

QUESTION WITHOUT NOTICE

Question No. [number] of 2023 Legislative Council

ASKED BY: Hon Meg Webb MLC

ANSWERED BY: Hon Leonie Hiscutt MLC, Leader of the
Government in the Legislative Council

QUESTION:

From 1 January 2018, the Tasmanian Government policy requires that all Government departments routinely publish on websites all written submissions made in response to broad public consultation on major policy matters, in light of this whole-of-government position, can the government:

1. Confirm the State Budget Community Consultation process equates to public consultation on a major policy matter?;
2. Confirm that it has been established practice to publish on the Treasury and Finance website all public submissions received through that community consultation process, except for any which requested to be treated confidentially?;
3. Clarify when and why the government determined that submissions made as part of the State Budget Community Consultation process are now exempt from the government's policy of routine publication of submissions received through public consultation on major policy?; and
4. In the interests of restoring this valuable transparency mechanisms, will the government now commit to reviewing this refusal to publish State Budget Community Consultation submissions, including those submissions made to the State Budget 2023-24 consultation process?

ANSWER:

Community Consultation is an important part of the annual Budget development process. Input from the community is a long-established element of the Budget process and is highly valued by the Government.

The “*Publication of submissions received by Tasmanian Government Departments in response to consultation on major policy matters*” Guideline provides a set of rules and guidance on the publication of submissions in response to public consultation on major policy items.

The Guideline specifically identifies that Budget submissions are examples of information that is not subject to publication.

The parties that provide submissions to the Community Consultation process as part of Budget development process are diverse and comprise representations from individuals, community groups, councils, businesses and other organisations.

The Department of Treasury and Finance does not publish Community Consultation submissions in relation to the Budget on its website. Parties that make a submission to the Community Consultation process do so with the understanding that submissions are not published.

Neither the Guidelines, nor Treasury’s Community Consultation information, prohibit Community Consultation participants from publishing their submissions on their own websites or through other communication methods, with some parties choosing to do so.

On receipt, Treasury provides the submissions to the relevant Government agencies for consideration in the formulation of Agency Budget submission information.

APPROVED/NOT APPROVED



Hon Michael Ferguson MP
Deputy Premier
Treasurer

Date: 25 May 2023