

Division 71: Heritage Council of Western Australia, \$7 140 000 —

Mr P. Abetz, Chairman.

Mr A.P. Jacob, Minister for Heritage.

Mr G.A. Gammie, Executive Director, State Heritage Office.

[Witness introduced.]

The CHAIRMAN: Member for Girrawheen

Ms M.M. QUIRK: I refer to “Income” on page 849. Can the minister advise whether the promised \$8 million revolving fund is reflected anywhere in the “Income Statement”?

Mr A.P. JACOB: I thank the member for the question. As I said earlier in other questions, not everything that has been committed to for the full four years is being funded in the very first budget. A subsequent three budgets will roll out our commitments. The revolving fund is a fantastic opportunity in the heritage space —

Ms M.M. QUIRK: Just say no, it is not there!

Mr A.P. JACOB: No, member; I think I need to provide a little more detail.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: I have got the minister’s press release!

Mr A.P. JACOB: Exactly; the member has the press release. I am going to finish my answer —

Ms M.M. QUIRK: All I asked, minister, was: was it recorded here? I do not need a dissertation for 10 minutes!

Mr A.P. JACOB: You do, member.

The CHAIRMAN: Member for Girrawheen, I will call you for the first time. It is unacceptable conduct.

Mr A.P. JACOB: The building and construction industry just does not work that way. Programs do not just sit there —

Ms M.M. QUIRK: I have a point of order, Mr Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: Please rise.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: I refer to the standing order relating to relevance. I asked a question that required a yes or no answer. I am entitled to add other things that were not asked. The minister is being non-responsive.

The CHAIRMAN: The minister is free to answer the question in whatever way he chooses.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: It has to be relevant, Mr Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: That is for me to decide.

Mr A.P. JACOB: It is an incredibly relevant answer, member. It is a very —

Ms M.M. QUIRK: Just tell us you have broken your promise and that will do!

The CHAIRMAN: Member, will you please —

Ms M.M. QUIRK: You have broken your election promise!

Mr A.P. JACOB: No; that is absurd. Here is what we are doing, member; and stop yelling over me!

The CHAIRMAN: Member, I will move on from this question; I will not allow that.

Mr A.P. JACOB: Mr Chairman, I need to answer the original question, if I may. It is an understanding of how the industry works —

Ms M.M. QUIRK: The original question required yes or no.

The CHAIRMAN: Member for Girrawheen, I call you to order for the second time.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: Good!

[9.50 pm]

Mr A.P. JACOB: The project has commenced. A lot of work has already been done on the identification of a fantastic trial property to start off with the heritage revolving fund. We have already gone out for an early feasibility study on this project. I believe that closed recently. These kinds of works simply take time. There will be some design work ongoing as well so members will be hearing a lot more in this space. It is not simply a matter of getting the money in heritage and running out and starting to spend it on construction immediately. The building and construction and development industry simply does not work that way. There is a commitment, and we will be meeting that commitment. Work has already started on that project. It is a very exciting project; in

fact, it is one of the most exciting projects we have ever seen in the heritage space. I would be only too happy to update the member further on works that are already being done in and around the heritage revolving fund.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: I refer to page 845 and the government goal around design outcomes. Why does that desired outcome refer only to built heritage? Why does it not include natural heritage and Aboriginal heritage?

Mr A.P. JACOB: It is a long page. Could the member draw my attention more specifically to where he is referring to?

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: I am referring to “Desired Outcome” on page 845, which states —

Conservation of cultural heritage places in Western Australia for the benefit of present and future generations.

Mr A.P. JACOB: Where does it say “built heritage”?

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: It says “cultural heritage places in Western Australia”. I am asking why it does not precisely say that this refers to natural heritage and Aboriginal heritage.

Mr A.P. JACOB: I think the member just answered his own question. “Cultural heritage places” encompasses all of that quite neatly.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: The minister is confirming that it does. Thank you.

Mr F.A. ALBAN: I refer to the very first paragraph—“Conservation of cultural heritage places in Western Australia, for the benefit of present and future generations”—under “Outcomes and Key Effectiveness Indicators” on page 846. We are only five days away from the fifth anniversary of the tragedy of the Guildford Hotel. This iconic heritage building has endured five winters without any protection from the elements and no-one can argue that this is acceptable. With this history in mind, can the minister please outline this government’s capacity and commitment with regard to the preservation of the Guildford Hotel?

Mr A.P. JACOB: I thank the member for the question. I know that this is a matter that the member for Swan Hills has been very passionate about for a long time, and he has been a very good community advocate for a long time. I will outline for the member what I have done since coming into this role less than five months ago. One of the first things I did as heritage minister was head out to the site and look at it. It needs to be remembered that this is a privately owned building. However, it is a heritage-listed building and a very significant building. I have also met with the owners, who have development approval. They were asking for expressions of interest for new tenants when we first came into government. I have also met with some of the community representatives in and around this project as well. I am getting out to speak to as many of the players as I can. Unfortunately, the member interrupting has not bothered to meet the owners, and I suspect she would have had a better understanding of the process if she had.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: I am expecting you to do your job. It is not up to me to do your job, minister.

Mr A.P. JACOB: I believe that one of our colleagues is arranging for a meeting between Mr Allen and maybe some other community representatives and the owners.

The CHAIRMAN: Member, I will call you for the third time in a moment.

Mr A.P. JACOB: It is important to remember that in the building, construction and development industry, it is frustrating—I can understand how frustrating it is because it is a very significant icon—that there has been a time lag and that there was a fire in the first place. Five years is not an unusual amount of time. Even in my own electorate where we have greenfields developments, sometimes there is a five to seven-year lag but I am pleased to report that the owners have informed me that the process is very much nearing the pointy end. We would be very keen to work with them to bring that magnificent building back to her former glory with new tenants and a fantastic heritage outcome. I think we could potentially be very close to that. We are very keen to work with them in that space. Obviously, I cannot reveal the commercial-in-confidence information that was released to me. However, I am encouraged to hear that the owners are also meeting with the community groups, which is a very good step forward for the member’s local community.

Mr F.A. ALBAN: Does the minister believe that the current owners are serious in their intentions to restore this building?

Ms M.M. QUIRK: That is an opinion. It is a breach of standing orders.

The CHAIRMAN: I was just about to say that. Member, that is not directly related to a line item. I need to disallow that question.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: I refer the minister to the third dot point on page 845 that states that about two-thirds of Western Australia’s heritage places are in regional areas, and that paragraph describes new ways to deliver

heritage support to local governments. Is it not true that this new initiative is cost-shifting about \$120 000 to local governments and that those costs were previously borne by the Heritage Council?

Mr A.P. JACOB: Where is the member getting the figure of \$120 000?

Ms M.M. QUIRK: It was \$132 000 and it is now \$18 000.

Mr A.P. JACOB: Could the member draw my attention to that line item?

Ms M.M. QUIRK: I was referring to the third dot point on page 845.

Mr A.P. JACOB: It does not have the figures.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: If we go into expenditure elsewhere, we will see that that is reduced from \$132 000 to \$18 000.

Mr A.P. JACOB: Could the member direct me to where the numbers are shown?

The CHAIRMAN: Members, I draw your attention to the fact that we are on division 71. We still have division 72 to go.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: I will make that a supplementary question.

Mr A.P. JACOB: I am not going to accept that. The member needs to direct me to the line item.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: I directed the minister to it.

Mr A.P. JACOB: What page? The member has not even told me the page number. I am not trying to be argumentative.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: It is on page 845. The third dot point refers to the program that shifts assessment of heritage and regional areas from the Heritage Council to local government. I will ask the question another way. Has the minister estimated what the cost of doing that will be?

Mr A.P. JACOB: I thank the member for the question. I think I will pass to Mr Gammie. I do not know whether he has followed this one.

Mr G.A. Gammie: We have had a two-year strategic review of the delivery of regional heritage advisory services. We shifted to a new model this financial year, whereas local governments were paying the Heritage Council to pay for heritage advisers or contracted heritage advisers. We have established a panel through the Western Australian Local Government Association that local governments can access direct. They can engage the adviser of their choice. The Heritage Council will continue to provide a subsidy to that scheme. That is valued at \$150 000 a year. I am pleased to say that the take-up from regional local governments has been very good. We are going from 19 under the old framework to 25 under the new framework. In that sense, it has been a very successful outcome.

Mr J. NORBERGER: I refer the minister to the services and key efficiency indicators on page 846. How many places were entered in the state Register of Heritage Places in 2012–13?

Mr A.P. JACOB: A total of 33 entries were approved, comprising 13 interim entries and 20 permanent entries. Of these, nine places were both interim and permanent entries.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: Excuse me if I do not have the particular part because I closed my book in disgust. One of the roles of the Heritage Council is to enforce provisions of the Heritage of Western Australia Act. Can the minister advise how many breaches were identified last year and whether any enforcement action was taken?

Mr A.P. JACOB: With regards to specific breaches and enforcement, it is probably best a question for Mr Gammie.

Mr G.A. Gammie: There was no action taken by the Heritage Council for any breaches of the act.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: Were any breaches identified?

Mr G.A. Gammie: Not to my knowledge.

The appropriation was recommended.