

Western Australian Meat Industry Authority —

Ms M.M. Quirk, Chair.

Mr D.A. Templeman, Minister for Local Government representing the Minister for Agriculture and Food.

Mr A. Williams, Chief Executive Officer.

Mr G. Hamley, Chief of Staff, Minister for Local Government.

[Witnesses introduced.]

The CHAIR: This estimates committee will be reported by Hansard. The daily proof *Hansard* will be available the following day. Members may raise questions about matters relating to the operations and budget of the off-budget authority. Off-budget authority officers are recognised as ministerial advisers. It is the intention of the Chair to ensure that as many questions as possible are asked and answered and that both questions and answers are short and to the point. The minister may agree to provide supplementary information to the committee, rather than asking that the question be put on notice for the next sitting week. I ask the minister to clearly indicate what supplementary information he agrees to provide and I will then allocate a reference number. If supplementary information is to be provided, I seek the minister's cooperation in ensuring that it is delivered to the principal clerk by Friday, 1 June 2018. I caution members that if a minister asks that a matter be put on notice, it is up to the member to lodge the question on notice through the online questions system.

I give the call to the member for Geraldton.

Mr I.C. BLAYNEY: I refer to the Western Australian Meat Industry Authority in budget paper No 2, volume 1, page 220 and new works for saleyards in the 2021–22 program. What is the status of the Boyanup saleyards? What was the original funding allocation for the relocation of Boyanup saleyards? Is this funding still committed to the relocation project? Given that the “Replacement of Boyanup Saleyards Final Report” by Deloitte Access Economics was submitted to the Minister for Agriculture and Food in October 2017, what is the time line for the government's obligation to relocate the Boyanup saleyards by 2022?

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: I thank the member for the question. I will break the question into two key parts: one is the current status of the saleyards, and the other part related to the time line and whether the government is continuing with that aspiration.

Mr I.C. BLAYNEY: Can I perhaps clarify that, Madam Chair?

The CHAIR: Yes.

Mr I.C. BLAYNEY: The industry is saying that there should still be funds left over from the sale of the Midland saleyards to go towards the Boyanup saleyards.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: I will ask Mr Williams, the CEO of the Western Australian Meat Industry Authority, to respond to the member's question.

Mr A. Williams: I thank the minister. There are no funds left over from the original allocation, to the best of our knowledge. That goes back quite a number of years. That was the first part of the question. What was the second part of the question?

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: What is the current status of the Boyanup saleyards?

Mr I.C. BLAYNEY: I will clarify that, if the minister would like.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Yes.

Mr I.C. BLAYNEY: I understand that the Shire of Capel wants the saleyards out of town by a certain date and the Minister for Agriculture and Food has said that she thinks it could perhaps be extended. Is the shire going to hold its line and say the saleyards have to be out by 2022, or is an extension possible?

Mr A. Williams: I certainly cannot talk for the shire. However, I can say that the minister held an industry round table on 7 March. At that round table, it was clarified amongst industry representatives and other key stakeholders that there are definitely benefits in the construction of a modern saleyard in the south west to replace those at Boyanup. Any development of a new facility will rely primarily on private sector funding and there is interest from the private sector if the right package can be developed. There is some interest amongst industry for a package that involves the Muchea Livestock Centre. A process is currently under consideration to seek expressions of interest for the construction of a saleyard by the private sector in the south west.

Mr I.C. BLAYNEY: Minister, I think the process just referred to was an expression of interest to the private sector. Can we have a bit of clarification about that: Has it been advertised? What is the time line? Where would the replacement for the Boyanup saleyards be located, because I do not think that has been decided yet either?

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: As Mr Williams highlighted, the issues around the Boyanup saleyards are ongoing. I suggest that if the member puts a detailed question on notice, he would get a greater response because ultimately, some of these questions relate to government policy. The Minister for Agriculture and Food has carriage of that. Intimate details of who has expressed an interest or the project's scope would need to be answered by the minister. I suggest that the member might frame a question on notice around those parameters to get the information he is seeking. I have just had an indication that Mr Williams may be able to shed some light on that.

Mr A. Williams: Hopefully, I can add a little bit to that. The expression-of-interest process that is currently being developed is not a standard procurement process because the government is not procuring a saleyard. We are attempting to develop a little bit of a hybrid process with all arms of government, so that takes a little bit of time. We are hopeful that it will be done very shortly and that we will be going out to the private sector in the not-too-distant future. I cannot give the member a time frame at this point because a number of government agencies are involved.

Mr I.C. BLAYNEY: Since the minister is also the Minister for Local Government, does the Shire of Capel have the power to order the saleyards out of there or would the state government have the power to keep them there?

The CHAIR: Member, I am not sure that that relates to the line item.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: I do not think that I am in a position to answer that question as Minister for Local Government, but I am happy for the member to put a question on notice. I now have an indication that Andrew Williams, the CEO, may be able to shed some light on this!

The CHAIR: With the indulgence of Mr Williams.

Mr A. Williams: My understanding is that the land in question at Boyanup is a crown grant in trust to the Shire of Capel for the purposes of a saleyard. That crown grant in trust is predicated on having a saleyard on the site. The Shire of Capel has indicated, publicly at least, that it wishes to remove the saleyards by the end of 2022. However, certainly at the ministerial round table that happened on 7 March, in discussions with the Shire of Capel and industry, some indication was given that there may be some wriggle room in that.

Mr R.S. LOVE: I am only asking this because we were told that this was the right place to ask questions about the proposed sale of the saleyards at Muchea. What communication has taken place with farmer groups, as opposed to processors and purveyors of saleyards, to ensure that they will be satisfied and farmers' requirements will be met at Muchea in the future if the proposed sale goes ahead? Has there been any recognition or understanding of the role that the industry played in developing the original Midland yards and their sale, which has now gone into that Muchea complex, and the fact that the government really holds that in trust for the industry?

The CHAIR: Minister, you have about a minute.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: I will defer to Mr Williams.

Mr A. Williams: In relation to consultation with industry and farmer groups, both the Pastoralists and Graziers Association and the Western Australian Farmers Federation were involved in the initial Deloitte consultation and they were both represented at the ministerial round table. There is an ongoing relationship and an ongoing open channel of communication between the Western Australian Meat Industry Authority and those two bodies, so there certainly would be ongoing consultation and they have been involved up to this point.

The CHAIR: Members, that completes the examination of the Western Australian Meat Industry Authority.

Meeting suspended from 5.59 to 7.00 pm