

26 July 2024

Committee Office Legislative Council
Parliament House, Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Ms Taahi,

Inquiry into the ability of local governments to fund infrastructure and services

Please find attached the following,

1. Transcript corrections.
2. Answers to questions on notice directed to Bathurst Regional Council.

On behalf of Council, I would like to thank the Inquiry for the opportunity to make a presentation. Council looks forward to receiving a copy of the Standby Committee report.

Yours faithfully

GENERAL MANAGER

Legislative Council Inquiry - 28 June 2024

Local Government Authority – Bathurst Regional Council

The CHAIR: Thank you. That's very useful. Turning now back to the SRV process that you went through, I was quite alarmed to hear in your opening remarks that staff were being significantly impacted that they weren't comfortable wearing their staff uniform. That says a lot to me about the potential impact that that has had on your staff. I'm interested in whether or not there has been any cost to that and whether or not that is something you can share with the Committee or whether its something that you can provide to us on notice in a more confidential fashion. (Page 21)

DAVID SHERLEY: Look, we probably could provide some general stuff. I might pass that to you, Aaron, in terms of the cost with the staff going and whatever else.

AARON JONES: Sure. Without putting a financial number to that, what I can convey, and we concluded in our submission is that Bathurst Council at the moment, we're experiencing our highest level of vacancies across our organisation. Some of that would definitely be attributed to staff just not wanting to be part of our organisation as a consequence of the SRV process.

The CHAIR: Did you see staff leave as a result of that?

AARON JONES: Yes.

The CHAIR: Have you done figures on what that number is?

AARON JONES: Happy to take that on notice. We do undertake an exit survey, with each of our staff and if they are willing to disclose their motivations for leaving., we do capture that level if data, so happy to take that on notice.

The CHAIR: Thank you, that would be useful. (page 22)

RESPONSES TO LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL INQUIRY - 28 JUNE 2024

Since 01 August 2023, when the SRV proposal was made public, 80 staff have left Council. This equates to approximately 16.51% of Council's workforce. In reviewing the exit surveys of those staff who chose to complete the survey, the SRV was not specifically identified. However, in reviewing the questions raised in the survey, it is unlikely that one specific issue for leaving (e.g. SRV) would be raised.

As a generalised obstruction, low staff morale and concerns about the ongoing future of Council were anecdotally cited, which can be attributed to the SRV experience.

In discussing this with Council's Human Resources staff who conduct the surveys, whilst not specifically noted, the SRV experience was often after mentioned as "one of the reasons" for the staff member leaving Council.

Legislative Council Inquiry - 28 June 2024
Local Government Authority – Bathurst Regional Council

The Hon. STEPHEN LAWRENCE: In terms of art and culture, if I can put it that way, what sort of percentage of the council budget are we talking about?

DAVID SHERLEY: I'll pass that to Aaron Jones.

AARON JONES: I'll take that on notice if that's okay.

RESPONSES TO LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL INQUIRY - 28 JUNE 2024

Based on the adopted 2024/25 Budget. Arts and culture are 5.45% of Council's total budgeted expenditure (excluding water and sewer), This includes;

- Library
- Art Gallery
- Entertainment Centre
- Bathurst's Art Residency
- Museums Administration Unit
- National Motor Racing Museum
- Australia Fossil and Mineral Museum
- Chifley Home and Interpretive Centre
- Historical Museum (not run by Council)
- Rockley Museum (not run by Council)
- Railway Museum
- Central Tablelands Collection Centre