

**PREMIER BRIEFING NOTE**

Tracking Folder: TF/23/11373  
Document Number: DOC/23/160031

To: THE ACTING PREMIER  
Date: 06 SEP 2023  
Subject: Amendments to *The Queensland Ministerial Handbook* regarding the authorisation of ministerial expenditure

Approved / Not Approved / Noted  
Premier / CoS: s.73 Irrelevant information  
Date: 19 / / 2023

**RECOMMENDATION**

- 1. It is recommended that you **approve** amendments (**Attachment 1**) to *The Queensland Ministerial Handbook* (the Handbook) to recognise the ability of ministers to authorise their own expenditure.

**KEY ISSUES**

- 2. It has always been the practice that ministers and assistant ministers can approve their own expenditure. This was reflected in previous iterations of the Handbook. However, the current Handbook only specifically allows for an assistant minister to authorise their own expenditure (up to \$10,000) and is silent on ministers approving their own expenses.
- 3. The Department of the Premier and Cabinet's (DPC) internal audits and the Queensland Audit Office's audits over ministerial expense transactions have raised findings regarding the appropriateness of a minister approving their own expenditure.
- 4. The findings indicate the Handbook is unclear on the requirements for ministers' self-approval of expenditure, which may give rise to a perceived conflict of interest.
- 5. In response to the findings, DPC agreed to review the Handbook to clarify the matter.
- 6. The amendments to the Handbook (**Attachment 1**) recognise the ability of ministers to authorise their own expenditure.

**CONSULTATION**

- 7. Ministerial Services, and Internal Audit and Risk, DPC.

s.73 Irrelevant information

Rachel Hunter  
Director-General

Released under RIPA

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## Extract from *The Queensland Ministerial Handbook* – Section 4.6 'Delegations' with proposed changes highlighted.

### 4.6 Delegations

Under the *Financial Accountability Act 2009*, the Director-General, Department of the Premier and Cabinet as the accountable officer for ministerial offices may delegate the incurring of expenditure.

However, **the Minister** still remains responsible for the proper management and control of all financial transactions effected under such delegations.

Staff members are not allowed to authorise their own expenditure or expenditure incurred on their behalf. The Director-General establishes, in liaison with the Office of the Minister, the appropriate level of delegations of authority to ministerial staff for the effective operation of the office. These delegations are to the person and not the position. They are not transferable. Delegation limits include GST.

A Minister may personally authorise their direct expenditure as well as expenditure incurred on behalf of their office. In addition, the Minister's direct expenditure (excluding entertainment) may be authorised by the Chief of Staff, and the Deputy Chief of Staff within the Office of the Premier, subject to financial delegation levels.

The Chief of Staff, and the Deputy Chief of Staff within the Office of the Premier, (subject to financial delegation) may authorise all other ministerial office expenditure for entertainment and travel. The Premier may also give approval for nominated ministerial staff to authorise entertainment and travel.

For internal control purposes, all proposed expenditure that is significant or related to expenditure by the Chief of Staff, should be discussed with and formally endorsed by the Minister.

An Assistant Minister may authorise their own expenditure up to a limit of \$10,000 and may request a delegation for a ministerial staff member to authorise expenditure on their behalf.

The Director-General may delegate authority to Ministerial Services personnel to approve routine and recurrent ministerial

office expenditure. These delegations are to a position rather than an individual and are detailed in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet's Expenditure Delegations.

In addition, the Director of Ministerial Services can approve expenditure of up to

\$100,000 on behalf of a Minister. Where practical, the Minister must personally authorise their own expenditure within 45 days of the Director of Ministerial Services approving the expenditure on their behalf. The reason for the Director of Ministerial Services approving expenditure on behalf of the Minister must be documented and attached.

Losses and special payments require the approval of Department of the Premier and Cabinet officers under the Department of the Premier and Cabinet delegations.

New delegations are required on the change of a Minister.

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## PREMIER BRIEFING NOTE

Tracking Folder: TF/23/11206  
Document Number: DOC/23/158038

To: THE PREMIER

Date:

Subject: **Independent Audit and Analysis of Government and Government Funded Services Delivered to Mornington Island – Final Report May 2023**

Approved / Not Approved / Noted

Premier / CoS: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: / / 2023

### RECOMMENDATION

1. It is recommended that you **note** this update on the audit of Queensland Government investment in services delivered to Mornington Island, as requested by Ms Fiona McNamara, Principal Policy Advisor, in your office.

### KEY ISSUES

2. In April 2021, Councillor Kyle Yanner, Mayor, Mornington Shire Council (the Council) called for an audit of Queensland Government investment in Mornington Island.
3. The Honourable Meaghan Scanlon MP, Minister for Housing and Ministerial Champion for Mornington Island, announced the audit on 4 April 2022. Queensland Health (QH) engaged KPMG to undertake the review in September 2022. The audit encompassed services delivery by all three levels of government.
4. KPMG's Independent Audit and Analysis of Government and Government Funded Services Delivered to Mornington Island – Final Report May 2023 (the Final Report) was received on 19 May 2023 (**Attachment 1**).
5. Incorporating analysis of investment data from over 20 government agencies, the Final Report found that, despite annual investment increasing by 81 per cent between 2017 (\$37.2 million) and 2022 (\$67.2 million), there have not been consistent improvements across the indicators for schooling and training, employment, social housing, chronic disease, mental health, and child safety. Queensland Government-funded programs and services are not holistically meeting the needs of community members.
6. The Final Report also found a high reliance on fly-in fly-out workforces, noting that the associated high costs of travel, accommodation and program administration reduced direct investment in community outcomes, and resulted in fragmented local service responses.
7. The Final Report identifies 20 key recommendations for reform, including:
  - a) enabling shared decision-making through an adequately resourced and funded local decision-making body
  - b) progressing place-based design and delivery of services
  - c) reviewing fly-in fly-out services to identify how improved outcomes might be achieved through community-based models.
8. Given the wide-ranging recommendations and learnings, a coordinated response from Queensland Government agencies, in partnership with the Mornington Island community and the Council is required. Accordingly, rather than addressing each recommendation individually, it is proposed that the response indicate the Queensland Government will work with the Council and the Mornington Island community on addressing the broad outcomes highlighted in the Final Report.
9. It is understood that KPMG will return to Mornington Island to present the findings to the Mornington Island community in late-August 2023.
10. Queensland Treasury Corporation is also undertaking initial investment mapping in Aurukun, Doomadgee, Hope Vale, Kowanyama, Mapoon, Napranum, Northern Peninsula Area, Palm Island, Woorabinda, Wujal Wujal and Yarrabah, with the mapping reports and project handover expected in the near future.

11. As data from the Mornington Island Audit and Queensland Treasury Corporation investment mapping project is intended to be publicly released, the Department of Treaty, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Communities and the Arts (DTATSIPCA) is proposing to take a paper to the Leadership Board.

**CONSULTATION**

12. DTATSIPCA was consulted in the preparation of this brief.

**BACKGROUND**

13. A Steering Committee comprising representatives from QH (project lead), Department of the Premier and Cabinet, the former Department of Seniors, Disability Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships (DSDSATSIP), the Council, the National Indigenous Australians Agency and Queensland Treasury was established to oversee the audit.

14. The audit was co-funded by QH and the former DSDSATSIP, with the latter contributing \$184,237.

Rachel Hunter  
**Director-General**

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