

### Summary of contact with key witnesses summonsed to appear at the PC7 Hills Shire Council inquiry to 16 February 2023

Witness	First contact	First invitation to give evidence	Second invitation to give evidence	Email notification of summons sent	Summons service attempts by parliamentary staff
Mr Christian Ellis	14 December 2022 emailed invitation to make submission. Phoned mobile 14 December, left message. Later spoke to him on his mobile, confirmed the email address I have is correct.	30 January 2023, by email. Followed up with a phone call on 1 February. He said he would check emails and get back to me.	3 February, letter from chair sent by email. Followed up with phone call 6 February, left message. No response.	8 February - email notification of summons. Followed up with phone call, left message asking for response. No response.	10 February - 2 service attempts at residential address in regional NSW. 13 February - 1 service attempt made at a Sydney residence.
Cr Virginia Ellis	13 December 2022 emailed invitation to make submission to council address. No response.	30 January 2023, by email to council address. Followed up with phone call to council mobile on 1 February, left message. No response.	3 February, letter from chair sent by email. Followed up with phone call 6 February, left message. 7 February, re-sent invitation to NSW Parliament email. Delivery receipt received, but no response.	8 February - email notification of summons to council and parliament email addresses. Followed up with phone call to council mobile, left message asking for response. 10 February received a 'read receipt' to the email sent to council address.	10 February - 2 service attempts at place of work, 1 attempt at residential address. 13 February - 1 service attempt at place of work, 1 attempt at residential address.
Mr Jean-Claude Perrottet	30 January 2023 phoned him at his place of work, he provided his personal email address. I advised an invitation would be sent by email.	30 January 2023, by email. 1 February called mobile, left message. No response.	3 February, letter from chair sent by email. Followed up with phone call 6 February, went to voicemail, left message. No response.	8 February - email notification of summons. Followed up with phone call, left message asking for response. No response.	10 February - 1 service attempt at place of work, 1 attempt at residential address. 13 February - 1 service attempt at residential address.
Mr Charles Perrottet	30 January 2023, phoned his place of work, spoke to reception, confirmed he works there, left a message with reception, explaining the purpose of the call, asking him to contact me. No response.	31 January 2023, by email. Follow up call to mobile - left message asking him to confirm receipt of email. No response.	3 February, letter from chair sent by email. 6 February followed up with a phone call, went to voicemail, left message. No response. 15 February. A new invitation letter from the Chair sent by email and express posted to a Victorian address. 16 February, followed up with call to mobile, went to voicemail, left message.	8 February - email notification of summons. Followed up with phone call, left message asking for response. Received 'out of office' reply to the email.	10 February - 1 service attempt at a residential address in Sydney. New information received that he is currently in Victoria. 15 February - new invitation to appear issued - sent by email and express post.

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**From:** Portfolio Committee 7  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 7 February 2023 9:39 AM  
**Subject:** PC7 - Hills Shire Council inquiry - witness update - notice of meeting 10 am  
Wednesday 8 February via webex  
**Attachments:**

Dear members

I write at the request of the Chair to provide an update on witnesses for the Hills Shire Council inquiry public hearings, noting that many of the invited witnesses have not responded by the deadline of 5pm Monday.

The Chair proposes the committee meet at **10 am, Wednesday 8 February via Webex** to consider next steps, including possible issuing of summonses.

**Invitation accepted**

- Mr Michael Edgar, General Manager, Hills Shire Council, is available on 15 February (correspondence attached)
- Dr Michelle Byrne, former Mayor, Hills Shire Council, is available the afternoon of 16 February (correspondence attached)

**Invitation declined**

- Ms Robyn Preston MP, who had previously accepted, has since emailed to decline the invitation (correspondence attached)
- Mr David Elliott has declined to nominate alternative dates on which he could appear (correspondence attached)

**Invitations re-issued**

Invitation letters from the Chair noting the committee's powers to summons witnesses were sent via email on Friday to the following individuals, asking for a response by **5pm Monday 6 February**. Those who had not responded by 4.00 pm were followed up with a phone call/voice message. Their status is summarised below:

- Dr Michelle Byrne – responded – accepted.
- Mr Jean Nassif – no response
- Mr Christian Ellis – no response
- Cr Virginia Ellis – no response
- Mr Charles Perrottet – no response
- Mr Jean-Claude Perrottet – no response
- Mr Frits Mare – requested further information, indicated he will respond on Tuesday.

A letter from the Chair to The Hills Shire Council (General Manager, cc'd to Mayor) re-issuing an invitation and noting the committee's powers to summon witnesses was sent on Monday morning, asking for a response by **10 am Wednesday 8 February**. The Council's General Manager has responded indicating he will attend on behalf of Council.

Letters from the Chair inviting the following MPs to indicate if they are available on other dates in February, were sent via email on Friday, seeking a response by **Wednesday 8 February**:

- Mr Ray Williams MP
- Mr David Elliott MP – responded saying his diary is very full

**Unable to contact -**

The secretariat has been unable to reach the following potential witnesses:

- Mr Jeremy Greenwood
- Mr Ronnie Wardan

**Action required:** Please note **10 am Wednesday 8 March** in your calendars for a meeting via Webex to consider next steps.

The secretariat will distribute agenda and meeting papers before the meeting.

Best regards

Peta

**Peta Leemen**

Principal Council Officer | Upper House Committees | Legislative Council  
Parliament of New South Wales

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**From:**  
**Sent:** Friday, 10 February 2023 11:57 AM  
**To:** Tina Higgins  
**Cc:** Peta Leemen  
**Subject:** Summons - Clr Ellis

Hi Tina

As discussed, I attempted to serve Clr Ellis at 11.00 am and left the office unsuccessful. I then made a second attempt at the electoral office as follows -

- I was greeted by Ms [redacted] Electoral Officer at approximately 11.26 am at the member for Hawkesbury's electorate office in Richmond
- I explained who I was and that I was there to serve a document under the Parliamentary Evidence Act and asked to see Ms Ellis
- I was told 'Ms Ellis is not present'
- I then asked to make an appointment today and was told that 'It was not possible', I asked why and was met with silence
- I then asked if Ms Ellis was physically present in the office and I was told 'No'
- I then asked what her pattern of work is and was told 'full time employee' so I asked when she would be in the office next and Ms [redacted] responded - 'I don't know but I don't think I can tell you anyway'
- I again stressed that it was very important that I see Ms Ellis and could I make an appointment for next week and was told 'No'
- I asked to see the Manager and I was told 'There is no manager in today and Ms Preston is not in the office'
- I left the electorate office at approximately 11.40 am
- This exchange was witnessed by [redacted], Electoral Officer.

I will now attempt the home address of Ms Ellis and Mr Jean-Claude Perrottet.

Kind regards

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**From:**  
**Sent:** Friday, 10 February 2023 12:01 PM  
**To:** Tina Higgins  
**Subject:** Summons

Tina

I tried to serve the summons for Mr Ellis at 11.55 am today at his residence. No one answered the door, and I sighted no one or cars etc on the grounds. I will try again in shortly.

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**From:**  
**Sent:** Friday, 10 February 2023 12:30 PM  
**To:** Tina Higgins; Peta Leemen  
**Cc:** Portfolio Committee 7  
**Subject:** Attempt to serve Mr Charles Darren Edward Perrottet

Dear Tina

As discussed, at approximately 11 am, I attempted to serve Mr Charles Darren Edward Perrottet at  
but was unsuccessful on account of the following:

- Upon arrival at the address I spoke to a gentleman through the intercom who identified himself as Darren Edward Charles Perrottet
- Darren advised that he was not at home but at work, and so I could not sight him in person
- Darren advised that he was not Charles Perrottet, the brother of Premier Dominic Perrottet, but rather a distant relative
- Darren confirmed that the contact phone number we have on file was not his and advised in turn that his mobile number is                      He also confirmed that he does not work for      (relevant to the email address we have on file for Charles Perrottet)
- Darren advised that he has no knowledge of the matters being inquired to by the committee and has not received any communication from the secretariat regarding his appearance before the committee.
- Darren maintains this is a case of "mistaken identity" as he is not Charles Darren Edward Perrottet.

Darren was open to being contacted further if required. He also requested that we confirm that his attendance is not required if in fact it is not him the committee is seeking to summons.

Kind regards

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**From:**

**Sent:** Friday, 10 February 2023 12:31 PM

**To:** Tina Higgins

**Subject:** File note

Hi Tina

Please find below a file note summary of today's attempted service of a summons to Jean-Claude Perrottet.

Kind regards

**File note**

- At approximately 11.15am I entered Two offices were situated on the floor – one with the door open, the other with the door closed. The sign on the wall indicated it was a financial services company.
- I walked straight into the office with the door open and asked for Jean-Claude. One of the men said that he works in the office next door.
- I rang the doorbell on the next office and asked the man who opened the door if I could speak to Jean-Claude. He apologised and said that he was on leave. I said I had a package for him and asked if he might be back today or on Monday. The man advised that he was on leave 'for a long block' and gestured with his hands to indicate 'long'.
- The man was standing in the door way. The office behind him led around to the right behind a wall so I could not see the faces of the people present in the office. I thanked him and left.

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**From:** Portfolio Committee 7  
**Sent:** Friday, 10 February 2023 3:08 PM  
**To:** Portfolio Committee 7  
**Subject:** FW: Summons - Clr Ellis

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**From:**  
**Sent:** Friday, 10 February 2023 1:00 PM  
**To:** Tina Higgins ; Peta Leemen  
**Subject:** Re: Summons - Clr Ellis

I've just visited Clr Ellis's home address (approx 12.40 pm) - it is gated but there is an intercom - I buzzed, a woman answered, I asked for Clr Ellis and was told she wasn't home. I told her I had some documents for Clr Ellis and asked when she would be back and she said she didn't know. I asked for her name and she said and said she is dog sitting (I could hear dogs in the background). I asked if I should drop by again over the weekend or next week and she said she wasn't sure when Clr Ellis would be back.

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**From:** Portfolio Committee 7  
**Sent:** Friday, 10 February 2023 3:09 PM  
**To:** Portfolio Committee 7  
**Subject:** FW: Summons - Jean-Claude Perrottet

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**From:**  
**Sent:** Friday, 10 February 2023 1:25 PM  
**To:** Tina Higgins  
**Cc:** Peta Leemen  
**Subject:** Summons - Jean-Claude Perrottet

Visited his residence at approx 1.18 pm rang the door bell twice (no answer and no movement or sounds from the house) and have observed the property from my car for the last few minutes - all but two of the curtains on the windows are closed (open curtains are on upper windows) still no movement and no cars in the driveway

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**From:**  
**Sent:** Friday, 10 February 2023 3:58 PM  
**To:** Tina Higgins  
**Cc:** Peta Leemen  
**Subject:** Re: Summons

Tina

This is to confirm that I attempted a second time to serve a summons on Mr Ellis at the nominated address of  
at 1.05 pm today without success.

Kind regards

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**From:** Peta Leemen  
**Sent:** Monday, 13 February 2023 5:18 PM  
**To:** Portfolio Committee 7  
**Subject:** Officer update - attempted service of summons to four witnesses

Notes from 13 February 2023

Clr Virginia Ellis - Hawkesbury electorate office

- I was met at the electorate office counter by [redacted] Electorate Officer at approx 2.30 pm.
- I asked for Ms Ellis and was told she was not available.
- I asked if she was physically present in the office today and Ms [redacted] refused to confirm her whereabouts and could not tell me when she would be in next.
- I asked if I could make an appointment and was told no.
- I asked if Ms Robyn Preston, Member for Hawkesbury, was in the office and I was told she was not available.
- I asked if I could make an appointment and was told that the only way to make an appointment was to send an email and I couldn't make an appointment over the counter.
- Ms [redacted] asked for my name and to see my ID. I told her my name and department and showed her my parliamentary pass.
- There was one other female presenting person in the office however they walked further into the office (behind a wall) as soon as I approached the counter. I could not ascertain who the person was.
- I left the electorate office at approximately 2.35 pm.

Clr Virginia Ellis and Mr Christian Ellis

- At approximately 3.20 pm I approached the residence at [redacted].
- As on Friday, the gate was securely closed across the driveway so I pressed the buzzer.
- The buzzer was again answered by ... (the dog sitter) and I asked for Virginia and Christian.
- I was told that they weren't home which seemed to indicate that Christian may be in Sydney.
- I asked when they would be back ... said that she didn't know.
- I left the residence at approximately 3.25pm.

Mr Jean-Claude Perrottet

- I approached the residence at approximately 4.05 pm, the curtains were drawn however the garage door was up and two cars were visible.
- I rang the doorbell twice and could not hear or see any movement.
- As the garage door was open I returned to my car and watched the house (there was no movement). I re-approached the residence at approximately 4.13 pm.
- I again rang the doorbell twice and could not hear or see any movement.
- I left the residence at approximately 4.15 pm.

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**From:** Portfolio Committee 7  
**Sent:** Monday, 13 February 2023 5:32 PM  
**To:** Portfolio Committee 7  
**Subject:** FW: PC7 - Hills Shire Council Inquiry - update on attempts to serve summonses to witnesses - hearing schedule 15 and 16 February  
**Attachments:** Officer update - attempted service of summons to four witnesses

Dear members

I write to provide an update on further attempts this afternoon to serve summons on witnesses for the Hills Shire Council Inquiry. None have been successful. Notes from the officer who made the attempts are attached.

Second/third attempts:

- **Councillor Virginia Ellis** – an attempt made at the . A further attempt at her residential address in
- **Mr Christian Ellis** – an attempt made at the residential address of Councillor Virginia Ellis, where he appears to be residing
- **Mr Jean-Claude Perrottet** – an attempt made at his registered residential address.

No response to invitation

We further advise that **Mr Jeremy Greenwood** has not responded to an invitation to appear, which was express-posted to him last week. As we do not have a phone number or email address for him we have not been able to follow up on the invitation. The committee may consider next steps at its meeting on Wednesday.

**Hearing schedule 15 and 16 February**

I advise that the committee has confirmed witnesses for the following times on 15 and 16 February:

15 February

9.30 am -10.00 am **Mr Frits Maré**

10.15am – 12.30 pm **Mr Michael Edgar**, General Manager, Hills Shire Council

16 February

1.30 pm – 2.30 pm **Dr Michelle Byrne**, Former Mayor, Hills Shire Council.

(Times have been arranged with witnesses according to availability, noting Dr Byrne was not available on 15 February)

Best regards

Peta

**Peta Leemen**

Principal Council Officer | Upper House Committees | Legislative Council  
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