

Hearing Date: 14 February 2024

Questions taken on notice

Directed to: Ballarat City Council, Evan King

Received Date: 18 March 2024

1. Joe McCRACKEN, page 4

Question Asked:

That is good. I am just going to go through a few questions. I want to follow on from David about the non-disclosure agreements. I feel a bit sorry for you because I feel like you have been forced into a corner on these, because there are some things that you should have been able to disclose that probably you have not been able to. Were you asked to sign one of these agreements?

Evan KING: Yes, I was.

Joe McCRACKEN: When was that?

Evan KING: Good question. I think it was in September of 2022 –

Joe McCRACKEN: Okay.

Evan KING: but I am happy to check that and provide that information.

Joe McCRACKEN: If you want to take it on notice and provide the date and all that, that is fine.

Evan KING: Yes. I am certainly happy to do that.

Response:

- Agreement on Villages – Signed on 7/6/2022
- Agreement on Victoria 2026 - Signed on 16/9/2022

2. Joe McCRACKEN, page 4

Question Asked:

You said also before that some of your officers had been asked to sign them.

Evan KING: Yes.

Joe McCRACKEN: How many?

Evan KING: I would have to take that on notice, but basically anyone that was working in the working groups was asked to sign –

Joe McCRACKEN: If you are happy to provide a list of who and when they were asked, that is fine.

Evan KING: Yes.

Response:

- 3 Officers

3. Joe McCracken, page 4

Question Asked:

Can you provide us with a copy of your agreement or one of the agreements?

Evan KING: I would certainly be happy to check whether I am able to do that.

Joe McCRACKEN: Whether you are able to? Okay. Privilege covers and trumps all those sort of agreements –

Response:

- I have contacted the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions to seek its consent to release the confidential undertaking, noting that on its face it prohibits the release of the undertaking. I will advise the Committee as soon as I receive a response from the Department.

4. Joe McCracken, page 4-5

Question Asked:

... So the main reason why you signed it is because of the need for one person to be a spokesman. Do you know why you had to sign it? What did the government say to you as the reason why?

Evan KING: Really, because of the complexity of the project, the dollar value of the project, it is proper, good governance from a probity perspective that we are not actually out there talking about the project before it is actually made public.

Joe McCracken: Yes, that is fair. Who was it that asked you to sign it?

Evan KING: It would have come through DJSIR.

Joe McCracken: Do you have any particular name of a person that asked you?

Evan KING: I would have to take that on notice.

Joe McCracken: If you are happy to take that on notice, that is fine. What limitations were placed on you in your ability to inform councillors about what was going on with the Commonwealth Games?

Response:

- Alex Kamenev
Deputy Secretary
Commonwealth Games Infrastructure Delivery
Office of the Commonwealth Games
Department of Jobs Precincts and Regions
- Tammy Fitzgerald | Director, Regional Operations | Grampians
Regional Development Victoria

5. David DAVIS, page 5-6

Question Asked:

We know from the state government that the EPA were asked to look at that site only, not other sites in Ballarat. Is that something that you supported at the time?

Evan KING: I provided a whole range of opportunities for potential athletes villages to the state government in my role as the CEO. I was not privy to the analysis of those sites and the determination of which would be the best site.

Joe McCracken: What other sites did you offer? Sorry, I will leave that as my last one.

Melina BATH: Can you provide those other sites to the committee, please?

Evan KING: I can check whether I am able to provide that.

Response:

- 1. Eastern Oval Precinct
- 2. Llanberris Athletics Reserve
- 3. Peel / Porter St Precinct

- 4.Dana Street sites
- 5.CBD North West
- 6.Mt Pleasant Precinct
- 7.Mt Xavier Precinct
- 8.Latrobe Street Saleyards Precinct
- 9.Selkirk Precinct
- 10.Sunnyside Mill
- 11.Northern Growth Area
- 12.Existing Growth Area

6. Melina BATH, page 7

Question Asked:

...I am interested to understand if the Victorian government gave you a copy of the business case for the Commonwealth Games, the proposed business case.

Evan KING: I am not aware of receiving a copy of the business case.

Melina BATH: Okay. If you do a check. All of my questions might be taken on notice, if you please.

Evan KING: Yes.

Response:

- No

7. Melina BATH, page 7

Question Asked:

Thank you, Mr King. The Victorian Auditor-General has just conducted an audit on government departments and the like. Were you asked to make a submission to that or did you provide content or be interviewed by the VAGO audit?

Evan KING: Yes. I was interviewed and also provided content to the audit.

Melina BATH: Okay. Hopefully we are going to see his report shortly, but we would appreciate if you could provide that to our committee as well.

Evan KING: I am happy to check with the Victorian Auditor-General if that is possible.

Response:

- I have contacted the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions to seek its consent to release the documents contained in the submission to the Victorian Auditor General. I will advise the Committee as soon as I receive a response from the Department.

8. Melina BATH, page 7

Question Asked:

Thank you. I note that the mayor, Mr Hudson, spoke in the paper about hundreds of thousands of hours. I would just like to see if you could quantify that in some way – it might be a request for homework – in terms of activity, staff, community engagement, you know, that sort of amount, because there has been an allocation in planning for something that is now not going to be delivered. It would just be useful for our committee to understand that, if you can. Thank you very much.

Did Ballarat make a financial contribution to the Shepparton council for the early original scoping study for a regional Commonwealth Games?

Evan KING: I understand we did.

Melina BATH: Okay. If so, how much and when were the payments made?

Evan KING: I would need to take that one on notice, yes.

Response:

- Council resolution R211/17 in June 2017 to continue to participate in the taskforce for the Greater Victoria Commonwealth Games Regional Cities Bid 2030.
- 01/2018 - City of Ballarat \$6,600 contributed to Greater Shepparton for the pre-feasibility study for the Greater Victoria Commonwealth Games Regional Cities Bid 2030.
- I am unable to provide an auditable cost to Council for its participation in the delivery of the Commonwealth Games. We did not keep records.

9. Melina BATH, page 8

Question Asked:

Thank you. It must have been quite a frenetic time for you, the announcement. You were having to gear up et cetera. I am interested to understand what ministers you met in your role as CEO but also any dates of those meetings and minutes of those meetings. If you could provide them, that would be helpful. Again, it might be a question on notice.

Evan KING: On notice, yes.

Response:

- 8/7/2022 - Meeting with Minister Allan (Acting Premier) – Commonwealth Games Legacy – No City of Ballarat Minutes Taken.
- 24/08/2022 - Minister Leane - Commonwealth Games Legacy – No City of Ballarat Minutes Taken.