



QUESTION TIME
OF THE
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

HANSARD

Edited proof transcript

Thursday, 10 April 2025

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Questions without notice

Government—transparency

MS CASTLEY: My question is to the Chief Minister. Under the Freedom of Information Act, the Chief Minister is required to publish information about each cabinet or cabinet committee decision, unless the release of that information is contrary to the public interest, but the Open Access website has not been updated this year, meaning no information about any cabinet or cabinet committee decisions has been published as required under the act. Chief Minister, why is it taking as long as four months to release this information?

MR BARR: It is not. There were no cabinet meetings in January, certainly in the first four weeks of January, so not before Australia Day. There is process, obviously, for the release of that information. It would be timely now, I would imagine, for the very first cabinet meetings of the year to be updated; that would be imminent. I will check with the cabinet office as to when that update will be provided. I would be very certain it will be before the Assembly next sits.

MS CASTLEY: Chief Minister, will you undertake to ensure the Open Access website is updated within 30 days of a cabinet or subcommittee meeting occurring?

MR BARR: No, I cannot do 30 days, but it will be as prompt as we possibly can. There are often periods during the year when cabinet would not meet for a period of 30 days or more. That would include, obviously, over the Christmas holiday period, and often, due to a combination of the estimates or annual report periods, cabinet meetings tend not to occur then, unless there are urgent items, because ministers are unavailable because they are in hearings. So there will be times when 30 days is just not possible, but there are other times, obviously, when updates can be provided, and they will be.

MR HANSON: Chief Minister, will you table a list of cabinet subcommittees, including names, membership and terms of reference?

MR BARR: I can advise, because members would be aware, that there is an expenditure review committee, and the membership of that committee is myself, the Treasurer, the finance minister and the Deputy Chief Minister. There are some cabinet working groups, particularly in relation to infrastructure and social policy. Cabinet subcommittees are open to all members, with the exception of the ERC, which obviously has that structured membership. So that is the answer. There is, I believe, three: ERC, infrastructure, social policy. And there is a quarterly meeting of the security and emergency management cabinet, which includes officials and particularly ACT Policing, the Emergency Services Agency and others. That is the totality.

Government—budget

MS CASTLEY: My question is to the Treasurer. In past years, the amount and presentation of information in the budget papers has been criticised by stakeholders, including the budget reviews prepared for the Assembly by Pegasus Economics. Is it the government's intention to address these concerns within this year's budget?

MR STEEL: I thank Ms Castley for her question. Without addressing any specific

issue that she would like to see, I will certainly take that into account, as the new Treasurer, as we prepare the budget. Of course, we have not done that for 2025-26; that process is underway. There may be changes to the format of the budget to address the context in which we are delivering the budget. We will look at the format and presentation of financial information.

MS CASTLEY: Treasurer, will you agree to provide the Assembly with information about the structural position, medium-term forecasts, a scenario analysis for key aggregates, and a program-level spending profile in the budget papers?

MR STEEL: I will not be committing to that today, but I will certainly take that into account as we prepare the budget.

MR COCKS: Treasurer, will you agree to provide the Assembly with more information about the reliability of the government's forecasts, given the poor performance of the budget forecasts in recent years?

MR STEEL: I thank the member for his question. As he well knows, Treasury, based on the information that they have, make the best assumptions possible in the budget. There is information in the budget papers about those assumptions, and officials and I make ourselves available for questions as part of the budget estimates process, which may include questions about the basis for those assumptions.

Transport Canberra—MyWay+

MISS NUTTALL: My question is to the Minister for Transport. Minister, in a media release in November last year, you promised the Canberra community that no-one would be left behind with the launch of MyWay+. Do you accept that you broke your promise and that many Canberrans, especially those with a disability, have in fact been left behind?

MR STEEL: No. That was referring to the policy that we had when go live occurred for MyWay+ that people would be picked up by buses and dropped where the planned routes were scheduled to arrive. We acknowledge that there has been a transition period for the Canberra community in using public transport—particularly in paying for public transport—and we are still in the process at the moment of educating the community on the different ways to pay to use public transport. Yes; we did make the commitment, which we have honoured, that no-one would be left behind literally by a bus during that process. We wanted to make sure that people had time to examine the various ways to pay and choose the easiest option for them. We have been doing that and we will continue to do that until the end of the transition phase. As I said in question time earlier in the week, then we will move to the next phase of embedding MyWay+.

MISS NUTTALL: Minister, would people being left behind not include people with a disability who are unable to use the service, irrespective of whether the bus came on time?

MR STEEL: No-one will be refused service. That was the point that was being made. People would be able to use public transport if they were not familiar with the ticketing system. For example, we have given a transition period to seniors, where they can flash

their Seniors Cards rather than get a MyWay+ card. Of course, we are encouraging them to get a MyWay+ card, because that period will come to an end at a point, but no-one has been refused service under the MyWay+ system, because we have had the policy of literally no-one being left behind.

Schools—recruitment

MR HANSON: My question is to the Minister for Education. Minister, from the beginning of the year, the ACT public service has been put on a hiring freeze for all non-essential workers. This supposedly excludes the direct provision of teaching services that support student wellbeing, safety and school operations. However, I am hearing from principals that they are frustrated with the process to hire much needed teaching staff due to the hiring freeze and the need to pass all new hires via strategic finance. To quote an ACT principal, “It’s needless bureaucracy which is impacting schools, students and school leaders. I think most schools are experiencing the same issue.” Minister, are you aware of the delays being experienced in recruiting teaching and education support staff in our schools due to the ACT government staffing freeze, even though they are meant to be exempt?

MS BERRY: Thank you for the question Mr Hanson. Yes, I am aware that there has been a process where schools that have been needing to hire additional staff, like learning support assistants to support their teaching services in their schools, have experienced some delays as the government works through the pause of recruitment. It does not mean that those staff will not be engaged. It is just that there is a more definite process that the Education Directorate is working closely with our schools on, to ensure the staff are appropriate and meet the needs of the school community and do not interfere with the ACT government’s pause on recruitment for jobs that might not be absolutely required in our schools.

MR HANSON: Minister, can you confirm that it currently takes longer than six weeks to fill a classroom teaching position, and explain what issue that is having in our schools?

MS BERRY: Yes, I can say that it has been taking a little bit longer whilst the government works through the challenges that we are facing. However, I have asked the Education Directorate to work with schools to expedite that process and to ensure those staff who are needed and are required as part of our schools services are employed within an appropriate timeframe.

MR MILLIGAN: Minister, what is the government doing to streamline the process for essential teaching staff?

MS BERRY: We are working with our schools to make sure we get it right and that the staff that are required and are appropriate are employed within an appropriate timeframe. Importantly, we are working with our schools through that process to make sure there are not delays in the employment of those staff, understanding that this is a new process, so we are trying to work through a way which is best for everybody, but also meets the needs for our students and our teachers.

Schools—Whitlam

MR HANSON: My question is to the Minister for Education and Early Childhood. Minister, the primary school and early childhood centre in Whitlam was meant to be open for the 2025 school year. It was then delayed to 2026, and then in March it was announced that it would be delayed again until 2027. The Education Directorate has said that all students in the priority enrolment area would be able to attend Evelyn Scott School in Denman Prospect. However, Evelyn Scott School is listed as a category A school because it is already in high demand.

Minister, can you guarantee to parents who are planning to send their children to the new Whitlam school that they will not see yet another delay of its opening?

MS BERRY: I thank Mr Hanson for his question and for his interest in the new school in Whitlam. It is disappointing, I know, for the Whitlam community and those in that area that the school has not proceeded at the pace that we would have liked. There have been some challenges with regards to the construction industry and the procurement of that project.

At this time we are now able to confirm with the community that the construction will not be completed until into 2027, but we will work with the community to ensure that there are places at their local schools.

MR HANSON: Minister, why did you announce that the school would be open in 2025 in the first place, when, if you go out to the current site, you will see it is still untouched grassland?

MS BERRY: Certainly it had been our intention to have the school opened at an earlier time. However, as everybody in this place knows, there are challenges existing within the construction industry as far as actually being able to deliver a project, and also with procurement and the difficulties on particular sites of building a school. This is not a flat site, so it comes with some different challenges which meant that the procurement has been a little bit more complicated.

We are continuing with that work and engaging with the community to make sure that there is a great school there—and there will be in 2027.

MR COCKS: Minister, how will sending more students, who were supposed to be at the Whitlam school, to an already category A school—Evelyn Scott School—impact that school?

MS BERRY: It will lead to more students at that school, quite obviously, and that will be the first immediate impact, and we will work with the school to ensure that they can deliver the best possible education, regardless of whether those students are in the direct priority enrolment area or will be there as a result of the delays at the Whitlam school.

Planning—Weetangera childcare facility

MS CLAY: My question is to the Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development. Several constituents have raised the lease use change that will allow development of an early childhood education centre in Weetangera. The centre has a capacity of around

80 children. I understand the plans have 26 car parks, but 18 are for staff and only eight are for parents and carers. Residents are generally supportive of the need for more child care in Belconnen and the benefits of redeveloping such a large block. But some of them have flagged concerns with how traffic will be managed, particularly at drop-off and pick-up times, near what is already a busy school. How many car parks will the development provide for parents and carers to drop off their kids?

MR STEEL: I encourage community members who are interested in a development application to have a look on the Territory Planning Authority's website and have a look at the documentation that is presented on notification and for those community members to have their say on developments. Of course, those are, as we have been discussing this week, assessed independently by the independent Territory Planning Authority. Those are relevant matters that would be considered by the Territory Planning Authority when it comes to considering changes to leases, including the addition of a use such as for childcare purposes. Traffic matters do come up in those discussions quite often, and I would certainly encourage the community to have their view put.

I am happy to provide an answer on notice. I will seek some advice from the independent Territory Planning Authority about the specific question around the number of car parks being proposed.

MS CLAY: Minister, what are the next steps in this lease use change proposal from the point of view of the community?

MR STEEL: I thank the member for her question. I will seek some advice about where that particular development application is up to in the process. But the process for development applications and their assessments generally are set out under the Planning Act 2023.

MISS NUTTALL: Minister, what requirement is there for the developer to consult with the community on this development?

MR STEEL: There is a notification process under the Planning Act 2023 where the community can have their say on a development application. That is then taken into consideration by the Territory Planning Authority when assessing the application and making a decision. There is then, of course, the potential opportunity of review of that decision.

Vocational education and training—Training Fund Authority

MR EMERSON: My question is to the Minister for Skills, Training and Industrial Relations. The ACT Building and Construction Industry Training Fund Authority is funded through a levy on building approvals. While demand for approvals remains high, the government's chronic delays in processing building approvals has impacted the training fund authority's income, and it recently advised that it will be reducing training rebates by 50 per cent from 1 May as a consequence. Some of these courses are essential for apprentices to complete their training, meaning they or their employers will have to cough up even more to get qualified. During a cost-of-living crisis, housing crisis and an industry-wide skills shortage, the last thing we need is to disincentivise

apprenticeships by making their career choice less attractive and more and more unaffordable.

Minister, will the government intervene to ensure the current rebates continue to be available in full for local apprentices?

MR PETTERSSON: I do thank Mr Emerson for the question. I am aware of this issue. It has been recently brought to my attention. I am seeking a briefing on this matter. The structure of the TFA is such that decisions on funding are decisions for the board—

Mr Hanson interjecting—

MR PETTERSSON: Mr Acting Speaker.

MR ACTING SPEAKER: Mr Hanson, please keep the interjections to a level so that we are actually able to hear the minister answer the question.

MR PETTERSSON: Decisions of the TFA and the decisions they make about what funding is given to each particular available training course are decisions for them. I am, of course, seeking further advice on this recent decision they have made to reduce funding.

MR EMERSON: Minister, when and how did you find out about this, given it was communicated to training providers on 28 March?

MR PETTERSSON: I will take that on notice.

MS CLAY: Minister, have you or your colleagues modelled the impact of this cut on the government's commitment to deliver 5,000 public, community and affordable homes?

MR PETTERSSON: No. As I have said, I have only just become aware of this decision by the TFA, and I am seeking urgent briefing on the matter.

Agriculture—Canberra food strategy

MISS NUTTALL: My question is to the minister for agriculture. Minister, when will the implementation plan for the Canberra food strategy be released?

Members interjecting—

MS ORR: As has been noted, “minister for agriculture” is not a title, but I do hold the responsibility under my portfolio, so I am very happy to answer the question.

Members interjecting—

MS ORR: After all the chatter and so forth, I have forgotten what the question was. Can Miss Nuttall please repeat it?

MR ACTING SPEAKER: Members, can those at the centre table please refrain from

interjecting and having a discussion with each other?

MISS NUTTALL: My question is to the minister for the environment. Minister, when will the implementation plan for the Canberra food strategy be released?

MS ORR: I thank the member for her question. I note that I am halfway through the time allotted for the answer, so I am happy to have a chat with her after this. The policy has gone out. The implementation plan continues to be progressed. There is not a fixed date. We will continue to work through those considerations. Obviously, we will have to take things to cabinet for approval prior to their release.

MISS NUTTALL: Minister, when will the ACT get an agriculture strategy, given that you have expressed that the ACT should be in line with the national initiative?

MS ORR: An agriculture strategy would be announcing a new policy initiative, which I am not at liberty to do during question time.

MS CLAY: Minister, what other measures are you or your colleagues currently undertaking to recognise the value of agriculture within government policy?

MS ORR: There is a range of commitments that go to implementing agriculture, noting that the ACT is not necessarily the largest farming jurisdiction in Australia. However, we do have a range of initiatives that sit there, and I am happy to take the detail on notice and get back to Ms Clay.

Sport and Recreation Investment Scheme

MR WERNER-GIBBINGS: My question is to the Minister for Sport and Recreation. Minister, what is the Sport and Recreation Investment Scheme?

MS BERRY: I thank Mr Werner-Gibbings. The Sport and Recreation Investment Scheme, or SRIS, is the annual funding program that supports sport and active recreation in the ACT community. There are four funding options that are available through this scheme. The first is the Community Sport Facilities Program. This supports the development of new high-quality sustainable facilities or the upgrade of existing facilities to maintain or increase physical activity in Canberra.

Mr Hanson interjecting—

MS BERRY: The second is the Club Enhancement Program, which assists sport and recreation groups to further develop their local services and programs by purchasing equipment, upskilling coaches and officials, and improving club governance. The third is the State Organisation Support Program, which provides funding through three-year agreements to improve organisational capacity and capability. And, lastly, there is the Industry Partnership Program, which allows the ACT government to co-invest with state sporting organisations in innovative and collaborative projects that are scalable and sustainable.

MR WERNER-GIBBINGS: Minister, how many sporting organisations were successful in the recent round, and which of those were in my electorate of Brindabella?

Opposition members interjecting—

MR ACTING SPEAKER: Members, please refrain from interjecting.

Opposition members interjecting—

MR ACTING SPEAKER: Members, I have asked you to refrain. Members, the minister is unable to answer due to the interjections. If you continue to interject, I will be required to warn you.

MS BERRY: Thank you very much. This scheme has provided an incredible amount of support for not-for-profit sport, recreation and community organisations in developing fit-for-purpose, sustainable and accessible places and spaces for sport and recreation. Through the latest round, 38 applications were successful. Canberra sporting and recreation clubs will share over \$3.2 million in this funding.

There were two successful applicants who received funding through the 2025 Sport and Recreation Investment Scheme in Brindabella. The Tuggeranong BMX Club received \$47,000 to replace their BMX start gate. I had the chance to go to the club last month, and I know that they are absolutely thrilled with this funding and the difference it will make to their sport. It will significantly improve the sporting experience and safety of club members, particularly children and beginners. The Canberra Southern Cross Club also received \$246,000 to fund the Southern Cross basketball stadium's bathrooms and fan upgrade.

MR EMERSON: Minister, when will the government develop a long-term community sport infrastructure plan to provide certainty to the community sector and keep sporting organisations from having to fight it out for funding at every turn?

MS BERRY: They do not have to fight. These are grants that organisations apply for that meet the needs of their sporting communities. The government is committed to ensuring that these grants remain fit for purpose. We have already increased them to make sure that they provide the funding that sports need. We work very closely with sports, particularly around partnerships that work really well with these funding grants and alongside work that sports clubs or communities may have done themselves to raise money for particular purposes across their sports. Of course, sport is competitive by its nature, so there is competitiveness amongst sports to have the highest participation rate or be the most popular sport. That is probably a game that nobody is ever going to win, so we try to make sure that every sport gets what it needs to ensure that organisations can meet the needs of their particular sporting communities.

Aged care—respite care

MS CARRICK: My question is to the Minister for Health. Minister, this morning you mentioned that new aged care facilities will add new respite capacity. These are at Aranda, Wright, and the new LDK Amberfield facility in Weston Creek. How many dedicated respite beds are currently available in the ACT and how many new dedicated respite beds will be available at these new facilities and when?

MS STEPHEN-SMITH: I thank Ms Carrick for the question. What I actually said this morning and yesterday—and certainly clarified in question time yesterday—was that the past experience in relation to aged care was that the development of aged care facilities seems to come in waves, depending on commonwealth government policy. The Albanese Labor government, of course, has significantly invested in aged care and has undertaken aged care reforms that are now seeing, for the first time in more than a decade, new aged care facilities being built. What I said in relation to that was that the experience is that when new aged care facilities are built that increases capacity across the sector. So I accept that there is a shortage of currently dedicated respite beds. There are a range of aged care facilities that do provide respite. I understand that most of those aged care facilities provide respite on the basis of a kind of “try before you buy” model, but also that there is a service through the ACT Carers’ Carer Gateway to support people to identify opportunities and I also appreciate—

Ms Carrick: Point of order.

MR ACTING SPEAKER: Ms Stephen-Smith, would you please take your seat, there is a point of order.

Ms Carrick: Point of order on relevance. My questions was: how many dedicated respite beds are currently available in the ACT and how many new dedicated respite beds will be available from these three new facilities.

MR ACTING SPEAKER: Ms Stephen-Smith, in the remaining time, if you might be relevant to the question.

MS STEPHEN-SMITH: I think I was being relevant. I did say that it is often not the model of aged care facilities to open dedicated respite beds, but as there is new aged care facilities opening, we can expect that there will be additional capacity across the aged care sector that is likely to open up more opportunity for respite beds to be available, whether they are dedicated or one off.

MS CARRICK: Minister, through the Carer Gateway, how long is the current waitlist for dedicated respite care beds in the ACT?

MS STEPHEN-SMITH: I recognise that there is a wait for respite and it is a challenge. That is part of the reason the Albanese Labor government has invested so much in aged care and undertaken significant aged care reforms to expand the availability of aged care services, which are a commonwealth responsibility, after a decade of neglect under the previous coalition government. I appreciate Ms Carrick’s advocacy. I appreciate the feedback from Carers ACT that there is a challenge in finding respite services. I had a decision to make as minister with a confluence of events.

Mr Cocks: Point of order.

MR ACTING SPEAKER: Point of order. Stop the clock please.

Mr Cocks: It is on relevance. The question was very short and very straightforward about the quantity of beds in the ACT. I do not believe the minister has actually gone to what the actual waitlist is at this stage.

MR ACTING SPEAKER: Minister, in the one minute 20 seconds remaining, if you could refer to the number of beds.

MS STEPHEN-SMITH: Mr Acting Speaker, that would not be information that is available to me as minister. This is an area of commonwealth responsibility, that is funded by the commonwealth.

MR COCKS: How then did you make your decision to remove Burrangiri's annual capacity of 4,500 respite care bed nights, without understanding the wider context of respite care available in the ACT?

MS STEPHEN-SMITH: I think the fact that I cannot provide a specific number of specific things that are available on this specific day in an area of commonwealth responsibility does not indicate that I do not understand the wider context. I have been talking about the wider context in this place for some time, and I would refer Mr Cocks to my, now many, previous statements and responses to questions in relation to this matter. It was not one thing. It was a confluence or a progress of decision making that resulted in this decision. I recognise that there are people who do not agree with the decision, but this is a decision that was mine, looking at the broad sweep of availability of ACT government resources and commonwealth responsibilities, and the timing of the maintenance that was required on the facility and the ending of the TSA contract.

Taxation—Revenue Office reassessments

MR COCKS: My question is to the Minister for Finance. Minister, during annual reports hearings the Commissioner for ACT Revenue stated that reassessments of conveyance due to concessions could occur at any time, essentially without a limit on how long after a stamp duty concession was granted. However, both the self-assessment terms and conditions and section 9 of the Taxation Administration Act state that such reassessments are limited to a five-year period.

Minister, could you please clarify what the timeframe for reassessments is?

MS STEPHEN-SMITH: I thank Mr Cocks for the question. I will take the question on notice to get a clarification of what the legal situation is in relation to the legislation. I suspect the commissioner was referring to the legal limitation under the act. In practice, it seems very unlikely that they would go back further than five years. In fact, I have asked my office to talk to the Revenue Office about whether it would be sensible to put a specific legislated limit on the timeframe for how far those can go back. I certainly know—I am aware from looking at the website—that there is definitely advice that you should keep your records for at least five years. If Mr Cocks would like to provide me with the references that he is looking at as well, I will take that into account in my conversations with the revenue commissioner and office.

MR COCKS: Minister, have any Revenue Office reassessments been undertaken later than the five years the Revenue Office tells Canberrans they need to keep records for?

MS STEPHEN-SMITH: I will take that question on notice.

MS CASTLEY: Minister, under what authority would reassessments beyond that five-year period be conducted?

MS STEPHEN-SMITH: I refer Ms Castley to my first answer, in relation to the legislative limit, which I have taken on notice. I think what the revenue commissioner was saying in the hearings earlier was that the legislation provides no limitation on how far they can go back. But it is clear that some of the information provided to the community indicates that records should be held for five years. That is why that is now a conversation with the Revenue Office.

ACT Policing—response times

MR COCKS: My question is to the Minister for Police. Minister, why in Tuesday's debate on the Molonglo police motion did you only use priority 1 response times when priority 2 response times average 18 minutes and priority 3 response times can take up to 48 hours?

DR PATERSON: I thank the member for the question. Because priority 1 response times are the most important response times. That is where we want to see police get to an emergency, and they are below their target. So ACT Policing are doing really well.

MR COCKS: Minister, why did you use response times for the entire ACT in your amendment rather than providing data specific to the Molonglo Valley?

DR PATERSON: Because that is the ACT average. That is how they measure the average for the ACT.

MS MORRIS: Minister, are you concerned that some residents are giving up on reporting crimes altogether because they are left waiting up to 48 hours for a response?

DR PATERSON: No, I am not concerned. I think residents are reporting crimes. There are multiple ways that they report crimes. They can report through the 000 phone number; they can call the 131 444 number; they can report online; and, as part of providing multiple avenues for people, they can report to Crime Stoppers. A priority 1 is an emergency, and that is when you want to have police attend. The lower priority callouts are triaged, assessed and prioritised by police. I will also say that residents in the Molonglo Valley are serviced by patrol zones from Belconnen, the City Police Station and Woden.

ACT Deafness Resource Centre

MS BARRY: My question is to the minister for community services. Thank you for advising me of the outcomes of your government's effort to comply with my motion calling on the government to ensure timely and proactive support for the Deafness Resource Centre and other community services providers. Given the DRC closed and the government only found reasons not to help this important community sector, how confident should the community organisations be with your commitment to timely and proactive support?

MS ORR: I do not agree with the member's characterisation that the government did

not provide support to this particular organisation. As I outlined in my letter to her, we listed all the actions that had been undertaken and the engagement that we had tried to have with the organisation, without success in some points.

The government does remain committed to working with the sector and across our community to support people with disability and the services that support them. There are a range of measures that are going on across a range of different types of disability, and we will continue to look at how we can also improve our own practices, including putting in Auslan interpreter services across our public facing service provision here in the ACT government and continuing to transition our own practices over a longer term to be inclusive of everyone with disability.

MS BARRY: When CSD was not able to contact the Deafness Resource Centre, why didn't you contact me or my office to facilitate a meeting?

MS ORR: In some respects, the same question could be put to Ms Barry: knowing that the letter went out quite a while before question time, why would you not contact me if you had these questions?

In working this through, there was contact with the Deafness Resource Centre; CSD did follow up, as it is appropriate that they would. I think the way Ms Barry has characterised it, that there was no contact, is taking bits out of what has been given to Ms Barry. I do not think it is showing the full context of the situation or the follow up that was there. I am a little bit concerned at the questions, and in the selective presentation of aspects of it, that they are not painting the full picture and that whatever I might say might be twisted or misinterpreted.

Ms Barry, the offer is always there to work with you collaboratively, should you have an issue. I think that has always been the case in what has been done to date, and I am happy to continue to do that and work in good faith. I would just ask that you do the same.

MR CAIN: Minister, what are you doing to address what you have acknowledged as loss of local knowledge and expertise?

MS ORR: There are a range of measures going on. I have already referenced some of them, which include looking at how we can improve ACT government services across our whole community, and there are a range of organisations within Canberra that will do this. In the letter that I provided to Ms Barry, too, there was an acknowledgement that, yes, certainly, the Deafness Resource Centre closing does mean that there is a little bit more work to do in maintaining service provision, and we continue to look at what we can do with that. The Deafness Resource Centre is an organisation independent of government. They are governed by a board. The board made the decision to close the organisation, and in responding to Ms Barry's motion, we had discussions with them. Their decision remained the same.

Mr Barr: Mr Acting Speaker, I ask that further questions be placed on the notice paper.