

Democracy in Action Conversation 1 Outputs Summary

This document brings together and summarises the collective statements and the key points from the Report.

What is a representative?

Key themes (from Collective Statements)

- *Represents the needs/concerns of constituents*
- *Someone who acts in good faith, in accordance with due consideration and good judgement, free from undue influence such as financial vested interest*
- *A 'voice and ear of the group or community'*

Summary of outputs

Elected; take concerns and needs of their community into policymaking; are involved in developing policy, and establishes a range of roles: delegate, advocate and trustee.

Additional points: not all representatives are in government; there are MLAs in opposition. MLAs' role also involves debating and voting on legislation, and Committee work. Their representative role is to the community not individuals.

What qualities are we seeking in our MLAs?

Key themes (from Collective Statements)

- *Genuine interest in community and people*
- *Courage*
- *Facilitator of community participation*
- *Intelligent, clear-thinking*
- *'A rare beast – honest, transparent, independent, available, intellectually competent*
- *Experienced in leadership*

Summary of outputs

High levels of personal integrity and positive values set; supports integrity and accountability in 'government'; engaged with, listens to and reports back to their community; balances competing interests AND puts community above personal and party interests; intelligent, open and flexible.

See also attached documents from the Active Democracy Bean Listening Post and the Yarralumla Kitchen Table Conversation which confirm these opinions.

How can we know our MLAs are working for the community?

Key themes (from Collective Statements)

- *They create and publish a highly visible scorecard on their progress and what they said they would achieve*
- *The representative communicates regularly and clearly via easily accessible means*
- *They are prepared to be challenged and to review their positions, openly and convincingly*
- *Genuine consultation and degree of quality engagement with community*
- *They hold deliberative forums and participatory community events*
- *By sensing the changes in the community, good quality of life*
- *The budget is balanced*

Summary of outputs

These can be arranged in three domains in ascending level of engagement:

They tell us

Emails, newsletters, social media;

We monitor them and this information is shared into the community

Voting history and advocacy is aligned with community consensus, community need and agreed policy deliverables; adherence (or not) to expert opinion and evidence; speeches (quantity, content, thematic qualitative analysis of how speech relates to community input; media reports on the MLA's work; interactive media, infographics and community dashboards; behaviour matches promised standards;

We are involved personally and, more importantly, as a community

Interpersonal interactions; surveys; consultations with community; volunteering with/for MLAs; measuring the number of deliberative and input-seeking forums; interactive report back to community forums; strong service provision, visible improved quality of life and positive improvements.

Links to relevant documents:

[Democracy in Action Conversation 1 full report with attachments](#)

[Active Democracy Bean Listening Report](#)

[Yarralumla KTC Report](#)