



Hon Simone McGurk MLA
Minister for Child Protection; Women's Interests;
Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence; Community Services

Tracey Sharpe
Committee Clerk
Legislative Council
Parliament House
PERTH WA 6000

Dear Ms Sharpe

Please find attached question and answers to the Legislative Council Estimates 2017.

I have read and approved the following answers to Legislative Council Estimates questions.

Yours sincerely

HON SIMONE MCGURK MLA
MINISTER FOR CHILD PROTECTION; WOMEN'S INTERESTS;
PREVENTION OF FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE; COMMUNITY SERVICES

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ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

FORMAT FOR AGENCIES TO ANSWERS QUESTIONS

Department of Communities

Page Number 1

Hon Nick Goiran MLC asked:

1. I refer to the new centralised system for mandatory reporting and I ask:

(a) What was the cost of implementing this new system;

Answer:

The Central Intake Team consists of 24 Full Time Equivalent (FTE), with a budget of \$2.7 million in 2017-18.

(b) How long has this system been operational;

Answer:

The Central Intake Team commenced operation on 3 July 2017.

(c) On what date was the decision made to move to this new system; and

Answer:

The former Department for Child Protection and Family Support endorsed the recommendation to establish a Central Intake System for the metropolitan districts on 21 October 2016.

(d) Who made the decision and who was consulted?

Answer:

The former Department for Child Protection and Family Support Corporate Executive, including the Director General, endorsed the recommendation to establish a Central Intake System for the metropolitan districts only, with considerable engagement and consultation with government and non-government partner agencies via the establishment of an interagency reference group.

A range of key internal and external stakeholders were consulted between 21 March and 26 April 2017 regarding the proposed structure, recruitment strategy and workflow for the team.

External stakeholders consulted included:

- Western Australia Police
- Education and Care Regulatory Unit
- Department of Education
- Department of Aboriginal Affairs
- Teacher Registration Board Western Australia
- Housing Authority
- Disability Services Commission
- Western Australia Country Health Services
- Child and Adolescent Community Health

- Western Austral Primary Health Alliance
 - Community and Public Sector Union
2. I refer to the answer given to Question On Notice 166 (e) on August 15 2017 and I ask:
- (a) What is the budgeted cost for the 160 claims handled by independent lawyers in 2017/18; and

Answer:

The 2017-18 budget for fees to independent lawyers is \$90,000.

- (b) What was the cost for claims handled by independent lawyers for each of the years 2008/09 to 2016/17?

Answer:

Financial Year	Costs (excluding GST)
2015-16	\$63,137.28
2016-17	\$87,637.67

Prior to 2015-16 the expenditure on independent lawyers relating to abuse in care claims was not tracked independently and therefore the Department is unable to isolate the specific expenditure relating to these claims from 2008-09 to 2014-15.

The above table only shows the legal fees paid to independent lawyers (other than those related to Criminal Injuries Compensation). A significant proportion of amounts committed in agreements with independent lawyers will either be covered by or recouped from RiskCover at settlement. It is not possible to estimate how much will be covered by RiskCover in individual cases as this varies.

3. I refer to the answer given to Question On Notice 166 (e) on August 15 2017 and I ask:
- (a) What is the budgeted cost for the 160 claims handled by independent lawyers in 2017/18; and

Answer: Refer to Question 2 above.

- (b) What was the cost for claims handled by independent lawyers for each of the years 2008/09 to 2016/17?

Answer: Refer to Question 2 above

4. What component of the budget for the Department of Child Protection and Family Services has been allocated to providing support to children exiting care:

What are these supports?

Answer:

\$2.744 million in 2017-18.

The *Children and Community Services Act 2004* gives the Department of Communities – Child Protection and Family Support division (Communities) the statutory responsibility to protect, support and promote the wellbeing of young people who are, or have been, in the Chief Executive Officer's (CEO) care. This includes providing appropriate leaving and aftercare services to young people who are transitioning from or have left the CEO's care (Part 4, Division 6).

Communities *Leaving Care Policy* aims to improve the preparation and planning for leaving care; support young people's active participation in decision making; enable a well organised and gradual transition from care; and provide adequate and appropriate aftercare support for young people.

Planning for leaving care begins when a young person reaches 15 years of age. The early focus of planning will include a thorough assessment of the young person's needs and independent living skills and strategies to further develop these skills.

Communities provides aftercare assistance and advocacy for young people who have left care to ensure they receive support in:

- accessing social services including health, housing, education, employment, legal, financial management and counselling services; and
- accessing their personal records.

Communities also has a legislated responsibility to provide aftercare assistance for young people who have left care until they reach 25 years of age. Each district has a designated leaving care officer to provide a point of reference for child protection workers planning for leaving care and assists young adults who have left care and return seeking aftercare support.

Communities also provides funding to the community sector to deliver leaving care services in Western Australia. The current leaving care services provide one-to-one support and case management to young people preparing to leave care or who have been in the care of the CEO throughout the three stages of leaving care:

- Preparation for Leaving Care;
- Moving to Independent Living; and
- Aftercare whilst living independently.

A case management approach is used to address identified issues and barriers to achieving independence, support linkages to other services, assist young people to secure stable long term accommodation, and reduce the likelihood of future homelessness.

The current leaving care services funded by the Department are;

- Mission Australia Navig8 – provide leaving care services in Great Southern and South West districts.
- Wanslea Family Services Incorporated – provide leaving care services in Peel and Rockingham districts.
- The Salvation Army (WA) Property Trust Salvation Army Crossroads West Transitional Support Service – provide leaving care services state-wide (not including Great Southern, South West, Peel and Rockingham).

5. I refer to the answer given to Question On Notice 81 and I ask:

(a) What was the cost of sending the Ministerial staff to their respective training sessions; and

Answer: The Public Sector Commission provides Accountable and Ethical Decision Making Training to Ministerial staff at no cost to the Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

(b) Have the Senior Media Adviser, Executive Officer and Appointment Secretary now completed their mandatory ethics and integrity training? If so, when?

Answer: Yes, 11 August 2017



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Page Number 2

Hon Martin Aldridge MLC asked:

1. I refer Budget Paper 3, page 224, under Royalties for Regions Expenditure, line item 'Regional Community Childcare Development Fund' and I ask:

(a) What projects will be funded with the \$1.7 million allocated in 2017-2018?

Answer: Funded projects include:

- Wheatbelt Governance Model;
- Southwest Children's Resource and Support Model;
- Implementation of strategies from the Education and Care Services (ECS) Plan for Regional Western Australia; and
- Project evaluation.

(b) What locations/childcare centres will receive these funds and for what purpose?

Answer: The Wheatbelt and Southwest regions will receive specific funding to implement their governance and support models. The remainder will go towards implementation of strategies from the Education and Care Services (ECS) Plan which will be either specific to a region or State wide.

(c) How many strategic grants will be issued with the allocated funds and what is the allocation per grant? And what locations will receive these funds?

Answer: Strategic grants to be issued as follows:

Wheatbelt	\$811,000
Southwest	\$280,000
ECS Plan	\$398,061
Evaluation	\$ 50,000

(d) What locations will receive these funds?

Answer: The following locations will receive funds:

- The Wheatbelt project will be for services in the Wheatbelt region;
- The Southwest project will be for services in the Southwest region; and
- ECS Plan will be across regional Western Australia.

(e) How many operational grants will be issued with the allocated funds and what is the allocation per grant? And what locations will receive these funds?

Answer: No operational grants will be issued.

(f) What will be the project types supported under the grants?

Answer: Project types must address the strategies in the ESC Plan for Regional Western Australia

(g) What will the timeline be for the grants?

Answer: The indicative timeline for the grants project is as follows:

- project commencement date - 1 November 2017;
- project end date - 30 June 2018; and
- acquittals for grants - by 31 August 2018.

The Department of Communities is working with the Department of Primary Industry and Regional Development to finalise the dates.

(h) Will vocational care programs, mentoring, training and equipment be included in the grants?

Answer: No, unless they form an element of a project referred to in (f).

(i) How many regional organisations will be eligible for the grants?

Answer: Any regional organisation may apply for a grant, providing:

- they meet the eligibility criteria;
- their proposed project addresses one or more strategies in the ECS Plan for Regional Western Australia; and
- their project is intended for regional Western Australia.

(j) What funding has been allocated in the forward estimates?

Answer: No funding has been allocated in the forward estimates; the project is due for completion in June 2018.

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Page Number 3

Hon Jacqui Boydell MLC asked:

1. Disability Services - I refer to Budget Paper 2, Volume 1, Page 250, under the heading Explanation of Significant Movements and I ask:
 - (a) Can you please advise which regional residential services have been or will be downsized or closed as a result of a reduction in expenditure and staffing?
 - (b) What other areas have been allocated funding that was originally allocated for residential services in regional WA?
 - (c) What measures have been put in place to ensure the reduction in residential services in regional WA does not have an adverse effect on those that would normally access these services?

Answer: to be provided by Hon Stephen Dawson MLC.

2. Disability Services - I refer to Budget Paper 2, Volume 1, Page 236 under the heading significant issues impacting the agency and I ask:
 - (a) How is the transition to the NDIS in the Pilbara and Kimberley being progressed and at what cost, in the absence of the decision on the service delivery model?
 - (b) What is the timeline for deciding on the appropriate NDIS model?
 - (c) What provisions are you making for the unique circumstances of those in regional WA in particular those living remotely?

Answer: to be provided by Hon Stephen Dawson MLC.

3. I refer to Budget Paper 2, Volume 1, Page 244 under Homelessness and Other Support Services and I ask:
 - (a) The amount of full time equivalents (FTE) employees has decreased due to the departments district structure review, what impact will this have on delivery of service?

Answer:

The reduction in FTE for this service does not relate to an actual reduction in service delivery FTE and only represents a shift in the number of direct and indirect FTE attributed to the services.

Prior to the District Structure Review, service delivery FTE had been allocated to services based solely on a labour time survey of district staff which apportioned an aggregated percentage of staff time across certain activities and services.

Following the implementation of the District Structure Review recommendations, three distinct service delivery teams Child Safety, Care Team and Intensive Family Support (IFS) were established in the districts and a smaller allocation of non-direct FTE allocated through a labour time survey.

As a result of this methodology change as well as the latest labour time allocation survey of field staff identifying a shift in staff time from providing family support to providing intensive family support, child protection services and supporting child in care there is less FTE attributed to this service.

The reduction will have a nil impact on delivery of the Homelessness and Other Support Services.

(b) What measures have been put in place to ensure the reduction of staff does not impact the delivery of service?

Answer: Refer to response to 3. (a).

(c) What is the reduction of FTE employees in regional WA?

Answer: Refer to response to 3. (a).

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Hon Tim Clifford MLC asked:

1. Please explain the ongoing decrease in expenditure for 'Homelessness and Other Support Services' over the forward estimates period referred to on page 241 of Budget Paper 2?

Answer:

The decrease in expenditure for 'Homelessness and Other Support Services' over the forward estimates is predominantly due to:

- A reduction in Commonwealth funding for the National Partnership Agreement Funding – Homelessness (NPAH) which expires on 30 June 2018. Funding under the current NPAH will be transitioned to the new long-term National Housing and Homelessness Agreement which is still being negotiated with the Commonwealth. As a result funding beyond 2017-18 has not shown in the budget; and
 - A reduction in the Commonwealth funding for the National Partnership Agreement on Pay Equity, as the current agreement expires on 30 June 2019 and a new agreement with the Commonwealth has yet to be negotiated.
2. The Housing Authority Annual Report for 2016-17 states that \$25.63 million was provided for Remote Essential and Municipal Services and page 238 of Budget Paper 2 states that this amount will increase to \$66 million annually in 2017-18 and the forward estimates period. Please explain how the additional funds will be spent?

Answer: to be provided by Hon Peter Tinley AM MLA.

3. With reference to the Asset Investment Program on page 256 of Budget Paper No. 2:
 - (a) Are any of the “1,017 lots developed with joint venture partners” allocated to affordable housing? If so, how many and under what schemes?
 - (b) Of the “1,017 lots developed with joint venture partners” that are not allocated to affordable housing, what is the anticipated net profit and how will these profits be used to benefit the social and community housing sector?
 - (c) Of the 492 housing lots that are not being developed with joint venture partners, how many of these will be retained and managed by the Housing Authority as social housing stock?

Answer: to be provided by Hon Peter Tinley AM MLA

4. With reference to the 'New Works' table on page 257 of Budget Paper No. 2:
- (a) Please explain the decrease in projected expenditure for the Acquisition Program from \$58.5 million in 2017-18 to \$35 million in 2018-19?
 - (b) Please explain the significant increase in projected expenditure for the Estate Improvement Land Redevelopment Program in 2020-21?
 - (c) Please explain the decrease in projected expenditure for the Redevelopment Program after 2017-18?

Answer: to be provided by Hon Peter Tinley AM MLA.

5. What is the net increase in public housing stock once the additional 335 public housing dwellings referred to in the Asset Investment Program on page 256 of Budget Paper No 1 are completed?

Answer: to be provided by Hon Peter Tinley AM MLA.

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Page Number 5

Hon Colin de Grussa MLC asked:

- 1) I refer to Budget Paper 2, Volume 1, Pages 246 and 247, Service 5, Service 6, Service 7 and ask in relation to all three services:

How many staff are in each Department of Child Protection office currently, and how many staff were in each office at this time in 2016-17 and 2015-16?

Answer:

The Full Time Equivalent (FTE) breakdown related to Service 5, 6 and 7 includes direct and indirect FTE across multiple locations and cannot be reported at an office level.

Below is a breakdown of funded FTE in each metropolitan and regional district:

District	September 2017	September 2016	September 2015
Armadale	109	110	108
Cannington	95	96	95
East Kimberley	80	83	81
Fremantle	84	87	85
Goldfields	73	82	81
Great Southern	58	59	59
Joondalup	79	79	78
Midland	95	97	96
Mirrabooka	96	96	97
Murchison	84	89	92
Peel	66	65	64
Perth	82	84	84
Pilbara	97	99	104
Rockingham	74	75	74
South West	95	100	97
West Kimberley	85	88	88
Wheatbelt	74	80	81