



# **2021 – 22 Budget Estimates**

**Report No. 9, 57th Parliament**  
**Community Support and Services Committee**  
**August 2021**

## Community Support and Services Committee

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### Acknowledgements

The committee thanks:

- the Honourable Leeanne Enoch MP, Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts
- the Honourable Craig Crawford MP, Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, and
- the Honourable Leanne Linard MP, Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs.

The committee also acknowledges the assistance provided by the departmental officers who contributed to the work of the committee during the estimates process.

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## Chair's foreword

This report presents a summary of the committee's examination of the budget estimates for the 2021-22 financial year.

Consideration of the budget estimates allows for the public examination of the responsible Ministers and the chief executive officers of agencies within the committee's portfolio areas. This was undertaken through the questions on notice and public hearing process.

The committee has recommended that the proposed expenditure, as detailed in the Appropriation Bill 2021 for the committee's areas of responsibility, be agreed to by the Legislative Assembly without amendment.

On behalf of the committee, I thank the Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts; the Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships; and the Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs, and their departmental officers for their co-operation in providing information to the committee throughout this process.

I would also like to thank the members of the committee for their hard work and valuable contribution to the estimates process, and other members whose participation in the hearing provided additional scrutiny of the estimates.

Finally, I thank the committee's secretariat and other Parliamentary Service staff for their assistance throughout the estimates process.



**Corrine McMillan MP**

Chair

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Role of the committee

The Community Support and Services Committee (committee) is a portfolio committee of the Legislative Assembly, established on 26 November 2020 under the *Parliament of Queensland Act 2001* and the Standing Rules and Orders of the Legislative Assembly.<sup>1</sup>

The committee's areas of portfolio responsibility are:

- Communities, Housing, Digital Economy and the Arts
- Seniors, Disability Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, and
- Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs.

Section 93(1) of the *Parliament of Queensland Act 2001* provides that a portfolio committee is responsible for examining each Bill and item of subordinate legislation in its portfolio areas to consider:

- the policy to be given effect by the legislation
- the application of fundamental legislative principles
- matters arising under the *Human Rights Act 2019*, and
- for subordinate legislation – its lawfulness.

The committee also has oversight functions in relation to the Family Responsibilities Commission.

On 18 June 2021, the Appropriation Bill 2021 and the estimates for the committee's area of responsibility were referred to the committee for investigation and report.<sup>2</sup>

On 13 August 2021, the committee conducted a public hearing and took evidence on the proposed expenditure from: the Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts; the Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships; the Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs (relevant Ministers) and other witnesses. A copy of the transcript of the committee's hearing is available on the committee's webpage.<sup>3</sup>

## 1.2 Aim of this report

This report summarises the estimates referred to the committee and highlights some of the issues the committee examined.

The committee considered the estimates referred to the committee by using information contained in:

- budget papers
- answers to pre-hearing questions on notice
- evidence taken at the hearing, and
- additional information given in relation to answers.

<sup>1</sup> *Parliament of Queensland Act 2001*, s 88 and Standing Order 194.

<sup>2</sup> Standing Order 177 provides for the automatic referral of the Annual Appropriation Bills to portfolio committees once the Bills have been read a second time.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/work-of-committees/committees/CSSC/inquiries/past-inquiries/estimates2021>, current at 20 August 2021.

Prior to the public hearing, the committee provided the relevant Ministers with questions on notice in relation to the estimates. Responses to all the questions were received.

Answers to the committee's pre-hearing questions on notice, documents tabled during the hearing, answers to questions taken on notice at the hearing and additional information provided by Ministers after the hearing are included in a volume of additional information tabled with this report. These documents are also available on the committee's website.

### **1.3 Participation by other Members**

The committee gave leave for other Members to participate in the hearing. The following Members participated in the hearing:

- Dr Amy MacMahon MP, Member for South Brisbane
- Ms Fiona Simpson MP, Member for Maroochydore, Shadow Minister for Integrity in Government and Shadow Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning
- Mr John-Paul Langbroek MP, Member for Surfers Paradise, Shadow Minister for Seniors, Communities and Disability Services and Shadow Minister for Multiculturalism and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships
- Mr Tim Mander MP, Member for Everton, Shadow Minister for Housing and Public Works and Shadow Minister for Sport and Racing
- Dr Christian Rowan MP, Member for Moggill, Shadow Minister for Education and Shadow Minister for the Arts
- Ms Amanda Camm MP, Member for Whitsunday, Shadow Minister for Child Protection, Shadow Minister for the Prevention of Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence and Shadow Minister for Women's Economic Security, and
- Mr Jarrod Bleijie MP, Member for Kawana, Shadow Minister for Finance, Shadow Minister for Industrial Relations

## **2 Recommendation**

Pursuant to Standing Order 187(1), the committee must state whether the proposed expenditure referred to the committee are agreed to.

### **Recommendation 1**

The committee recommends that the proposed expenditure, as detailed in the Appropriation Bill 2021 for the committee's areas of responsibility, be agreed to by the Legislative Assembly without amendment.

### 3 Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts

The Honourable Leeanne Enoch MP, Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts, is responsible for the Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy (DCHDE). The Minister is also responsible for the following statutory bodies:

- Library Board of Queensland
- Queensland Art Gallery
- Queensland Museum
- Queensland Performing Arts Trust, and
- Residential Tenancies Authority.

In addition, the Minister is responsible for the following commercialised business units: CITEC; Queensland Shared Services and the Corporate Administration Agency.<sup>4</sup>

#### 3.1 Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy

The DCHDE provides or funds services through four service areas:

- Arts Queensland – invests in opportunities that create greater access for Queenslanders to experience arts and culture, supports the growth of the arts sector and showcase the state's stories and artistic talent
- Community Services - supports communities to thrive through investing in quality community services that are connected and supports the social and economic inclusion and wellbeing of people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds
- Customer and Digital Services - puts Queenslanders and their businesses at the heart of government service delivery and oversees investments to enable successful delivery of a digitally enabled economy, and
- Housing and Homelessness Services - benefits Queenslanders and their communities by providing housing and homelessness services that are responsive, integrated and accessible and enrich the lives of Queenslanders.<sup>5</sup>

The following table taken from the Appropriation Bill 2021 compares the appropriations for the DCHDE for 2020-21 and 2021-22.

<b>Appropriations</b>	<b>Budget 2020-21 \$'000</b>	<b>Est. Actual 2020-2021 \$'000</b>	<b>Vote 2021-22 \$'000</b>
<i>Controlled Items</i>			
departmental services	1,137,169	1,075,845	1,223,496
equity adjustment	248,475	174,270	246,731
<i>Administered Items</i>	126,760	133,649	172,499
<b>Vote</b>	<b>1,512,404</b>	<b>1,383,764</b>	<b>1,642,726</b>

*Source: Appropriation Bill 2021, Schedule 2, p 9.*

<sup>4</sup> Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements, Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy (DCHDE), p 16.

<sup>5</sup> Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements, DCHDE, p 1.

### 3.1.1 Budget highlights

The total estimated expenditure (Controlled and Administered budget expenses) is approximately \$2.06 billion.<sup>6</sup>

DCHDE derives its income from appropriation revenue, user charges and fees, grants and other contributions and other revenue. In 2021-22, DCHDE income is expected to be approximately \$1.948 billion.<sup>7</sup>

The total investment in capital purchases in 2021-2022 for the DCHDE will be \$621 million. This includes \$435.7 million to increase the supply of social housing, upgrade the existing social housing portfolio and further invest in infrastructure projects across the community, arts and cultural facilities. The 2021-22 capital grants expenditure of \$185.3 million will principally increase the supply of social housing and upgrades for existing housing properties in partnership with community housing providers and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander councils.<sup>8</sup>

The Housing and Homelessness Action Plan 2021-25 provides \$1.908 billion over four years to boost housing supply and increase housing and homelessness support across Queensland. This comprises of:

- \$1.813 billion of expenditure over four years to increase the supply of social housing and upgrade the existing social housing property portfolio, and
- \$94.9 million over four years, \$23.7 million in 2021-22, to support the housing and homelessness service system and deliver better outcomes for Queenslanders.<sup>9</sup>

To support this, the Queensland Government has established a \$1 billion Housing Investment Fund, a long-term fund that will drive new supply to support current and future housing need. The fund will be administered by DCHDE and Queensland Treasury.<sup>10</sup>

Other 2021-22 budget highlights include:

- \$61.7 million over four years, \$20.1 million in 2021-22, for the delivery of critical infrastructure and maintenance to support the continued preservation of the heritage listed Queensland Cultural Centre, and support priority infrastructure that will revitalise existing state owned arts and cultural facilities including through the Arts Infrastructure Investment Fund and the Queensland Museum Network
- \$21 million over 4 years, \$4.5 million in 2021-11, in supporting significant cultural tourism outcomes and regional arts delivery across the state through the World Science Festival, and investment in the Regional Arts Services Network, along with blockbuster exhibitions funding of \$6 million over 3 years commencing from 2022-23
- \$7 million in 2021-22 to extend the live music venue support program to support the sustainability of Queensland's live music industry
- \$17.3 million over five years, \$4.4 million in 2021-22 (with \$8.5 million held centrally) to complete the Digital Archives program which will enable the preservation of digital government records
- \$11 million over two years (held centrally) for whole-of-government cyber security enhancements, and

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<sup>6</sup> Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements, DCHDE, p 10, 13.

<sup>7</sup> Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements, DCHDE, p 10, 13.

<sup>8</sup> Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements, DCHDE, p 3.

<sup>9</sup> Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements, DCHDE, p 2.

<sup>10</sup> Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements, DCHDE, p 2.



- \$5.2 million (held centrally) for community drought support as part of the overall Drought Assistance and Reform Package.<sup>11</sup>

### 3.2 Concessions

The total cost of concessions to be provided via schemes in the Communities, Housing and Digital Economy portfolio is estimated at \$519.2 million in 2021-22. A breakdown of these concessions by scheme is below.

Concession scheme	2019-20 Est. Act. \$'000	2020-21 Estimate \$'000
Government managed housing rental rebate	460	461.9
National Rental Affordability Scheme	28.3	26.6
Home Assist Secure	22.5	22.9
Queensland Performing Arts Trust - Arts Concessional Entry Fees <sup>1</sup>	1.5	3.0
Queensland Museum - Arts Concessional Entry Fee <sup>2</sup>	1.4	1.7
Arts Queensland - Discount on Property Lease Rentals <sup>3</sup>	0.8	0.9
Rental Bond Loans	0.6	0.7
Queensland Art Gallery - Arts Concessional Entry Fees <sup>4</sup>	0.4	0.5
Queensland Performing Arts Trust - Venue Hire Rebates	0.3	0.4
Arts Queensland - Venue Hire Rebates	0.3	0.3
State Library of Queensland - Venue Hire Rebates	0.3	0.3
COVID-19 Relief - Arts Queensland - Property Lease Rental Relief <sup>5</sup>	0.4	...
COVID-19 Relief - Queensland Museum - Additional Concessions <sup>5</sup>	0.3	...
COVID-19 Relief - Queensland Performing Arts Trust - Additional Concessions <sup>5</sup>		
Non-Government Managed Housing <sup>6</sup>	...	...
<b>Total</b>	<b>517.3</b>	<b>519.2</b>

#### Notes:

1. The variance is due to the estimated growth in recipients, particularly Health Care Card holders.
2. Electricity price rebates are adjusted annually according to the Queensland Competition Authority's (QCA) price determination for general household electricity tariff (Tariff 11). For 2020-21, the QCA determined Tariff 11 will decrease by 5.9%. However, the government has determined that existing rebate values will not be decreased and will continue to apply in 2020-21.
3. The \$2.9 million reported in 2019-20 relates to the 2018-19 allocation. The 2019-20 Electricity Asset Ownership Dividend was incorporated into the 2019-20 COVID Electricity Rebate.
4. 2019-20 Actual consists of \$404.2 million under the Residential Household Relief Package and \$85.9 million under the Small/Medium Business Rebate Package.
5. This item is part of the Queensland Government's response to COVID-19.

*Source: Queensland Budget 2021-22, Budget Strategy and Outlook, Budget Paper No. 2, p 213.*

<sup>11</sup> Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements, DCHDE, p 2.

### 3.3 Library Board of Queensland

The Library Board of Queensland is the governing body of the State Library of Queensland, established under the *Libraries Act 1988*. The State Library of Queensland is responsible for collecting and preserving Queensland's cultural and documentary heritage, providing free access to information and the advancement of public libraries across the state.<sup>12</sup>

The budget comparison for the Library Board of Queensland for 2020-21 and 2021-22 is shown below.

<b>Library Board of Queensland</b>	<b>2020-21 Budget \$'000</b>	<b>2020-21 Est Actual \$'000</b>	<b>2021-22 Budget \$'000</b>
Total income	79,849	79,783	80,610
Total expenses	79,849	79,783	80,610
<b>Operating surplus/(Deficit)</b>	..	..	..

*Source: Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements, DCHDE, p 36.*

The key deliverables for 2021-2022 note that the State Library of Queensland will:

- collect, interpret and share First Nations' peoples perspective of the Queensland story
- strengthen digital collecting and preservation and provide fit for purpose digital services
- deliver the First 5 Forever program in partnership with local government to provide strong early literacy foundations for all Queensland children aged zero to 5 years, and
- continue to strengthen and increase the Indigenous Knowledge Centres in discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities that deliver programs to keep culture strong.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements, DCHDE, p 34.

<sup>13</sup> Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements, DCHDE, p 34.

### 3.4 Queensland Art Gallery

The Queensland Art Gallery / Gallery of Modern Art (the QAGOMA) are both administered under the *Queensland Art Gallery Act 1987*. The galleries are governed by the Queensland Art Gallery Board of Trustees.<sup>14</sup>

The budget comparison for the Queensland Art Gallery for 2020-21 and 2021-22 is shown below.

Queensland Art Gallery	2020-21 Budget \$'000	2020-21 Est. Actual \$'000	2021-22 Budget \$'000
Total income	64,013	66,301	62,690
Total expenses	63,362	62,901	62,690
<b>Operating surplus/(Deficit)</b>	<b>651</b>	<b>3,400</b>	<b>...</b>

*Source: Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements, DCHDE, p 42.*

The key deliverables state that in 2021-22, QAGOMA will:

- commence forward planning for blockbuster exhibitions strategy with \$6 million funding from 2022-23 to 2024-25
- implement the Gallery's inaugural *Reconciliation Action Plan 2021-23* and launch a series of free public tours led by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander facilitators that explore the Gallery's Indigenous Collection
- secure major gifts and pledges and deliver public fundraising initiatives for QAGOMA's collection digitisation project, and build foundations for corporate philanthropic support of First Nations and art and wellbeing initiatives, and
- operationalise the Gallery's *2020 Cultural Tourism Strategy and Product Development Plan*, an initiative to attract and engage a wider audience of tourist markets to the Gallery for the purposes of sustainable and strategic growth.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>14</sup> QAGOMA, 'Board of Trustees', [www.qagoma.qld.gov.au/about/our-team](http://www.qagoma.qld.gov.au/about/our-team).

<sup>15</sup> Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements DCHDE, p 39.

### 3.5 Queensland Museum

The Queensland Museum was established under the *Queensland Museum Act 1970* and is governed by the Board of the Queensland Museum.<sup>16</sup>

The budget comparison for the Queensland Museum for 2020-21 and 2021-22 is shown below.

<b>Queensland Museum</b>	<b>2020-21 Budget \$'000</b>	<b>2020-21 Est. Actual \$'000</b>	<b>2021-22 Budget \$'000</b>
Total income	46,766	53,983	52,414
Total expenses	52,859	58,806	58,707
<b>Operating surplus/(Deficit)</b>	<b>(6,093)</b>	<b>(4,823)</b>	<b>(6,293)</b>

*Source: Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements, DCHDE, p 48.*

For 2021-22, some of the key deliverables for the Queensland Museum Network are to:

- continue to store, preserve, manage and maintain the \$550 million state collection. This includes the operationalisation in 2021-22 of the new \$9 million expanded research and biodiversity collection storage centre at Hendra, as part of the \$16.1 million commitment over 4 years from 2019-20 to 2022-23, to preserve and maintain valuable collection items to international standards
- commence in 2021-22 a 4 year \$9.1 million maintenance program of Queensland Museum Network campuses across Queensland
- deliver World Science Festival events across the state in 2021 and commence planning for events 2022–2024 with annual funding of \$3 million, and
- strengthen partnerships with First Nations communities through implementation of an Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan; ongoing commitment to repatriate Aboriginal Peoples and Torres Strait Islander Ancestral Remains; presentation of Island Futures: What Lies Ahead for Zenadth Kes temporary exhibition (June 2021– April 2022) and pursuing private sector and philanthropic support for a state-of-the-art Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander gallery envisioned for the flagship campus.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Queensland Museum Network, 'Board of the Queensland Museum', <http://network.qm.qld.gov.au/About+Us/Corporate+information/Board>.

<sup>17</sup> Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements DCHDE, pp 45-46.

### 3.6 Queensland Performing Arts Trust

The Queensland Performing Arts Trust is constituted under the *Queensland Performing Arts Trust Act 1977* and operates the Queensland Performing Arts Centre (QPAC). Its purpose is to contribute to the cultural, social and intellectual development of all Queenslanders.<sup>18</sup>

The budget comparison for the Queensland Performing Arts Trust for 2020-21 and 2021-22 is shown below.

Queensland Performing Arts Trust	2020-21 Budget \$'000	2020-21 Est. Actual \$'000	2021-22 Budget \$'000
Total income	33,131	64,077	63,565
Total expenses	43,080	57,727	63,565
<b>Operating surplus/(Deficit)</b>	<b>(9,949)</b>	<b>6,350</b>	<b>..</b>

*Source: Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements, DCHDE, p 54.*

In 2021-22, the Queensland Performing Arts Trust key deliverables are to:

- deliver an on-site live program in theatre venues and outdoor spaces under the QPAC site specific COVID-19 Safe Plan, supporting employment opportunities for Queensland arts companies, artists and arts workers
- extend the reach of programming by engaging online audiences through digital presentations and streaming
- ensure that First Nations arts and culture are embedded into QPAC's program and operations, and
- finalise Phase 2 of QPAC's LED lighting upgrade, funded by the government through Arts Queensland which will renew and transition the energy efficiency of the theatre lighting in the Playhouse Theatre.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements, DCHDE, p 51.

<sup>19</sup> Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements, DCHDE, p 51.

### 3.7 Residential Tenancies Authority

The Residential Tenancies Authority (RTA) is a statutory body established under the *Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008* (RTRA Act) to administer the RTRA Act which regulates the Queensland residential rental sector.<sup>20</sup>

The objective of the RTA is to ensure renting works for everyone by regulating, educating and informing the residential rental sector and delivering informative and tailored customer experiences.<sup>21</sup>

The budget comparison for the RTA for 2020-21 and 2021-22 is shown below.

<b>Residential Tenancies Authority</b>	<b>2020-21 Budget \$'000</b>	<b>2020-21 Actual \$'000</b>	<b>2021-22 Budget \$'000</b>
Total income	25,075	49,785	41,472
Total expenses	34,643	34,970	37,760
<b>Operating surplus/(Deficit)</b>	<b>(9,568)</b>	<b>14,815</b>	<b>3,712</b>

*Source: Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements, DCHDE, p 59.*

In 2021-22, the key deliverables for the RTA are to:

- continue to deliver digital products to the RTA's customers to promote a seamless service, be more responsive to customers and increase the number of services to be provided online
- implement new business processes, compliance activities and service offerings to ensure that they meet the highest standards to support and administer RTRA Act, including the RTA's recent Compliance and Enforcement Strategy 2021–23, and
- continue to support and educate the rental sector on requirements under the RTRA Act including implementing any legislative reforms.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Queensland Government, RTA, 'About Us', [www.rta.qld.gov.au/about-us](http://www.rta.qld.gov.au/about-us).

<sup>21</sup> Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements, DCHDE, p 57.

<sup>22</sup> Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements, DCHDE, p 57.

### **3.8 Key issues raised at the public hearing**

Issues raised by the committee and participating Members at the public hearing included:

- social housing
- housing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- current demands on the housing market
- the *Housing and Homelessness Action Plan 2021-2025*
- jobs for Queenslanders
- young people in need of housing support
- the Check In Qld app
- Queensland's economic recovery from COVID-19
- Smart Service Queensland
- social isolation and loneliness in Queensland
- the Queensland Care Army
- the Queensland Community Support Scheme
- Queensland neighbourhood and community centres
- support provided to the Queensland arts, cultural and entertainment industries through the COVID-19 pandemic
- support provided to cultural destination tourism, and
- the *First 5 Forever* program.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Public hearing transcript, Brisbane, 13 August 2021.

## 4 Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships

The Honourable Craig Crawford MP, Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, is responsible for the Department of Seniors, Disability Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships (DSDSATSIP).

### 4.1 Department of Seniors, Disability Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships

The DSDSATSIP provides its services through four service areas:

- Seniors Services - to improve the social and economic outcomes of seniors by advocating for inclusive programs and services, recognising and promoting their contribution to communities, and contributing to systems that safeguard and protect seniors
- Disability Services - to improve the social and economic outcomes of people with disability through the delivery of quality accommodation support and respite services, access to opportunities provided through the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), and by contributing to systems that safeguard and protect the rights of people with disability
- Economic Participation of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples - to influence more economic participation opportunities and outcomes for Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and
- Community Participation of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples - to increase the community participation of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples.<sup>24</sup>

The following table taken from the Appropriation Bill 2021 compares the appropriations for the DSDSATSIP for 2020-21 and 2021-22.

<b>Appropriations</b>	<b>Budget 2020-21 \$'000</b>	<b>Est. Actual 2020-2021 \$'000</b>	<b>Vote 2021-22 \$'000</b>
<i>Controlled Items</i>			
departmental services	328,408	316,626	295,216
equity adjustment	9,470	4,950	6,670
<i>Administered Items</i>	2,423,678	2,429,198	2,434,745
<b>Vote</b>	<b>2,761,556</b>	<b>2,750,774</b>	<b>2,736,631</b>

*Source: Appropriation Bill 2021, Schedule 2, p 12.*

<sup>24</sup> Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements, Department of Seniors, Disability Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships (DSDSATSIP), p 1.



#### 4.1.1 Budget highlights

The total estimated expenditure (Controlled and Administered budget expenses) is approximately \$2.746 billion.<sup>25</sup>

DSDSATSIP derives its income from appropriation revenue, user charges and fees, grants and other contributions and other revenue. In 2021-22, DSDSATSIP income is expected to be approximately \$2.746 billion.<sup>26</sup>

The 2020–21 budgeted expenses are not directly comparable to the 2021–22 budgeted expense as the preceding year was inclusive of 5 months of Communities budget and 7.5 months of the former Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships budget as a consequence of machinery-of-government changes in November 2020.<sup>27</sup>

The total budget capital outlays for the DSDSATSIP is \$13.18 million in 2021-22.<sup>28</sup>

In 2021–22 a budget of \$423.1 million is allocated for energy, rates and water concessions and rebates administered by the department.<sup>29</sup>

A total of \$20.87 million in additional funding has been provided in 2021–22 to the department for key initiatives. The additional funding is primarily for the continuation of:

- Disability Services initiatives including support for advocacy and peak bodies
- remote Indigenous land and infrastructure programs
- support for the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Foundation Scholarship Program, and
- protecting seniors against elder abuse.

In addition, the Queensland Government is establishing a \$300 million Path to Treaty Fund, with its returns used to support Path to Treaty actions and the Government's response to the Treaty Advancement Committee report, expected to be provided to Government later in 2021.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements, DSDSATSIP, p 8, 11.

<sup>26</sup> Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements, DSDSATSIP, p 8, 11.

<sup>27</sup> Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements, DSDSATSIP, p 7.

<sup>28</sup> Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements, DSDSATSIP, p 2.

<sup>29</sup> Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements, DSDSATSIP, p 7.

<sup>30</sup> Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements, DSDSATSIP, p 2.

## 4.2 Concessions

Concession scheme	2019-20 Est. Act. \$'000	2020-21 Estimate \$'000
Electricity Rebate Scheme	210.2	228.5
Electricity Asset Ownership Dividend	106.9	100.0
Pensioner Rate Subsidy Scheme	56.3	57.4
South East Queensland Pensioner Water Subsidy Scheme	19.3	19.7
Home Energy Emergency Assistance Scheme	10.0	10.0
Reticulated Natural Gas Rebate Scheme	2.6	2.6
Electricity Life Support Concession Scheme <sup>1</sup>	2.3	2.5
Medical Cooling and Heating Electricity Concession Scheme <sup>1</sup>	2.1	2.4
Electricity Rebate - COVID-19 - Residential Household Utility Assistance Package & Small / Medium business Power Bill Relief Package <sup>2</sup>	40.0	...
<b>Total</b>	<b>449.7</b>	<b>423.1</b>
<p>Notes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Electricity price rebates are adjusted annually according to the QCA's price determination for general household electricity tariff (Tariff 11). For 2021–22, the QCA determined Tariff 11 will decrease by 7.3 per cent. However, the Queensland Government has determined existing rebate values will not be decreased and will continue to apply in 2021–22.</li> <li>2. This item is part of the Queensland Government response to COVID-19.</li> </ol>		

*Source: Queensland Budget 2021-22, Budget Strategy and Outlook, Budget Paper No. 2, p 230.*

### 4.3 Key issues raised at the public hearing

Issues raised by the committee and participating Members at the public hearing included:

- the National Disability Insurance Scheme
- elder abuse in Queensland
- Queensland government support to older Queenslanders
- the Forensic Disability Service
- support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability
- Queensland Seniors Month
- the Queensland response to the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth mental health
- Path to Treaty in Queensland
- the Queensland contribution to the new national agreement on *Closing the Gap*
- the *Meriba Omasker Kaziw Kazipa Act 2020*, and
- economic participation in Queensland Indigenous remote and discrete communities.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Public hearing transcript, Brisbane, 13 August 2021.

## 5 Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs

The Honourable Leanne Linard MP, Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs, is the Minister responsible for the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs (DCYJMA).

### 5.1 Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs

The DCYJMA has three service areas as follows:

- Child and Family Services - to enable families to safely care for their children and young people, and provide services to support the safety, belonging and wellbeing of children and young people not able to be cared for by their families
- Youth Justice Services - to keep the community safe by working together to prevent offending and reduce reoffending by children and young people, and by enabling young people to reconnect to community, and
- Multicultural Affairs - to promote Queensland as a unified, harmonious and inclusive community.<sup>32</sup>

The following table taken from the Appropriation Bill 2021 compares the appropriations for the DCYJMA for 2020-21 and 2021-22.

Appropriations	Budget 2020-21 \$'000	Est. Actual 2020-2021 \$'000	Vote 2021-22 \$'000
<i>Controlled Items</i>			
departmental services	1,719,769	1,813,091	1,838,805
equity adjustment	4,828	26,828	(12,367)
<i>Administered Items</i>	72,296	71,221	90,191
<b>Vote</b>	<b>1,796,893</b>	<b>1,911,140</b>	<b>1,916,629</b>

*Source: Appropriation Bill 2021, Schedule 2, p 8.*

#### 5.1.1 Budget highlights

The total estimated expenditure (Controlled and Administered budget expenses) is approximately \$1.86 billion.<sup>33</sup>

DCYJMA derives its income from appropriation revenue, user charges and fees, grants and other contributions and other revenue. In 2021-22, DCYJMA income is expected to be approximately \$1.859 billion.<sup>34</sup>

The capital works program for the DCYJMA in 2021-22 is \$41.1 million. These funds provide infrastructure and systems to support children, young people and families to be safe and help prevent and respond to crime, violence, abuse and neglect.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements, Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs (DCYJMA), p 1.

<sup>33</sup> Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements, DCYJMA, p 10, 13.

<sup>34</sup> Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements, DCYJMA, p 10, 13.

<sup>35</sup> Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements, DCYJMA, p 4.

The Queensland Government is providing a total of \$472.6 million increased funding over 5 years to the department to:

- continue supporting our most vulnerable children
- continue and expand the Youth Justice Strategy to tackle youth offending and reduce recidivism
- promote inclusive communities, and
- provide much needed support to people seeking asylum and humanitarian entrants with a temporary protection visa in Queensland.<sup>36</sup>

The government is providing increased funding of \$364.5 million over 5 years to Children and Family Services, including funding of:

- \$282.6 million over 2 years for out-of-home care services, in response to the significant pressures arising from an increase in demand and growing complexity of matters coming to the attention of the child protection system
- \$76.6 million over 4 years and \$22.9 million per annum ongoing for 154 additional frontline child safety workers to reduce caseloads and boost services for Queensland's most vulnerable children and families, and
- \$5.3 million in 2021–22 to continue the new child protection litigation model providing early, independent legal advice to child safety workers and working collaboratively with the independent Director of Child Protection Litigation to manage child protection order applications and proceedings.<sup>37</sup>

The government is providing increased funding of \$95.7 million over 4 years and 2 months to Youth Justice Services, including \$77.3 million under the Youth Justice Strategy to target serious recidivist offenders and the continuation of broader support programs, through funding including:

- \$20.8 million over 2 years and 2 months as part of a total investment of \$26.7 million to continue and expand the Youth Justice Five Point Plan, including the Co-responder Model
- \$13.1 million over 4 years and 2 months for additional youth workers for the Conditional Bail program which aims to reduce the risk of young people offending or breaching conditions while on bail. This includes \$5.1 million to continue the existing program and \$8 million to expand the program in Brisbane North, Logan, Townsville, Gold Coast and Moreton/Caboolture, and
- \$11.4 million over 4 years with a further \$14.6 million being met internally by the department to continue the Legal Advocacy and Bail Support program which aims to reduce the pressure on youth detention centres and police watch houses by conducting bail reviews and providing bail support.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>36</sup> Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements, DCYJMA, p 2.

<sup>37</sup> Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements, DCYJMA, p 2.

<sup>38</sup> Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements, DCYJMA, p 2.

The government is providing increased funding of \$12.3 million over 4 years to Multicultural Affairs Services, including:

- \$8.3 million over 4 years and \$2.1 million per annum ongoing to provide financial, employment, housing and mental health assistance to people seeking asylum and humanitarian entrants with a temporary protection visa in Queensland, and
- \$4 million over 4 years and \$1 million per annum ongoing for the Celebrating Multicultural Queensland program which supports multicultural events and projects that promote an inclusive, harmonious and united Queensland. This takes the total funding to \$2 million per annum.<sup>39</sup>

Capital funding of \$3.5 million in 2021–22 will also be provided as a contribution to establish a Holocaust Museum and Education Centre to honour victims of the Holocaust.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements, DCYJMA, p 3.

<sup>40</sup> Queensland Budget 2021-22, Service Delivery Statements, DCYJMA, p 3.

## 5.2 Key issues raised at the public hearing

Issues raised by the committee and participating Members at the public hearing included:

- the *Working Together Changing the Story* youth justice strategy
- the safety, wellbeing and belonging of Queensland Children
- addressing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander over-representation in the child protection system
- residential drug and alcohol treatment programs for young people
- early intervention for at-risk families
- children in out-of-home care
- measures to reduce young offending
- funding and support for child safety officers
- improving permanency outcomes for children in out-of-home care
- translation services provided to Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities during the COVID-19 pandemic
- support for refugees and people seeking asylum in Queensland
- support for CALD Queenslanders in finding training and employment opportunities
- the Queensland Multicultural Advisory Council, and
- the Queensland Language Services Policy.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Public hearing transcript, Brisbane, 13 August 2021.

## **6 Statements of Reservation**





## Community Support and Service Committee – Budget 2021/22 Statement of Reservation

The LNP agrees with passing the 2021/22 Budget.

However, honest Queenslanders expected more from the Labor Government's budget.

With the health system in crisis, they deserved solutions to fix ambulance ramping and the ever-growing surgery waiting lists.

With small and family businesses going to the wall under the pressure of COVID lockdowns, they expected the Labor Government to step up and provide COVID support payments.

With young criminals running rampant through Queensland, they expected action to keep their family and possessions safe.

With double income families struggling to buy or rent a home, they expected action be taken to release more land.

What they received was a budget which announced funds without funding and \$4 billion cuts to vital infrastructure spending.

### Housing

Despite being in its third term and managing the system for more than six years, the Labor Government is losing control of social housing in Queensland. At the Budget Estimates hearing, the LNP asked for the figures for Queensland's Social Housing Waiting List, as of 30 June.

Instead of being honest and accountable with updated numbers, the Labor Government provided data from 30 June 2020, data which is more than 12 months old. After this was revealed, questions were asked of the Minister to provide the updated information. That request was not met on the day, with the number of Queenslanders waiting for social housing this year remaining unknown.

This sequence of events at the estimates hearing revealed a concerning lack of ministerial oversight when it comes to managing the social housing waiting list.

Since 2015, Queensland's population has grown by some 10 percent, yet the number of social housing dwellings has only increased by 3 percent in the last six years. If the level of social housing stock had increased at the same rate of population growth, an additional 5,000 Social

Housing dwellings would have been built in Queensland. Queenslanders expect more from this Labor Government.

While the LNP welcomes any new investment in housing infrastructure which will increase the number of homes available to vulnerable Queenslanders, the LNP remains sceptical about the \$1.9 billion investment announced in the 2021/22 budget. When departmental staff were questioned on how much of the \$1.9b billion had previously appeared in budgets of previous years, a clear answer was not ascertained. The LNP believe that some of the \$1.9 billion is repackaged funding which has been previously announced.

There is wide acknowledgement that Queensland is in the grips of a housing crisis, where tens of thousands of people are desperate for a roof over their head. Queenslanders can rightly feel aggrieved that funding for community housing projects provided by the Commonwealth Government is not being accessed by the Queensland Government.

Utilising funds through the National Housing Finance and Investment Corporation (NHFIC) presents a fantastic opportunity for state and territory jurisdictions to partner with the community housing sector. South Australia has closed \$125 million with NHFIC, Victoria has closed \$662 million and New South Wales has closed nearly \$1.3 billion. These investments from governments of different political persuasions show a willingness to engage with the community housing sector to protect and provide a home for vulnerable citizens. The same cannot be said of the Queensland Government. Appallingly, Queensland has closed just \$5 million worth of transactions with NHFIC.

This represents a significant missed opportunity by the Labor Government. Queenslanders would expect with the Labor Government's constant proclamation of their desire to build more social housing they would act on this by accessing FHFIC.

### **Communities, Seniors and Disability Services, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships**

The LNP quizzed the Director-General about why the Department has an Associate Director-General, essentially two Directors-General. It was highlighted that no other department has this structure.

The LNP questions the legitimacy of the second Director-general as the answer provided was there is a significant amount of work occurring in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander space. While this may be true, there is also a significant amount of work occurring in all departments, arguably more than in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander space considering the disappointing results Labor has achieved in closing the gap targets.

The Labor Government boasts about its \$300 million Path to Treaty Fund – not one dollar has been allocated to this between 2021/22 and 2024/25 - evidence the Labor Government is more interested in headlines than outcomes. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people deserve better.

During the hearing, the Minister criticised the LNP for failing to work together with the Government to progress, and support, the Path to Treaty. However, it is the Labor Government that seems to have prevented the LNP from having these important briefings.

The Member for Surfers Paradise raised issues about race shifting as reported in The Australian. The Department confirmed it is guided by Commonwealth advice. However, in a situation where a person says to the Department that they identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, the Department takes them on face value. Further to this, it was revealed that the Department does not have any interaction with the Department of Housing about information received alleging non-Indigenous clients residing in Aboriginal housing – something which has been the subject of several complaints recently.

When asked when there will be a new multi-year State Disability Plan as the previous one expired in 2020, the Minister advised the Department is currently working with the Commonwealth on developing the national disability strategy. Of concern, it appears there is no active state disability plan currently in force.

During the hearing, the Member for Surfers Paradise tabled a copy of a letter he received from a constituent on a disability pension about the extra cost of obtaining a phone to enable the Check in Queensland app. While there are other ways to check in, she has arthritic hands and wrists which makes writing painful - a reality for many Queenslanders. This is just one example of how seniors and Queenslanders with disability, specifically those who are income affected, are impacted by policy decisions. Workable solutions are needed for vulnerable Queenslanders.

Unfortunately, despite the Premier referring this issue to the department on 13 July, a response from the Department has still not yet been received.

## **Multicultural Affairs**

It was confirmed in estimates that the Department does not have a direct input into Adult Migrant English Program within Community Hubs Australia which are federally funded. When asked about the Government's input in supporting other community hub programs, such as providing job assistance or childhood programs, the Director-General confirmed the department provided no direct input into any community hub programs operating across Queensland.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, there were examples of refugees and people from non-English backgrounds who had difficulty interpreting public health directions. To gain insight into the Government's response to this, the LNP asked what translation services had been provided during the COVID-19 period to culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities across the state. While the Minister was quick to announce specific funding, not one specific example of how COVID-19 announcements was communicated to CALD communities was given.

The lack of affordable housing was also raised. The LNP is aware of the issues of providing affordable housing options for refugees and the broader multicultural community – who are willing to work in regional areas but cannot afford to, or there simply are not enough housing options. It is these groups that are willing to work in regional areas, and who will stimulate regional growth but are unable to. It is a shame the Government hasn't done enough to address this issue.

## Child Safety

The LNP asked questions to the Labor Government about the recommendations which came out of the Coronial Inquest into Mason Jett Lee. In this Inquest, the Coroner determined that the department failed Mason in *every possible way*.

As a result, the Public Service Commission (PSC) was ordered to conduct a review into the disciplinary decisions of the Department, which identified grossly inadequate misconduct findings. The Public Service Commission mandated the Department seek independent legal advice from Crown Law on complex disciplinary matters for a duration of two years.

The Department of Child Safety will be monitored by another entity; this demonstrates the failings of process and transparency.

The LNP will continue to stand up to protect vulnerable children and hold the Minister to account for departmental failings.

## Arts

The arts and live music industry have been particularly hard hit by a succession of COVID lockdowns and the uncertainty they bring to scheduling and bookings.

Of greater consequence is the Labor Government's response in providing support packages which have left these industries expecting more.

The unfortunate fact to emerge from current conditions is that, after 18 months dislocation, the support provided by the Labor Government can be characterised as "catch up", chasing changing circumstances that are themselves responses to government decisions.

In order to ensure that Queensland's arts, cultural and entertainment sector is afforded every assistance and opportunity to endure the uncertain economic environment, there needs to be a greater degree of agility from the Labor Government to ensure all stakeholders, including artists, performers, and venues, are not unnecessarily disadvantaged. The industry deserves this.

## Conclusion

The LNP believes this budget provides little reassurance to honest Queenslanders that ambulance waiting times and hospital waiting lists will drop.

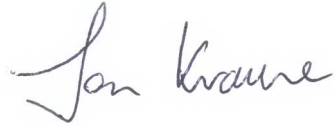
It provides little reassurance crime rates will fall, or planning is being done to bring on a supply of housing stock for people to own or rent.

It provides little reassurance on the delivery of infrastructure needed to get people home to their families faster.

Queenslanders deserve more from this third term Labor Government

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bennett".

**Mr Stephen Bennett MP**  
Member for Burnett

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jon Krause".

**Mr Jon Krause MP**  
Member for Scenic Rim



**Michael Berkman MP**  
*For Maiwar* ▲

19 August 2021

### **Statement of Reservation - Fixing Budget Estimates**

I provide these comments in addition to the Committee's report on 2021-22 Budget Estimates and its recommendation "that the proposed expenditure, as detailed in the Appropriation Bill 2021 for the committee's areas of responsibility, be agreed to by the Legislative Assembly without amendment."

Putting aside the substance of the report and the budget, I take this opportunity to once again put on the record my concerns about the process of budget estimates, the many ways it falls short as an effective accountability mechanism, and some simple suggestions to improve the process.

This year's estimates hearings were again characterised by constant interruptions from government MPs and committee Chairs, spurious points of order, time-wasting monologues from Ministers, and Ministers going to quite extraordinary lengths to avoid answering difficult or potentially embarrassing questions. A vanishingly small amount of time is made available for cross-bench MPs, while government MPs waste hours on Dorothy Dixers.

The process of estimates, as it is currently being run, provides almost no meaningful opportunity to hold the executive to account. My view remains that estimates is fundamentally broken and needs urgent reform.

I have written to the Premier a number of times with suggestions to fix the estimates process in Queensland after widespread calls for reform, including from former Labor Speaker of the Legislative Assembly John Mickel who described estimates as a "protection racket". The public perception of estimates, and the experience of all non-government MPs, is at odds with the view expressed by Mr Speaker in the estimates hearings that the process is not fundamentally broken. It is disappointing to have learned that neither the CLA nor any other parliamentary body is currently considering any potential means of improving estimates as a mechanism for accountability and scrutiny of government spending.

The need for reform is clear, and this should begin with **an all-party review of the estimates process**, that could be undertaken by a committee chaired by a non-government MP with representation from all parties in Parliament.

In the meantime the Parliament could adopt some **interim measures to strengthen estimates** including:

1. Abolish Dorothy Dixers from government MPs. Those MPs have ample opportunity outside estimates to seek information directly from their government colleagues.
2. Double the amount of time available for questions by having two committees sit simultaneously for the full seven day estimates period. This is standard practice in other jurisdictions and would not involve much if any extra cost.

3. Make sure all hearings are chaired by non-government MPs to prevent Government Chairs shamelessly using their position to protect the Ministers' and the Government's interests.
4. Expand the Questions on Notice process to give all MPs a chance to ask written questions ahead of the hearings. Right now, this privilege is restricted to the six members of each Committee.
5. Publicise the hearings widely and encourage ordinary people to attend. It is to be hoped that this might force everyone to behave a little better.

These interim measures could be implemented immediately by a simple resolution of the Legislative Assembly and easily take effect before this year's Budget Estimates hearings, which are only months away.

In considering the options for reform, both long-term and immediate measures that could be adopted, it is important to note the evidence from the Clerk of the Parliament, Mr Laurie, that "the vast majority of costs [of estimates hearings] are sunk costs", so the cost of extending or expanding estimates hearings would be negligible. Similarly, the cost sunk in the extensive preparation undertaken by public servants to brief senior officials and Ministers would be unaffected by allocation of more time for estimates. In this light, there is no justification for not **at least** increasing the amount of time available for estimates hearings (e.g. by adopting interim measure no. 2 listed above). The Government's ongoing failure to do so demonstrates a deplorable disinterest in transparency and accountability.

There is a widespread consensus in Queensland, across civil society and the press gallery, that our system of Parliamentary oversight in general and estimates in particular are hopelessly ineffective. I know this view is shared by a number of my Parliamentary colleagues, and I welcome that the LNP has now followed the Greens' lead in proposing reforms to increase the amount of time available for questioning, provide for a non-government chair to oversee estimates, and limit the use of Dorothy Dixers.

Labor is alone in maintaining that estimates serves the purpose it purports to. As I've said previously, no one who watches these hearings is fooled by the Government's spin. It is clear to everyone paying attention that this particular system of accountability is broken.

Good governments welcome scrutiny, and estimates has the potential to be a key part of a healthy democracy. But without far-reaching reform, this potential will not be realised.



Michael Berkman MP