

**Answers to questions on notice
Inquiry into the integrity, efficacy and value for money of NSW Government
grant programs, Hearing, Monday 8 February 2021**

**Mr Tim Hurst - Deputy Secretary, Local Government, Planning and Policy,
Office of Local Government**

Page 41

The CHAIR: I might just show you another document, which is the amended guidelines. Do you see that, Mr Hurst? It says "Stronger Communities and New Council Implementation Fund guidelines"? Do you see that?

Mr HURST: Yes, I can see that.

The CHAIR: Did you author this document?

Mr HURST: I think "author" is not the word I would use.

The CHAIR: Help me here, Mr Hurst. What was your role?

Mr HURST: Certainly I reviewed the document and submitted it for approval. The

CHAIR: You submitted it for approval to who?

Mr HURST: The approval was for the consideration of the Minister for Local Government, the Deputy Premier and the Premier.

The CHAIR: Did you say "for"?

Mr HURST: You asked what I submitted it for. It was for the approval.

The CHAIR: You will see that the Deputy Premier has signed it but it is undated. Do you see that?

Mr HURST: Yes, I can see that.

The CHAIR: Do you know when he signed it?

Mr HURST: I do not have that material to hand. I am happy to take on notice whether the Office of Local Government has a record of when it was signed. The

CHAIR: Just to be clear, before you hand us back to either the Deputy Premier's office or the Department of Regional NSW, in answers to questions on notice from the Department of Regional NSW, they made it clear that it was your office's responsibility to ensure the briefing note was signed and they have no records of when it was signed. Did the Deputy Premier approve the guidelines after the projects had been identified and funded?

Mr HURST: I have undertaken to take on notice the question about whether the Office of Local Government has a record of the date that the Deputy Premier signed this document.

Answer

The Office of Local Government provided a briefing note to the Minister for Local Government (Minister) to approve the modification of the existing guidelines.

As part of this briefing note, there was a recommendation that the Minister seek the endorsement of the Premier and the Deputy Premier to the proposed revised guidelines.

The briefing note was signed by the Premier on 25 June 2018 and the Minister on 27 June 2018. The Deputy Premier signed the briefing note but it was not dated. The Office of Local Government has no record of the date the briefing note was signed by the Deputy Premier.

Page 45

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: Mr Hurst, you have had a series of job titles that we have seen on emails and now in appearing before this Committee. You were the acting CEO of Local Government; is that correct?

Mr HURST: I have had a number of roles. Sorry, I am just not sure how this is relevant to the Committee.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: I am just asking you what your current job title is.

Mr HURST: As we established at the hearing in September, my role is Deputy Secretary, Local Government, Planning and Policy at the Department of Planning, Industry, Environment.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: When did you take on that role?

Mr HURST: It would have been approximately April. I am sorry, I don't know exactly when. I would have to look it up.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: Roughly, April 2020?

The Hon. TREVOR KHAN: He said he will have to look it up.

Mr HURST: I am not prepared to speculate. I will have to look it up.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: You are taking that on notice?

Mr HURST: I am happy to take on notice when the role title changed.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: Perhaps you can take on notice when you were appointed acting CEO. Was there a job in between acting CEO and then Deputy Secretary?

Mr HURST: Yes. I was the Chief Executive of the Office of Local Government.

The Hon. COURTNEY HOUSSOS: Can you provide us with a time line of when you were appointed to those particular roles, please?

Mr HURST: Yes, I undertake to provide that on notice.

Answer

The Department of Planning, Industry and Environment records indicate the following:

- **Acting Chief Executive Officer Local Government: 01/10/2015 – 18/02/2018**
- **Chief Executive Officer Local Government: 19/02/2018 – 25/07/2019**
- **Deputy Secretary Local Government, Planning and Policy: 26/07/2019 – current**