



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

GENERAL PURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEES

BUDGET ESTIMATES 2015-2016 Supplementary Questions

General Purpose Standing Committee No. 6

Local Government

Friday 4 September 2015

Answers due by: Wednesday 30 September 2015

Budget Estimates Secretariat

Phone 9230 3081

budget.estimateds@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Questions from Shaoquett Moselmane [on behalf of the NSW Labor Opposition]

GPSC No 6

Local Government

4 September

Local Government Misc.

1. What governance structure are you proposing to put in place for any forcibly amalgamated councils following your 'Fit for the Future' process, until elections are eventually held?
 - a) Are you going to appoint administrators?
 - b) How are they going to be selected?
 - c) Will there be any role for current mayors and general managers?
2. What steps will the government take to ensure employees of any amalgamated councils are offered the same five year guarantee of no forced redundancies?
3. A number of the forcibly amalgamated councils in Queensland have now de-amalgamated. Now a number of areas in the amalgamated city of Auckland in New Zealand are also seeking to de-amalgamate, and the process has been backed by the High Court. Under your Fit for the Future forced amalgamations, what legal and administrative process will you put in place if communities wish to de-amalgamate at some stage in the future?
4. How much has been spent by local councils in NSW to comply with the requirements of the Fit for the Future policy, including making the submissions that are being assessed by IPART?
5. Will the NSW Government force through the council mergers against the wishes of the councils involved?
6. Given that nationally around 14,000 dog bite victims present at hospitals each year, and four people every day are hospitalised, what action have you taken to ensure that a nationally consistent approach is put in place to reduce the harm caused by dangerous dogs, including a register of dog bites to track incidents and record the value or otherwise of actions such as banning specific breeds?
7. In relation to your 'Cogs' advertising campaign regarding local councils:
 - a) What factors were considered to determine that Saatchi and Saatchi's proposal considered the best?
 - b) Was Saatchi and Saatchi's proposal the least expensive?
 - c) What was the brief given to Saatchi and Saatchi?
 - d) What was the budget for the entire Cogs campaign?
 - e) What was the budget for the Saatchi and Saatchi part of the campaign?
8. Given the issue of cost shifting from other levels of government onto local councils, why are the proposed lower interest loans proposed to be made available by Government, not currently available to local councils?

9. What progress has the government made in implementing the 58 out of the 65 ILGRP recommendations that it supported or partially supported? Will the government provide an implementation report on each one?
 - a) In particular, what are the details of the implantation of the 11 recommendations which relate to the funding model for local government?
10. Have there been any meetings within government to consider cutting the number of local councils in Sydney from 41 to around 22?
 - a) If so, when were these meetings held?
 - b) Who was involved?
 - c) What was the outcome of the discussion?
11. Was your office first made aware of concerns relating to Auburn Council and the operation of section 451 of the *Local Government Act* in December last year?
 - a) If not, when did your office become aware?
 - b) What action do you propose to take?
 - c) Why has it taken you so long to take any action?
12. On how many times since it was enacted have the disclosure provisions of sections 451 (4) and (5) been used?
 - a) In what councils were they used, and on how many occasions in each case?

Ministerial Office Administration

13. How many staff are in your ministerial office?
 - a) What was the average salary for staff members in your office during 2014-15?
 - b) What is the average salary for a ministerial staffer in your office based on current appointments?
14. How many blackberries/smart phones are assigned to your staff?
 - a) For each phone, how much was each bill in the past financial year?
 - b) How many phones have been lost or replaced due to damage in your office?
 - i. What is the cost of replacing those phones?
15. How many iPads or tablets does DPC assign to your Ministerial office and to whom have they been issued?
 - a) What is the cost of providing iPads or tablets to your Ministerial Office?
 - b) How many iPads or tablets have been replaced due to lost or damage?
 - i. What was the cost of replacing these devices?
16. Did any your or your ministerial staff incur data charges on a mobile phone or tablet device greater than \$1000 for a single billing period?
 - a) If so, how many times did this occur?
 - i. What was the individual cost of each data charge over \$1000 for a single billing period?
17. Has any artwork been purchased or leased for display in your office?
 - a) What is the cost of this?

18. Have any floral displays or indoor plants been hired or leased for display in your ministerial office?
 - a) If so, what was the cost of these items?
19. What is the total cost of all subscriptions by you and your staff to online news services, newspapers, magazines, journals and periodicals?
 - a) What are these services/newspapers/magazines/journals/periodicals?
 - i. Who is the subscriber for each of these?
20. What was the total value of all gifts purchased for use by you and your office?
 - a) What were the gifts purchased?
 - i. Who were they gifted to?
21. Do you purchase bottled water or provide water coolers for your office?
 - a) What is the cost of this?
22. Can you advise the names of all contractors/consultants employed and/or paid for by your office, under any agreement, contract or fee-for -service arrangement in 2014-15?
 - a) Do they have ABN's?
 - i. If so, please provide details?
 - b) Details of paid or unpaid invoices and amounts?
 - c) Details of services and fees provided by each contractor and or consultant?
23. Details of the agreement between your office and any contractors/consultants engaged by your office?

Ministerial And Office Travel

24. Have any of your overseas trips in the past year been paid for in part or in full by using public money?
 - a) If so, did any of your relatives or friends accompany you on these trips?
25. Have you undertaken any official overseas travel that was privately funded?
 - a) What were the nature of these trips?
 - b) Who paid for these trips?
26. What was the total bill for your office in 2014-15 for:
 - a) Taxi hire
 - b) Limousine hire
 - c) Private hire care
 - d) Hire car rental
27. Have you ever used Uber?
 - a) If yes, were any of these occasions in an UberX vehicle?

28. Have you or anyone in your office used Uber services travelling to or from work-related events, meetings or functions?
 - a) Were any of those services in an UberX vehicle?
29. Have you or anyone in your office sought reimbursement for using Uber services to travel to or from work-related events, meetings or functions?
 - a) What is the value of those reimbursements?
30. Have you used Airbnb?
31. Have you or anyone in your office used Airbnb as an accommodation solution whilst travelling on official business?
32. Have any planes or helicopters been chartered by you or your office and paid for with public money?
 - a) If yes, will you please detail each trip, the method of transport and the cost?
33. What non-standard features are fitted to your ministerial vehicle?
 - a) What is the cost of each non-standard feature?

Labour Hire Firms

34. Do any Departments/agencies within your portfolio responsibilities utilise the services of Labour Hire Firms? If yes, please advise in table form:
 - a) The names of the firms utilised
 - b) The total amount paid to each firm engaged
 - c) The average tenure period for an employee provided by a labour hire company
 - d) The longest tenure for an employee provided by a labour hire company
 - e) The duties conducted by employees engaged through a labour hire company
 - f) The office locations of employees engaged through a labour hire company
 - g) The highest hourly or daily rate paid to an employee provided by a labour hire company

Media And Public Relations

35. How many media or public relations advisers are employed for each of your portfolio agencies?
36. What is the forecast for the current financial year for the number of media or public relations advisers to be employed and their total cost?
37. What is the total cost of media monitoring services used by Departments/agencies within your portfolio responsibilities?
38. Have you had media training or speech training?
 - a) If yes, who paid for it?
 - b) If paid by taxpayers, what was the amount?

Consultants, Lobbyists And Former Parliamentarians

39. Have you, your office or your Departmental Officers had any meetings with former MP Chris Hartcher in the time since he has left the Parliament?
- Who attended those meetings?
 - What was the nature of those meetings?
 - What was discussed?
 - Were any records of those meetings kept?
40. Have you, your office or your Departmental Officers had any meetings with former MP Andrew Stoner in the time since he has left the Parliament?
- Who attended those meetings?
 - What was the nature of those meetings?
 - What was discussed?
 - Were any records of those meetings kept?
41. Have you, your office or your Departmental Officers had any meetings with former MP Tim Owen in the time since he has left the Parliament?
- Who attended those meetings?
 - What was the nature of those meetings?
 - What was discussed?
 - Were any records of those meetings kept?
42. Have you, your office or your Departmental Officers had any meetings with former MP Craig Baumann in the time since he has left the Parliament?
- Who attended those meetings?
 - What was the nature of those meetings?
 - What was discussed?
 - Were any records of those meetings kept?
43. Have you, your office or your Departmental Officers had any meetings with former MP Andrew Cornwell in the time since he has left the Parliament?
- Who attended those meetings?
 - What was the nature of those meetings?
 - What was discussed?
 - Were any records of those meetings kept?
44. Have you, your office or your Departmental Officers had any meetings with former MP Chris Spence in the time since he has left the Parliament?
- Who attended those meetings?
 - What was the nature of those meetings?
 - What was discussed?
 - Were any records of those meetings kept?
45. Have you, your office or your Departmental Officers had any meetings with former MP Darren Webber in the time since he has left the Parliament?

- a) Who attended those meetings?
 - b) What was the nature of those meetings?
 - c) What was discussed?
 - d) Were any records of those meetings kept?
46. Have you, your office or your Departmental Officers had any meetings with former MP Garry Edwards in the time since he has left the Parliament?
- a) Who attended those meetings?
 - b) What was the nature of those meetings?
 - c) What was discussed?
 - d) Were any records of those meetings kept?
47. Have you, your office or your Departmental Officers had any meetings with former MP Bart Bassett in the time since he has left the Parliament?
- a) Who attended those meetings?
 - b) What was the nature of those meetings?
 - c) What was discussed?
 - d) Were any records of those meetings kept?
48. Has the consultancy company Premier State done any consultancy work for the Department? If so what projects was Premier State consulted on?
- a) What was the cost of the consultancy work for each project?
 - b) Was there a tender process for these projects?
49. Does Premier State currently have any contract work with the Departments/agencies under your portfolio responsibility?
- a) If yes, what is their role in the project?

Consulting

50. How much have the Department/agencies under your portfolio responsibility spent in legal costs?
- a) For what specific purposes or matters was legal advice sought?
51. Have Department/agencies under your portfolio engaged any consultants to provide the following services or advice:
- a) Social media
 - i. And the cost of these services
 - b) Photography
 - i. And the cost of these services
 - c) Acting training
 - i. And the cost of these services
 - d) Ergonomics
 - i. And the cost of these services

Department/Agency Administration

52. How many redundancies were processed by Departments/agencies within your portfolio responsibilities during 2014-15?
 - a) Of these redundancies, how many were:
 - i. Voluntary
 - ii. Forced
 - b) What was the total cost of all redundancies?
53. Have any staff who received a redundancy in the last two years undertaken any paid work or provided any paid services for the agency with which they were formerly employed?
 - a) What was the nature of these works/services?
 - b) What was the total cost of these works or services?
54. Are any staff formerly employed by your ministerial office now employed by Departments/agencies under your portfolio responsibility?
55. How many staff were dismissed from Departments/agencies under your portfolio responsibilities in 2014-15?
 - a) What were the reason/s for each dismissal?
56. How much was spent on corporate hospitality by Departments/agencies within your portfolio responsibilities during 2014-2015?
57. How much was spent on indoor plant hire and maintenance by Departments/agencies within your portfolio responsibilities during 2014-2015 year?
58. How much did Departments/agencies within your portfolio responsibilities spend on restaurant bills during the year 2014/2015?
 - a) How much of these bills were alcohol?
59. Were instances of internal fraud detected by Departments/agencies within your portfolio responsibilities during 2014-2015?
 - a) What was the sum total of any such fraud and what was the result of any investigations?
60. How large is the Department's vehicle fleet?
 - a) What is the composition of this fleet in terms of engine size?
 - b) How many of the fleet were involved in an accident during the year 2014-2015?
 - c) What was the total cost of insurance claims and repairs?
61. How much did departments/agencies spend on newspaper and journal subscriptions during 2014-2015?
62. How many SES employees are employed within departments/agencies under your ministerial portfolio?
 - a) What is their remuneration band?

- b) For each SES employee, how many have:
 - i. 0 staff reporting to them;
 - ii. less than 2 staff reporting to them; and
 - iii. less than 5 staff?
63. How many sick days, leave days or days attributable to workers compensation were lost for each department/agency within your portfolio responsibility during 2014-15 for:
- a) workplace bullying;
 - b) stress leave; and
 - c) sick leave?
64. Do any of the departments/agencies under your portfolio area employ actors for staff training?
- a) If so, what is:
 - i. the size of the contract for the provision of actors for staff training in your departments?
 - ii. the term of the contracts for the provision of actors for staff training in your departments?
 - iii. the tender numbers for each of the contracts?

Department/Agency Travel

65. What was the total expenditure in 2014-15 by Departments/agencies within your portfolio on:
- a) Taxi hire
 - b) Limousine/private car hire
 - c) Hire car rental
66. Do the Departments/agencies within your portfolio have a policy on utilising Uber services for travel on official business?
67. Have staff in your Department/agencies either paid for with departmental funds or been recompensed for official travel using Uber services?
- a) Were any of these payments for UberX services?
68. Have staff in your Department/agencies either paid for with departmental funds or been recompensed for official travel using Airbnb services?
69. Did any officers within departments/agencies under your ministerial portfolio use charter aircraft during the year 2014-2015?
- a) If so what was the purpose and cost?

Departmental/Agency IT

70. Do the Departments/agencies within your portfolio have an iTunes account?
- a) What was the total expenditure in 2014-15 on iTunes?
 - i. What applications/subscriptions/services were purchased through iTunes?
71. Do the Departments/agencies within your portfolio have an Android account?

- a) What was the total expenditure in 2014-15 on Android?
 - i. What applications/subscriptions/services were purchased through Android?
- 72. How many Department/agency mobile phones, tablets and laptops were replaced due to loss or damage during 2014-2015?
 - a) What was the total cost of replacing these items?
- 73. Did any staff within departments/agencies within your portfolio responsibilities incur data charges on a mobile phone or tablet device greater than \$1000 for a single billing period?
 - a) If so, how many times did this occur?
 - i. What was the individual cost of each data charge over \$1000 for a single billing period?

Efficiency Dividend

- 74. What was the efficiency dividend required of the department in the 2014/15 financial year?
- 75. What is the efficiency dividend required of the department in the 2015/16 financial year?
- 76. What savings measures were implemented by the Department for:
 - a) 2014/15 financial year
 - b) 2013/14 financial year
 - c) 2012/13 financial year?
- 77. What actual savings were achieved by each strategy in:
 - a) 2014/15 financial year
 - b) 2013/14 financial year
 - c) 2012/13 financial year?
- 78. What reduction of staff occurred and at what cost as a result of each strategy in:
 - a) 2014/15 financial year
 - b) 2013/14 financial year
 - c) 2012/13 financial year?
- 79. For the 2015/16 financial year:
 - a) What savings measures will the Department save?
 - b) What is the expected saving to be achieved for each measure?
 - c) Will they require a reduction in staffing?
 - d) How many positions within the Department remain unfilled due to the imposition of savings measures?

Questions from David Shoebridge

Section 451 of the Local Government Act

80. How many current term councillors is the Minister or Department aware of who also work as property developers, real estate agents or conveyancers in their local government area?

Fit for the Future advertising campaign

81. Can the Office of Local Government provide a copy of the advertising compliance certificate for the Fit for the Future advertising campaign?
82. What was the original quote for the entirety of the work by Saatchi and Saatchi for the work they have done and are doing on the Fit for the Future advertising campaign?
83. Given it is likely that the cost of the Fit for the Future advertising campaign (including the costs of Saatchi and Saatchi) will exceed \$1,000,000 why was section 7 of the Government Advertising Act 2011 not complied with?
84. Who undertook the peer review of the Fit for the Future advertising campaign?

To the Minister

85. Can the Minister advise if his government distributed a list of Sydney's councils with a proposal to reduce the number of councils from 41 to 22?
- If no, why did the Minister not deny reports to this effect in the Sydney Morning Herald and Daily telegraph to your government distribute a list of Sydney's councils with a proposal to reduce the number of councils from 41 to 22?
 - If yes, please provide the committee with a copy of the list.
 - If yes, which councils were on the list as being proposed for merger and with which councils were they proposed to be merged?

10/50 clearing code of practice

86. How many hazard complaints have local councils received regarding the 10/50 tree clearing code of practice?
- What are the resource implications for councils receiving hazard complaints?
87. How many compliance investigations have local councils undertaken directly related to the 10/50 tree clearing code of practice?
- What are the resource implications for councils undertaking these compliance investigations?
88. As Local Government Minister have you made any representations to the RFS about the code to seek to allow Local Councils to seek exemptions from the code?

Menacing dog classification

89. Can the Minister explain the inconsistent treatment of dangerous and menacing dogs under the *Companion Animals Act 1998*?
90. Can the Minister advise why there are currently no local court appeal rights for dogs that are declared “menacing”, despite the fact that the more dangerous classification of “dangerous” dog does allow for a local court appeal process?

Local Council Pounds

91. What steps are being taken to ensure that Council Pounds are managed to comply with:
 - a) The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1979?
 - b) The NSW Animal Welfare Code of Practice No 5 - Dogs and Cats in Animal Boarding Establishments?
 - c) The Companion Animals Act 1998?
 - d) The Impounding Act 1993?
92. How many complaints regarding incidences of non-compliance in Council Pounds have been lodged in the last financial year?
93. How many Council Pounds have been declared non-compliant in the last financial year?
94. What steps are being taken to ensure that all councils comply with providing the mandatory pound reporting data to the Office of Local Government?
95. Are the RSPCA, Animal Welfare League or the NSW Police compelled to notify the Minister for Local Government where there is any incident or instance involving breaches of Acts or complaints concerning a council pound?
 - a) If not, why not?
 - b) If yes, which council pounds have been investigated following complaints?
96. How many grants have been provided under the Responsible Pet Ownership Grants Program for local councils in NSW?
 - a) Which councils have these grants been provided to?
 - b) What is the total amount of money that has been provided through these grants?
97. Can the Minister confirm that discounted registration fees will apply to all animals from groups registered under Section 16 (d) of the Companion Animals Act, as recommended by the Companion Animals Taskforce?