

Mr Paul Papalia; Mr John Castrilli; Mr David Templeman; Mr Frank Alban; Mr Michael Sutherland; Mr John Hyde; Mr Albert Jacob

Division 64: Local Government, \$17 111 000 —

Ms L.L. Baker, Chairman.

Mr G.M. Castrilli, Minister for Local Government.

Ms J. Mathews, Director General, Department of Local Government and Regional Development.

Dr C. Berry, Manager, Regional Policy Unit, Department of Local Government and Regional Development.

Mr T. Fowler, Director, Capacity Building, Department of Local Government and Regional Development.

Mr L. Nagy, Manager, Financial Services, Department of Local Government and Regional Development.

Mr Q.N. Harrington, Director, Governance and Statutory Support, Department of Local Government and Regional Development.

Mr E.J. Griffiths, Acting Executive Director, Office of Multicultural Interests.

The CHAIRMAN: This estimates committee will be reported by Hansard. The daily proof *Hansard* will be published by 9.00 am tomorrow.

The estimates committee's consideration of the estimates will be restricted to discussion of those items for which a vote of money is proposed in the consolidated account. This is the prime focus of the committee. Although there is scope for members to examine many matters, questions need to be clearly related to a page number, item, program, or amount within the volumes. For example, members are free to pursue performance indicators that are included in the budget statements while there remains a clear link between the questions and the estimates. It is the intention of the Chairman 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. For the purpose of following up the provision of this information, I ask the minister to clearly indicate to the committee which 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 committee clerk by Friday, 5 June 2009, so that members may read it before the report and third reading stages. If the supplementary information cannot be provided within that time, written advice is required of the day by which the information will be made available. Details in relation to supplementary information have been provided to both members and advisers and accordingly I ask the minister to cooperate with those requirements.

I caution members that if the minister asks that a matter be put on notice, it is up to the member to lodge the question on notice with the Clerk's office. Only supplementary information that the minister agrees to provide will be sought by Friday, 5 June 2009. It will also greatly assist Hansard if, when referring to the program statements volumes or the consolidated account estimates, members give the page number, item, program and amount in preface to their question.

I now ask the minister to introduce his advisers to the committee.

[Witnesses introduced.]

The CHAIRMAN: There are three divisions in this segment; would the committee like to discuss how they deal with them?

Mr P. PAPALIA: I seek the minister's agreement to, if possible, spend 40 minutes on local government and multicultural interests, and the remaining time on heritage.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: That is fine by me.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: I refer to the first dot point on page 829, and the second and third what I call take-away signs—he knows what I am referring to—which read —

- give financial assistance to local governments for new infrastructure and renewal, through the Country Local Government Fund ...
- assist local governments in meeting their service and compliance objectives through legislative development, ...

These points relate ultimately to the minister's wish to review local government boundaries, as is mentioned alongside the first take-away sign. How many local governments does the minister think Western Australia should actually function with?

Mr Paul Papalia; Mr John Castrilli; Mr David Templeman; Mr Frank Alban; Mr Michael Sutherland; Mr John Hyde; Mr Albert Jacob

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: Madam Chair, I can answer the question but I do not think it is relevant to the actual budget process in terms of funding allocations, sources of delivery or whatever.

The CHAIRMAN: Can the member for Mandurah specify a page number and the details?

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: I have. I am referring to page 829 and the first take-away point, which reads —

- provide for a review of all Local Government boundaries, representation and regional structures;

I am interested in the minister's personal feelings on how many local governments he believes would be sustainable for the state of Western Australia?

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: In February 2009 I announced a package of local government reform for the local government reform strategies. That included a requirement for local government to seriously consider voluntary amalgamations, to reduce the number of elected members to a minimum of six and a maximum of nine, and for local governments to look at appropriate regional groupings for the efficient delivery of services to local government. In February 2009 the local government steering committee issued guidelines to assist that process and develop the reform proposals. Part of that proposal is for them to come back to me by the end of August to look at transitional arrangements for local government, and to complete the checklists, which could then identify the capacity of local governments and the gaps within each local government. Local government could then use those checklists to talk to their neighbours to ascertain how they could fill those gaps. I have not put any parameters around what the number of local governments should be.

[4.10 pm]

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Does the minister want the number reduced?

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: I want the number reduced.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: By how many?

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: I just said that I have not put any parameters around what the number of local governments should be. I have asked local governments to consider a reduction in elected members from a minimum of six to a maximum of nine. I have not specified that I want X number of local governments. Local governments want to enter into a voluntary reform progress process. I have agreed to that. I have asked local governments to look at a voluntary reform process and to come back to me by the end of August, after discussions with their neighbours and communities, and to tell me what they think should be the ultimate number of local governments in Western Australia.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: The minister said that he would not give a specific number of local governments, but he has acknowledged that he would like a reduction in the number of councils. Does the department have research information that indicates which local government authorities in Western Australia are unsustainable? If so, is the minister prepared to provide me with a list of the local government authorities that are considered unsustainable and name them?

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: The Local Government Advisory Board prepared a report in 2006. We are aware of that report. We are also aware of the systemic sustainability report from the Western Australian Local Government Association in which it identified that there needs to be major reform of local government. There are issues in that report about unsustainability. The checklists we receive from all local governments will be gone through. That process will be about sustainability. The sustainability issue will come to the fore in that process, and the department will be working with local governments on that question.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: I know that a process is currently in place. Does the department have any research information that identifies those local governments in Western Australia that are considered to be unsustainable? If the minister has that information, is he prepared to provide a list of the names of the councils that have been identified? I am eager to receive that information.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: I will ask Ms Mathews to answer that question.

Ms J. Mathews: Research has been conducted on this issue, firstly, by the Local Government Advisory Board in 2006. The report provided a comprehensive report on the sector generally. The report identified a number of important financial, operational and population sustainability issues that impacted on the sector. It is a fairly broad report. The report is public and it included recommendations. It was put out in 2006. That resource is available to the public. That was followed up by a report on the WALGA SSS—systemic sustainability study—panel's research into the sustainability of local government, which was released at the end of 2007 or early 2008. That report also identified a range of sustainability issues impacting on the sector and recommended models for going forward. To answer the question, research is available but a specific list identifying particular local

Mr Paul Papalia; Mr John Castrilli; Mr David Templeman; Mr Frank Alban; Mr Michael Sutherland; Mr John Hyde; Mr Albert Jacob

governments is not available. The process we are going through now as part of the reform agenda is to analyse the individual checklists that local governments have submitted to us. We are in the process of doing that. Those checklists will help to identify the sustainability gaps in local governments. That is the process we are undertaking.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: I accept that. However, the process that has been established is that the government is relying on all local governments to be absolutely up-front, honest and realistic in terms of current and future circumstances. Given that very few have indicated that they would like to voluntarily amalgamate, the information that will be submitted will quite likely be biased towards them wanting to continue to be sustainable, even if they are not. I want to know whether any independent research looks at Western Australian local government authorities from a financial and sustainable point of view. Is there any research that identifies that a particular council is sustainable because it has the required population and income for X number of years? The minister said that broad reports that show the issues and gaps and outline concerns about sustainability are available, but he does not have a list of local governments in Western Australia that are considered to be unsustainable. That is what I am asking for.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: I confirm that there is not a list that identifies which local governments are sustainable and which are not. Broad reports are available.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Can I have a list?

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: A list of what?

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: I gather that there is no list.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: We have identified two broad reports. The purpose of the checklists is that each local government will be assessed against those criteria. That is what the steering committee will be working towards. We will be working with each local government based on that assessment.

Mr F.A. ALBAN: I refer to "Major Policy Decisions" on page 827 of the *Budget Statements*. I note with interest the line item "Choose Respect Program", for which \$40 000 per year has been budgeted for the next three years. I would appreciate a summary of what that program is and what benefits the minister believes will result from it.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: I thank the member for the question. As the member said \$40 000 has been allocated in 2008-09 to this program.

Mr P. PAPALIA: Can we keep this brief? We have only an hour remaining.

The CHAIRMAN: I ask the minister to continue. The member was seeking brevity in responses

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: I came across this initiative at the Carey Park Primary School in Bunbury. It was an initiative created by a former Armadale high school chaplain, Gary Butcher. The program addresses the poor antisocial behaviour of students at the school. I came across the program when I was invited to the Carey Park school in Bunbury, where it had been introduced. When I saw the program, it was having some fantastic outcomes on reducing antisocial behaviour, changing the language between students and having a real marked effect on the behaviour of those students. I think the Town of Boddington has taken up the program and has had some dramatic impacts, which are good impacts. In all my community consultations around Bunbury, one issue that came up constantly was of people getting sick and tired of antisocial behaviour and a lack of respect. When I came across that program, therefore, I thought it was a fantastic program and one that could be adopted. I wanted to make Bunbury the first city to have the Choose Respect program and I wanted the program to permeate right throughout the community. We therefore have champions of the Choose Respect program in Bunbury through health services, education, sporting groups, local government, the business community, the Chamber of Commerce and Industries and other community groups.

[4.20 pm]

Mr P. PAPALIA: We are talking about the line item for \$40 000.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the member for Warnbro. I am sure the minister is completing his response.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: It was a program that I thought would have a beneficial impact on Bunbury as a community and as a society. It will create a generational change. We have to start somewhere, and the government made a pre-election commitment to allocate \$160 000 for a four-year program.

Mr P. PAPALIA: The Leader of the Opposition's office submitted a number of questions, of which some notice has been given. Noting that there is only a limited time, I just want to ask whether the minister is open to submitting written answers to those questions, as an alternative to us asking them now, so that we can go on to other questions.

Mr Paul Papalia; Mr John Castrilli; Mr David Templeman; Mr Frank Alban; Mr Michael Sutherland; Mr John Hyde; Mr Albert Jacob

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: Does the member want to put the questions on notice and I will supply the answers?

Mr P. PAPALIA: No. I gave the minister some notice of the questions; they were given to him last week. In light of that, I am wondering whether the minister is open to the concept of submitting written answers to those questions rather than having us receive them verbally now.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: I can supply them as supplementary information, if the member wishes.

Mr P. PAPALIA: Yes, I would appreciate that.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: There are some answers, which are short, that I can read to the member.

Mr P. PAPALIA: Noting that some questions are quite detailed, I would be happy to receive them as supplementary information, if I can. Can I still ask the question?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, absolutely.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: I would like the member to ask the question first.

Mr M.W. SUTHERLAND: On the question of supplementary answers, it is not correct to ask the minister a supplementary question for him to take on notice.

Mr P. PAPALIA: Can I explain? I submitted a number of questions, of which some notice was given to the minister last week. We were led to believe that that would enable us to then get a written response.

The CHAIRMAN: That is correct, but the question must come through the Chair. That is what we did previously and I would like to continue with that. The member for Warnbro has a list of questions, of which he has previously given notice.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: Madam Chair, I ask you to make a ruling because, as I understand it, any question must be asked.

The CHAIRMAN: It is negotiable.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: Because the question must be asked, I will answer it, and I will confirm whether I will answer it now or on notice by providing supplementary information.

The CHAIRMAN: That is quite right.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: For the record, that is, of course.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, and to continue that, if the member for Warnbro would like to read out the questions, they will then be given to the minister if the minister is prepared to answer them.

Mr P. PAPALIA: No, I am not happy to do that. What I will do is ask another question, if the Chairman does not mind.

The CHAIRMAN: That is fine.

Mr P. PAPALIA: I refer the minister to the last two lines under "Major Policy Decisions" at the bottom of page 827 in volume 3 of budget paper No 2. Noting the massive increase in funds managed by the department, can the minister answer how he arrived at the formula used for the distribution of funds in the country local government fund?

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: A dartboard, I reckon!

Mr P. PAPALIA: Whiteboard, dartboard!

Mr J.N. HYDE: Scissors, rock, paper!

Mr P. PAPALIA: Blindfold! William Tell!

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: The formula was arrived at by the Minister for Regional Development, of course, but the formula is based broadly on population and need.

Mr P. PAPALIA: Is the minister not responsible for managing this fund?

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: Yes, I am responsible for auditing and managing the fund, but not for the allocation of money to the fund.

Mr P. PAPALIA: Not the allocation of the initial lump sum?

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: That is right.

Mr P. PAPALIA: However, the minister is subsequently responsible for the allocation of those sums to councils.

Mr Paul Papalia; Mr John Castrilli; Mr David Templeman; Mr Frank Alban; Mr Michael Sutherland; Mr John Hyde; Mr Albert Jacob

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: The fund was determined on a formula. Each local government was allocated a certain amount of money based on the formula, and I am responsible for ensuring that the money is spent in its correct form and that the audit process is carried out, aligned, acquitted and all that sort of stuff as well. The formula, as I understand it, is based on population and on a needs analysis of the capacities of local governments to fund the services that they perceive they need to fund. The ability to fund is based on the services that local governments need to fund.

Mr P. PAPALIA: I have a further question. Was the minister himself involved in determining the formula?

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: I provided some input into the process, but the ultimate responsibility lies with the Minister for Regional Development.

Mr P. PAPALIA: I have a further question. Can the minister confirm that the director general was involved in all the deliberations on deciding the formula?

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: The director general is the Director General of the Department of Local Government and Regional Development, which department serves both me as Minister for Local Government and Minister Grylls as Minister for Regional Development.

Mr P. PAPALIA: Through the minister, I have a further question to the director general, unless the minister can answer it. Did the Western Australian Local Government Association make a submission regarding the distribution or the proposed construct of this formula; and, if so, what did that submission contain?

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: I will ask the director general to answer that question.

Ms J. Mathews: My answer will be in my capacity as wearing my regional development hat as opposed to my local government hat. WALGA did put in a submission paper to the Minister for Regional Development to assist with the development of the formula, which was taken into account in the development of the subsequent formula.

Mr P. PAPALIA: I have a further question. Can the minister confirm whether the formula is a reflection of the submission that WALGA submitted?

Ms J. Mathews: In a very broad sense. I mean that WALGA put forward a submission that had certain parameters in it. We basically developed and finessed that formula to make it more equitable and to take into account a more equitable way of distributing the allocations. When I say that we finessed it, we did that by adding in a population component combined with a component based on need as assessed in accordance with the grants commission formula, which was based on the way the grants commission allocates grants in accordance with a horizontal equalisation component and asset component. The paper, therefore, was considered.

Mr P. PAPALIA: Through the minister, does that mean that the floor and ceiling population limitations on the formula were actually applied by the department and did not come from the sector?

[4.30 pm]

Ms J. Mathews: I am speaking here wearing my regional development hat, but this division does not relate to --

Mr P. PAPALIA: It is confusing to members, because the fund is called royalties for regions, but it sits within the Department of Local Government and Regional Development, so it is difficult to determine in which division we can ask the questions and of whom we ask them.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: I will explain what I understand my responsibility to be as Minister for Local Government. The Minister for Regional Development has allocated the money, with a formula for funding, to each local government. The director general can correct me if I am wrong. Each local government has a certain amount of money assigned to it under that formula. My responsibility is then to make sure that when local governments apply for that money, which is associated with their individual allocations, they put in an application to the Department of Local Government and Regional Development. That application is then assessed to ensure that the money they want to spend it on is right and adequate and complies with the act for the allocation of renewable assets. They then need to acquit that project, if one likes. My responsibility is also to ensure that that money is spent according to that application and to ensure that the auditing is completed. Spot audits will be carried out, and I am responsible for a whole set of compliance issues.

Mr P. PAPALIA: So the minister is the bookkeeper --

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: Absolutely.

Mr P. PAPALIA: -- and the Minister for Regional Development gets to throw the money around. All the Minister for Local Government does is fill out the ledger. Is that all the minister does?

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: I will ask the director general to expand on that.

Mr Paul Papalia; Mr John Castrilli; Mr David Templeman; Mr Frank Alban; Mr Michael Sutherland; Mr John Hyde; Mr Albert Jacob

Ms J. Mathews: One way of looking at it is that, given the country local government fund is a major initiative under the royalties for regions program, the higher level policy development in relation to that fund is the responsibility of the Minister for Regional Development, and the Minister for Local Government has responsibility for administering that.

Mr P. PAPALIA: Is the Minister for Local Government not up to it? It is \$400 million.

Ms J. Mathews: The Minister for Local Government is responsible, through the Department of Local Government and Regional Development, for administering the fund. The department's role is to administer the fund and to ensure that the payments are made, reported on and acquitted in accordance with the guidelines. The Department of Local Government has a key role in advising and supporting the sector to ensure that the funding is spent on the projects for which it is intended; in other words, the funding is tied to particular classes of infrastructure and assets, and must be acquitted accordingly. It is because it is such a large amount of money that a lot of work has gone into working out a proper system of governance and accountability to ensure that that happens.

Mr A.P. JACOB: My question relates to page 828 of budget paper No 2. I refer to the heading "Service Summary" and the line "Implementation of Government Policy". Can the minister please advise what services are being undertaken for the local government reform initiative?

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: Items 1 and 2 refer to the local government reform initiative. I tried to mention in a previous answer that in February I announced the local government reform package that included local government councils seriously considering voluntary amalgamations, reducing the number of councillors to a minimum of six and a maximum of nine, and looking as well at appropriate regional groupings as part of the overarching efficient delivery of services. Also, in February 2009, guidelines were sent out by the steering committee to assist local governments to develop their reform proposals. Along with those guidelines, local governments have been asked to provide costings and likely savings from their reform proposals and to estimate the costs in such a transition. Once they are received at the end of August, we can identify how much any reform proposals will cost in that transitional phase. All local governments have now returned their checklists, and by the end of August those reform proposals will be submitted to me and I will then send them to the Local Government Reform Steering Committee, which in turn will forward them on to the Local Government Advisory Board for assessment.

To assist local governments in the whole reform process, we have established four working groups to look at the component parts of the reform process.

Mr P. PAPALIA: Everything that the minister has just said is on the website.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: I was asked a question, and I would like to answer it, Madam Chairman.

Mr P. PAPALIA: We have only five more minutes!

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: Those four working groups will look at corporate and strategic planning, commercial enterprise, and training initiatives to improve the capacity of local governments, and encompassing all of that is another working group that will look at the legislative reform process. If local governments are to go ahead and do the job that we have asked them to do, we need to know what legislative changes to make so that they can do their job properly. The country local government fund will assist all those local governments with the reform agenda.

Mr J.N. HYDE: Minister, on page 831 under the heading "Promotion and Support of Multiculturalism in Western Australia" and the subheading "Efficiency Indicators" I am comparing the 2008-09 budget with the 2009-10 budget target. How does the minister explain the almost halving of the average cost per policy project initiative for multiculturalism, unless the minister already has a hit list to de-fund the bigger funded organisations serviced by the Office of Multicultural Interests, like the Ethnic Communities Council of Western Australia, Coalition for Asylum Seekers, Refugees and Detainees and so on?

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: Is the member referring to the reduction in the 2008-09 estimate from \$45 million —

Mr J.N. HYDE: No, the reduction from \$67.107 million down to \$35.876 million; it is a 100 per cent reduction. The minister must be chopping to high heavens the currently bigger funded organisations.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: That is calculated by the cost of a program to the number of projects carried out. Obviously, if the item has the same funding and twice the number of projects are being funded, we are halving the cost of a project.

Mr J.N. HYDE: That is right, and that means the larger ones have been cut to get the average down by 100 per cent.

Mr Paul Papalia; Mr John Castrilli; Mr David Templeman; Mr Frank Alban; Mr Michael Sutherland; Mr John Hyde; Mr Albert Jacob

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: This is about the staff carrying out more work on projects than before. It is about delivering more projects for the same cost. I will ask the director general to expand on that.

Ms J. Mathews: Basically, the number of initiatives being undertaken by OMI going forward has increased from 60 to 81. When that is averaged out across the number of FTEs available to undertake those projects, the cost per project decreases. It is just an averaging out of the number.

Mr J.N. HYDE: Yes, and the minister has to accept simple mathematics: in order to get the average down by that 100 per cent cut, instead of doing three or four large projects properly, there will now be 80 tiny projects.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: That is not necessarily so, but I ask the acting director of OMI to respond to that.

Mr E.J. Griffiths: The explanation is that in the 2005-06 budget there was a special one-off allocation for some quite large projects given to the office as a result of the previous government's antiracism committee. That money covered 10 quite large projects, which took the average up in the past few years. The final portion of that money was expended this financial year. However, from now on, that million dollars is not there and the number of projects will revert to a more normal situation.

[4.40 pm]

Mr J.N. HYDE: Minister, given that explanation, if we look at the net cost of services, we see that an extra \$928 000 is going towards multicultural interests. Precisely what will the government be spending that extra \$928 000 on if it is no longer doing these very important big projects on antiracism and so on and cutting down the big projects into little ones?

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: Is the member referring to the services summary?

Mr J.N. HYDE: The figure of \$928 000 is a global figure, with net cost of services being \$3.6 million up to \$4.58 million. There is an extra \$928 000 in the budget and there is no indication anywhere of what it will be spent on.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: The majority of that is incorporated into the Department of Local Government. OMI is part of the Department of Local Government and Regional Development.

Mr J.N. HYDE: The service summary is for the promotion of multiculturalism.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: That is what I am trying to explain. It has been incorporated into the department of local government.

Mr J.N. HYDE: My suggestion that it is for local government overheads is correct; is it not multiculturalism?

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: There are four service sections in the department of local government. The department of local government allocates overheads to the whole four service sectors based on Treasury standards and guidelines. OMI is now part of the department of local government. There is no diminution of service delivery of OMI.

Mr J.N. HYDE: But there is no increase.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: There is no service reduction. That \$928 000 that the member is talking about comes about because OMI has been incorporated into the Department of Local Government and Regional Development. Like every department or business, it has to allocate overheads. Because there are four service divisions there, based on a Treasury formula, that is how it has been allocated.

Mr J.N. HYDE: So it was much more efficient when it was on its Pat Malone.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: That is not necessarily true. I cannot vouch for that because I do not have access to the books of the Department for Communities, where it actually came from. It has been transferred and now it forms part of the local government department. It has to allocate corporate overheads as per standards from Treasury over the four service divisions.

The CHAIRMAN: I draw members' attention to the fact that we have now gone past 40 minutes. Do members wish to stick with this line of questioning?

Mr P. PAPALIA: I want to ask one question so that the minister can consider answering it as a supplementary.

The CHAIRMAN: Unfortunately, someone is in line to ask a question before the member for Warnbro. Would members like to extend the time a bit longer to look at this division?

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: I call the member for Mount Lawley.

Mr Paul Papalia; Mr John Castrilli; Mr David Templeman; Mr Frank Alban; Mr Michael Sutherland; Mr John Hyde; Mr Albert Jacob

Mr M.W. SUTHERLAND: Minister —

Mr P. PAPALIA: Minister, we have an extremely short period here—one hour—for two divisions.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: Is that one of the questions that the member put on notice?

Mr M.W. SUTHERLAND: Madam Chair, I was asking a question and the member for Warnbro just butted in.

The CHAIRMAN: I understand the point that the member for Warnbro is raising. It is about whether we want to take the questions on notice.

Mr P. PAPALIA: I want the minister to take it as a supplementary question if he can.

The CHAIRMAN: If the minister takes the question as a supplementary question, the member for Mount Lawley will get to ask his question.

Mr J.N. HYDE: I raise a point of order. The agreement at the beginning was 40 minutes for the first section and 20 minutes for the next. Our one request is for the minister to take one supplementary question.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: We have gone over 40 minutes already. Is that one of the questions the member asked on notice?

Mr P. PAPALIA: It is one that I gave last week.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: I ask the member to ask the question and I will determine what I will do.

Mr P. PAPALIA: That is much appreciated.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: The question we would like the minister to provide a written answer on is as follows: I refer to the 2008-09 estimated actual figure in the “Major Policy Decisions” table on page 827 of budget paper No 2, volume 3. Firstly, how much of the \$97.5 million local infrastructure asset renewal and new assets funds has been spent? Secondly, which councils received money from these funds? Thirdly, for each of the local governments that have received the money, what were the funds spent on? Fourthly, for each of those local governments that have applied for funding but not yet received the money, for what purpose was the funding requested?

The CHAIRMAN: I understand that the minister is happy to provide supplementary information.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: I can probably answer the first and second of those questions but the third and fourth questions are quite lengthy, as the member probably understands, and I will need some time. I will take the third and fourth questions on notice and I will answer the first two, if the member is happy with that. I will take the final two questions on notice because they are quite lengthy. Is the member happy with that?

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Yes.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: In answer to the first question —

Mr P. PAPALIA: The minister can take it as a supplementary question; he does not have to answer it now.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: I am going to answer the first two questions and then I will put the rest on notice. That is what I have agreed to.

Mr J.N. HYDE: The minister agreed to take it as a supplementary question.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: I will answer the first two questions and I will take the rest on notice. The answer to the first question is as follows. Payments were made in two instalments. Of the \$48 750 000, excluding goods and services tax, in the first instalment, \$26 213 537.85 has been paid to local governments as of 25 May. In answer to the second question, the shires that received the money from the funds are Brookton, Broome, Broomehill-Tambellup, Busselton, Capel, Carnarvon, Chittering, Coolgardie, Corrigin, Cue, Dundas, Gingin, Goomalling, Halls Creek, Kellerberrin, Kondinin, Koorda, Leonora, Meekatharra, Merredin, Moora, Mt Marshall, Mukinbudin, Mullewa, Northam, Perenjori, Plantagenet, Tammin, Upper Gascoyne, Woodanilling, Narembeen, Trayning, Geraldton-Greenough, Dandaragan, Jerramungup, Carnamah, Karloo, Cranbrook, Cunderdin, Dalwallinu, East Pilbara, Gnowangerup, Harvey, Irwin, Katanning, Manjimup, Northampton, Quairading, Serpentine-Jarrahdale, Waroona, West Arthur, Wickepin, Williams, Wiluna, Wyalkatchem and Yilgarn, as well as the Town of Narrogin. I will put the third and fourth questions on notice.

The appropriation was recommended.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: I am not sure how we can do this but the opposition would like to register its grave concern about the time that has been allocated to divisions 64, 65 and 66, being one hour, and the fact that this minister is the only minister of the government in the Legislative Assembly who has been required to appear for one hour. I would like that officially recorded.

Extract from *Hansard*
[ASSEMBLY - Tuesday, 26 May 2009]
p153b-160a

Mr Paul Papalia; Mr John Castrilli; Mr David Templeman; Mr Frank Alban; Mr Michael Sutherland; Mr John Hyde; Mr Albert Jacob

The CHAIRMAN: We will have that recorded.

[4.50 pm]