 am, 11.15 am to 12.45 pm, 2.00 pm to 3.30 pm and 3.45 pm to 5.15 pm, and, if required, by Government members only from 10.45 am to 11.00 am, 12.45 pm to 1.00 pm, and 5.15 pm to 5.30 pm.

4.2 Sequence of questions

The committee noted that under the Budget Estimates 2024-2025 resolution, unless the committee decides otherwise, the sequence of questions to be asked at the hearing for the portfolios of Police and Counter Terrorism is to alternate between *opposition and crossbench members, in that order*, with equal time allocated to each.

4.3 Public hearing - Police and Counter Terrorism, the Hunter (Catley)

Witnesses, the public and the media were admitted.

The Chair made an opening statement regarding parliamentary privilege and other matters.

The Chair noted that Members of Parliament swear an oath to their office, and therefore do not need to be sworn prior to giving evidence before a committee.

The Hon Yasmin Catley MP, Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism, and Minister for the Hunter was admitted and examined.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Commissioner Karen Webb, Commissioner, NSW Police Force
- Deputy Commissioner David Hudson, Deputy Commissioner, NSW Police Force
- Deputy Commissioner Paul Pisanos, Deputy Commissioner, NSW Police Force
- Deputy Commissioner Peter Thurtell, Deputy Commissioner, NSW Police Force
- Deputy Commissioner Dean Smith, Acting Deputy Commissioner, NSW Police Force
- Ms Kate Meagher, Deputy Secretary Community Engagement Group, Premier's Department.

The Chair declared the proposed expenditure for the portfolios of Police and Counter-terrorism, the Hunter open for examination.

Ms Meagher withdrew at 10.45 am.

The Minister withdrew at 12.45 pm.

Ms Meagher was examined on her former oath (2.00 pm).

Ms Meagher withdrew at 2.09 pm.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The public hearing concluded at 5.23 pm. The public and the media withdrew.

4.4 Tabled documents

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Donnelly: That the committee accept and publish the following document tabled during the public hearing by Mr Roberts:

- Budget Estimates 2022, Responses to supplementary questions, Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional NSW and Minister for Police, Hon Paul Toole MP.

4.5 Redaction of transcript and recording

The committee considered whether the name of a private individual should be redacted from the transcript of the hearing and recording.

Resolved, on the motion of Ms Suvaal: That the name of a private individual be redacted from the transcript and recording of the Budget Estimates 2024-2025 Police and Counter-Terrorism hearing (Catley), held on 30 August 2024.

5. Adjournment

The committee adjourned at 5.40 pm, until Tuesday 3 September 2024, 9.00am, Jubilee Room, Parliament House, Budget Estimates 2024-2025 – Families and Communities, Disability Inclusion (public hearing).

Sarah Newlands

Committee Clerk

Minutes no. 18

Tuesday 3 September 2024

Portfolio Committee No. 5 – Justice and Communities

Jubilee Room, Parliament House, Sydney at 9.04 am

1. Members present

Mr Borsak, *Chair* (until 9.35 am, from 9.43 am until 12.00 pm, from 12.09 pm until 4.49 pm, from 4.52 pm)

Ms Higginson, *Deputy Chair*

Ms Boyd (participating until 12.07 pm, from 2.00 pm until 2.26 pm)

Mr Buttigieg (substituting for Mr Murphy until 12.46 pm, from 4.00 pm)

Mr Donnelly (until 11.22 am, from 2.54 pm until 4.01 pm, from 4.54 pm)

Mrs Maclaren-Jones

Ms Merton (substituting for Mr Fang)

Ms Suvaal (substituting for Mr Lawrence until 2.55 pm)

2. Correspondence

The committee noted the following items of correspondence:

Received

- 23 August 2024 – Email from Daniel Barakate, office of Hon Kate Washington MP, Minister for Families and Communities, Minister for Disability Inclusion advising that Ms Zoe Dendle, Executive Director, Early Intervention, Disability and Inclusion Strategy, Department of Communities and Justice is available to appear at Budget Estimates 2024-2025 hearing for the Minister's portfolios, 3 September 2024.

Sent

- 22 August 2024 – Email to Hon Kate Washington MP, Minister for Families and Communities, Minister for Disability Inclusion advising that Portfolio Committee No. 5 continues to request the appearance of Ms Zoe Dendle, Executive Director, Early Intervention, Disability and Inclusion Strategy, Department of Communities and Justice at the Budget Estimates hearing for the Minister's portfolios, 3 September 2024.

3. Inquiry into Budget Estimates 2024-2025

3.1 Order for examination of portfolios

The committee noted that under the Budget Estimates 2024-2025 resolution:

- (d) each portfolio, except The Legislature is to be examined concurrently by opposition and crossbench members only from 9.15 am to 10.45 am, 11.15 am to 12.45 pm, 2.00 pm to 3.30 pm and 3.45 pm to 5.15 pm, and, if required, by Government members only from 10.45 am to 11.00 am, 12.45 pm to 1.00 pm, and 5.15 pm to 5.30 pm.

3.2 Sequence of questions

The committee noted that under the Budget Estimates 2024-2025 resolution, unless the committee decides otherwise, the sequence of questions to be asked at the hearing for the portfolios of Families and Communities, Disability Inclusion is to alternate between crossbench and opposition members, in that order, with equal time allocated to each.

3.3 Public hearing - Families and Communities, Disability Inclusion (Washington)

Witnesses, the public and the media were admitted.

The Chair made an opening statement regarding parliamentary privilege and other matters.

The Chair noted that Members of Parliament swear an oath to their office, and therefore do not need to be sworn prior to giving evidence before a committee.

The Hon Kate Washington MP, Minister for Families and Communities, and Minister for Disability Inclusion was admitted and examined.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Mr Michael Tidball, Secretary, Department of Communities and Justice
- Ms Anne Campbell, Deputy Secretary, Strategy, Policy and Commissioning, Department of Communities and Justice
- Ms Simone Czech, Deputy Secretary, Child Protection and Permanency, Department of Communities and Justice
- Mr Paul O'Reilly, Deputy Secretary, System Reform, Department of Communities and Justice
- Ms Zoe Dendle, Executive Director, Early Intervention, Disability and Inclusion Strategy, Department of Communities and Justice.

The Chair declared the proposed expenditure for the portfolios of Families and Communities and Disability Inclusion open for examination.

Mr Borsak left the meeting.

In absence of the Chair, the Deputy Chair took the Chair for the purpose of the meeting.

Mr Borsak re-joined the meeting and took the Chair.

Mr Borsak left the meeting.

In absence of the Chair, the Deputy Chair took the Chair for the purpose of the meeting.

Mr Borsak re-joined the meeting and took the Chair.

The Minister withdrew at 12.46 pm.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined (2.00 pm):

- Ms Kathryn McKenzie, Acting NSW Ageing and Disability Commissioner, NSW Ageing and Disability Commission
- Mr Steve Kinmond OAM, Children's Guardian, Office of the Children's Guardian

Mr Borsak left the meeting.

In absence of the Chair, the Deputy Chair took the Chair for the purpose of the meeting.

Mr Borsak re-joined the meeting and took the Chair.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The public hearing concluded at 5.17 pm. The public and the media withdrew.

4. Adjournment

The committee adjourned at 5.17 pm, until Wednesday 4 September 2024, Macquarie Room, Parliament House, Budget Estimates 2024-2025 – Attorney General (public hearing).

Teneale Houghton
Committee Clerk

Minutes no. 19

Wednesday 4 September 2024

Portfolio Committee No. 5 – Justice and Communities

Macquarie Room, Parliament House, Sydney at 9.03 am

1. Members present

Mr Borsak, *Chair*

Ms Higginson, *Deputy Chair* (until 10.45 am, from 11.35 am until 3.31 pm)

Ms Boyd (participating) (from 12.07 pm to 12.34 pm)

Mrs Carter (substituting for Mr Fang) (until 12.52 pm, from 3.10 pm)

Dr Cohn (participating) (from 11.27 am to 11.57 am)

Mr Donnelly (until 12.52 pm, from 3.49 pm)

Dr Kaine (substituting for Mr Lawrence) (until 12.52 pm, from 2.54 pm until 3.50 pm)

Mrs Maclaren-Jones

Ms Mihailuk (participating) (from 10.05 am until 12.27 pm, from 2.26 pm until 2.55 pm)

Mr Murphy (until 2.55 pm)

2. Inquiry into Budget Estimates 2024-2025

2.1 Order for examination of portfolios

The committee noted that under the Budget Estimates 2024-2025 resolution:

- (e) each portfolio, except The Legislature is to be examined concurrently by opposition and crossbench members only from 9.15 am to 10.45 am, 11.15 am to 12.45 pm, 2.00 pm to 3.30 pm and 3.45 pm to 5.15 pm, and, if required, by Government members only from 10.45 am to 11.00 am, 12.45 pm to 1.00 pm, and 5.15 pm to 5.30 pm.

2.2 Sequence of questions

The committee noted that under the Budget Estimates 2024-2025 resolution, unless the committee decides otherwise, the sequence of questions to be asked at the hearing for the portfolio of the Attorney-General is to alternate between opposition and crossbench members, in that order, with equal time allocated to each.

2.3 Public hearing – Attorney-General (Daley)

Witnesses, the public and the media were admitted.

The Chair made an opening statement regarding parliamentary privilege and other matters.

The Chair noted that Members of Parliament swear an oath to their office, and therefore do not need to be sworn prior to giving evidence before a committee.

The Hon Michael Daley MP, Attorney General was admitted and examined.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Ms Monique Hitter, Chief Executive Officer, Legal Aid NSW
- Mr Chris D'Aeth, Acting Deputy Secretary, Courts, Tribunals and Service Delivery, Department of Communities and Justice
- Mr Paul McKnight, Deputy Secretary, Law Reform and Legal Services, Department of Communities and Justice
- Dr James Cockayne, NSW Anti-slavery Commissioner
- Ms Sally Dowling SC, Director of Public Prosecutions, Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions.

The following witnesses were examined on their former oath:

- Mr Michael Tidball, Secretary, Department of Communities and Justice
- Ms Anne Campbell, Deputy Secretary, Strategy, Policy and Commissioning, Department of Communities and Justice.

The Chair declared the proposed expenditure for the portfolio of Attorney General open for examination.

The Attorney General withdrew at 12.52 pm.

At 2.00 pm the committee agreed that the sequence of questions to be asked for the afternoon session of the hearing was to alternate between the crossbench and opposition members, in that order, with equal time allocated to each.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The public hearing concluded at 4.17 pm. The public and the media withdrew.

3. Adjournment

The committee adjourned at 4.17 pm, until Wednesday 11 September 2024, 9.00am, Jubilee Room, Parliament House, Budget Estimates 2024-2025 – Women, Seniors, Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (public hearing).

Amanda Assoum
Committee Clerk

Minutes no. 20

Wednesday 11 September 2024

Portfolio Committee No. 5 – Justice and Communities

Jubilee Room, Parliament House, Sydney at 9.02 am

1. Members present

Ms Higginson, *Acting Chair* (until 9.40 am)
 Ms Boyd (participating) (until 9.40 am) (substituting for Ms Higginson) (from 9.40 am)
 Mr Buttigieg (substituting for Mr Lawrence)
 Mrs Carter (substituting for Mr Fang)
 Mr D'Adam (substituting for Mr Murphy) (until 12.45 pm)
 Dr Kaine (substituting for Mr Donnelly) (until 12.45 pm)
 Mrs Maclaren-Jones (from 9.34 am)

2. Apologies

Mr Borsak, *Chair*

3. Election of Deputy Chair for Women, Seniors, Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault public hearing

The Chair called for nominations for Deputy Chair for the duration of the meeting.

Dr Kaine moved: That Mrs Maclaren-Jones be elected Deputy Chair of the committee for the duration of the meeting, and that in the absence of the Chair and Deputy Chair, Mrs Carter be elected Acting Chair.

There being no further nominations, the Chair declared Mrs Maclaren-Jones Deputy Chair for the duration of the meeting, and Mrs Carter Acting Chair, in the absence of the Chair and Deputy Chair during the meeting.

4. Inquiry into Budget Estimates 2024-2025

4.1 Order for examination of portfolios

The committee noted that under the Budget Estimates 2024-2025 resolution:

- (f) each portfolio, except The Legislature is to be examined concurrently by opposition and crossbench members only from 9.15 am to 10.45 am, 11.15 am to 12.45 pm, 2.00 pm to 3.30 pm and 3.45 pm to 5.15 pm, and, if required, by Government members only from 10.45 am to 11.00 am, 12.45 pm to 1.00 pm, and 5.15 pm to 5.30 pm.

4.2 Sequence of questions

The committee noted that under the Budget Estimates 2024-2025 resolution, unless the committee decides otherwise, the sequence of questions to be asked at the hearing for the portfolios of Women, Seniors, Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault is to alternate between opposition and crossbench members, in that order, with equal time allocated to each.

4.3 Public hearing - Women, Seniors, Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (Harrison)

Witnesses, the public and the media were admitted.

The Chair made an opening statement regarding parliamentary privilege and other matters.

The Chair noted that Members of Parliament swear an oath to their office, and therefore do not need to be sworn prior to giving evidence before a committee.

Hon Jodie Harrison MP, Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault was admitted and examined.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Dr Hannah Tonkin, Women's Safety Commissioner, Department of Communities and Justice
- Ms Gillian White, Deputy Secretary, Social Policy and Intergovernmental Relations, The Cabinet Office
- Ms Tanya Smyth, Director, Women NSW, The Cabinet Office.

The following witnesses were examined under their former oath:

- Mr Michael Tidball, Secretary, Department of Communities and Justice
- Ms Anne Campbell, Deputy Secretary, Strategy, Policy and Commissioning, Department of Communities and Justice
- Ms Kathryn McKenzie, Acting NSW Ageing and Disability Commissioner, NSW Ageing and Disability Commission.

The Chair declared the proposed expenditure for the portfolios of Women, Seniors, Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault open for examination.

The Chair left the meeting.

In the absence of the Chair, the Deputy Chair took the Chair for the purposes of the meeting.

The Minister withdrew at 12.45 pm.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The public hearing concluded at 3.23 pm. The public and the media withdrew.

5. Adjournment

The committee adjourned at 3.23 pm, *sine die*.

Helen Hong
Committee Clerk

Minutes no. 22

Thursday 27 February 2025

Portfolio Committee No. 5 – Justice and Communities

Jubilee Room, Parliament House, Sydney at 9.03 am

1. Members present

Mr Borsak, *Chair* (until 10.30 am; from 11.16 am until 2.15 pm; from 2.55 pm until 3.10 pm; from 3.20 pm)
 Ms Boyd (substituting for Ms Higginson) (until 11.39 am; from 12.01 pm until 2.20 pm)
 Mr Buttigieg (substituting for Mr Lawrence) (until 12.11 pm; from 12.24 pm until 12.46 pm; from 3.47 pm)
 Mrs Carter (participating) (from 11.15 am until 11.58 am; from 12.24 pm; from 2.56 pm)
 Ms Hurst (participating) (from 11.53 am until 12.07 pm)
 Mrs Maclaren-Jones
 Mr Nanva (substituting for Mr Murphy) (from 9.18 am until 10.47 am; from 11.28 am until 12.46 pm)
 Mrs Overall
 Ms Suvaal (substituting for Mr Donnelly) (until 3.30 pm)

2. Previous minutes

Resolved, on the motion of Mrs Maclaren-Jones: That draft minutes nos. 17, 18, 19 and 20 be confirmed.

3. Correspondence

The committee noted the following items of correspondence:

Received

- 22 January 2025 – Email from Ms Maddy Griffiths, Departmental Liaison Officer, Office of Hon Michael Daley MP, Attorney General, confirming the witness list for the Attorney General additional hearing on 28 February 2025
- 31 January 2025 – Letter from the Hon Penny Sharpe MLC, Minister for Climate Change, Minister for Energy, Minister for the Environment, Minister for Heritage, Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council, advising that due to a delay in finalising the arrangements for some witnesses, the Government will be unable to provide confirmation of witnesses to the secretariat until 5.00 pm Monday 3 February 2025
- 3 February 2025 – Email from Mr Mark Boyd, Chief of Staff, Office of Hon Jodie Harrison MP, confirming the witness list for the Women, Seniors, Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault additional hearing on 27 February 2025
- 3 February 2025 – Email from Mr Blake Mooney, Chief of Staff, Office of Hon Kate Washington MP confirming the witness list for the hearing for the Families and Communities, Disability Inclusion additional hearing on 10 March 2025 and requesting that the Acting Ageing and Disability Commissioner and Children's Guardian only appear in the afternoon.

Sent

- 20 December 2024 – Email to Hon Michael Daley MP, Attorney General inviting him to appear at the Budget Estimates additional hearing on 28 February 2025, and attaching the witness list agreed to by the committee
- 20 December 2024 – Email to Hon Jodie Harrison MP, Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault inviting her to appear at the Budget

Estimates additional hearing for on 27 February 2025, and attaching the witness list agreed to by the committee

- 20 December 2024 – Email to Hon Kate Washington MP, Minister for Families and Communities, Minister for Disability Inclusion inviting her to appear at the Budget Estimates additional hearing on 10 March 2025, and attaching the witness list agreed to by the committee
- 6 January 2025 – Email to Hon Yasmin Catley MP, Minister for Police and Counter Terrorism, and the Hunter inviting her to appear at the Budget Estimates additional hearing on 12 March 2025, and attaching the witness list agreed to by the committee.

4. Inquiry into Budget Estimates 2024-2025

4.1 Answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions

The following answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions were published by the committee clerk under the authorisation of the resolution appointing the committee:

- answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions from Hon Yasmin Catley MP, Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism, received 27 September 2024
- answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions from Hon Kate Washington MP, Minister for Families and Communities, Minister for Disability Inclusion, received 1 October 2024
- answers to questions on notice from Hon Michael Daley, Attorney-General, received 3 October 2024
- answers to questions on notice from Hon Jodie Harrison MP, Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, received 9 October 2024.

4.2 Clarification of evidence

Resolved, on the motion of Mrs Maclaren-Jones: That:

- the undated letter from Mr Michael Tidball, Secretary, Department of Communities and Justice seeking to clarify his evidence given at the committee's Budget Estimates 2024-2025 hearing, 3 September 2024 (Washington) be published and his evidence clarified by inserting explanatory footnotes into the transcript of evidence
- the letter from Mr Paul O'Reilly, A/Deputy Secretary System Reform, Department of Communities and Justice, dated 30 September 202, seeking to clarify his evidence given at the committee's Budget Estimates 2024-2025 hearing, 3 September 2024 (Washington) be published and his evidence clarified by inserting an explanatory footnote into the transcript of evidence
- the undated letter from Ms Anne Campbell, Deputy Secretary Strategy, Policy and Commissioning, Department of Communities and Justice, seeking to clarify her evidence given at the committee's Budget Estimates 2024-2025 hearing, 3 September 2024 (Washington) be published and her evidence clarified by inserting an explanatory footnote into the transcript of evidence
- the letter from Mr Michael Tidball, Secretary, Department of Communities and Justice, dated 13 September 2024, seeking to clarify his evidence given at the committee's Budget Estimates 2024-2025 hearing, 4 September 2024 (Daley) be published and his evidence clarified by inserting an explanatory footnote into the transcript of evidence
- the letter from Mr Michael Tidball, Secretary, Department of Communities and Justice, dated 17 September 2024, seeking to clarify his evidence given at the committee's Budget Estimates 2024-2025 hearing, 11 September 2024 (Harrison) be published and his evidence clarified by inserting an explanatory footnote into the transcript of evidence
- the letter from Ms Anne Campbell, Deputy Secretary Strategy, Policy and Commissioning, Department of Communities and Justice, dated 9 October 2024, seeking to clarify her evidence given at the committee's Budget Estimates 2024-2025 hearing, 11 September 2024 (Harrison) be published and her evidence clarified by inserting an explanatory footnote into the transcript of evidence
- the letter from Hon Jodie Harrison, Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, dated 9 October 2024, seeking to clarify her evidence given at the committee's Budget Estimates 2024-2025 hearing, 11 September 2024 (Harrison)

be published and her evidence clarified by inserting an explanatory footnote into the transcript of evidence.

4.3 Resolution for additional hearings

The committee noted the resolution of the House on 21 November 2024 to conduct additional hearings for the inquiry into Budget Estimates 2023-2024.

4.4 Order for examination of portfolios

The committee noted that under the Budget Estimates 2024-2025 resolution each portfolio, except The Legislature is to be examined concurrently by opposition and crossbench members only from 9.15 am to 10.45 am, 11.15 am to 12.45 pm, 2.00 pm to 3.30 pm and 3.45 pm to 5.15 pm, and, if required, by Government members only from 10.45 am to 11.00 am, 12.45 pm to 1.00 pm, and 5.15 pm to 5.30 pm.

4.5 Sequence of questions

The committee noted that under the Budget Estimates 2024-2025 resolution, unless the committee decides otherwise, the sequence of questions to be asked at the hearing for the portfolios of Women, Seniors, Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault is to alternate between *crossbench and opposition members, in that order*, with equal time allocated to each.

4.6 Witness lists

The committee noted that it agreed via email on 17 December 2024 to the following approach to arranging the additional round of Budget Estimates 2024-2025 hearings in February/March 2025:

- arrangements for the additional hearings be made over email in the first instance, rather than holding a meeting, unless a meeting is required to resolve any disagreement
- the confirmed witness lists from the initial round in August/September 2024 and, if applicable, supplementary round of hearings in December 2024, be the proposed witness lists for the additional round of hearings in February/March 2025
- committee members be given 48 hours following receipt of the proposed witness lists to provide any feedback or additional witnesses, as per the practice adopted for initial round of hearings
- responses from ministers' offices to witness invitations be due by Friday 31 January 2025.

4.7 Election of Acting Deputy Chair

The Chair noted the absence of the Deputy Chair for the meeting.

The Chair called for nominations for a member to act as Deputy Chair for the purposes of the meeting.

Ms Suvaal moved: That Mrs Maclaren-Jones be elected as Deputy Chair of the committee.

There being no further nominations, the Chair declared Mrs Maclaren-Jones elected Deputy Chair.

4.8 Public hearing – Women, Seniors, Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

Witnesses, the public and the media were admitted.

The Chair made an opening statement regarding parliamentary privilege and other matters. The Chair noted that Members of Parliament swear an oath to their office, and therefore do not need to be sworn prior to giving evidence before a committee.

The Chair declared the proposed expenditure for the portfolios of Women, Seniors, Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault open for examination.

The Hon Jodie Harrison MP, Minister for Women, Seniors, Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, was admitted and examined.

The following witnesses were examined on their former oath:

- Mr Michael Tidball, Secretary, Department of Communities and Justice
- Ms Anne Campbell, Deputy Secretary, Strategy, Policy and Commissioning, Department of Communities and Justice
- Ms Hannah Tonkin, Women's Safety Commissioner, Department of Communities and Justice

- Ms Gillian White, Deputy Secretary, Social Policy and Intergovernmental Relations, The Cabinet Office
- Ms Tanya Smith, Director, Women NSW, The Cabinet Office
- Ms Kathryn McKenzie, Acting NSW Ageing and Disability Commissioner, NSW Ageing and Disability Commission.

Ms Bianca Jarrett, Executive Director, Transforming Aboriginal Outcomes, Department of Communities and Justice, joined the hearing at 9.18 am and was sworn and examined.

In the absence of the Chair, the Deputy Chair took the Chair at 10.30 am for the purpose of the meeting.

The Chair rejoined the meeting and took the Chair at 11.15 am.

The Minister withdrew at 12.47 pm.

In the absence of the Chair, the Deputy Chair took the Chair at 2.16 pm for the purpose of the meeting.

The Chair rejoined the meeting and took the Chair at 2.55 pm.

In the absence of the Chair, the Deputy Chair took the Chair at 3.10 pm for the purpose of the meeting.

The Chair rejoined the meeting and took the Chair at 3.20 pm.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The public hearing concluded at 3.58 pm.

The public and media withdrew.

5. Adjournment

The committee adjourned at 3.58 pm, until 9.00 am, Friday 28 February 2025, Macquarie Room, Parliament House, Budget Estimates 2024-2025 – Attorney-General.

Talina Drabsch

Committee Clerk

Minutes no. 23

Friday 28 February 2025

Portfolio Committee No. 5 – Justice and Communities

Macquarie Room, Parliament House, Sydney at 9.04 am

1. Members present

Mr Borsak, *Chair* (until 2.11 pm, from 2.22 pm until 2.40 pm, from 2.47 pm until 4.10 pm)

Ms Higginson, *Deputy Chair* (until 10.01 am, from 10.27 am until 10.46 am, from 11.24 am until 12.46 pm, from 2.01 pm until 4.42 pm)

Ms Boyd (participating) (from 11.15 am until 11.45 am)

Mrs Carter (substituting for Mrs Overall)

Dr Cohn (participating) (from 11.31 am until 12.16 pm)

Mr Donnelly (until 10.46 am, from 11.18 am until 12.46 pm, from 3.45 pm until 4.42 pm)

Mrs Maclaren-Jones

Ms Mihailuk (participating) (from 9.15 am until 10.46 am, from 11.32 am until 11.48 am, from 2.00 pm until 3.29 pm)

Mr Nanva (substituting for Mr Lawrence) (until 12.46 pm, from 2.53 pm until 3.30 pm)

Ms Suvaal (substituting for Mr Murphy) (until 3.09 pm, via videoconference from 3.54 pm until 4.20 pm)

2. Inquiry into Budget Estimates 2024-2025

2.1 Order for examination of portfolios

The committee noted that under the Budget Estimates 2024-2025 resolution each portfolio, except The Legislature is to be examined concurrently by opposition and crossbench members only from 9.15 am to 10.45 am, 11.15 am to 12.45 pm, 2.00 pm to 3.30 pm and 3.45 pm to 5.15 pm, and, if required, by Government members only from 10.45 am to 11.00 am, 12.45 pm to 1.00 pm, and 5.15 pm to 5.30 pm.

2.2 Sequence of questions

The committee noted that under the Budget Estimates 2024-2025 resolution, unless the committee decides otherwise, the sequence of questions to be asked at the hearing for the portfolios of Attorney General is to alternate between *opposition and crossbench members, in that order*, with equal time allocated to each.

2.3 Public hearing – Attorney General

Witnesses, the public and the media were admitted.

The Chair made an opening statement regarding parliamentary privilege and other matters. The Chair noted that Members of Parliament swear an oath to their office, and therefore do not need to be sworn prior to giving evidence before a committee.

The Chair declared the proposed expenditure for the portfolio of Attorney General open for examination.

The Hon Michael Daley MP, Attorney General, was admitted and examined.

The following witnesses were examined on their former oath:

- Mr Michael Tidball, Secretary, Department of Communities and Justice
- Mr Paul McKnight, Deputy Secretary, Law Reform and Legal Services, Department of Communities and Justice
- Ms Anne Campbell, Deputy Secretary, Strategy, Policy and Commissioning, Department of Communities and Justice
- Mr Chris D'Aeth, Deputy Secretary, Courts, Tribunals and Service Delivery, Department of Communities and Justice
- Ms Monique Hitter, Chief Executive Officer, Legal Aid NSW
- Ms Sally Dowling SC, Director of Public Prosecutions, Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions
- Dr James Cockayne, NSW Anti-slavery Commissioner, Office of the NSW Anti-Slavery Commissioner.

Ms Mihailuk tabled the following document:

- NSW Labor reportable state campaign donations 2022-23 – selected pages downloaded from NSW Electoral Commission reportable donations portal, www.efadisclosures.elections.nsw.gov.au.

The Minister withdrew at 12.46 pm.

In the absence of the Chair, the Deputy Chair took the Chair at 2.11 pm.

The Chair rejoined the meeting at 2.22 pm.

In the absence of the Chair, the Deputy Chair took the Chair at 2.40 pm.

The Chair rejoined the meeting at 2.47 pm.

In the absence of the Chair, the Deputy Chair took the Chair at 4.10 pm.

Ms Higginson tabled the following document:

- James Forman Jr, 'What happened when America emptied its youth prisons – Lessons from a radical 20-year experiment and a quiet triumph of public policy' *The New York Times Magazine*, 28 January 2025.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The public hearing concluded at 4.41 pm.

The public and media withdrew.

2.4 Tabled documents

Resolved, on the motion of Mrs Maclaren-Jones: That the committee accept and publish the following documents tabled during the hearing:

- NSW Labor reportable state campaign donations 2022-23 – selected pages downloaded from NSW Electoral Commission reportable donations portal, www.efadisclosures.elections.nsw.gov.au, tabled by Ms Mihailuk
- James Forman Jr, ‘What happened when America emptied its youth prisons – Lessons from a radical 20-year experiment and a quiet triumph of public policy’ *The New York Times Magazine*, 28 January 2025, tabled by Ms Higginson.

3. Adjournment

The committee adjourned at 4.42 pm, until 9.00 am, Monday 10 March 2025, Macquarie Room, Parliament House, Budget Estimates 2024-2025 – Families and Communities, Disability Inclusion.

Elspeth Dyer

Committee Clerk

Minutes no. 24

Monday 10 March 2025

Portfolio Committee No. 5 – Justice and Communities

Macquarie Room, Parliament House, Sydney at 9.02 am

1. Members present

Mr Borsak, *Chair* (until 9.34 am, from 9.42 am until 11.22 am and from 12.10 pm until 12.46 pm)

Ms Higginson, *Deputy Chair*

Ms Boyd (participating from 11.28 am until 11.55 am and from 2.21 pm until 2.26 pm)

Mr Donnelly (until 12.46 pm and from 3.23 pm)

Ms Hurst (participating from 9.34 am until 10.02 am)

Ms Suvaal (substituting for Mr Lawrence)

Mrs Maclaren-Jones

Mrs MacDonald (substituting for Mrs Overall)

Mr Murphy (until 11.37 and from 12.33 pm until 12.46 pm)

2. Correspondence

The committee noted the following item of correspondence:

Received:

- Email from Mr Blake Mooney, Chief of Staff, Office of the Hon Kate Washington MP, Minister for Families and Communities, Minister for Disability Inclusion proposing an amendment to the witness list for the hearing on 10 March 2025.

3. Inquiry into Budget Estimates 2024-2025

3.1 Order for examination of portfolios

The committee noted that under the Budget Estimates 2024-2025 resolution each portfolio, except The Legislature is to be examined concurrently by opposition and crossbench members only from 9.15 am to 10.45 am, 11.15 am to 12.45 pm, 2.00 pm to 3.30 pm and 3.45 pm to 5.15 pm, and, if required, by Government members only from 10.45 am to 11.00 am, 12.45 pm to 1.00 pm, and 5.15 pm to 5.30 pm.

3.2 Sequence of questions

The committee noted that under the Budget Estimates 2024-2025 resolution, unless the committee decides otherwise, the sequence of questions to be asked at the hearing for the portfolios of Families and Communities, Disability Inclusion is to alternate between *opposition and crossbench members, in that order*, with equal time allocated to each.

3.3 Public hearing – Families and Communities, Disability Inclusion

Witnesses, the public and the media were admitted.

The Chair made an opening statement regarding parliamentary privilege and other matters. The Chair noted that Members of Parliament swear an oath to their office, and therefore do not need to be sworn prior to giving evidence before a committee.

The Chair declared the proposed expenditure for the portfolio of Families and Communities and Disability Inclusion open for examination.

The Hon Kate Washington MP, Minister for Families and Communities and Minister for Disability Inclusion was admitted and examined.

The following witness was sworn and examined:

- Ms Lauren Dean, Deputy Secretary, Child Protection and Permanency, Department of Communities and Justice.

The following witnesses were examined on their former oath:

- Mr Michael Tidball, Secretary, Department of Communities and Justice
- Ms Anne Campbell, Deputy Secretary, Strategy, Policy and Commissioning, Department of Communities and Justice
- Mr Paul O'Reilly, Deputy Secretary, System Reform, Department of Communities and Justice
- Ms Zoe Dendle, Executive Director, Early Intervention, Disability and Inclusion Strategy, Department of Communities and Justice
- Ms Bianca Jarrett, Executive Director, Transforming Aboriginal Outcomes, Department of Communities and Justice.

In the absence of the Chair, the Deputy Chair took the Chair at 9.34 am.

The Chair rejoined the meeting at 9.42 am.

In the absence of the Chair, the Deputy Chair took the Chair at 11.22 am.

The Chair rejoined the meeting at 12.10 pm.

The Minister withdrew at 12.46 pm.

In the absence of the Chair, the Deputy Chair took the Chair at 2.00 pm.

The following witness was sworn and examined (2:00 pm):

- Ms Rachael Ward, Acting Children's Guardian, Office of the Children's Guardian

The following witness was examined on their former oath:

- Ms Kathryn McKenzie, Acting NSW Ageing and Disability Commissioner, NSW Ageing and Disability Commission

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The public hearing concluded at 3.46 pm.

The public and media withdrew.

4. Adjournment

The committee adjourned at 3.46 pm, until 9.00 am, Wednesday 12 March 2025, Jubilee Room, Parliament House, Budget Estimates 2024-2025 – Police and Counter Terrorism, The Hunter.

Lauren Evans
Committee Clerk

Minutes no. 25

Wednesday 12 March 2025

Portfolio Committee No. 5 – Communities and Justice

Jubilee Room, Parliament House, Sydney, 9.02 am

1. Members presentMr Borsak, *Chair* (until 1.02 pm)Ms Higginson, *Deputy Chair*

Mr Barrett (substituting for Mrs Maclaren-Jones)

Ms Boyd (participating from 11.39 am until 12.28 pm, and from 3.45 pm until 3.57 pm)

Mrs Carter (substituting for Mrs Overall)

Mr Donnelly (until 1.02 pm, and from 3.24 pm)

Ms Faehrmann (participating from 9.52 am until 10.23 am, and from 2.52 pm until 3.00 pm)

Mr Murphy (until 3.32 pm)

Mr Roberts (participating from 9.15 am until 4.49 pm)

Ms Suvaal (substituting for Mr Lawrence until 3.00 pm)

2. Inquiry into Budget Estimates 2024-2025**2.1 Order for examination of portfolios**

The committee noted that under the Budget Estimates 2024-2025 resolution each portfolio, except The Legislature is to be examined concurrently by opposition and crossbench members only from 9.15 am to 10.45 am, 11.15 am to 12.45 pm, 2.00 pm to 3.30 pm and 3.45 pm to 5.15 pm, and, if required, by Government members only from 10.45 am to 11.00 am, 12.45 pm to 1.00 pm, and 5.15 pm to 5.30 pm.

2.2 Sequence of questions

The committee to note that under the Budget Estimates 2024-2025 resolution, unless the committee decides otherwise, the sequence of questions to be asked at the hearing for the portfolio of Police and Counter Terrorism, the Hunter is to alternate between *crossbench and opposition members, in that order*, with equal time allocated to each.

2.3 Public hearing – Police and Counter Terrorism, the Hunter

Witnesses, the public and the media were admitted.

The Chair made an opening statement regarding parliamentary privilege and other matters. The Chair noted that Members of Parliament swear an oath to their office, and therefore do not need to be sworn prior to giving evidence before a committee.

The Chair declared the proposed expenditure for the portfolio of Police and Counter Terrorism, and the Hunter open for examination.

The Hon Yasmin Catley MP, Minister for the Police and Counter-Terrorism and Minister for the Hunter was admitted and examined.

The following witnesses were sworn and examined:

- Commissioner Michael Barnes, Commissioner, NSW Crime Commission
- Ms Kate Meagher, Deputy Secretary, Delivery and Engagement Group, Premier's Department.

The following witnesses were examined on their former oath:

- Commissioner Karen Webb, Commissioner, NSW Police Force
- Deputy Commissioner David Hudson, Deputy Commissioner, NSW Police Force
- Deputy Commissioner Paul Pisanos, Deputy Commissioner, NSW Police Force
- Deputy Commissioner Peter Thurtell, Deputy Commissioner, NSW Police Force
- Deputy Commissioner Dean Smith, Deputy Commissioner, NSW Police Force.

Mr Roberts tendered the following documents:

- Legislative Council Hansard 13 and 14 November 2024 – NSW Police Force Wages.
- Quarantined Authorised Police Position Overview, report date 10/11.

The Minister withdrew at 12.48 pm.

In the absence of the Chair, the Deputy Chair took the Chair at 2.00 pm.

Mr Roberts tendered the following document:

- Updated status of Administration Review and Organisational Change within NSWPF D2024/843707.

The evidence concluded and the witnesses withdrew.

The public hearing concluded at 5.12 pm.

The public and media withdrew.

2.4 Tendered documents

Resolved, on the motion of Mrs Carter: That the committee accept and publish the following documents tendered during the hearing:

- Legislative Council Hansard 13 and 14 November 2024 – NSW Police Force Wages, tendered by Mr Roberts
- Quarantined Authorised Police Position Overview, report date 10/11, tendered by Mr Roberts
- Updated status of Administration Review and Organisational Change within NSWPF D2024/843707, tendered by Mr Roberts.

3. Adjournment

The committee adjourned at 5.14 pm, *Sine die*.

Kara McKee

Committee Clerk

Draft minutes no. 29

Monday 23 June 2025

Portfolio Committee No. 5 – Justice and Communities

Macquarie Room, Parliament House, Sydney, 10.36 am

1. Members present

Mr Borsak, *Chair*

Mr Donnelly

Mr Lawrence (via videoconference)

Mrs Maclaren-Jones

Mr Murphy

2. Apologies

Ms Higginson, *Deputy Chair*

Mrs Overall

3. Previous minutes

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Murphy: That draft minutes nos. 22, 23, 24 and 25 be confirmed.

4. Correspondence

The committee noted the following items of correspondence:

Received:

- 10 March 2025 – Letter from Mr Michael Tidball, Secretary, Department of Communities and Justice, requesting transcript clarifications to his evidence from the Budget Estimates 2024-2025 Women, Seniors, Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (Harrison) additional hearing on 27 February 2025
- 12 March 2025 – Letter from Mr Michael Tidball, Secretary, Department of Communities and Justice, requesting transcript clarifications to his evidence from the Budget Estimates 2024-2025 Attorney General (Daley) additional hearing on 28 February 2025
- 13 March 2025 – Letter from Mr Chris D'Aeth, Deputy Secretary, Courts, Tribunals and Service Delivery, Department of Communities and Justice, requesting transcript clarifications to his evidence from the Budget Estimates 2024-2025 Attorney General (Daley) additional hearing on 28 February 2025
- 27 March 2025 – Letter from Hon Michael Daley MP, requesting transcript clarifications to his evidence from the Budget Estimates 2024-2025 Attorney General (Daley) additional hearing on 28 February 2025
- 5 April 2025 – Letter from Hon Kate Washington MP, requesting transcript clarifications to her evidence from the Budget Estimates 2024-2025 Families and Communities, Disability Inclusion (Washington) additional hearing on 10 March 2025
- 4 April 2025 – Letter from Ms Bianca Jarrett, A/Executive Director, Transforming Aboriginal Outcomes, Department of Communities and Justice, requesting transcript clarifications to her evidence from the Budget Estimates 2024-2025 Families and Communities, Disability Inclusion (Washington) additional hearing on 10 March 2025
- 14 April 2025 – Letter from Hon Kate Washington MP, requesting transcript clarifications to her evidence from the Budget Estimates 2024-2025 Families and Communities, Disability Inclusion (Washington) additional hearing on 10 March 2025.

5. Inquiry into Budget Estimates 2024-2025**5.1 Answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions**

The committee noted that the following answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions were published by the committee clerk under the authorisation of the resolution appointing the committee:

- answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions from the Hon Jodie Harrison MP, Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, received 26 March 2025
- answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions from the Hon Michael Daley MP, Attorney General, received 27 March 2025
- answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions from the Hon Kate Washington MP, Minister for Families and Communities, and Minister for Disability Inclusion, received 4 April 2025
- answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions from the Hon Yasmin Catley MP, Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism, and Minister for the Hunter, received 8 April 2025.

5.2 Transcript clarifications

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Murphy: That the committee authorise:

- the publication of correspondence from Mr Michael Tidball, Secretary, Department of Communities and Justice to the committee dated 10 March 2025 providing transcript clarifications, and the insertion of footnotes into the transcript from the 27 February 2025 (Harrison) hearing clarifying Mr Tidball's evidence
- the publication of correspondence from Mr Michael Tidball, Secretary, Department of Communities and Justice to the committee dated 12 March 2025 providing transcript clarifications, and the insertion of footnotes into the transcript from the 28 February 2025 (Daley) hearing clarifying Mr Tidball's evidence
- the publication of correspondence from Mr Chris D'Aeth, Deputy Secretary, Courts, Tribunals and Service Delivery, Department of Communities and Justice to the committee dated 13 March 2025

providing transcript clarifications, and the insertion of a footnote into the transcript from the 28 February 2025 (Daley) hearing clarifying Mr D'Aeth's evidence

- the publication of correspondence from Hon Michael Daley MP, Attorney General to the committee dated 27 March 2025 providing transcript clarifications, and the insertion of a footnote into the transcript from the 28 February 2025 (Daley) hearing clarifying the Attorney General's evidence
- the publication of correspondence from Hon Kate Washington MP to the committee dated 5 and 14 April 2025 providing transcript clarifications, and the insertion of footnotes into the transcript from the 10 March 2025 (Washington) hearing clarifying the Minister's evidence
- the publication of correspondence from Ms Bianca Jarrett, A/Executive Director, Transforming Aboriginal Outcomes, Department of Communities and Justice to the committee dated 4 April 2025 providing transcript clarifications, and the insertion of a footnote into the transcript from the 10 March 2025 (Washington) hearing clarifying her evidence.

5.3 Consideration of Chair's draft report

The Chair submitted the Chair's draft report entitled 'Budget Estimates 2024-2025', which, having been previously circulated, was taken as being read.

Resolved, on the motion of Mr Donnelly: That:

The draft report be the report of the committee and that the committee present the report to the House;

The transcripts of evidence, tabled documents, correspondence and answers to questions taken on notice and supplementary questions relating to the inquiry be tabled in the House with the report;

Upon tabling, all unpublished transcripts of evidence, tabled documents, correspondence and answers to questions taken on notice and supplementary questions related to the inquiry be published by the committee, except for those documents kept confidential by resolution of the committee;

The committee secretariat correct any typographical, grammatical and formatting errors prior to tabling;

The committee secretariat be authorised to update any committee comments where necessary to reflect changes to recommendations or new recommendations resolved by the committee;

Dissenting statements be provided to the secretariat within 24 hours after receipt of the draft minutes of the meeting;

The secretariat is tabling the report at 11.00am Friday 27 June 2025;

The Chair to advise the secretariat and members if they intend to hold a press conference, and if so, the date and time.

6. Adjournment

The committee adjourned at 10.39 am, until 8.45 am, Friday 4 July 2025, Macquarie Room, Parliament House (public hearing for the inquiry into antisemitism in New South Wales).

David Rodwell
Committee Clerk

