

# **TRANSCRIPT**

## **SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE 2026 COMMONWEALTH GAMES BID**

### **Inquiry into the 2026 Commonwealth Games Bid**

Melbourne – Thursday 26 October 2023

#### **MEMBERS**

David Limbrick – Chair

Joe McCracken – Deputy Chair

Melina Bath

David Davis

Jacinta Ermacora

Michael Galea

Sarah Mansfield

Tom McIntosh

Rikkie-Lee Tyrrell

**WITNESS**

Shaun Leane.

**The CHAIR:** I declare open the committee's public hearings for the Inquiry into the 2026 Commonwealth Games Bid. Please ensure that mobile phones have been switched to silent and that background noise is minimised.

I welcome any members of the public in the gallery or watching via live broadcast. I remind those in the room to be respectful of proceedings and to remain silent at all times.

Thank you for appearing today. All evidence taken is protected by parliamentary privilege as provided by the *Constitution Act 1975* and provisions of the Legislative Council standing orders. Therefore the information you provide during the hearing is protected by law. You are protected against any action for what you say during this hearing, but if you go elsewhere and repeat the same things those comments may not be protected by this privilege. Any deliberately false evidence or misleading of the committee may be considered a contempt of Parliament.

All evidence is being recorded. You will be provided with a proof version of the transcript following the hearing. Transcripts will ultimately be made public and posted on the committee's website.

For the Hansard record, can you please state your name and the organisation that you appear on behalf of.

**Shaun LEANE:** Shaun Leane. I am not too sure if I am appearing on behalf of the Victorian Parliament. I am appearing on behalf of myself as a member of Parliament, I suppose.

**David DAVIS:** A former minister.

**The CHAIR:** I would like to welcome you to make any opening comments and ask that they be kept to a maximum of around 10 minutes, please.

**Shaun LEANE:** Thanks, Chair. Thanks, committee, for inviting me. I suppose initially I want to state that I was the Minister for Commonwealth Games Legacy from late June 2022 until early December, when there were new ministers sworn in. For a few weeks of that, close to a month of that time, I was under caretaker provisions, so I really had four months in the position I was in. I will try and do my best to assist the committee as best as possible from the short time that I had.

From the outset I was very pleased that Daniel Andrews, the Premier at the time, asked me to take up this position. One of the reasons I was pleased was when we first came into government I worked closely with Jacinta Allan as her Parliamentary Secretary for Infrastructure and something I really wanted to push and replicate in the delivery of the Commonwealth Games investment – and can I say I am really pleased that the government have announced that they are going to commit to the \$2 billion investment into the regions.

When we first came to government, Jacinta Allan was transport infrastructure minister, but she was also minister for employment. Something she never gets credit for but deserves credit for because she was employment minister is that she was the architect of things like the 10 per cent apprentice guarantee on major projects. She was the architect as far as that goes, and she and the other minister I worked for, Gavin Jennings, gave me free rein to produce the social enterprise framework, which also applies to major projects and infrastructure. We added to it, but we also were really mindful, and I was really mindful, of the Victorian government's jobseeker priority list. We added a few things, but it includes people for whom English is not their first language and refugee groups. We added veterans and their families, which really helped me in another role I had previously. And did I mention survivors of domestic violence and things like that?

When I came to this role, as far as legacy goes, I was of the view that the spending on infrastructure would bring of course a longstanding legacy to regional Victoria. But I wanted to leave a longstanding legacy in people, so I concentrated my time – the four months – in meeting with people in the regions from group training companies for apprentices, from social enterprises. I put a lot of weight on meeting with the local Aboriginal corporations, not just for the opportunities for their enterprises but also for enlisting their assistance into when the Commonwealth Games were going to occur. From my conversations with them, they were really

stretched, just at the current time that I was speaking to them, with work on heritage, with work on the number of events that they were asked to deliver or be a part of and with their work with their Aboriginal companies and so forth. So that led me to advocate to our government for some funding so that they could actually do the work that they had on their plate and then be in a position down the track to be able to assist us with anything we might have called them to assist us in. I was very pleased that in the four months time I was there I managed to announce that \$2.7 million to those three Aboriginal corporations that covered the areas that we announced would be the regional hubs for the Commonwealth Games. I was very pleased with that, and that was money to get them, like I said, on top of the challenges they had in the present day so that if we did come to them down the track and ask them to assist with anything, as far as the Commonwealth Games, they were in a position that they had some capacity to assist us.

I think, Chair, there is not much more I want to add other than that. As I said, it was a short period of time, then we went into caretaker. I do not believe the department asked me to do anything in line with the caretaker provisions, so I sort of had that four-month period. But as I said, I did enjoy Jacinta's support – I should say the Premier's support – in the way I wanted to go ahead with the role I was given, and also other colleagues.

As I said, I am really pleased with the announcement that the \$2 billion investment is there. You know, I think that there is a great opportunity to still assist regional social enterprises with capacity building and even the Aboriginal corporations with capacity building and also to target, you know, major projects. As I said, I do not think the Premier has had enough credit for what she initiated with that 10 per cent apprentice guarantee for major projects. I think she had the employment portfolio for a very short time too and then it moved on to someone else. They did some great work as well, but she was the architect of all these provisions that we have. You know, if we are going to spend money on infrastructure, then let us make sure we maximise the training and maximise the opportunities for everyone to be a part of it. You know, the social enterprises employ people. There are some great social enterprises, and I am a bit fixated on them. I think that there are ones that employ people with intellectual disabilities and other disabilities and refugee groups – you know, different people that want to earn an award wage and above and want to have the capacity to look after themselves. So I think that is where, with what I had worked on before, I really wanted to bring and of course complement the work that Jacinta had done as well. Thanks, Chair.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you, Mr Leane. One of the things that has not been really clear due to the complexity of the organisation of the departments and things like this is around accountability. Who do you think is ultimately accountable for the decision to go ahead with the games in the first place?

**Shaun LEANE:** I would have thought it would have been the executive at the time.

**The CHAIR:** So the cabinet?

**Shaun LEANE:** Not being in cabinet at the time, I just would have – that would be my assumption. I do not know if you really want me, as a witness to a committee, making assumptions, giving opinions and guessing, but that would be my assumption.

**The CHAIR:** And when did you first see the business case for the Commonwealth Games?

**Shaun LEANE:** I sighted a lot of documents. Once I was there, there was no point in me doubling back on the business case. I got excerpts from the contract around things like training and skills and legacy and that, which assisted me in advocating for what I wanted to see come out of it, but I did not sight the business case and I did not think I needed to. The process was already well advanced by the time I was asked to do this role.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you, Mr Leane. But the business case outlined what the projected benefits of the games were going to be as well as the costs, and part of those benefits was going to be the legacy. There were other benefits as well that the business case outlined. How would you know what the objectives were that you were meant to be trying to meet?

**Shaun LEANE:** It was very clear in the contract with the Commonwealth Games Federation that there had to be a legacy component, and so, as I said –

**The CHAIR:** And that was stipulated by the government, not by the federation.

**Shaun LEANE:** Well, who stipulated it? It was a contract between two parties. But my understanding is that it would not have mattered where the Commonwealth Games would be, there would be an onus on leaving a legacy for people, as I explained. As I said, my understanding would be it would not matter what location the Commonwealth Games were going to be at, I think this is something that the Commonwealth Games Federation had stipulated as far as making sure – you know, the Commonwealth Games would move in for a couple of weeks and then go, and there would be no longstanding advantage to the actual people of that jurisdiction.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you. And did you find that the now DJSIR, a very large department that would have been involved in a lot of this, was complex in how you were going to be able to access skills and get infrastructure happening? How was that? One of the pieces of evidence that we have heard is that there was complexity in the organisational structure and this sort of thing. How did you find working with that?

**Shaun LEANE:** I did not have any great issue with it. Obviously I was taking advice and dealing with people on sort of a high level, so it would have been the leaders of those two different departments – I call them departments, but there were probably different terminologies. I would put my advocacy for what I wanted to see in legacy to the leadership of those two departments.

**The CHAIR:** One of the problems – well, the biggest problem really – was that the initial cost estimates were flawed. They were originally considered in the business case. One of the things I have been questioning, though, is the benefits, which I am still concerned about, because we were hoping to obtain some of those benefits through the legacy rollout and the government is still going ahead with part of that. How can you be certain that those costs and benefits for the legacy rollout will not have the same sorts of problems that we had with the original costing that was put forward in the business case?

**Shaun LEANE:** Well, I am not too sure if that is a question for me, but –

**The CHAIR:** You would have considered it the time, though.

**Shaun LEANE:** I can give an opinion. My interaction and sort of interest and passion, coming from where I come from, similar to Tom, are that I have actually seen firsthand, when we have done major infrastructure, the benefits that I have spoken about. At times I have pushed it myself on the ground, because you know, you can get major contractors to agree to do certain things, but you have got to make sure that they actually deliver. So sometimes I have had to give it a push. But in saying that, I have found that the major contractors that deliver the government's projects have actually embraced where we have come from. Once they have used social enterprises they see that the price is right, the service or the product is right, the delivery is on time and it gives this social benefit. So why wouldn't they get involved in it? Why wouldn't they? I had a conversation with a major contractor that, through our priority jobseeker list, employed a woman that was a victim of family violence, and that guy said to me, 'She's one of the best employees I've had.' So I have confidence that those policies are sound, and I have confidence that once the major contractors embrace it they actually believe in it. It took us a few years – and this is going back to when we first took government – to kind of get to that point, but I think anything that is going to be delivered into regional Victoria from the \$2 billion will be successful in those policies.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you. We have also heard evidence that different people involved with the games had different understandings of the objectives of holding the games in the first place. What was your understanding of what the objective of having the games was?

**Shaun LEANE:** Well, my understanding of the objective of having a regional Commonwealth Games was actually – if we were going to have the Commonwealth Games, there had to be a benefit for the regions and a long-term lasting benefit for the regions. So that was my belief in the objective.

**The CHAIR:** So the objective was infrastructure – that was the main objective?

**Shaun LEANE:** Well, not so much infrastructure, I just think investment. You know, if we were going to put on a Commonwealth Games in the regions, then we wanted to make sure that there was investment into the regions. That is why I am pleased that that investment is still going to be there. I think – look, this is an opinion as well – it could have been easy to make it all Melbourne city centric. I was not in cabinet at the time, but I embraced the idea that if we were going to do it, then we should make a benefit for regional Victoria.

**The CHAIR:** All right. Thank you. I am out of time. I will go to Mr McCracken.

**Joe McCracken:** Thank you. Are you happy if I call you Shaun, or would you prefer 'Mr Leane'?

**Shaun Leane:** Shaun is good.

**David Davis:** 'President'.

**Joe McCracken:** 'President' – what would you prefer?

**Shaun Leane:** I am really happy with Shaun, if I can call you Joe.

**Joe McCracken:** Okay. Thanks. Shaun, in your preparation for today, have you spoken with the Premier or former Premier or any minister or the department or anyone from their offices?

**Shaun Leane:** No. Having been on a committee myself, I was concerned about an ask for me to deliver documents. So I checked with the Premier's legal team about if there is something in place that if the committee calls for documents, that there is some sort of process. When I left this position – you know, there is no sort of big stockpile of documents in my bathroom at home. I have not got anything, so I kind of wanted to make sure of what the provision is for the committee if I get asked that question.

**Joe McCracken:** Okay. And that was the only –

**Shaun Leane:** That was it. I have said that I have only had a chance to say hello to Jacinta Allan in the corridor since she became Premier. That is not unusual, because premiers have a big job to run the state. And I have not had any discussion with any former ministers around it.

**Joe McCracken:** What were your responsibilities, in your view, as Minister for Commonwealth Games Legacy? What did you view as what you were you responsible for?

**Shaun Leane:** I suppose I was responsible for after the games – that there was not a lot of investment just in putting on the games, it was there for the long-lasting medium-term or long-term benefits of the games being in Victoria.

**Joe McCracken:** What stakeholder consultations did you have as part of your ministerial responsibility as part of the Comm Games legacy?

**Shaun Leane:** I suppose the local councils were one of my first ports of call – I think just to get my understanding of their view of what legacy in their region may or may not look like. I caught up with the Aboriginal corporations in the three regions I think a couple of times. They sort of wanted to get their heads around what asks we might give them of how they might be able to be embedded into the process. When I went to Dja Dja Wurrung in Bendigo they walked me around buildings that they gave advice on as far as First Nations heritage being interweaved into, I think, the courthouse and things like that. It is just magnificent, so I was pretty keen for that to happen. Also, as I said before, I had conversations with groups of social enterprises from different regions and group training companies to just understand, for any infrastructure that was built, what their capacities were and to give them a real push and say, 'Look, get yourself involved' and assist the people that they assist in the good work they do.

**Joe McCracken:** Just as a summary: local councils, Aboriginal corporations, social enterprises –

**Shaun Leane:** Yes, group training companies.

**Joe McCracken:** Group training companies, and I take it those local councils would have been, I am guessing, Geelong, Ballarat, Bendigo, Shepparton and –

**Shaun Leane:** Latrobe, yes. I think the announcement of the extra sports going to Shepparton was kind of towards the end of my –

**Joe McCracken:** Your time.

**Shaun LEANE:** time, so by the time I thought I could get to Shepparton we would have been in caretaker anyway. So I did not get a chance to speak to Shepparton, but I did speak to those – I think a number of times I had conversations with those – other councils you mentioned.

**Joe McCracken:** At any one of those consultations was the point raised about the location of the games at all, particularly about the location of the infrastructure?

**Shaun LEANE:** There would have been conversation around a lot of aspects of the games. Given my role – the location is one thing, but what would have been left afterwards as far as benefit was completely different to me. An example: I had a conversation – I had a number of conversations – with Latrobe Valley council around what they saw in their region as a real demand for not so much aged care but retirement-type facilities.

**Joe McCracken:** Care facilities.

**Shaun LEANE:** Yes. The conversation that they had was that they were advocating for something that would be purpose-built for elderly people, something attractive for them to move to and then therefore leave their three-bedroom house and make that available for young families. There were those sorts of conversations.

**Joe McCracken:** Did anyone raise anything about the ability to deliver on those pledges that were put forward – the infrastructure – given that the time line was fairly well known as 2026? Were there any conversations about the ability, or perhaps the lack of, to deliver that legacy infrastructure?

**Shaun LEANE:** No. I mean all the stakeholder groups I spoke to were just really keen on the infrastructure in the regions. We did not discuss time lines with those sorts of stakeholders.

**Joe McCracken:** Okay. I know that in my part of the world, in Ballarat, with a lot of legacy infrastructure we knew it was going to be 2026 so there were time lines that would have needed to be adhered to. There were no conversations around how things were going to work?

**Shaun LEANE:** Not with me directly. I met with Ballarat council, I think, in different forums. But I think I only really at one time sat across from the Ballarat council in their offices in that sort of forum, and there was not that discussion.

**Joe McCracken:** Okay. Did you meet with the caravan industry at any point?

**Shaun LEANE:** No.

**Joe McCracken:** No? Okay. I think that will probably do me. I have only got 20 seconds left.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you, Mr McCracken. Mr Galea.

**Michael GALEA:** Thank you, Chair. I will take from Joe's lead – if I can call you Shaun?

**Shaun LEANE:** Yes. That would be great.

**Michael GALEA:** Thanks for joining us today, Shaun. I am just wondering if you can talk a bit to – and you have touched on this with Joe as well – your role as Commonwealth Games legacy minister, specifically on what your roles were but also what your roles were not in terms of Commonwealth Games delivery and those two sides of the coin.

**Shaun LEANE:** Yes. I was actually quite pleased that the Premier at the time, Daniel Andrews, determined that there should be a minister for legacy, not delivery and legacy, because it gave me scope outside of a lot of activities to actually think about all the things I mentioned before, Michael. As I said, the legacy of infrastructure is really important. I was really making sure that we were attuned to that and that we needed the legacy for people. If someone could start an apprenticeship on a government project in regional Victoria, I think that is a fantastic thing, because given the 10 per cent guarantee, that is what has been happening, for contractors to be able to fulfil that. In saying that, I was glad Daniel Andrews at the time determined there should be a separate delivery minister and a separate legacy minister, which kind of gave me the opportunity to just keep waving that legacy flag in all discussions, whereas if you had a minister having both roles it would

have been difficult for them to be able to take in certain advice and then have someone else say, 'No, we should be making sure we interweave all these really good policies.'

In the early days, when we had these policies of the level crossing removal authority, I completely understood that a big building company wins a project to deliver it. There is a superintendent on the job, but their thinking is, 'I have to dig a big hole, throw down some rocks and then put down a rail and then I have got to get out of here.' That is their priority. So we needed to sort of interweave ourselves into other responsibilities for our government and that was training of apprentices, engaging social enterprises, employing off our priority jobseeker list and a number of environmental and other responsibilities. The current Premier and I were pretty pleased to be back working together on a similar thing to when we first came into government, so it was good.

**Michael GALEA:** You talked about the 10 per cent apprentice guarantee on projects, and you actually mentioned the genesis being the level crossing removal projects. Can you talk to how that was already being interpreted and delivered as part of those Commonwealth Games legacy projects that you were engaged with?

**Shaun LEANE:** Yes, and I think interpreted, I suppose, to give no doubt to anyone that was going to be involved, including people that may tender for the work, that 'This is our expectation from you.' So we were making sure to interweave it into every conversation and into everything that we did. And getting back to my example about a superintendent project, if it was a level crossing, I suppose in fairness to them their priority in their own mind would be to get the works done quickly and get in and out. That is the way it works. Whether they really have a mind to the social benefit of actually doing this work – I am not questioning whether they have a mind to it – there has to be an emphasis on them to do it. Otherwise, as I said, the quicker a company can get in and out without worrying about things other than digging the hole and putting down the rocks and the rail, that is the way construction, as a rule, works.

**Michael GALEA:** Without that – I think you said the word 'push' before – supportive pressure from the government to ensure that that is still in place, for example, with the 10 per cent apprenticeship rate, and perhaps without the role that you had, do you see that would have potentially fallen away, especially if it had just been left up to saying to the contractors, 'Here's the job; go and do it.'

**Shaun LEANE:** I suppose that is a fair assessment. And it also goes back to the current Premier initiating a lot of this when we came into government and her having faith in me to sort of make sure that I was the one – and I understood it – interweaving myself into the process outside of other processes in delivery.

**Michael GALEA:** And you talked about as well the now Premier from an earlier point – I think you said you were her parliamentary secretary at one point. Can you talk to me about how you found her to be as a minister through those years and through recent years as well?

**Shaun LEANE:** I mean, you have bowled me a full toss, Michael. I have got to say, you know, I am biased, so whatever I say probably will not mean much. I have always had a great working relationship with Jacinta Allan. I admired her, as I said, right from the start. I had a great working relationship with Daniel Andrews. I am biased, so I suppose all I can say is that I have actually thought that the policies that this government has interweaved into our infrastructure program is leading a lot of jurisdictions. I always sort of amuse myself that organisations I pushed in early days were going overseas to give talks on the Victorian social enterprise framework after they embraced it. So I think our framework and our apprentice guarantee has been embraced by a lot of jurisdictions, and as I said, a lot of that was initiated by Jacinta Allan when we first came to government because she had the employment portfolio.

**Michael GALEA:** I think my time is up as well. Thank you.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you, Mr Galea. Mr Davis.

**David DAVIS:** President, thank you for appearing before the committee. It is a welcome step. I am going to try and be brief and succinct and try and roll through a few questions. Who in the department, DJPR, briefed you on the Commonwealth Games?

**Shaun LEANE:** Mainly Simon Phemister.

**David DAVIS:** And when did those briefings occur?

**Shaun LEANE:** Sort of every few weeks, I would imagine.

**David DAVIS:** Three weeks, two weeks, four weeks?

**Shaun LEANE:** It was determined on what my calendar was like as well. I had other portfolio responsibilities in veterans, and I was pretty busy with the royal commission and working on some other initiatives in that area as well.

**David DAVIS:** Can you provide those dates on notice?

**Shaun LEANE:** I will take that on notice. The answer is I am unsure. As I said, I did not keep any documents and –

**David DAVIS:** Diaries.

**Shaun LEANE:** Yes, I will check for you.

**David DAVIS:** Did those briefings provide any discussion of costs?

**Shaun LEANE:** Not with me. It was more me pushing the boundaries and pushing, you know, ‘Can we get more out of what we’re delivering as far as legacy?’

**David DAVIS:** At any point during your tenure as minister, did anyone raise the cost pressures with you?

**Shaun LEANE:** No.

**David DAVIS:** Not at all?

**Shaun LEANE:** No, no.

**David DAVIS:** All right. When were you first briefed about the cost pressures?

**Shaun LEANE:** I just answered you before that I was not briefed on any cost pressures because –

**David DAVIS:** Not at all?

**Shaun LEANE:** I think what you are trying to say, Mr Davis – well, it is not for me to say what you are trying to say – is that at the time I was mindful of cost pressures in my legacy role and they were brought to my attention, but that was not the case.

**David DAVIS:** All right. Did you get an incoming ministerial brief?

**Shaun LEANE:** Yes.

**David DAVIS:** And briefs regularly on these matters?

**Shaun LEANE:** On?

**David DAVIS:** The Commonwealth Games legacy.

**Shaun LEANE:** Yes.

**David DAVIS:** Can we have copies of those, please?

**Shaun LEANE:** As I stated, when I left the department – they are departmental documents. When I left the ministry I did not – I have not taken one piece of paper with me, which is the practice.

**David DAVIS:** They are office of the minister documents, to be strictly correct, and you could obtain them.

**Shaun LEANE:** Are you stating that I could obtain them now?

**David DAVIS:** Yes.



**Shaun LEANE:** That is not the advice I have got.

**David DAVIS:** Well, I would ask you to check that.

**Shaun LEANE:** Well, that is not the advice I have got. That is why I went out of my way: because I knew, having been a member of a committee before, that a call for documents is not unique. That is why I went to the Premier's legal team about these particular questions. There is an internal process for documents in the Premier's office, and I suggest, Mr Davis, that is the avenue for you.

**David DAVIS:** Or the department.

**Shaun LEANE:** Well, that is the avenue for you.

**David DAVIS:** Thank you. Okay, we will press forward. Allen Garner in his testimony on Monday the 9th indicated that when he started in November – noting that this was during the caretaker period – when he was brought in to review costs on the games, they were aware there were challenges. That was November 2022. Did you deal with Mr Garner?

**Shaun LEANE:** No.

**David DAVIS:** You did not at all?

**Shaun LEANE:** No.

**David DAVIS:** No. So he came, and you were ships passing, were you? Or did you meet him?

**Shaun LEANE:** I can say I think I met Mr Garner once when he was working at the level crossing authority a long time ago.

**David DAVIS:** Right. Mr Garner indicated he had announced three major sites that were an increase on the original budget that was in the business case. Were you aware of that early budget blowout – the three additional sites?

**Shaun LEANE:** I was not in my time, and I think with the terminology you are using about budget blowouts it is kind of a loaded question and so –

**David DAVIS:** Well, it is not in the sense that costs were greater.

**Shaun LEANE:** I will let that pass. The answer is no.

**David DAVIS:** What role did the business case play in your thinking about the Commonwealth Games legacy?

**Shaun LEANE:** As I stated, I think in answer to a question from Mr McCracken, I relied on the parts of the contract with the Commonwealth Games Federation as far as the legacy components that were expected of us from them.

**David DAVIS:** Did you read the business case?

**Shaun LEANE:** No.

**David DAVIS:** Never?

**Shaun LEANE:** No.

**David DAVIS:** The business case was based on generating 3064 jobs after the games. What advice did you ask for or receive about those legacy jobs?

**Shaun LEANE:** I did my own work on the outcomes of legacy jobs, which I was very confident of given the good policy framework that I had already inherited when I got to that position. So I was confident that we would leave a good legacy in training and employment.

**David DAVIS:** But you did not tie it back to the business case?

**Shaun LEANE:** I did not tie anything back to the business case. I made sure I was aware of the parts of the contract which referred to legacy, whether it be people or not, and I thought they were very good provisions for me to advocate for what I wanted to advocate for.

**David DAVIS:** The business case notes that a proportion of the athletes villages would be provided to affordable or social housing stock post the games. What proportion was the government targeting?

**Shaun LEANE:** I think we were trying to maximise the outcome of anything that we produced, whether it be housing or any other infrastructure.

**David DAVIS:** Was there a number?

**Shaun LEANE:** We would maximise the best outcome. We are very mindful and passionate about affordable and social housing as a rule, so, yes, we would have endeavoured to maximise the best outcome we could get from anything that was delivered in that fashion.

**David DAVIS:** It could be 5 per cent? No number?

**Shaun LEANE:** Well, we would maximise the best outcome we could get, the highest percentage we could get.

**David DAVIS:** The business case says:

Following the Games, approximately 20 to 30 per cent of the accommodation will be converted into social and affordable housing stock, to accommodate the high housing –  
stock –

in regional Victoria.

Did you push for that target?

**Shaun LEANE:** Yes, I would have. I pushed for as much as possible. I would have been –

**David DAVIS:** You did not have any number in mind?

**Shaun LEANE:** My role was to push for as much – like, even more than that. My role was to push –

**David DAVIS:** But a nebulous amount.

**Shaun LEANE:** My role was to push for the best outcome for social and affordable housing and also housing in general in regional Victoria. In the role I had previously, Minister for Local Government, I spoke to a lot of regional local governments, and there was a real demand. Particularly during COVID and directly after – post – COVID, housing in regional Victoria was at a premium.

**David DAVIS:** Can you provide a breakdown of where that housing legacy would be?

**Shaun LEANE:** No.

**David DAVIS:** Despite being minister for legacy?

**Shaun LEANE:** Well, if you want exact facts and figures –

**David DAVIS:** Or even ballpark?

**Shaun LEANE:** Well, I wanted to maximise the best outcome. My job was to push for as much social and affordable housing, as much benefit, for regional Victorians as I could.

**David DAVIS:** President, according to testimony from Jeroen Weimar and Allen Garner, the \$2.6 billion in the budget was split \$1.6 billion for running the games and \$1 billion for infrastructure, of which the majority was for permanent sporting improvements. What was the budget that you were responsible for?

**Shaun LEANE:** I was not responsible for that side of delivery, I was responsible for what was going to happen after the delivery.

**David DAVIS:** What aspects did it cover?

**The CHAIR:** Thank you, Mr Davis. Ms Ermacora.

**Jacinta ERMACORA:** Thank you. Thank you for attending, Shaun, and thanks for your contribution so far. I am particularly interested in, and could you provide a bit of detail around, the community consultation that you undertook with the regional communities – businesses, councils – in your previous capacity as the minister?

**Shaun LEANE:** Yes. Thank you, Jacinta. I suppose, and I outlined previously, I did have – I do not know if ‘forums’ is the right word – pretty casual sort of interactions with the social enterprises and the group training companies. I met them in a bigger group, usually facilitated by one of the local MPs that knew those enterprises better than me and knew who would be great to ask to come along. We spent probably an hour and a half in those groups. My belief at the time was to listen to them and understand what they could do – what they believed they could do – with more capacity. I took that into account. As I said before, look, I had a lot of conversations with local government. I had the luxury that I came from being a local government minister, to knowing these councils really well – I do not want to brag, but quite well. So I had a really good open dialogue, a trusted open dialogue, with the councils and what their aspirations would be.

The Aboriginal corporations – as I said, I had a number of in-person conversations with them. I travelled to their headquarters and put no time limit on listening to their aspirations, I suppose. It really boiled down to, as I said before in my previous evidence, they were more than happy to assist the government in delivering a Commonwealth Games, but at the time their heritage work, their work on events – the demands on them – meant that they sort of said to me, ‘Look, we haven’t even got time to think about what you’re talking about down the track because we’re so busy’. That led me to advocate for: let us help them with some funding to get them and their day-to-day demands on top of things, whether they put on another person or whatever they do. I preferred to meet people in-person if I could, so I travelled to the regions, and a lot of it was group forums, if not conversations with councils in their offices or Aboriginal corporations in their offices or wherever someone was happy to accommodate me.

**Jacinta ERMACORA:** Very good. With the councils and the communities, what feedback did you receive from them?

**Shaun LEANE:** Of course there was a lot of enthusiasm – just welcoming regional investment was the main thing for their enthusiasm. The opportunity for the investment was probably front of mind to them. As I said before, for me it was to take into account their advice on anything that would be delivered, their good local advice about how they would like to see that delivered, and what would be left after the games.

**Jacinta ERMACORA:** Thank you. I want to move on to First Nations now. Can you explain your work with the First Peoples communities and how they were involved with the legacy planning?

**Shaun LEANE:** I think there was a lot of emphasis that with a regional Victoria event like this the First Nations should be front and centre. That was a conversation that I had with them, and they were more than happy to embrace that. I was interweaving that in my advice back to government. After going to Dja Dja Wurrung Aboriginal Corporation, having had a good conversation with them, I went for a walk to look at the advice as far as what had been interwoven into new government buildings and acknowledging those First Nations people in a semi-permanent way – buildings do not last forever. But I was kind of just blown away. So the conversation that I had back to government was that we really needed to enlist their advice to lever a lasting acknowledgement of the First Nations people of Victoria and their 65,000-year culture and for us to celebrate and embrace that this is a country where we have the oldest living culture, and it is something we should be absolutely proud of, I think, and celebrate. So my conversation with them, being an old white guy, was: ‘You need to tell us, you need to advise us’, therefore making sure that I had the capacity at the time when we did come to them to get that advice.

**Jacinta ERMACORA:** Thank you. Do you think that the work that was done at that stage is still relevant to the regional package as it is rolled out?

**Shaun LEANE:** Yes. I would think so, absolutely. Despite the short time that I was in the role, and I am sure Minister Shing has taken up the baton, the process around having these conversations with stakeholders in regional Victoria was really pushing that our government policies 100 per cent afforded them to be involved, whether it be the Aboriginal corporations; whether it be, as I said, the social enterprises; or whether it be someone who was looking for an apprenticeship – all of the above. I actually felt the conversations were well worthwhile at the time and now.

**Jacinta ERMACORA:** Thank you. In relation to the caretaker period, can you give a bit of a fuller picture of your role as minister in the caretaker period? That went from 1 November, I believe, until the election in 2022. Can you tell the committee what that means for a minister?

**Shaun LEANE:** I suppose if a person urgently wanted sign off, they would come to me, but other than that it was hands off as far as being the minister.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you, Ms Ermacora. Dr Mansfield.

**Sarah MANSFIELD:** Thank you. Thank you, Shaun, for being here today. I wanted to go back to some of the aspects of the legacy around housing. Did you meet with Homes Victoria at any point?

**Shaun LEANE:** My recollection is just not there. I did have conversations with a number of groups around housing. As I said, some of the councils had views. But I apologise, my memory is not serving me.

**Sarah MANSFIELD:** That is okay. Apart from councils, was there anyone else that you met with to discuss the housing aspect of the legacy?

**Shaun LEANE:** I suppose there is always advice from departments when you are a minister. I had a really clear view myself coming into the role, having spoken to a number of regional councils about housing. They were saying to me it was their biggest issue. I think with COVID there was this thing happening where people were buying houses in regional Victoria on Facebook without even looking at them, because they thought, 'If I'm going to be working from home, I could work from a regional town or next to a river or somewhere quite picturesque.' That was the advice I was getting from the councils at the time, so I had a really clear view that housing in regional Victoria was a very big challenge.

**Sarah MANSFIELD:** Okay. I guess when the government was pitching the games, one of the big talking points was the housing legacy that would be left. As has been alluded to, the initial business case said 20 to 30 per cent social housing. Homes Victoria, when they presented the other week, said that they understood that there would be 20 to 30 per cent social housing delivered out of the villages. Was it your understanding that the social and affordable housing would be in addition to housing already pledged for regional areas under the Big Housing Build?

**Shaun LEANE:** I cannot really say. Given that that sort of side of the housing was not inside my responsibility, I really honestly do not want to comment that that was the case or not. But yes, I think that it was definitely seen, in my view and others, whatever we did, as an injection for much-needed housing in regional Victoria.

**Sarah MANSFIELD:** And was that delivery of additional housing – whether it be social, affordable or private housing – something that you were overseeing as part of legacy, or was that another minister's responsibility?

**Shaun LEANE:** Look, I think it was a clear direction to whoever was working on the delivery of these particular facilities that that would be the case – sorry, the housing, the social housing and affordable housing, would need to be part of it.

**Sarah MANSFIELD:** So that was more delivery rather than legacy, is that what you are saying?

**Shaun LEANE:** Well, I think it is sort of more delivery – as in I would give advice and my view around what would happen afterwards, but what had to be delivered was in delivery.

**Sarah MANSFIELD:** Okay. It is great you have talked a lot about building skills and the people legacy, but infrastructure was another important part of the legacy I think regional areas were looking for. In your discussions with councils and other entities, did you have discussions about the infrastructure legacy?

**Shaun LEANE:** Yes, I did. Look, I knew that councils were hopeful and had aspirations on some of their existing sporting facilities that maybe could be selected as part of the games, and then therefore that would deliver an upgrade of that particular facility. So they were the sort of conversations that I did have.

**Sarah MANSFIELD:** Yes. Did you have any conversations with them about potential temporary infrastructure or other locations perhaps that were different to their preferred locations or upgrades?

**Shaun LEANE:** No, I did not have those sorts of conversations. Given, Sarah, that it was a short time, I cannot say if anyone else had those conversations, but I did not.

**Sarah MANSFIELD:** Okay. You do not have to name the people, but what positions of people were you meeting with at councils – was it the CEO, mayors?

**Shaun LEANE:** Every meeting I had would be the CEO and the mayor as a minimum, but some directors as well would attend.

**Sarah MANSFIELD:** Okay. I guess just going back to the question about preferred locations, did you have any discussions with Geelong council about the preferred pool location, because I do not know if by that stage it had been named as the swimming site?

**Shaun LEANE:** Not with the councillors that I can remember. I think there may have been some advocacy from stakeholders around the pool at Kardinia Park, but my personal view was if there was going to be a pool built, then why demolish an existing pool to build a pool, when you could put a pool in a growth area where there are going to be a lot of young families being able to utilise it and learn to swim. The other thing about Kardinia Park was if we did decommission the pool for a long period of time, there was correspondence to me from one particular swimming club that they were really concerned about people in that area getting back to learn to swim. I think there might have been some elite groups using it as well.

**Sarah MANSFIELD:** All right. Did you have any discussions about potential cost sharing with councils – you know, costs that they might have to contribute to with the infrastructure – or did it not get to that?

**Shaun LEANE:** I did not. In my role I did not.

**Sarah MANSFIELD:** Okay. I guess going to your discussions that you had with the registered Aboriginal corporations and the extra funding you were able to get for them to assist with dealing with existing challenges, do you know if any of those corporations put on additional staff in anticipation of the games going ahead or did put aside any of that funding?

**Shaun LEANE:** I cannot answer that question for them. I think with them saying they needed to build capacity to deal with the demands on them at the time, my understanding was that they might utilise that to put other people on, but I cannot answer if that has happened. I would have thought so. As you know, it is just a privilege to be an MP. There is privilege in the role to actually see the work they were doing, the Aboriginal corporations, so I was very passionate to make sure that if we could assist them doing the good work they were doing without actually burning the midnight oil, then that would be a good thing.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you, Dr Mansfield. Mr McIntosh.

**Tom McINTOSH:** Hi, Shaun. You have had some questions already about the intention of the legacy for the Commonwealth Games. I wanted to dive into some of the things that you have responded on. Something that I think is really important to comprehend is the investment. I suppose I mention also how you view the investment that is going to flow from the \$2 billion package for regional Victoria around housing. Obviously we have got worker accommodation, community sports and all that community investment. Also in your nine years in this term of government, it has been known obviously for investing in infrastructure, but I think what can get missed is the equality it brings to communities, whether it is metro or regional, that comes out of that investment. I think something you have touched on is the equity for individual Victorians that comes out of construction. To me I see it as a great equaliser – you talked about family violence – whether it is children or

women moving out of family violence, migrants, refugees or simply people that have perhaps come from situations where they have not had educational opportunities or whatever it might be, so that great equaliser to be able to get work and provide income for families, so that sort of community equality, that individual equity, but also what it means from an economic perspective. Perhaps before we dive into some of the forward-looking things, could you just talk about how you see those benefits, which I think can be overlooked, because you have touched on those broader benefits. Perhaps we can start with community and equity for individuals, as you were touching on earlier.

**Shaun LEANE:** Yes. Thanks, Tom. I suppose to get back to where I started, this is something that the government can shout from the rooftops – whether we will get credit for it or not, I do not know, but it does not matter. It does not matter if this government gets credit for it, because it is a really good thing to do and it is the right thing to do. It might have been a perfect storm where when we first came to government Jacinta Allan had the employment portfolio and the transport infrastructure portfolio, which was a new portfolio, and that is where a lot of the big projects were: level crossing removal and other transport projects. It gave her and me an opportunity to kind of implant this idea and enforce this idea to some degree in contracts for the major projects, giving the 10 per cent apprentice guarantee. So I think in the projects going forward in regional Victoria, all of that will apply. All of that is going to apply, and I think I have seen firsthand a cultural change in the construction industry. The day I was introduced to a young woman that a guy told me was the best employee he had ever had – a survivor of domestic violence – was one of the best days I have had in this job, because it started from years ago. To convince an employer in the construction industry that these are the sorts of people that they need to prioritise to employ is a cultural thing. I spoke to – and these are the conversations we will have with the successful tenderers in delivering this regional package – a superintendent of a level crossing removal early in our term about social enterprises, and he was saying to me, ‘No offence, but I’m prioritising getting this done,’ which is fair enough. I suggested to him there were two fantastic social enterprises not far from where he was delivering the project – pay the award, look after people, do the right thing – and suggested that he have a look. Then I saw him a few months later and he told me he went down to those enterprises, and he said they blew his mind. He gave one of them a heap of printing and he gave another one a contract to deliver trees and ferns. So my expectation is clearly – and it is my expectation, I am not part of the executive – as a member of our government is that this gets delivered, and I reckon the culture is there that it will not be an issue.

**Tom McINTOSH:** I want to touch on that third point I talked about, the economic productivity and I think the downward pressure on inflation and about investing in people – you touched on it earlier. I started my trade in 2001. I did an apprenticeship and worked in construction for about 10 years. That was coming out of that period of the 90s when there was that intense privatisation, there was not investment in skills and there was not investment in people. So I grew up in the regions, where we had – I have talked about it before – train lines ripped out and community investment ripped out. And then there was no work in the regions, so most of my time I was travelling and living away, whereas we now see work in the regions for young people, and it flows through the whole economy locally and the state. But I think, as you say, now Premier Allan has made that commitment to training and supporting people to build that pipeline of workers, and that flows through to building trams and trains here in Victoria rather than sending the contract off overseas and just waiting to see what turns up three or four years later. That investment in people and skills and the investment we are going to make in the regions out of this \$2 billion, how do you see all that marrying up for us to deliver these projects and continue to deliver all the other projects around Victoria with skilled people who have had time to grow into their careers?

**Shaun LEANE:** My personal opinion – and a personal opinion to a committee hearing is worth probably nothing – is the government should create employment and they should train up people with the skills we need into the future. It should be part of their responsibility. I think that we have gone from – probably 35 kilos ago I sat in the exhibition building, which was full of young people doing exams just to get an apprenticeship with the railways, and I was unfortunately unsuccessful. But I just think this has been big. We put a lot of weight on this as a government, and I think it is exactly the right thing to do.

**Tom McINTOSH:** Yes. And just on that, back to that equity for individuals, that bringing of so many people into it, I understand and absolutely agree with what you said about culture, that broader culture of bringing people into those roles of work, whether that is migrants, First Nations and all that sort of thing. Can you just touch again – we are just about out of time – and close on what you think that has done culturally not only for that line of work but for Victoria more broadly, on that inclusivity, that diversity and that respect for all

people in Victoria and including them and bringing them on the journey for a more economically successful life for all those people and for all of us?

**Shaun LEANE:** I suppose what it has done, and I spoke about whether there is any credit or acknowledgement – but seriously, the Victorian social enterprise framework is discussed around the world. It is discussed around the world and forms of it have been embraced in other jurisdictions. The apprentice guarantee has been discussed in other jurisdictions, and I would hope a lot of jurisdictions would have similar things as far as priority jobseeker lists, because there is a reality that it is harder for some people to get employment through no fault of their own than other people. That is the reality.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you, Mr McIntosh. Ms Bath.

**Melina BATH:** Thank you, President. Good to see you here today. I would like to ask you about Armstrong Creek. I would like to ask you about a few different regions: Armstrong Creek and Waurn Ponds. What was your involvement in the planning of the infrastructure and swimming pool at Armstrong Creek?

**Shaun LEANE:** In a previous answer to Dr Mansfield, I suppose my involvement was advocating for legacy, and I got my head around to some degree what would happen to the pool at Kardinia Park, which was what some groups were advocating for. I was advocating that if we were going to build a new pool, let us build it in a growth area where there is access for a lot of young families that want to take kids to swimming lessons.

**Melina BATH:** Were you aware that it was going to be a temporary pool for the games?

**Shaun LEANE:** My understanding is there would be a pool left behind.

**Melina BATH:** What was your involvement, President, in Waurn Ponds as the site of the Geelong athletes village?

**Shaun LEANE:** As far as involvement in the decision for it to be located there, probably none. But in saying that, I did make myself 100 per cent aware of where the location was going to be, as in going and standing and looking at it. Having a legacy of housing next to a train station in a growth area I believed was a good thing. The thing about a games village is you sort of imagine just accommodation for athletes, but there had to be big common areas for catering, for physiotherapy – for a lot of things. So my view was and what I was advocating for was those large areas can become a community centre or they can become of some value – it could be a kindergarten, it could be a childcare centre. So I sort of had that overview of ‘Let’s make sure these particular larger buildings can be retrofitted for those sorts of community facilities and so forth’.

**Melina BATH:** Thanks, President. Appreciate that. The Committee for Geelong noted in its submission that it would be helpful to understand the rationale for the choice of Armstrong Creek and Waurn Ponds. What was the rationale, and who recommended Armstrong Creek to your knowledge?

**Shaun LEANE:** As I said, it was a whole-of-executive decision on a lot of these issues. But getting back to my rationale at the time, which is only what I can talk on, I did not think it was a great idea to decommission Kardinia Park’s pool for a long period of time and therefore deny those swim schools and other people that use it – for a long period of time they could not use it. My belief was that if there was going to be infrastructure like a swimming pool, then it should be in a growth corridor.

**Melina BATH:** Thank you. On 29 October, two days before the writs were issued, you appeared with four Labor MPs going up to the election. Wasn’t this really just a good opportunity to spruik what was supposedly happening there at the time as an election ploy? Wasn’t it a good visual?

**Shaun LEANE:** I do not know if I ever think of anything as a ploy. But part of my role was to advocate and

**David DAVIS:** It was campaigning, wasn’t it?

**Shaun LEANE:** A ploy, campaigning – Ms Bath, nothing is unique as far as advertising good policy of a government.

**Melina BATH:** Sure. On 19 October in the *Latrobe Valley Express* you are quoted as saying in relation to the villages the government were ‘still working on the final design of the village’. Did you see these final designs? What did they look like? Could you share that with the committee?

**Shaun LEANE:** No, I did not see any final designs.

**Melina BATH:** So you made that statement in a doorstep in the Latrobe Valley without seeing them.

**Shaun LEANE:** No, I did not actually say that in that quote. They were working on it.

**Melina BATH:** ‘We are still working on the final design’ – therefore there have been the initial stages, there has been thorough organisation and they are working on the final design.

**Shaun LEANE:** I think there would have been, getting back to answering a previous question, discussion with stakeholders about what may be, but that was the extent of it.

**Melina BATH:** And you happened to be standing next to the candidate for Morwell in that photo too. With respect to tender documents, and I think it is the Comm Games industrial relations, page 36, 5(d), point 8, the request for tender documents for these athletes villages gave preference to the CFMEU, the ETU, the PTEU and Victorian Trades Hall. Why were these unions given preference?

**Shaun LEANE:** That is new to me, and I cannot answer that question.

**Melina BATH:** That was not anything that you as legacy minister had any relation to?

**Shaun LEANE:** No, I had no relation to it. Getting back to your comment, I did appear next to the candidate for Morwell, and she was unsuccessful. So it shows you how much I helped.

**Melina BATH:** It shows you how much potentially people observed of the credibility – not of the candidate, but of the topic. In August last year you spoke, and you have spoken a lot today, about social enterprises. Can you provide a list of those organisations for the committee that you have seen and the dates that you met? Is that possible, and what were the drill-down purposes of those meetings?

**Shaun LEANE:** If I can, I will. As I said, I vacated the position and left documents behind. I think I have outlined the purpose of having those conversations a number of times.

**Melina BATH:** Can you provide that detail about what was the actual, direct, quantifiable commitment to them? I think that is what the committee is interested in.

**Shaun LEANE:** As far as direct commitment, it would have been completely out of line for me to do that. What I was doing was getting their understanding of what they did, their capacity, and making sure that they would be able to be part of a tender process, so it would probably be out of line for me to have said I guaranteed that such and such a company was going to get work. That would have been inappropriate.

**Melina BATH:** Noted. Thanks, President. In August 2022 you participated in the partnership forum. Can you provide to the committee a copy of the brief and attendee list for that forum, and what was the purpose of the partnership forum?

**Shaun LEANE:** The answer is no, because I have not got those documents, to the first question. The purpose of that forum in my view was to once again alert different stakeholders that we wanted them to be involved.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you, Ms Bath. Mrs Tyrrell.

**Rikkie-Lee TYRRELL:** Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Shaun, for showing up today. You mentioned that you met and consulted with Aboriginal corporations in the regional areas, stating that Dja Dja Wurrung at Bendigo was one. What were the others?

**Shaun LEANE:** Wathaurong covers Ballarat and Geelong and – I am sorry for the disrespect I am showing, but the Aboriginal corporation that covers the Latrobe Valley, which I should –



**Tom McINTOSH:** Gunnai Kurnai.

**Melina BATH:** Gunnai Kurnai – GlaWAC.

**Shaun LEANE:** Yes. Thank you. Gunnai Kurnai, which is the Latrobe Valley.

**Rikkie-Lee TYRRELL:** Okay. So it was three of them?

**Shaun LEANE:** Yes, three of them that covered the four regional centres that were nominated.

**Rikkie-Lee TYRRELL:** Did you meet with any in Shepparton?

**Shaun LEANE:** No, Rikkie-Lee, because I think once it was announced that there were going to be extra sports to Shepparton, I had kind of run out of time.

**Rikkie-Lee TYRRELL:** Okay.

**Shaun LEANE:** In saying that, I was absolutely really keen to but had run out of time. I would have been more than happy to have that conversation with them.

**Rikkie-Lee TYRRELL:** Yes. Shepparton was pretty much underwater at that time too. It was flooded, during the election.

**Shaun LEANE:** Yes. Also, like I said, I had run out of time. Actually, thanks for reminding me too, there was the flooding, and I actually did take into account that the last thing they probably needed was me going up there talking about the Commonwealth Games.

**Rikkie-Lee TYRRELL:** Yes. That is okay. Sticking to the regions, did you consult with any businesses or corporations that were privately owned in the regions that were going to be a part of 2026?

**Shaun LEANE:** Look, I had a lot of conversations with NGOs, and I think some of the group training companies may be privately owned. I am not sure of their structure, but I think Ms Bath mentioned quite a big forum of stakeholders, and I would imagine there would have been some interested parties as far as enterprises in that forum. But as I said, that was a big forum, and I cannot 100 per cent say who actually participated.

**Rikkie-Lee TYRRELL:** Okay. So it was predominantly government organisations that you were consulting with during the time that you were legacy minister?

**Shaun LEANE:** No. It was, like I said, non-government organisations, councils, Aboriginal corporations and, you know, different groups and sporting bodies – like, as in local sporting bodies not global.

**Rikkie-Lee TYRRELL:** Okay. All right. Thanks. That is all I have.

**Shaun LEANE:** Thank you.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you, Mrs Tyrrell. We have got time for a couple more questions. Mr Leane, you mentioned how during your brief period as the minister you met with Aboriginal corporations, local councils and, I think you said, social enterprises. Who did you meet with in regard to the project and event management of the games?

**Shaun LEANE:** That was not my role, so that was not where I was concentrating on.

**The CHAIR:** But the legacy infrastructure was intended to be part of the games infrastructure also, right, because some of the housing that was going to be to be built to be used for athletes would later be used for social housing, and some of the sporting facilities would later be used by community groups et cetera, et cetera. Surely that would have to be incorporated into the project and event management plans?

**Shaun LEANE:** Yes, and I think – look, put aside event management because that was not an area that I had responsibility for, and I tried to not sort of occupy other people's time and mine with areas that were not of my concern.

**The CHAIR:** But they must have been talking to you to try to figure out what of these things were actually going to be happening and – yes.

**Shaun LEANE:** That is an excellent question. Event management take that out, but as far as legacy for infrastructure, the directors under Simon Phemister’s department who had the responsibility as far as infrastructure delivery – I spoke to them a number of times, but it was more one-way advice about what I wanted to see from legacy. So it was sort of more one-way advice from me about –

**The CHAIR:** So they were not telling you what their requirements were to conduct the games?

**Shaun LEANE:** No, no. It was –

**The CHAIR:** Should they have been doing that? Because surely they would have requirements – like beds, for example.

**Shaun LEANE:** Look, they may have in some discussions, but in the period of time I was there, there were a lot of concepts rather than solid plans, so I was making sure I was interweaving myself into the concept. Getting back to Mr McIntosh’s question about equality, I was even speaking to the commissioner for equality around his view and their view of what we could interweave in delivering infrastructure, and then I would give that advice to those types of departments about my expectations in line with government.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you, Mr Leane. Ms Bath.

**Melina BATH:** Thank you. President, you said earlier on that you were talking about the Comm Games at a high level and ‘I went to leadership of the two departments’. Can you just maybe take it on notice but tell us who that leadership was of those two departments at the time?

**Shaun LEANE:** Yes, Jeroen Weimar and Simon Phemister.

**Melina BATH:** Yes, right. Fabulous. Thank you. You have mentioned just now, in terms of delivering housing and infrastructure moving forward, the culture is there and it will not be an issue. I put it to you that in previous Commonwealth Games across Australia, they have been delivered, we have seen them delivered in Victoria in the past, but in effect at the moment the culture is not there, because the games have been cancelled by the government.

**Shaun LEANE:** What I am talking about is the \$2 billion investment into infrastructure that was announced at the time it was announced that the Commonwealth Games were not going to go ahead.

**The CHAIR:** Okay. Mr Davis.

**David DAVIS:** You talked about the additional cost of other items, and you talked about Indigenous, social enterprise and apprentices and so forth and how that integrated into the activities. Was that costed in any way?

**Shaun LEANE:** I cannot answer that question. There is a great social outcome and a great investment in training people, and as far as the utilising of social enterprises – with the social enterprises that I have been lucky enough to be involved with – they do not want a favour, they just want an opportunity, so they are happy to. The price will be competitive, the product will be fantastic, the service will be fantastic and it will be delivered on time.

**David DAVIS:** So there is absolutely no impact on the budget?

**Shaun LEANE:** That is my personal belief.

**David DAVIS:** Was that costed in any way? Did someone test that? Can we point to that being tested?

**Shaun LEANE:** I do not know, Mr Davis. Over my time in this area I have had cost–benefit ratios be amazing, and with every dollar you put into this sort of training or investment – if you go to social enterprises that employ people with intellectual disabilities that can function, they earn their own wage, they pay their own rent and they pay for their own entertainment. Otherwise, if they were not doing that, society would have to look after them in a different way.

**David DAVIS:** Or the business case would have to be adjusted.

**The CHAIR:** Mr Galea.

**Michael GALEA:** Thank you, Chair. Just very briefly, Shaun, you mentioned the job seeker priority list. What does that involve?

**Shaun LEANE:** I will try to rattle it off. It is a priority job seeker list that the government has where we push and incentivise employers or departments. There are categories of people, as I said, that through no fault of their own fall into categories of people that are hard to get employed, categories of people like women over 45 – which should not be a category, but it is a reality; as I said, people with disabilities; refugee groups; and people for whom English is not their first language. As I said, Michael, it made my job easier when I was the Minister for Veterans that veterans and their family members were on the priority job seeker list, because that sort of helped get some employment programs happening in the private sector and in our public sector. It is an area we can point to as a government – that these are areas that we really want to encourage and incentivise; that you look towards these very capable, good people that can fill a great role at your enterprise that may be having a harder time getting a position because of their age or their gender or their ability.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you, Mr Galea. Thank you, Mr Leane, for appearing today. You will receive a copy of the transcript for review in about a week. The committee will now adjourn until 10:40.

**Witness withdrew.**