

**Division 41: Planning, Lands and Heritage — Services 7 and 8, Heritage, \$13 188 000 —**

Ms J.M. Freeman, Chair.

Mr D.A. Templeman, Minister for Heritage.

Mr G. Gammie, Assistant Director General.

Mr J. Deery, Chief Financial Officer.

Mr G. Hamley, Chief of Staff, Minister for Heritage.

[Witnesses introduced.]

**The CHAIR:** Member for Moore.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** I refer to page 600 and the service “Cultural Heritage Conservation Services on Behalf of and Under the Direction of the Heritage Council of Western Australia”. Does the minister see an expanded role and expanded need for finance into that area with changes to the heritage legislation?

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** I thank the member for the question. As he is aware, the new Heritage Bill for Western Australia is currently before the Parliament for debate. I thank him for taking part in that debate. The bill is currently under consideration in detail and I am hoping that it will pass the Legislative Assembly as soon as possible. In fact, I would expect that we will deal with it promptly when Parliament returns in June. The legislation has a range of important new elements for modernising the legislation and clarifying existing issues associated with a modern piece of heritage legislation. It is important to note that there are a range of functions that the Heritage Council and the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage, of which Mr Gammie is part, are responsible for in delivering quality heritage outcomes. The member is asking about an expectation of increasing costs. That expectation is not really perceived because the legislation will highlight the responsibilities of local governments and owners of heritage-listed buildings. Of course, there are a range of opportunities through the heritage grants process and the revolving fund to preserve, reactivate and adaptively re-use heritage assets into the future. I am very confident that the Heritage Bill will provide even greater clarity around how we operate in the heritage area going forward.

**The CHAIR:** Members, I am going to allow one question as we go; each member will get a question. I am not going to allow further questions. We have 10 minutes. Member for Bicton.

**Mrs L.M. O'MALLEY:** I refer to page 639 and the line item “Heritage Grants Program”. Can the minister provide some background on the program and how this investment has helped everyday Western Australians conserve their heritage-listed homes?

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** I thank the member. I will be very brief. This is a very successful program that is essentially a leverage program and \$1.2 million is made available annually to eligible applicants. Applicants can apply for a heritage grant as long as they meet the criteria, with the expectation that they will match any successful appropriation from that program. By and large, a lot of people who access these grants spend over and above what would be expected of a dollar-for-dollar or matching contribution. In fact, many of them spend four or five times more. The grant program allows people with a heritage asset to improve it and maintain it. That ultimately means that they, as custodians of the asset, help to maintain and preserve our heritage assets throughout the state. The grants are awarded to both regional and metropolitan applicants and it is a very successful grant program.

**Mr A. KRSTICEVIC:** I refer to note 2 at the bottom of page 600 regarding the heritage advisory service subsidy program. I see that it has been cut. I understand that it was to provide assistance to local governments. Is this just cost shifting onto the local government sector? Why is the funding being cut? How much was previously allocated?

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** I will ask Mr Gammie to make a brief comment on that line item.

**Mr G. Gammie:** I thank the member for the question. The heritage advisory service subsidy program provided up to \$120 000 per annum for participating local governments to engage a heritage consultant to assist them with various heritage projects they might have—for example, heritage inventories and providing advice to ratepayers. The take-up rate on that program was very low and, typically, the department was providing less than \$100 000 in financial support. A lot of local governments were engaging and paying for their own heritage advisers, so the efficiency and effectiveness of that program was diminishing. As a consequence of looking for savings, it was discontinued.

**Mr A. KRSTICEVIC:** Was the cutting of that fund discussed with the local government sector, the Western Australian Local Government Association or Local Government Professionals under the partnership agreement?

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY ESTIMATES COMMITTEE B — Tuesday, 22 May 2018]

p149a-150a

Chair; Mr Shane Love; Mr David Templeman; Mrs Lisa O'Malley; Mr Tony Krsticevic; Mr Simon Millman

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**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** In answer to that question, this is a program that was previously offered, as the officer has highlighted. The take-up was declining and local governments were voting with their feet in terms of where they thought they could best source advice. It is not a significant amount of money in terms of availability and it was not something that would normally be part of any proposal for discussion; it is a budgetary issue. As I said, the member's government left us in the circumstances it left us in with regard to the economy, and there have been some important decisions made for savings that needed to be made.

**Mr A. KRSTICEVIC:** With regard to the Coogee Hotel and the revolving fund, will 100 per cent of the profits be reinvested back into the revolving fund, and how much is that?

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** The revolving fund is a very successful fund that again was funded by the government in this budget. A formula process is followed with regard to the disbursement of the profits made from a project. That is done as per the fund's establishment. The Coogee Hotel and post office and the warders' cottages in Fremantle are probably the most recent examples. The revolving fund has seen these two projects return net proceeds of \$6.7 million after expenditure and after repayment of \$2 million to the state government. We will continue to focus on making sure that the revolving fund delivers quality outcomes to government and the heritage buildings upon which it is focused.

**Mr S.A. MILLMAN:** My question relates to the heritage grants program and the heritage revolving fund. The heritage grants program was used for the Albany Bell Castle on Guildford Road in the electorate of Mount Lawley. Is the heritage revolving fund more for government assets, and how will it be used by the government?

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** It was established to revitalise vacant or unutilised state and local government-owned heritage properties. That is the focus.

**The appropriation was recommended.**

[5.00 pm]