

From: [Dominic Ofner](#)
To: [PAWC](#)
Subject: RE: Public Accountability and Works Committee inquiry into the integrity, efficacy, and value for money of the Local Small Commitments Allocation process - Post hearing responses - 28 March 2025
Date: Tuesday, 13 May 2025 10:18:07 PM
Attachments:

[Attachments for PAWC supplementary questions Ofner.pdf](#)
[PAWC supplementary questions and questions on notice - Dominic Ofner.pdf](#)

Good evening

Please find attached my responses to questions on notice and supplementary questions, and relevant documents as requested by the Committee.

Please note, the redacted material is either confidential Party material not relevant to the inquiry or private contact details for individuals who no longer work for the Labor Party or Parliamentary Party.

Regards
Dominic Ofner

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

- 1. The Hon. CHRIS RATH: Mr Ofner, would you be able to provide to this Committee the communications that went out to those candidates, with what the process was and the nomination process?***

See attached documents.

- 2. The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL: Mr Ofner, perhaps you could take on notice—and I appreciate what you said, Mr Nanva, about it being a busy time—whether there are any records of who communicated from the parliamentary team into headquarters at that campaign level? If you could provide that back on notice, that would be great.***

According to campaign records, Josh Wright from the then-Opposition Leader's Office and Elizabeth Butterworth from the office of John Graham were the points of contact about the local commitment process in the Parliamentary Party.

- 3. The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL: Do you know, Mr Ofner? Do you remember?***
DOMINIC OFNER: The specifics of who in the staffing pool of the parliamentary party? I'd have to take that on notice. But it certainly aligns with my recollection that there were staff in the leader's office who were, essentially, managing the forms as such, which would have included the information in response to the criteria and, included in that, any conflict of interest declarations.
The Hon. SARAH MITCHELL: If you could provide on notice who they were that it went back to. I mean, again, I appreciate if it didn't go back to your offices, but it would be good to know where they were sent to.
The Hon. CHRIS RATH: And maybe a copy of the nomination form as well, if you could provide that to us on notice.

Refer to attached documents and to previous answer.

- 4. The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Are you able to provide the extract that refers to this local commitments to the Committee?***
DOMINIC OFNER: I'm not sure if it does. That's the first thing. I'm not sure; I can't remember.
The Hon. MARK LATHAM: But if it does, can you provide it to the Committee?
DOMINIC OFNER: I'd have to take that on notice.

See relevant extract in attached documents.

- 5. The Hon. MARK LATHAM: Were they all preselected at that point?***
DOMINIC OFNER: I don't think so, actually.
The Hon. MARK LATHAM: So which ones were still to be selected?
DOMINIC OFNER: I don't know. I can take that on notice.

Candidates for the following seats were still to be preselected at the time in question: Cabramatta, Northern Tablelands, Fairfield, Epping, Wahroonga, Oxley, Murray, Cronulla, Monaro and Manly.

Local small commitments fund

Guidelines for assessment

Each electorate will be allocated a nominal \$400,000 under the fund.

Candidates will make recommendations to the Expenditure Review Committee subcommittee as to the proposed allocation of funds, up to that total limit.

The relevant candidate may assess the eligible applications in their electorate on how they address four Assessment Criteria:

1. Enhancing facilities: the project develops a vibrant, sustainable, and inclusive community through the enhancement or construction of community infrastructure.
2. Meeting community needs: the project supports activities and services needed by local communities.
3. Increasing community participation: the project encourages participation in activities or services needed by a broad section of the community.
4. The organisation's capacity: the applicant has the capacity to deliver the project on time and within scope.

Candidates will be invited to make funding recommendations for projects for Shadow ERC consideration.

Partial funding may be recommended for some projects to increase the benefit to be obtained from the funding allocated to each electorate. Reasons for recommending partial funding may include 'High demand for funds'; 'Some project activities not eligible' and 'Applicant advised part of the project can proceed with partial funding'.

In assessing and in making funding recommendations, candidates may give consideration to local requests for funding, the geographical spread of recommended projects across the electorate and whether the project has received funding from other state or federal government sources.

Candidates will be required to complete a conflict of interest declaration as a part of the assessment process.

2023 Local Commitments Request

This form is to submit a 2023 State election local commitment request to Campaign HQ for processing.

Please ensure you have read the guidelines before making your request(s). [Guidelines for assessment are attached here.](#)

Please submit a new request for each individual funding proposal.

Your commitment request will be processed as soon as possible. Please provide as much details as possible and as early as possible for timely assessment.

If you require any assistance or want to follow up, please email commitments@nswlabor.org.au or contact your Organiser.

If you have issues submitting the form, please visit <https://www.nswlabor.org.au/commitments2023>

Electorate *

- Choose -

Commitment *

Short statement on what Labor would commit to.

Portfolio *

Further Details *

What does the commitment involve? What issue are we fixing? What were Labor's previous commitments? Have the Liberals or Nationals committed to anything similar?

Community Benefit/Public Interest *

Why is this important to the local community?

Cost estimate *

Funding commitment towards project *

What is the capped amount that Labor is committing towards this project?

Has the Government committed to this? *

☐ Yes

☐ No

- ☐ Unsure
- ☐ Partially
- ☐ Expected to

Did Labor make this commitment at the 2019 election?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Unsure
- ☐ Partially

Campaign Plan *

What is the campaign plan to make the most of this commitment? Which stakeholders have or will you engage with?

Is this time sensitive? *

If yes, when does the announcement need to happen by & why?

Conflict of interests (if any) *

Do you have any actual, potential or perceived, direct or indirect personal interests in this commitment?

A conflict of interest (e.g. MP or relative is member of local soccer club receiving funding) may not rule out a commitment but we need to be aware of any potential conflicts.

Campaign contact *

Name, email and phone number of the best contact in regards to this commitment.

Submit any supporting documents here

Add file



SUBMIT

Made with  Formfacade

CAMPAIGN BULLETIN

A FRESH START FOR NSW

LOCAL COMMITMENT REQUESTS

NSW Labor has opened local small commitments funding requests.

This will allow campaigns to make small commitments and campaign with local community groups in a way which is highly responsive during the campaign

Small commitments up to a total of \$400,000 for each electorate will be tracked, accounted for and costed as a part of this allocation.

[Guidelines for assessment are attached here.](#)

[Local commitment requests can be submitted online here.](#)

Further commitment requests can be submitted at a later date if required. The final deadline for last requests will be in early March.

Please submit a separate form for each individual small commitment request in **order of priority**.

Initial commitment requests should be **submitted by Wednesday 1 February** for assessment by Labor's Expenditure Review Committee.

It is up to the local campaign to recommend the number and size of commitments up to the suggested limit.

This process is being established so that a future Labor Government can deliver every promise made during the course of the campaign.

Your commitment request will be processed **as soon as possible**. Please provide as much detail as possible for timely assessment.

is approved, rejected or requires amending.

If approved, Campaign Headquarters will liaise with Members and staff regarding the announcement.

Do not announce any requests until approved.

If you require any assistance, please email commitments@nswlabor.org.au.

NSW Labor

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LOCAL COMMITMENTS BRIEFINGS

LOCAL COMMITMENTS ZOOM BRIEFINGS

Join us for an online briefing about the local commitments process.

WHEN: 6PM Monday 30 & 6PM Tuesday 31 January

WHERE: Zoom - link shared upon RSVP.

RSVP: [REDACTED]

We will be running the briefing twice to give campaigns the best opportunity to attend - first at 6PM on Monday 30 Jan, then again at 6PM on Tuesday 31 Jan.

The same content will be covered in both sessions. **You do not need to attend both.**

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LOCAL COMMITMENT REQUESTS

ZOOM Q&A SESSION

To help with any questions you may have about the process, we are hosting a Zoom Q&A session at 6PM tonight.

Join Zoom Meeting

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

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[Guidelines for assessment are attached here.](#)

Local commitment requests can be [submitted online here](#), or by visiting www.nswlabor.org.au/commitments2023

order of priority.

Commitment requests must be submitted ASAP for assessment by Labor's Expenditure Review Committee.

The final date to make submissions is this Friday 3 March 2023.

It is up to the local campaign to recommend the number and size of commitments up to the suggested limit.

This process is being established so that a future Labor Government can deliver every promise made during the course of the campaign.

Your commitment request will be processed as soon as possible. Please provide as much detail as possible for timely assessment.

The contact you provide on the form will be updated as to whether your request is approved, rejected or requires amending.

If approved, Campaign Headquarters will liaise with Members and staff regarding the announcement.

Do not announce any requests until approved.

If you require any assistance, please email commitments@nswlabor.org.au

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Do not announce any requests until approved.

If you require any assistance, please email commitments@nswlabor.org.au

ZOOM Q&A SESSION

To help with any questions you may have about the process, we will be hosting a Zoom Q&A session next week,

WHEN: 6PM, Monday 27 February 2023

WHERE: Zoom - link upon RSVP

RSVP: 

If you require any assistance, please email commitments@nswlabor.org.au

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A positive feature of the local commitment process was the manner in which every electorate, no matter its margin or Party status, would receive an equal amount of funding as part of the Local Small Commitments Allocation. The program was designed to combat the former Government's practice of favouring Liberal and National electorates over other electorates.



[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

49. That probity and integrity underpin the local commitments process, making it very clear that any commitment would be an efficient, effective, economical and ethical use of the money and would represent value for money.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]