REPORT ON PROCEEDINGS BEFORE

STANDING COMMITTEE ON STATE DEVELOPMENT

ALLEGATIONS OF IMPROPRIETY AGAINST AGENTS OF THE CITY OF CANTERBURY BANKSTOWN COUNCIL

At Dixson Room, Ground Floor, Mitchell Building, State Library of NSW, Sydney on Wednesday 21 December 2022

The Committee met at 9:30.

PRESENT

The Hon. Aileen MacDonald (Chair)

The Hon. Mark Banasiak
The Hon. Scott Farlow
The Hon. John Graham
The Hon. Mark Latham
The Hon. Taylor Martin
The Hon. Chris Rath
The Hon. Penny Sharpe

PRESENT VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

The Hon. Mark Pearson

The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN: You've declared yourself as self-employed through EAL. Does it have any other partners, or is it just you?

KHAL ASFOUR: No.

The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN: Okay, just you, and what's your role? Are you the managing director?

KHAL ASFOUR: Self-employed.

The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN: Self-employed, just a one-man band. What kind of consulting does

EAL consult on?

KHAL ASFOUR: I haven't really prepared, because the terms of reference are so broad, for that. I'm happy to take that onnotice.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: You don't know what you do as a self-employed—

KHAL ASFOUR: I haven't done much work through EAL for quite a long time.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: But you would have some knowledge of what it did at the time.

KHAL ASFOUR: I've consulted for-

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: For who? Who have you consulted for?

KHAL ASFOUR: Forclients.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Who are these clients? In what profession?

KHAL ASFOUR: I'm happy to take that on notice.

(Answer furnished to Committee on 6 February 2023)

I have consulted for various clients. When I established the consultancy, it was predominantly for mums and dads seeking broking advice. I later expanded offering advice on a range of matters from business processes, community service and supporting businesses with their advocacy and processes. The work I did was around SMEs. I also assisted my wife with her financial services business.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: To the point of order Itook earlier: The mayor has furnished a document to the council dated 18 November listing this consultancy group as a current, relevant source of his income. It's a pecuniary interest declaration under the rules of the New South Wales statute. It's just not credible, having listed this as a source of income, to say he has no knowledge of who he is doing the consulting for or who pays the income to him. He must know and has a legal obligation to tell this Committee.

The CHAIR: You've said you want to take that on notice?

KHAL ASFOUR: I don't have the details at hand, but I'm confident I haven't done anything inappropriate.

The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN: Hang on. In your opening statement you said the truth will be your defence. We are giving you the opportunity to tell the truth, and you simply zipup within 15 minutes of opening. The business name, as you just said, is your children's names put together in an acronym. You're the sole operator; it's your business and you run it. You can't even name one client, but you name it as a source of income in your pecuniary interests. It's just bizarre.

KHAL ASFOUR: I haven't done much work through EAL for a long time. I don't have the details at hand. The terms of reference for this inquiry are broad, and I did not bring myself up to speed with the history of EAL Consulting. I was focused on my councillor and mayoral role because of the terms of reference. Again, I've taken it on notice, and I'm happy to provide that response.

The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN: This is not a business that you have joined or a board that you're a part of that has operations everywhere. You're telling us it's basically the family business. You're the one running it, the managing director or thereabouts. You're self-employed through the business, but you can't name one client here.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Or what you do.

The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN: Or what it does, what the consulting consists of.

KHAL ASFOUR: It's a consulting business.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: "Consulting" is a broad term.

KHAL ASFOUR: Again, I'm happy to take it on notice and provide the Committee with that answer.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Point of order: The pecuniary interest declaration seeks sources of income received by the mayor from an occupation at any time since 30 June this year. We're talking about a company that's been listed as a source of income for the mayor in the past six months, and it's just not credible for the mayor to say he's got no knowledge of what those sources of income have been and to refuse to tell this Committee reliable information regarding who he's been consulting for. This is a defiance of the rules of the Parliament and the due processes of this Committee.

The CHAIR: I'm happy for the witness to take that question on notice, offering procedural fairness.

The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN: Mr Asfour, less than 15 minutes ago you said the truth will be your defence. Iam asking you a pretty open question: Can you tell us if any of the clients you dealt with in that capacity reside or operate in the Canterbury Bankstown area?

KHAL ASFOUR: I think I've answered the question.

The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN: You certainly have not; you've pled the fifth, mate. You've turned up and said the truth will be your defence, and now you've gone to ground and you won't—

The Hon. PENNY SHARPE: Point of order: I know that Mr Martin is very excited and that he wants to argue with the witness. The witness has indicated he's taking it on notice. In your last ruling, Madam Chair, you indicated that that was acceptable. They need to move on.

The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN: To the point of order: I'm actually not trying to argue. I am giving a pretty open question—pretty simple stuff. At the very beginning of this whole inquiry, I think it's bizarre that the witness says they want the truth to be their defence and then pleads the fifth at the first opportunity. Madam Chair, I ask the witness if any of the clients of EAL are based overseas.

KHAL ASFOUR: I'll take that on notice.

(Answer furnished to Committee on 6 February 2023)

As per the previous response.

And to the best of my knowledge EAL has no clients based overseas.

The Hon. CHRIS RATH: Councillor Asfour, I move now to the issue of your MBA, which has received some media attention. Under the councillor facilities and expenses policy adopted at the ordinary meeting of 22 August 2017, councillors must fill out a request for councillor professional development or long-distance travel before approval can be given for professional development. Did you fill out a request for councillor professional development or long-distance travel prior to commencing your MBA?

KHAL ASFOUR: I don't recall whether I filled out a form. I did have a conversation with my general manager and I think a file note was taken.

The Hon. CHRIS RATH: Do you remember whether you had to fill in such a form for each subject, or was it just a form at the beginning of the process in which you started your MBA?

KHAL ASFOUR: I need to go back and check but I believe there was no form. There was a file note, from my recollection, after a conversation with the CEO about pursuing professional development.

The Hon. CHRIS RATH: Would you be able to take on notice whether such a form was completed—

KHAL ASFOUR: Absolutely.

The Hon. CHRIS RATH: —at the beginning of the MBA and for each subject, if that was required?

KHAL ASFOUR: Sure.

(Answer furnished to Committee on 6 February 2023)

Information provided to me from Council confirms there was no form to fill in.

.

The Hon. CHRIS RATH: And do you remember the CEO at the time saying that your expenses as part of the MBA did fall within the entitlement?

KHAL ASFOUR: I want to be clear. I didn't ask to do an MBA. I asked to do subjects of the CEO that I felt were pertaining to my role, that would help me in my role as the mayor of a large city with a \$400 million budget, with \$4 billion or more in assets, and I thought some of the subjects that the MBA involved, that I had to undertake, would help me in my role. So I asked the CEO if I could undergo these subjects, when and if I could, and time permitting, and I would seek his agreement that they fell within the scope of my role as the mayor.

The Hon. CHRIS RATH: And he gave you that agreement—that it did fall within the entitlement?

KHAL ASFOUR: Yes. Further to that, this was asked of the council by the Office of Local Government, and the Office of Local Government have come back to the council and categorically agreed that my professional development my education were completely within the guidelines of council's policy and, to quote the

The Hon. CHRIS RATH: Is that a document that was provided to you—

KHAL ASFOUR: That's correct.

The Hon. CHRIS RATH: —by the Office of Local Government?

KHAL ASFOUR: That was provided to the council by the Office of Local Government.

The Hon. CHRIS RATH: Would we be able to table that document?

KHAL ASFOUR: I don't have it with me but we'll be able to give you that—

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: On notice.

KHAL ASFOUR: On notice, yes.

Attached letter from the Office of Local Government to Council dated 1.12.22.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Can I jump in there for a second? I will let Mr Rath return to that. According to council policy that existed at that time in 2017, you stated you have taken on notice whether you filled out a form. Your recollection is largely that you didn't and that a file note was taken, but 6.30 of council policy at the time stated:

Approval for professional development activities is subject to a prior written request to the Mayor and General Manager using the 'Request for Councillor Professional Development of Long Distance Travel' Form ... which outlines the:



details of the proposed professional development relevance to Council priorities and business relevance of the exercise of the Councillor's civic duties

Was it determined that you would not do that because that request was supposed to go to both the mayor and the general manager? Was that the reason that there was no form provided?

form.

KHAL ASFOUR: As I said, I would need to check if there was a form. I need to check if there was a

Information provided to me from Council confirms there was no form to fill in, as above.

The Hon. CHRIS RATH: In terms of the reimbursement, which we were talking about before, falling in the same financial year, you were reimbursed for a second subject on 12 June for \$2,545. The two MBA subjects totalled \$5,090. Was this brought your attention by the council staff?

KHAL ASFOUR: No.

The Hon. CHRIS RATH: So you were in breach of the policy because you were over the limit that was allowed and it was never brought to your attention by anyone at Canterbury Bankstown council.

KHAL ASFOUR: No. As I mentioned, I put in the claim. It then goes through an administrative process. If the claim was paid two weeks later, there would not have been a breach, so the breach was technical in nature. Again, I don't pay myself. I put in the claim form and the council then reimburses.

The Hon. CHRIS RATH: So the council approves the expenses?

KHAL ASFOUR: The council staff reimburse the claim.

The Hon. CHRIS RATH: They approve?

KHAL ASFOUR: The claim?
The Hon. CHRIS RATH: Yes.

KHAL ASFOUR: Yes.

The Hon. CHRIS RATH: So their role is to approve?

KHAL ASFOUR: Yes.

The Hon. CHRIS RATH: You lodge the form and then they decide whether it's in accordance with the guidelines—in accordance with the rules, with the policies—and then they approve the claim. So they have the power to not approve certain claims as well?

KHAL ASFOUR: Yes.

The Hon. CHRIS RATH: Have you ever had any such expenses knocked back?

From my records, no.

The Hon. CHRIS RATH: Before that change, as we spoke about, the professional development allowance was \$3,000 a year. After that change went through, you could claim up to \$15,000. Do you remember that being one of the changes that was adopted?

KHAL ASFOUR: The change was to facilitate professional development, and the amount was changed not just for professional development. That number of \$15,000 for the mayor then included conferences, seminars, programs, training, study tools, programs with affiliated organisations and membership of professional bodies, as detailed in the councillor professional development handbook.

The Hon. CHRIS RATH: It was a very generous increase. Did you instigate these changes?

KHAL ASFOUR: No.

The Hon. CHRIS RATH: Was it instigated by council staff?

KHAL ASFOUR: I don't agree that it was a generous increase. It was a culmination of different, separate facilities that were then combined into one facility.

The Hon. CHRIS RATH: Yes, but looking through the policies at the time—because we have looked at this—if you bundle up all those different pots of money that you're talking about, it still doesn't come anywhere near \$15,000. It was still quite a significant increase even after you had bundled up those pockets of money into one single fund.

KHAL ASFOUR: Do you know how much it comes up to?

The Hon. CHRIS RATH: I think it was around a 50 per cent increase after combining all those different—

KHAL ASFOUR: I disagree with that, but I would need to take on notice the exact amount.

I am advised by Council that in September 2018 Council's Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy was adopted. One of the changes was that Council's professional development, conference and seminar allowances were merged and increased from a combined total of \$11,000 to \$15,000 (for the mayor).

The Hon. CHRIS RATH: But you supported these changes?

KHAL ASFOUR: Yes—as well as, from memory, it was unanimous. It went on public exhibition. It's been voted on. It's come back since that time another time, where we voted to go on public exhibition and then resolved to adopt the policy.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: I will come to that matter shortly. You said earlier on that you oversee management but you're saying here that you've got no idea of what the financial liability might be for your council in funding your legal team.

KHAL ASFOUR: Not one cent of council is paying for my legal team; it's the council insurer. Ithink I've answered that now enough times.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Have you got a letter from the insurer saying their meeting the claim even though you wouldn't have lodged the claim because you don't know the expenses.

KHAL ASFOUR: You answered your own question there, Mr Latham.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Have you got the letter from the insurer that you can provide to the Committee?

KHAL ASFOUR: I donot.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Can you take that on notice to get correspondence with your insurer relating to the cost of your legal team?

KHAL ASFOUR: Yes.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: The lawyers lodge their own claim on behalf of the council? That's good work if you can get it. I'm in the wrong business here, mate.

KHAL ASFOUR: I will take it on notice.

(Answer furnished to Committee on 6 February 2023)

Nothing to produce.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Does EAL provide management consulting services that combine strategic process people integration, change management and human resources management? Is that what you do?

KHAL ASFOUR: No.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: What is the nature of the consulting?

KHAL ASFOUR: I think I've said that I'll take that question on notice, but can you furnish me with that document, Mr Latham? I'd like to see what it is that you are quoting from.

(Answer furnished to Committee on 6 February 2023)

Answer provided above.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Have you ever done any consultancy work for Chinese financial interests?

KHAL ASFOUR: Not that I'm aware of. I'll take that on notice, but not that I'm aware of.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: You'll take it on notice. Thank you.

(Answer furnished to Committee on 6 February 2023)

As far as my records show, no.

The Hon. CHRIS RATH: I wanted to come back to my line of questioning from before. But before

I do, just following up from Mr Latham's questioning, does EAL have an ABN?

KHAL ASFOUR: Can I take that on notice? Ithink it does, but I just—yes, it—

The Hon. CHRIS RATH: Would you be able to provide the ABN to us?

KHAL ASFOUR: Yes.

The Hon. CHRIS RATH: Because I could not find an ABN for EAL Consulting in Chullora.

KHAL ASFOUR: Yes. Sorry, can I—yes, I don't think EAL has an ABN, no.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: It's not registered for GST?

KHAL ASFOUR: It is, under my name—my private name.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: So EAL is effectively a trading name?

KHAL ASFOUR: Yes, it's just a name I've set up.

(Answer furnished to Committee on 6 February 2023)

EAL is a trading name and does NOT have an ABN.

The Hon. CHRIS RATH: Last year under your mayoralty Canterbury Bankstown council had the largest rate hike of any metropolitan council. Do you think that fits well in terms of then going out on a bit of a spending spree when it comes to professional development?

KHAL ASFOUR: I think it's important to know that the council has not applied nor sought to increase its rates above the SRV since I've been on the council. And I don't agree that it's the largest, even though I can take that on notice.

According to information provided by Council the statement is not correct. The Special Variation independently approved by IPART for the City of Canterbury Bankstown is not the largest that has been approved for any metropolitan Council. In 2022-23 Canterbury Bankstown's Special Variation was independently approved by IPART for 5.3%. By way of comparison Hunters Hill Council was approved for a special variation of 16.2% above peg rate in the same year. Historically, in 2014/15 Holroyd has an SV approved of 44.22% and in 2015/16 Ashfield was approved for a 38.4% increase.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Thank you, Madam Chair. Mr Asfour, Imight turn now to some of your overseas study trips and the like through council. Would you mind outlining for the Committee where you have been overseas on behalf of council?

KHAL ASFOUR: Can I take that on notice, because I don't want to forget one.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Well, you can start with a general gist, can't you, of where you've been?

The Hon. TAYLOR MARTIN: Off the top of your head.

KHAL ASFOUR: Yes, sure. Firstly, all travel done overseas has been in accordance with the Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy and approved by council. All travel has been presented to an open council meeting and approved by councillors, all done in accordance with the policy. I know there has been media about a United States trip back in 2019. I have also represented council overseas at my own expense. So, you know, I'm happy to take that on notice, Mr Farlow.

Council holds records of the following overseas trips:

- 12-20 Oct 2007: Japan Sister City site visit
- May 2013: Lebanon represent Bankstown City Council and to attend the ordination of Father Antoine Tarabay in Lebanon
- 19 Sept 2014: Turkey To visit Gallipoli in preparation for the ANZAC Centenary, a legacy of Australians and Turks and pay respect to those who served in World War 1
- 29 June 5 July 2015: Japan Assess future viability of Energy from Waste

- 29 Oct- 8 Nov 2017: USA Cities Leadership Institute Tour
- 2-14 June 2019: USA/Canada Smart City Immersion
- 1-6 Sept 2019: East London Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue examine Urban regeneration of East London, its transformation and economic and social issues they faced in developing their City and relevance to Western Sydney
- 5-7 Dec 2019: Chicago meetings and site visits including with the office of the Mayor, KPMG and Ignite Cities.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: —which I think was the 2019 trip you were referring to before. Can you

describe what that exchange program was about?

KHAL ASFOUR: The Cities Leadership Exchange—can you just remind me whichone?

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: I believe that was 29 October until—sorry, this is the 2017 trip—9 November 2017.

KHAL ASFOUR: That was a trip organised by the Cities Leadership Group. Many mayors and councillors have, with the Cities Leadership Group, travelled overseas to look at what other cities are doing. That was a trip, from memory, focused on smart cities. It was done with the professor at the time who had been working with council. Again, it was back in 2017 so I am just trying to recall.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: It was five years ago. Pretty close to the date, yes?

KHAL ASFOUR: Yes.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: How did you first hear about this exchange?

KHAL ASFOUR: From memory—again, I will correct the record if I am mistaken—that was a decision made by the administrator at the time. There was no council. The administrator resolved that a person go on the trip. That was all done in an open council meeting by the administrator. That's when the decision was made. After the 2017 elections, I was made aware that this had happened—that there was a resolution by council—and, having that happen, I went on the tour.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Did anyone else join you from Canterbury Bankstown council or was it just you?

KHAL ASFOUR: Can I take that on notice?

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: You can.

KHAL ASFOUR: I think there was one person but, again, I just want to make sure.

James Carey, Director City Future - City of Canterbury Bankstown also attended.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: On that visit, what cities did you visit? I think this was one where you said there were several cities.

KHAL ASFOUR: Yes, that was essentially California, San Diego, San Jose, a lot of the Tech Valley area—

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: San Francisco, or not?

KHAL ASFOUR: I don't think San Francisco, no.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Mexico, at all?

KHAL ASFOUR: Not as part of the trip.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: But you went to Mexico while there?

KHAL ASFOUR: Yes.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: In a private capacity?

KHAL ASFOUR: Yes.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Was that during the trip, or was that after or before?

KHAL ASFOUR: It was during a break in the trip, from memory.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: How much did that trip cost Canterbury Bankstown council?

KHAL ASFOUR: I would need to take that on notice.

The Cities Leadership Exchange cost to Council was \$38,404.44.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Can I ask the mayor if you are aware of a personal bank account held by the CEO of the council which holds money deposited directly from Bankstown council?

KHAL ASFOUR: I am notaware.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Have you ever heard of your CEO referring to this account that is used for personal purposes, not connected to the council?

KHAL ASFOUR: I have not.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Are you aware of the CEO's company credit card?

KHAL ASFOUR: The council credit card?

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Yes.

KHAL ASFOUR: Yes.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: What monitoring or checking does the council undertake that all the expenditures there are related to council purposes, not private purposes?

KHAL ASFOUR: Sorry? I misheard.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: What monitoring and checking does the council undertake on this credit card to see that all the expenditures are legitimate and to do with local government rather than personal?

KHAL ASFOUR: I will take that on notice, because there would be one or two levels of scrutiny, I am sure. But I will take that on notice.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Did the council, yourself included, organise a trip to Turkey and, I assume, Anzac Cove related to the centenary of Anzac?

KHAL ASFOUR: Yes.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: What information did you garner that then related to the council's centenary of Anzac commemorations?

KHAL ASFOUR: Again, all travel was done in accordance with the *Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy* and approved by the council. I am proud of the contribution our council has made in relation to being part of those centenary celebrations. The council set up a working group and the minutes are well documented. There was a local essay-writing competition for local high school students where the winner and their guardian travelled with us to Turkey for a significant event to, obviously, honour our diggers. That was the point of the trip.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: How many attended on the trip? There was yourself and the general manager.

KHAL ASFOUR: I will take that on notice.

Twelve people attended the ANZAC trip.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: What was the overall expenditure involved?

KHAL ASFOUR: I will take that on notice.

The cost to Council was \$24,841.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: What was the breakdown? What did you cover out of your ownpocket on this trip?

KHAL ASFOUR: From memory—again, I will take it on notice—I certainly paid for my international airfare.

I have no personal records for this trip. However I did pay for my international airfare and incidentals.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: But the council, I am assuming, is paying for your accommodation in Turkey, tour guides and your time at Anzac Cove. The council is helping you make the trip to Turkey, isn't it?

KHAL ASFOUR: No. I paid for the trip to Turkey from my own private funds. It was a privately funded international airfare. I paid for the international airfare privately.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: I have been in local government. I know how it works.

KHAL ASFOUR: Exactly. You know how it works.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: You piggybacked out of Turkey knowing that the council paid for your accommodation in Turkey, yes?

KHAL ASFOUR: But I paid for the airfare, Mr Latham.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: I'm not asking about the airfare; I'm asking about the accommodation in Turkey. Did the council pay?

KHAL ASFOUR: I will take that on notice as to what the breakdown was for that trip.

I am informed by Council that Council paid for accommodation in Turkey as per the Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Are they happy with the discussions you would have had prior to the Turkey trip saying, "Isn't it good that we can lower the cost of the overall trip using council funds, and then we'll arrange for a privately funded trip"—you say—"to a soccer match in Liverpool, England?"

KHAL ASFOUR: I think I have answered your question.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: What about the return leg via Singapore? Who funded the accommodation and your expenses, restaurants, hotels, other outlays in Singapore on the way back from Liverpool?

KHAL ASFOUR: From memory we were in transit in Singapore. It may have been a night and I'd need to—I'll take the rest of the question on notice, just so I give the correct answer to the Committee.

ANSWER; I am informed by Council that it has no record of any expenses claimed in Singapore.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: In Liverpool, England, and Singapore, as part of this commemoration of Anzac, were you aware of the general manager using the council credit card to meet expenses?

KHAL ASFOUR: I'm notaware.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Were you aware of him using the bank account that's funded by the council underhis own private arrangements?

KHAL ASFOUR: You'd need to ask him, Mr Latham.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: No, I'm asking you as the mayor—longstanding, re-elected, blah blah—what you know about this particular matter.

KHAL ASFOUR: I'm notaware.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: You're not aware?

KHAL ASFOUR: No.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Can you make some investigations about the possible use of the council credit card and the personal expense account funded by the council as part of your trip with the CEO to Liverpool and Singapore?

KHAL ASFOUR: You're asking me to investigate?

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Yes, please—to take that on notice and have a look at the council records to make sure everything was kosher.

KHAL ASFOUR: Bearing in mind that you'll have the opportunity to ask him the same questions—but, yes.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Well, I'm asking you.

KHAL ASFOUR: Yes.

I am informed by Council that its' practice for monitoring and checking that all the expenditures are legitimate and to do with local government is as follows.

- 1 The CEO signs off on his credit card statement indicating that all expenditure is for business related purposes.
- 2. If the credit card is inadvertently used for personal expenditure, CEO reimburses Council with payroll processing deduction from CEO's pay.
- CEO required to attach all receipts supporting any credit card expenditure. All entries are coded by CEO for appropriate cost centre and general ledger codes based on the type of expenditure.
- 4. In accordance with Council's delegations the mayor is required to approve all expenditure on the CEO's credit card. The completed credit card statement and supporting receipts are provided to the mayor for review, approval and sign off.
- 5. The Finance Department review submitted credit card statements to check:
 - · receipts have been provided for all expenditure
 - credit card statement has been signed off by CEO
 - credit card statement has been approved and signed off by the mayor
 - each transaction line has an appropriate description of expenditure and appropriate cost code allocated
- 6. The Finance Department post the approved credit card transactions into Council's ERP system and reconciles against the bank transactions.
- 7. Council's external auditor (NSW Audit Office) reviews all credit card expenditure to ensure it complies with Council's purchasing card policy and financial delegations.
- 8. Council's internal auditor also reviews all Council credit card use regularly as part of their annual audit plan to ensure it complies with Council's purchasing card policy and financial delegations.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Why has the council brought the recycling and rubbish collection back in house?

KHAL ASFOUR: Because it was the right thing to do.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Why?

KHAL ASFOUR: Because it would save money for us and the contractors that were doing the job—let me go back a step. Bankstown has been doing that in house for as long as I can remember and Canterbury's—

contract with the contractor was expiring. Their service level was pretty poor if you ask the ratepayers living in Canterbury. The decision was made to bring it in house.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: What constitutes poor service? I've got a document here showing in 2017-18 the missed bin rate was 0.19 per cent. That's very low, isn't it?

KHAL ASFOUR: I don't know what document you're referring to.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: It's a City of Canterbury Bankstown annual report that you as mayor would have signed off on in all your glory. The report at page 61 says that the missed bin rate under the previous arrangements, the contractor, was 0.19 per cent. You think that's an unsatisfactory service level?

KHAL ASFOUR: I'm happy to take that on notice,

The current missed bin rate since going in-house is approximately 0.23% of 1%. This rate reflects a different methodology whereby we factor in bins that were not put out, incorrect bins, and blocked and unacceptable bins. While this measure does ostensibly give us a slightly higher missed bin rate, it gives a figure that is significantly more accurate. It is a better measure than the prior contractor's methodology and assists Council with accurate and improved service levels.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: I suppose the international travel does that to you, but can I just ask: What would you regard as an unacceptable missed bin rate that required changing these service arrangements?

KHAL ASFOUR: I would certainly look at the correspondence and contacts I've had from ratepayers and the calls complaining about the missed bins. You're quoting from, I think, 2017-18. Again, I haven't had a look at the document recently, but certainly the contract was due to end and going in house was, I think, the best option for the ratepayers.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: When did you make that decision?

KHAL ASFOUR: When the report was presented to the council. After reading the report and understanding the context—

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: What time period are we talking about?

KHAL ASFOUR: I'll take that on notice because the contract with the contractor was extended for a period of time to allow council to get itself in order in making sure that we were able to carry out that service. It's a very important service. I'm very proud now that we are bringing in our waste in house. Because the service on the ground is a lot better.

On information provided by Council, Council endorsed the recommendation to proceed with a mixed model service at a meting on 28 May 2019. The service was to begin in March 2021.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: What's your missed bin rate now?

KHAL ASFOUR: I'll take that on notice. I don't have the number at hand.

As above (at page 17).

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Just returning to the overseas travel issues, you outlined before that you did visit Mexico and it was part of a private trip on that smart cities delegation. Considering it was part of the private trip, why did you put forward an expenses claim for a "Los Panchos" of 266 pesos for council?

KHAL ASFOUR: I'll take that on notice, Mr Farlow. The trip to Mexico was when we were in San Jose, I think, or San Diego. It might've been—I'd need to take that on notice. I'm not going to speculate right now.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Was that for tacos in Tijuana?

KHAL ASFOUR: Again, I'll take that on notice.

The expenses claimed were in line with the Councillors Expenses and Facilities Policy and in line with the expenses for meals claimed during overseas visits.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Can you perhaps provide on notice any information you do have with respect to that claim and why, if it was on a personal day, you put a council claim in for that personal portion?

KHAL ASFOUR: Yes.

I made an expense claim for "Los Panchos" in Tijuana for 266 pesos (\$20.29 AUD on the current exchange rate). It was approved for reimbursement as it was in accordance with clause 6.20 of the City of Canterbury Bankstown Councilor Expenses and Facilities Policy 2022, which states that "Council will incur costs for accommodation and meals (or reimburse costs) while Councilors are undertaking prior approved travel or attending approved professional development, conferences and seminars." This policy includes all me als while Councilors are undertaking prior approved travel and does not stipulate that the Councillor must be undertaking civic duties while the meal is taken for it to fall under the policy. The WSLD tour constituted prior approved travel.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Seeing you've got some recollection of that roundtable, did that take place Did you attend "Developing Policy to Inform Smart Cities"?

KHAL ASFOUR: I'll take that on notice.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: You don't have any recollections about what you learned about developing policy or smart city initiatives that have come out of your involvement or non-involvement in that roundtable?

KHAL ASFOUR: Again, I want to clarify which trip—

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: There are so many.

KHAL ASFOUR: —which trip, which obviously meets council's expenses and facilities policy that

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: On the 2017 trip to San Diego, unless there was another one to San Diego, Saturday 4 November was the delegates' scheduled self-tour day. Do you remember what happened on the self-tour day?

KHAL ASFOUR: I don't recall, no.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Was that the trip to Tijuana, perhaps?

KHAL ASFOUR: I'll take that on notice. I can't remember what I can't remember.

My receipts from the trip show that I put in a claim for "Los Panchos" in Tijuana for 266 pesos (AUD \$20.29 on current exchange rates) on 4 November 2017, as above. I attended the scheduled activity as part of the official tour in the morning and then had lunch.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Mr Asfour, with respect to 2017, were there any other overseas trips you went on that year apart from that one to the US and Mexico?

KHAL ASFOUR: In my private capacity, or in my—

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Well, it seems like the council and the private sort of merge in some cases.

KHAL ASFOUR: I'll take that on notice.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: I turn now to the National General Assembly of Local Government in Canberra, which was held from 17 June to 20 June 2018. These are common trips that councils will take, no doubt.

KHAL ASFOUR: Yes.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: How did you get to Canberra on that trip? Do youremember?

KHAL ASFOUR: I'll take that on notice.

Council's records indicate that I drove to Canberra on this trip.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Did you attend all the scheduled activities within that conference?

KHAL ASFOUR: I believeso.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: And you stayed for the whole scheduled conference?

KHAL ASFOUR: I may have left early; I'm not sure. It depends on my commitments, Mr Farlow.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Mr Asfour, was any of the alcohol you were drinking during that

conference billed back to ratepayers at all?

KHAL ASFOUR: I'll take that on notice, Mr Farlow.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Do you remember where you stayed for that conference?

KHAL ASFOUR: No, I'll take it on notice. I've stayed in—

From information provided by Council, my receipts show that I stayed at the Hyatt Hotel in Canberra from 17 June 2018 to 20 June 2018.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Was any of the alcohol you were drinking in those videos billed to the

ratepayers of Canterbury Bankstown?

KHAL ASFOUR: Not that I'm aware of, no.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Have you ever billed the cost of alcohol to ratepayers at all?

KHAL ASFOUR: I'll take that on notice. Again, I've been on council for 17 years.

(Answer furnished to Committee on 6 February 2023)

Yes, in accordance with the Councillors Expenses and Facilities Policy.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: For a local government conference to Albury, \$3,000-odd per councillor seems like an exorbitant amount of money.

KHAL ASFOUR: Does that include the registration fees for the conference?

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: I'm not sure.

KHAL ASFOUR: Neither am I, Mr Farlow, so—

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: But I think those are covered by your policy externally, without

reimbursement, if you look at your policy.

KHAL ASFOUR: Again, I don't have the numbers in front of me, Mr Farlow.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Can you take it on notice and perhaps provide some explanation?

KHAL ASFOUR: I don't have the numbers, Mr Farlow, in front of me.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: I will turn to East London. This was a September 2019 trip.

KHAL ASFOUR: Yes.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: So you toured East London, and that was approved by an ordinary meeting of council on 23 July 2019. Was any detailed budget provided at that meeting?

According to Council records, no.

KHAL ASFOUR: I'll take it on notice. I don't know that.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Thank you. That report approved \$5,000 excluding GST plus flights. On 5 August 2019 you were reimbursed for \$6,469 for the Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue study tour. Did that include the flights?

KHAL ASFOUR: I'll take that on notice, Mr Farlow. I don't—

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: If that was the case, why did the trip costs exceed what was approved by council at \$5,000?

KHAL ASFOUR: I don't think that it did, but again I'm happy to take that onnotice.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Okay. Did you think the report authorising travel met the requirements outlined in the *Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy* at the time?

KHAL ASFOUR: I'm happy to take that on notice, but I believe so.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Was there an itinerary that was provided to council when approving that budget?

KHAL ASFOUR: I don't have the council report in front of me, Mr Farlow. Again, happy to take it on notice and provide you with a response, or the Committee with a response.

Council paid \$5,000 to WSD for me to attend. \$6,469 was the cost of my international airfare, for which I was reimbursed by council.

An itinerary was provided to Council. See minutes of Council 23 July 2019 attached.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Okay. Now, in that report it outlines that Chicago has grown from a small trading post into one of America's largest cities and that today it is a global city, a thriving centre of international trade and commerce. Can you share with the Committee your analysis of how Chicago has transformed from the small trading post into the global city that it is today?

KHAL ASFOUR: Clearly, if you went to Chicago 200 years ago, if you had a time machine—

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: Stockyards!

KHAL ASFOUR:—it would not be the smart city that it is today; with the population that it's dealing with today; with the ability to provide services for its residents at a high standard that it is today. So, yes, it certainly has transformed in 200 years, no doubt about that.

The Hon. SCOTT FARLOW: How has that history informed the City of Canterbury Bankstown?

KHAL ASFOUR: I think the trip was a private trip. While I was there in my private capacity, I undertook to meet with some government representatives. I think I've already mentioned I met with the Mayor of Chicago, which was a good meeting for me to have on behalf of the city. Imet with the US consult o Chicago—I'm sorry, I keep saying that—I met with the Australian consult o Chicago as well. I met—and I'm happy to provide who I met with in my capacity as the mayor on a privately funded trip. But I met with, from memory, an executive from KPMG and others, and I'm happy to provide that to the Committee. But, again, not one cent of ratepayer money was spent on that trip.

Met with:

Tom Schenck jnr, Director of Analytics KPMG City of Chicago Mayor Lightfoot and her Chief of Staff. George Burciaga of Ignite Cities. Australian Consul to Chicago

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Very good. Glad to hear it. Just coming back to the garbage service—

KHAL ASFOUR: Yes.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: —you've had 20 months now of the in-house arrangements under the coverage of your political ally Graeme Kelly and the USU. What are the differences now in the cost of the service to the council, before and after?

KHAL ASFOUR: I'm happy to provide the Committee with a report and I'll take that on notice, Mr Latham.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: And so too with the complaints rate, before and after?

I am informed by Council that the total cost to provide the waste and recycling services across both the former Canterbury and Bankstown LGA (excluding tipping) in 2019/20 was \$21.3m. The forecast cost to provide the waste and recycling service across the Canterbury Bankstown LGA (excluding tipping) in 2022/23 is \$21.7m. This is an increase of 1.9% over three years.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Right. You've got a fleet of 50 waste collection vehicles. Where did you get those from overnight to run the service? How was it arranged to go back in-house, given the expense of the capital assets, the expertise, the staff?

KHAL ASFOUR: I think I mentioned earlier, it wasn't done overnight, and we extended the contract with the contractor, so we were able to get ready for day one when we moved in-house. So it wasn't done overnight.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: What? You leased back your vehicles? Was that the arrangement or does the council own them?

KHAL ASFOUR: I'll take that on notice.

I am informed by Council that the trucks are owned by Council.

The Hon. CHRIS RATH: On Canterbury Bankstown council, you obviously run as a group of councillors with the Labor brand.

KHAL ASFOUR: Correct.

The Hon. CHRIS RATH: We can see who are the donors to your campaign, but which donors in particular would you say you would have a non-pecuniary interest on the Bankstown master plan with?

KHAL ASFOUR: The ones that have a registered address within the scope of the area of the master plan.

The Hon. CHRIS RATH: Did any other councillors at the time declare a non-pecuniary interest?

KHAL ASFOUR: You'd have to ask them. I don't recall. It's a matter for each councillor to deal with

their interests and their conflicts.

The Hon. CHRIS RATH: But the donations that you receive as part of your campaign, that is to the Labor group of councillors rather than to you as a mayoral candidate?

KHAL ASFOUR: Correct.

The Hon. CHRIS RATH: So, if you had a non-pecuniary interest, we would assume that the other

Labor councillors would also have a non-pecuniary interest?

KHAL ASFOUR: The ones in my ward—and if it was significant, obviously, as well.

The Hon. CHRIS RATH: Would you be able to take that on notice in terms of if any other councillors

in your ward made a non-pecuniary disclosure on that—

KHAL ASFOUR: Sure, I am happy to.

Councillor Bilal El-Hayek made a declaration. No other Ward councillor made a non-pecuniary interest disclosure.

The Hon. CHRIS RATH: —and, potentially, any donors in particular who you think may have been relevant for that non-pecuniary interest?

BBQ City Buffet.

KHAL ASFOUR: Yes, sure.

The Hon. CHRIS RATH: A final question from me: Have you ever claimed loyalty points through council as part of hotels or flights, in terms of the expenses that you charge back to council?

KHAL ASFOUR: I will take that on notice. Mr Rath.

(Answer furnished to Committee on 6 February 2023)

In relation to claiming loyalty points through Council, to the best of my knowledge and records, I have not claimed them.

KHAL ASFOUR: I will take that on notice, but it sounds about right.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Why does it say on the ticket that the ticket is complimentary and at no cost to you—zeropounds?

KHAL ASFOUR: I can't answer that. I don't know.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Can you take that on notice?

KHAL ASFOUR: I definitely paid for it, I know that.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: I've got a copy of what I believe to be the ticket. You told this inquiry under oath that you paid for it.

KHAL ASFOUR: Yes, absolutely I did.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: It says "complimentary, zero pounds". I've given you the details. Maybe you can jot them down and check your records. It was on 27 September 2014 at 12.45 p.m. You were in stand block ME. This is at Anfield, I'm assuming. It's not at the other one, Everton's ground.

that sou KHAL ASFOUR: No, it's not at the blue one.

The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Row 33, seat 251—you'll see this on *Hansard*—"complimentary, zero pounds".

KHAL ASFOUR: Sure, I'm happy to do that. But I can assure you and the Committee that I paid for my ticket and I don't know why the ticket would have that.

(Answer furnished to Committee on 6 February 2023)

I would like to reinforce to the Committee I paid for the ticket to the football game, it was not complimentary. My accommodation and the ticket were purchased as a package through Thomas Cook Travel, a sponsor of the Liverpool Club. I was informed as they are one of the major sponsors, tickets to the match would have to be purchased through them. I cannot explain why they issued the ticket as "complimentary".



5 O'Keefe Avenue NOWRA NSW 2541 Locked Bag 3015 NOWRA NSW 2541 Our Reference: Contact: Phone: A838983

Mr Matthew Stewart General Manager Canterbury Bankstown Council PO Box 8 BANKSTOWN NSW 1885

1 December 2022

Dear Mr Stewart

Thank you for your letter of 25 October 2022 responding to the Office of Local Government's (OLG) preliminary enquiries relating to the reimbursement of professional development expenses to the Mayor, Clr Khal Asfour.

On the basis of the information provided by you, I am satisfied that no further action is warranted in relation to the content of the City of Canterbury Bankstown Council's (Council) Fees and Expenses Policy (the Policy), insofar as it relates to the professional development of the Mayor and councillors, or the reimbursement of the Mayor's expenses for particular subjects undertaken by the Mayor as part of his Master of Business Administration.

OLG's review of the Policy has identified that clause 8.3 appears to be inconsistent with OLG's guidelines for the payment of expenses and the provisions of facilities for Mayors and Councillors in NSW. Clause 8.3 of the Policy would be strengthened by the inclusion of a limitation to the reimbursement of legal expenses to those matters that have proceeded past any initial assessment phase to a formal investigation or review and the investigator makes a finding substantially favourable to the councillor.

Lastly, I have recently become aware of an allegation aired in the media that the Mayor may have omitted a directorship from his annual disclosure of interests return. Prior to making an enquiry directly with the Mayor to clarify this issue, I would appreciate it if you could provide a copies of the Mayor's current and previous return to olg@olg.nsw.gov.au as soon as possible.



Thank you for your ongoing assistance in this matter. Should you have any questions or wish to discuss this matter further, please contact Director, Sector Performance and Intervention on

Yours sincerely

Ally Dench Executive Director, Local Government

Service and Operational Matters - 23 July 2019

ITEM 8.3 Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue

AUTHOR Office of General Manager

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

To consider an invitation from Western Sydney Dialogue (WSD) for the Mayor to participate in a delegation to attend a tour of East London in September 2019.

ISSUE

WSD have issued a formal invitation for the Mayor to join them and other prominent industry professionals and Government leaders to participate in the study tour.

Whilst outlined in their letter, WSD's objective for the tour will be to focus on examining the urban regeneration of East London, its transformation and understanding the economic and social issues they faced in developing their City, and its relevance for Western Sydney.

Given the nature of the tour and attendance by other prominent industry professionals and Government leaders, the experience will provide a direct understanding of the broader issues and/or impacts on addressing the required planning, delivery and integration of the expected transformation of our CBD and broader local government area.

Details regarding the issue are noted further in the report.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council agree to participate in the Western Sydney Dialogues Tour, as outlined in the report

ATTACHMENTS

A. Letter - Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue - Formal Invitation

POLICY IMPACT

There are no direct Policy issues outlined in the report, at this time.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

WSD have offered an all-up cost (excluding airfares) for the Mayor to participate of \$5K (excluding GST), which essentially will cover all elements/land-costs of the tour, including accommodation. Airfares will separately need to be arranged by Council.

Council's Facility Policy for Councillors provides an annual allocation of funding for Professional Development, Conferences and Seminars, which would extend to the Mayor attending this tour, including any associated costs.

COMMUNITY IMPACT

As Councillors would be aware, Council expects to see a notable transformation to our CBD and broader local government area over the coming decade.

That said, it is important that Council both engage and/or obtain an understanding of learnings from others, which will assist in ensuring we appropriately plan for our city, both from a spatial and service delivery perspective.

This tour will provide Council with key insights on the impacts of large-scale transformation have on local government areas, in terms of housing, transport, health and education — all key issues currently being faced by our Council - and how best it be implemented for our community.

DETAILED INFORMATION

Background

As Councillors would be aware, Council has partnered with Western Sydney Dialogue (WSD), a body who advocates and/or informs public policy on key issues and works to both support and advance our city as a key player throughout Western Sydney.

Indeed, Council recently hosted the 2019 "Out There Summit", a key WSD initiative which attracted many businesses and government representatives to discuss the challenges and opportunities for our region.

Equally, WSD also provides a breath of strategic resourcefulness, particularly in terms of relevant research, advocacy and exposure to understanding and planning for expected challenges and transformation expected throughout our community.

WSD Study Tour

Earlier this month, WSD issued a formal invitation for the Mayor (letter attached) to join them and other prominent industry professionals and Government leaders to participate in a study tour of East London, in September 2019.

The tour is of particular relevance given it will:

- focus on examining the urban regeneration of East London, its transformation and understanding the economic and social issues they faced in developing their City;
- includes senior representatives/participants from Western Sydney University, South West Sydney Local Health District and the Greater Sydney Commission, key stakeholders who will play a significant part in transforming our city and broader town-centres throughout the local government area; and
- importantly, WSD have requested the Mayor be the prominent local government official to both lead and provide wide-ranging insight and advice on issues from a community perspective.

WSD's invitation recognises the importance placed on Council's participation as a key stakeholder in driving change throughout Western Sydney and as such, our involvement would be of benefit for our community.

Policy Issues

WSD have offered an all-up cost (excluding airfares) for the Mayor to participate of \$5K (excluding GST), which essentially will cover all elements/land-costs of the tour, including accommodation. Airfares will separately need to be arranged by Council.

Council's Expenses and Facilities Policy for Councillors provides an annual allocation of funding for Professional Development, Conferences and Seminars, which would extend to the Mayor attending this tour, including any associated costs.



PO Box 3201 North Parramatta NSW 1750 T +61 2 9810 8496 info@westernsydney.org.au www.westernsydney.org.au Chairman

Christopher Brown AM

Patron

Hon. Nick Greiner AC Mr Cameron Clyne Hon. Craig Knowles AM Dr Kerry Schott AO Prof. Peter Shergold AC

08 July 2019

Mr Matthew Stewart General Manager City of Canterbury-Bankstown

Email: CC:

Dear Matt.

Western Sydney Study Tour of East London, UK September 1st-6th, 2019 Formal Invitation to Join the Delegation

In September this year, the Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue is leading a cohort of leaders focussed on the development of Greater Western Sydney to examine the urban regeneration in the UK's East London community. This reflects the 'brownfields' relevance of that region and jurisdiction to our own dynamic growth region (especially Sydney's Central River City) and our capacity to access those who drove London's massive transformation originally and those who are delivering and regulating its projects and policy settings today.

As we continue to respond to our own massive tasks in economic and social policy, infrastructure, governance and place making, the Dialogue's plan to lead a group of 'senior Westies' from the public and private sector to examine East London's journey over the past 30+ years is well underway.

On behalf of the Steering Committee curating this high-level international study tour Clr Khal Asfour, as Mayor of Canterbury Bankstown, has been identified as targeted participant and I write to issue him a personal invitation.

It is worth noting that there are a few other delegates already confirmed for this trip of specific relevance to CBC, including GSC District Commissioner and Canterbury Bankstown Collaboration boss, Peter Poulet; Jon Lamonte, CEO of the Sydney Metro office; WSU Vice Chancellor, Prof Barney Glover and his university property executives, and the CEO of South West Sydney Local Health Amanda Larkin, who is in charge of the \$1.3b Bankstown Hospital redevelopment, among others..

The Mayor's participation in this tour will assist Canterbury Bankstown with its own city-building understanding and build your regional network. It should also provide substantial understanding of similar civic pressures in the UK.

A combination of logistic planning and compelling site visits/briefings will be key determinants of the success of this initiative and to achieve this we have assembled a stellar project Steering Committee to help frame our agenda, curate the tour and oversee the legacy program. It includes three local leaders with significant professional experience in the East London arena:

- **Dr Sarah Hill**, CEO, Greater Sydney Commission (and former Head of Major Developments, London Borough of Hackney);
- John Burton OBE, Managing Director, Urban Regeneration, Lendlease (and ex head of Westfield Development UK); and
- **Dr Tim Williams**, Head of Cities, ARUP (and then-CEO of the Thames Gateway London Partnership & Adviser to the UK Government & London Mayor).

Another vital ingredient to our program is a depth of commitment to legacy and content capture. To this end, also joining me on the Steering Committee are these eminent regional leaders:

- Prof. Barney Glover AO, Vice Chancellor & President, Western Sydney University;
- Leanne Bloch-Jorgensen, Head of Insights & Analytics, NAB Institutional Bank;
- Amanda Larkin, Chief Executive, South West Sydney Local Health District;
- Charles Moore, CEO, Sydney Olympic Park Authority; and
- Kerryn Vine-Camp, Head of Western Sydney Unit, Federal Dept of Infrastructure & Cities.

The final component of a productive program is the quality of the participants – and this is where the Mayor comes in and why you and your organisation have been specifically identified.

We seek the assistance of Mayor Asfour (who would be the ranking local government official on this study tour) in leading the cohort's engagement in part of the curated program, including a special briefing at City Hall with the Leader of the London Assembly and three Deputy Mayors, as well as a working lunch at the Royal Naval College in Greenwich to address local governance and community engagement, with two Borough Mayors and other civic leaders as part of an interactive session. We would obviously also like his input to various sessions concerning innovative funding partnerships, strategic planning, education, health & innovation precincts, tourism & cultural facilities, community housing options, etc.

To ensure an intimate event, and to maximise the return on our collective investment of time, we have strictly limited places on the tour to 35. Within this constraint, it is the collective resolve of the Steering Committee to secure a range of leaders as delegates, representing the upper echelons of industry, academia, health & social services, property & planning, governance, project finance, economic development, arts/sport/tourism, technology & innovation and public policy.

The development of a brand new city in Sydney's outer west and the massive regeneration of its 'middle ring' are herculean tasks requiring professionalism imagination and dogged determination — over decades. London is almost 40 years into the reshaping of East London. Therefore, as part of the tour's legacy program is the development and nurturing of a regional leadership cohort that can help Greater Western Sydney realise its ambition for many years to come.

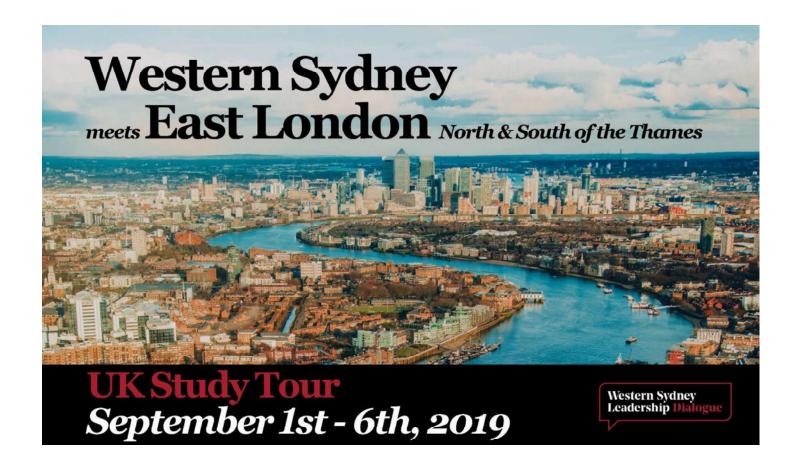
The Steering Committee is working to pull together some exciting elements, including site tours of Stratford's Olympic Park, the Elephant & Castle urban renewal project, hospital & university campuses, Cross Rail and the London Docklands. We are working on private meetings with national and local government leaders, (including UK City Deal originators), planners, investors, regulators, critics and community representatives. We even hope to host a few memorable events at the House of Lords, Canary Wharf, the Australian High Commission and on the River Thames. You can review a high level overview of the program and the cohort list here: https://westernsydney.org.au/east-london-tour-closed

The all-up cost for Mayor Asfour (ex airfares) to participate in this high-level study tour with public and private sector leaders is \$5,000 + GST - a discount against standard fee to encourage his involvement. The dates of the program are confirmed as 1st-6th September 2019.

I look forward to the Mayor joining this high-powered leadership cohort on this special trip and I can be contacted directly on or with any feedback, questions or comments.

Kind regards,

CHRISTOPHER BROWN AM Chairman



Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue's Inaugural International Study Tour

2019 East London

Tour Program



Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue

 $\begin{array}{c} East\ London \\ Study\ Tour \\ September\ 1^{st}-6^{th,}\ 2019 \end{array}$

Overview

Day 1 Sunday September 1	Arrival, walking tour & welcome
Day 2 Monday September 2	Docklands legacy, role of national and metro government in urban regeneration
Day 3 Tuesday September 3	Olympic legacy, community facilities, transport infrastructure and education
Day 4 Wednesday September 4	Health precincts, urban regeneration & innovative funding partnerships
Day 5 Thursday September 5	Riverside & outer East London development. Social housing, community engagement and innovation precincts
Day 6 Friday September 6	Lessons learned, local governance & departure

App Details

To access the app, download it from the Apple App Store or Google Play, install it on your phone, and use the below Event Code to access the East London Study Tour event. From there, use the username and access code emailed to you separately to log in.

- Apple App Store: https://apps.apple.com/us/app/the-event-app-by-eventsair/id1142851582?ls=1
- Google Play: https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.eventsair.attendeeapp
- Event Code: elst2019
- Username & access code: emailed to you separately



Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue

 $\begin{array}{c} \text{East London} \\ \text{Study Tour} \\ \text{September } 1^{\text{st}} - 6^{\text{th,}} \ 2019 \end{array}$

Day 1: Sunday, September 1

Arrival, walking tour & welcome

Prior to 12:00	Arrival in London and bag drop at hotel
11:00 – 15:00	Optional walking tour of King's Cross St Pancras – urban regeneration
	Get the jet lag cobwebs out and fill in time before hotel check-in with lunch followed by a stroll through the urban regeneration miracle of Kings Cross and St Pancras. (It's not actually in East London so it's not officially in the tour program – but it is worth a look!).
	We have a reservation for the group from 12:15pm at <i>Granary Square Brasserie</i> (1-3 Stable Street, Kings Cross) to grab a casual lunch (at delegates' expense) and then we plan to wander around the new development area with knowledgeable locals before heading back to the hotel for check-in and afternoon relaxation.
	Meet in the Novotel Canary Wharf lobby at 11:00am to travel to King's Cross together by public transport. Dress: Casual – comfortable walking shoes Bring: Oyster card, ID, umbrella (if sky is grey)
	Tube: Jubilee line to London Bridge, change for Northern Line to King's Cross St. Pancras Underground.
	Guided by: Dr Tim Williams, Australasia Cities Leader, Arup
	Delegates' own expense
From 15:00 onwards	Hotel check-in Novotel London Canary Wharf 40 Marsh Wall Isle of Dogs, London E14 9TP, UK Phone: +44 20 3530 0500
17:00 – 19:00	Welcome & drinks, Bokan Rooftop Terrace, Novotel Canary Wharf
Deloitte.	Meet and network with fellow delegates, hear about the program ahead, and relax with a drink and finger food from the rooftop terrace of our host hotel with stunning views over Docklands, the Thames River and East London.
	Dress: Smart Casual
	Don't forget to give some thought to <i>your</i> 'best of the west' nomination to share with the group during introductions. Here's a link to our Best of the West for some inspiration: https://westernsydney.org.au/best-of-the-west
	Hosts: Christopher Brown AM, Chair, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue Theo Psychogios, Partner, Financial Advisory, Deloitte
Thereafter	Hosts: Christopher Brown AM, Chair, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue



Western Sydney Leadership <mark>Dialogue</mark>

East London Study Tour September 1st **–** 6^{th,} 2019

Day 2: Monday, September 2

Docklands legacy, role of national and metro government in urban regeneration

From 06:30	Breakfast available at the hotel	
08:00 - 08:30	Daily Briefing: 1st Floor Lounge, Novotel Canary Wharf	
	Dress for the day: Business attire – closed, comfortable walking shoes Bring: Oyster card, Lanyard, ID (driver's licence is acceptable)	
	Daily briefing by: John Burton OBE, Managing Director, Urban Regeneration, Lendlease Dr Tim Williams, Australasia Cities Leader, Arup	
08:45 - 9:00	Walk from Novotel to Canary Wharf Group Office, 1 Canada Square	
09:15 - 10:45	Canary Wharf site inspection & briefing on London Docklands legacy	
CANARY WHARF	Delegates will be hosted by the owners of the Canary Wharf development, viewing the high-tech models of the precinct and talking to the leaders of the business about the past, present and future of the project.	
	Dress: Business attire	
	Hosts - Canary Wharf Group: Howard Dawber, Managing Director, Strategy	
10:45 – 11:30	Tube (Jubilee Line) to Waterloo, then change for Northern Line, and continue to Goodge Street	
11:30 – 14:00	Working lunch at Arup to explore East London's strategic planning legacy from the Olympics, transport projects and social infrastructure	
ARUP	Dress: Business attire Bring: Oyster card, Lanyard, ID (driver's licence is acceptable)	
	Host: Dr Tim Williams, Australasia Cities Leader, Arup	
	Panellists: Baroness Jo Valentine, fmr Chief Executive, London First Sir Peter Hendy CBE, Chair, Network Rail and Chair, LLDC Isabel Dedring, Global Transport Leader, Arup	
	Moderators: Dr Tim Williams, Australasia Cities Leader, Arup Ben Rogers, Director, Centre for London	
14:00 - 15:00	Tube (Northern Line) to Waterloo, then change for Jubilee Line, and continue to London Bridge. A short riverside walk will follow to City Hall.	

Day 2 itinerary continues over the page



Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue

15:00 - 17:00

London Mayor's City Hall briefing on urban development with Transport for London (TfL) and Greater London Authority (GLA)

MAYOR OF LONDON

This bespoke briefing and moderated discussion at City Hall will see the heads of London's transport, planning and housing agencies talk with our cohort about the metropolitan government's role in urban regeneration and community engagement.

Dress: Business attire

Bring: Oyster card, Lanyard, ID (driver's licence is acceptable)

Hosts:

Len Duvall OBE, Labour Leader, London Assembly
David Lunts, Executive Director, Housing
Andrew McMunnigall, Principal Policy Advisor, Growth and Infrastructure, GLA
Jules Pipe CBE, Deputy Mayor, Planning, Regeneration and Skills

17:30 - 18:00

Coach to Bistrotheque, Benthal Green, 23-27 Wadeson St, London

18:00 - 21:30

Tour dinner & East London legacy panel, Bistrotheque, Bethnal Green



A pre-dinner panel of leaders in the early redevelopment of East London talk about the drivers of the transformation, then Lendlease's UK boss will speak about urban regeneration, public / private partnerships, skills exchange and community engagement.

Dress: Business attire

Panellists:

Robert John, former Deputy Chief Executive, Canary Wharf Chris Roberts, former Chair, Thames Gateway Partnership Baroness Margaret Ford OBE, former Chair of the Olympic Park Legacy Company Lord Robert Kerslake, former Head of the UK Civil Service

Moderators:

Dr Tim Williams, Australasia Cities Leader, Arup John Burton OBE, Managing Director, Urban Regeneration, Lendlease

Keynote: Dan Labbad, CEO, Lendlease UK & Europe

After dinner

Coach to Novotel Canary Wharf



Western Sydney Leadership <mark>Dialogue</mark>

 $\begin{array}{c} East\ London \\ Study\ Tour \\ September\ 1^{st}-6^{th,}\ 2019 \end{array}$

Day 3: Tuesday, September 3

Olympic Legacy, community facilities, transport infrastructure and education

From 06:30	Breakfast available at the hotel
08:00 - 08:30	Daily Briefing: 1st Floor Lounge, Novotel Canary Wharf
	Dress for the day : Smart casual – closed, comfortable walking shoes Bring : Lanyard, Oyster Card, ID (driver's licence is acceptable)
	Daily briefing by: Kerryn Vine-Camp, Executive Director, Western Sydney Unit, Federal Dept of Infrastructure, Transport, Cities & Regional Development Charles Moore, CEO, Sydney Olympic Park Authority
9:00 - 9:30	Tube (Jubilee Line) from Canary Wharf Station to Stratford Station
9:30 - 12:30	Briefing & walking tour of QEII Olympic Park Precinct, Stratford
SLEGACY SDEVELOPMENT SCORPORATION	Briefing at London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC) offices and then tour of commercial, environmental, tourism, cultural, retail and sporting infrastructure in Stratford's Olympic legacy site.
	Dress: Smart casual – closed, comfortable walking shoes
	Hosts: Dr Paul Brickell, Executive Director, Regeneration & Community Partnerships, LLDC Lyn Garner, Chief Executive, LLDC Gavin Poole, Chief Executive, Here East
12:30 – 14:30	Lunch & Briefing on Crossrail, Transport for London offices, Stratford
\geq	Working lunch and briefing on multi-billion-dollar Crossrail underground project, which is linking west and east London and driving above-station urban renewal.
Crossrail	Dress: Smart casual
	Hosts - Crossrail: Martin Buck, Commercial Director Tony Meggs CB, Chairman Richard Storer, Community Relations Manager Mark Wild, Chief Executive



Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue

 $\begin{array}{c} \text{East London} \\ \text{Study Tour} \\ \text{September } 1^{\text{st}} - 6^{\text{th,}} \ \text{2019} \end{array}$

14:30 – 16:00	Tour of University College London, Here East Campus development site
≐UCL	UCL is establishing a campus at 'Here East', originally the Media Centre for the 2012 Olympics, now redeveloped as a cultural and innovation precinct.
	Dress: Smart casual – closed, comfortable walking shoes
	Hosts: Prof. Andrew Edkins, Director, The Bartlett Real Estate Institute (UCL East) Prof. Paola Lettieri, Academic Director, UCL East
16:15 – 16:30	Tube (Jubilee Line) from Stratford Station to Canary Wharf Station
16:30 – 18:00	At leisure
18:00 – 18:30	Coach from Novotel Canary Wharf to Australia House, The Strand, 71 Aldwych, London
18:30 onwards	Delegate Reception and Dinner at Australia House, Downer Room
Australian Government Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional Development	Dinner will be held at the Australia High Commission for Western Sydney leaders, including discussion of attracting inward investment for regional infrastructure. Dress: Business attire Bring: Lanyard, Passport (required for entry) Please note you will be unable to bring any large bags into Australia House
	Kerryn Vine-Camp, Executive Director, Western Sydney Unit, Federal Dept of Infrastructure, Transport, Cities & Regional Development Keynote: Matt Anderson PSM, Deputy High Commissioner
	Grace: Rev. Bill Crews AM, Founder and Chairman, Exodus Foundation
	In Conversation with: John Burton OBE, Managing Director, Urban Regeneration, Lendlease Sir Robin Wales, former Mayor of Newham
	In Conversation about Urban Form in East London & Western Sydney Prof. Peter Bishop, Professor in Urban Design, Bartlett School of Architecture Peter Poulet, District Commissioner – Central City, Greater Sydney Commission
	Moderators: Kirsten Andrews, Chief of Staff to the Vice-Chancellor and Director, Government Relations, University of Sydney Dr Andy Marks, Assistant Vice-Chancellor, Strategy & Projects, Western Sydney University
	Panellists: Lakshmi Logathassan, Graduate Scholarship Recipient Andrew Phong, Graduate Scholarship Recipient Geoffrey Winters, Charles Perkins Scholarship, Oxford
fter dinner	Coach to Novotel Canary Wharf



Western Sydney Leadership <mark>Dialogue</mark>

 $\begin{array}{c} \text{East London} \\ \text{Study Tour} \\ \text{September } 1^{\text{st}} - 6^{\text{th,}} \ 2019 \end{array}$

Day 4: Wednesday, September 4

Health precincts, urban regeneration & innovative funding partnerships

From 06:30	Breakfast available at the hotel
08:00 - 08:30	Daily Briefing, 1st Floor Lounge, Novotel Canary Wharf
	Dress for the day: Smart casual – closed, comfortable walking shoes Bring: Oyster Card, Lanyard, ID (driver's licence is acceptable)
	Daily briefing by: Amanda Larkin, Chief Executive, South Western Sydney Local Health Avendra Singh, Partner, Squire Patton Boggs
08:30 - 09:15	Docklands Light Rail from Canary Wharf Station to Shadwell Station
09:15 – 11:30	Briefing & walking tour of new Royal London Hospital, Whitechapel
NHS Barts Health NHS Trust	Tour one of Europe's biggest hospitals, the Royal London, then discussion of NHS' role in public health, urban form, economic development and social cohesion.
	Dress: Smart casual – closed, comfortable walking shoes
	Host: Alwen Williams, Group CEO, Barts Health NHS Trust
11:30 – 12:00	Host: Alwen Williams, Group CEO, Barts Health NHS Trust Coach to Squire Patton Boggs Office, 7 Devonshire Square, Spitalfields
11:30 – 12:00 12:00 – 14:00	
	Coach to Squire Patton Boggs Office, 7 Devonshire Square, Spitalfields
12:00 – 14:00 SQUIRE	Coach to Squire Patton Boggs Office, 7 Devonshire Square, Spitalfields Innovative Funding Partnerships & Working Lunch in City of London Moderated panel debate on value capture, funding partnerships, delivery of major transport projects, community infrastructure facilities and social housing. Dress: Smart casual
12:00 – 14:00 SQUIRE	Coach to Squire Patton Boggs Office, 7 Devonshire Square, Spitalfields Innovative Funding Partnerships & Working Lunch in City of London Moderated panel debate on value capture, funding partnerships, delivery of major transport projects, community infrastructure facilities and social housing. Dress: Smart casual Panellists: Andrew Herring, Partner, Squire Patton Boggs Joanna Rowelle, Director Integrated City Planning, Arup Michael Carr, Director, NAB
12:00 – 14:00 SQUIRE PATTON BOGGS	Coach to Squire Patton Boggs Office, 7 Devonshire Square, Spitalfields Innovative Funding Partnerships & Working Lunch in City of London Moderated panel debate on value capture, funding partnerships, delivery of major transport projects, community infrastructure facilities and social housing. Dress: Smart casual Panellists: Andrew Herring, Partner, Squire Patton Boggs Joanna Rowelle, Director Integrated City Planning, Arup



Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue

 $\begin{array}{c} East\ London \\ Study\ Tour \\ September\ 1^{st}-6^{th,}\ 2019 \end{array}$

14:45 - 17:00

Briefing & walking tour of Elephant & Castle urban regeneration precinct



Dress: Smart casual - closed, comfortable walking shoes

Walking tour of this \$7b private/public regeneration of this neighbourhood south of the Thames, with discussion of community engagement plan and facilities.

Hosts:

John Burton OBE, Managing Director, Urban Regeneration, Lendlease

Presenters:

lain Smith, Communications Manager, Lendlease Elise John-Lewis, Social and Economic Development Manager, Lendlease Kristy Lansdown, Project Director, Elephant Park

17:00 - 17:30

Coach to Canary Wharf/hotel

Thereafter

At leisure



Western Sydney Leadership <mark>Dialogue</mark>

 $\begin{array}{c} East\ London \\ Study\ Tour \\ September\ 1^{st}-6^{th,}\ 2019 \end{array}$

Day 5: Thursday, September 5

Riverside & outer East London development, social housing and innovation precincts

From 06:30	Breakfast available at the hotel	
08:20 - 08:40	Walk to Canary Wharf Pier from Novotel Canary Wharf	
08:45 – 11:15	Thames Boat Tour of East London's riverside developments	
WOODS BAGOT	Dress for the day: Smart casual – closed, comfortable walking shoes Bring: Lanyard, Oyster Card, ID	
	Board the <i>Edwardian</i> , a cruiser built by Sir Richard Branson, for a commentary of riverside development and local communities north and south of the Thames.	
	Hosts: Dr Christian Derix, Principal, Global Leader SUPERSPACE, Woods Bagot Sarah Kay, Director, Global Client Stream Leader, Woods Bagot	
11:15 – 11:30	Walk from Greenwich Pier to Old Royal Naval College, King William Walk, Greenwich Peninsula	
11:30 – 13:00	Lunch at the Old Royal Naval College, Greenwich & Local Government and Community Engagement Forum	
ARUP	The importance of local government and community engagement will be the to of discussion over a working lunch at the historic Naval College at Greenwich, with leaders of local councils and communications professionals.	
	Dress: Smart casual – closed, comfortable walking shoes	
	Host: David Harding, Principal, Arup Sydney	
	Panellists: Cllr Clare Coghill, Leader, Waltham Forest Cllr Danny Thorpe, Leader, Royal Borough of Greenwich Cllr Kyrsten Perry, Tower Hamlets Clr Khal Asfour, Mayor, Canterbury Bankstown Kathy Jones, Executive Chair, KJA and ECF	
	Moderator: Christopher Brown AM, Chair, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue David Borger, Executive Director, Western Sydney Business Chamber	
13:00 – 14:30	Coach tour of outer East London boroughs	
КЈА 💚	Guided coach tour of communities and developments such as Woolwich, Abbey Wood, Thamesmead, Bluewater, QEII Bridge and Barking Riverside.	
engage, communicate, facilitate.	Dress: Smart casual Host: Chris Roberts, former Chair, Thames Gateway Partnership	

Day 5 itinerary continues over the page



Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue

 $\begin{array}{c} East\ London \\ Study\ Tour \\ September\ 1^{st}-6^{th,}\ 2019 \end{array}$

14:30 – 16:00	Social Housing Forum, University of East London, Docklands campus
	A moderated panel session to discuss the development, governance and operations of social housing projects and partnerships in East London.
	Dress: Smart casual – closed, comfortable walking shoes
	Panellists: Matthew Carpen, Managing Director, Barking Riverside London Toby Lloyd, Special Adviser, 10 Downing Street Cllr Darren Rodwell, Leader, Barking & Dagenham Council Brendan Sarsfield, Chief Executive, Peabody
16:00 – 17:30	Tour of University of East London's Knowledge Dock innovation precinct, Docklands Campus and signing of UEL/Western partnership
University of East London WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY	We will tour UEL campus near Royal Albert Dock and its new innovation precinct and co-working space. We will also witness the signing of a MOU between UEL and Western Sydney University.
w	Dress: Smart casual – closed, comfortable walking shoes
	Hosts: Prof. Verity Brown, Pro-Vice Chancellor (Impact & Innovation), UEL Prof. Barney Glover AO, Vice Chancellor & President, Western Sydney University
17:30 – 18:00	Docklands Light Rail from Cyprus to Canning Town Station, change to Tube (Jubilee Line) to travel from Caning Town Station to Canary Wharf Station
18:00 – 19:10	At leisure
19:10 - 19:30	Walk to Museum of London, Docklands, West India Quay, Canary Wharf
19:30 – 22.00	Study Tour farewell dinner, Museum of London, Docklands
NSW	Delegates will hear a keynote address about the similarities and differences in the development of East London and Western Sydney from a global leader who has dominated both jurisdictions and delivered Olympic infrastructure in both cities.
GOVERNMENT	Dress: Smart casual
EY	Hosts: Peter Poulet, Central District Commissioner, GSC Caitlin Francis, Partner, EY Sydney
	Speaker: Sir David Higgins, Chairman, Gatwick Airport (and fmr CEO of London's Olympic Delivery Authority; English Partnerships, Network Rail & Lendlease Australia)
Thereafter	Walk to Novotel Canary Wharf



Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue

 $\begin{array}{c} \text{East London} \\ \text{Study Tour} \\ \text{September } 1^{\text{st}} - 6^{\text{th,}} \ 2019 \end{array}$

Day 6: Friday September 6

Lessons learned, local governance & departure

From 06:30	Breakfast available at the hotel
08:00 - 08:30	Daily Briefing, 1st Floor Lounge, Novotel Canary Wharf
	Christopher Brown AM, Chair, Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue
09:00 - 11:00	(Optional) Discussion on regional advocacy and legacy, Canary Wharf
	A select group of our travelling cohort will meet with East London civic and business leaders about regional advocacy, based on Western Sydney success.
	Dress: Smart casual
No later than 12:00	Hotel check-out





On the ground Study Tour contacts:

Western Sydney Leadership Dialogue

Christopher Brown

Phone: Email:

Faith Halliday

Phone: Email:

Brett Towers

Phone: Email: