

PEEL REGION — FINANCIAL COUNSELLING SERVICES

8234. Mr D.A. Templeman to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Child Protection
- (1) Can the Minister confirm the following numbers of current full-time equivalent (FTE) financial counsellors for Mandurah and the Peel Region, provided by the organisations listed:
 - (a) Finucare – 3 FTE financial counsellors;
 - (b) Anglicare – 1 FTE financial counsellor; and
 - (c) St Vincent De Paul (funded by the Federal Department of Families, Housing Community Services and Indigenous Affairs) – 1 FTE financial counsellor?
 - (2) Can the Minister confirm that, as of 1 July 2012, Finucare will only have 1 FTE financial counsellor, and Anglicare only 0.5 FTE financial counsellor (delivering a service to the Byford area)?
 - (3) With the current FTE service provision being cut by half from September 2012 (from 5 FTEs down to 2.5 FTEs), how does the Minister expect existing services in the Peel Region to cater not only for current demand but also for increasing demand?
 - (4) What is the Minister planning to do to restore funding to agencies in Mandurah and Peel?
 - (5) When is the Minister going to provide additional financial resources to the Peel Region in order to cater for the increase in demand for financial counselling services?

Mr A.P. JACOB replied:

- (1) New Service Agreements, in line with Delivering Community Services in Partnership policy, fund for an outcome and amount, rather than a FTE figure. Services can determine their own staffing and service model within the funding amount they receive.
 - (a) Finucare (Uniting Church In Australia Property Trust (WA)) — Annual Funding for \$129,749. Finucare intend to use this funding for one financial counsellor position. Additional funding for one non-recurrent FTE will cease on 30 June 2012.
 - (b) Anglicare WA Inc — Annual Funding for \$499,536 for the Metropolitan/Peel Financial Counselling Services. Non-recurrent funding for two additional financial counsellors was provided to Anglicare for the areas of Port Kennedy/Rockingham/Kwinana (ceased March 2012) and Fremantle/Rockingham/Kwinana (ceasing 30 June 2012). Anglicare WA intends to use the annual funding for five financial counsellor positions, including one in the Peel area.
 - (c) St Vincent De Paul (funded by the Commonwealth Department of Families, Housing Community Services and Indigenous Affairs) — 1 FTE financial counsellor.
- (2) Finucare (Uniting Church in Australia Property Trust (WA)) is funded for \$129,749 per annum to deliver financial counselling services to the Peel area.

Anglicare WA Inc is funded for \$499,536 per annum to deliver the Metropolitan/Peel Financial Counselling Services. Within this funding, there is a full time service to the areas covered by the Shires of Serpentine and Jarrahdale, which covers newly established high growth areas in the Peel corridor. Office locations are Port Kennedy, Baldivis and Byford.

Flexibility is afforded to services to tailor their service delivery to areas of higher and emerging need.
- (3) Recurrent funding for financial counselling services in the Peel area has increased by 19 per cent since July 2011. No recurrent funding has been reduced. A 15 per cent increase was granted to the services to make them more sustainable and a 4 per cent indexation increase was also provided from July 2011.

A Financial Counselling Helpline, operated by the Financial Counsellors Association of Western Australia, has been established which provides financial counselling services to people who cannot work with a financial counsellor face-to-face. The helpline assists in alleviating pressure on wait times for financial counselling services, as well as providing a service to people who may be unable or unwilling to visit one of the service locations.
- (4) Funding continues for financial counselling services in the Peel area. Services have recently undertaken a re-tendering process and new service agreements are in place for the next three years, with an extension option for another two years.
- (5) Additional funding of 15 per cent was provided to services in 2011–12 for currently funded services. The Department for Child Protection continues to provide funding for approximately 68 financial

counsellor positions across Western Australia, allowing multiple opportunities for people to access face-to-face financial counselling services.