

Division 23: Heritage Council of Western Australia, \$1 421 000 —

Ms S.E. Winton, Chair.

Mr D.A. Templeman, Minister for Heritage.

Mr G.A. Gammie, Assistant Director General, Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage.

Mr J. Deery, Chief Finance Officer, Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage.

Mr G. Hamley, Chief of Staff.

[Witnesses introduced.]

The CHAIR: I give the call to the member for Carine.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: If the minister could keep his answers short, that would be good, too.

The CHAIR: I will do my best to be a bit firmer with him.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: I have a couple of quick questions. The first is on the new heritage legislation. When will the heritage legislation that was before the Parliament be reintroduced?

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: I am very hopeful that we will see the heritage bill introduced into Parliament before the end of the year.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: We are going to be busy.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: I am happy for us to sit late to get it through.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: Wonderful. We will end up getting on the heritage list ourselves.

The CHAIR: Let us keep it going, member for Carine.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: I note in that same review of the act that there are significant issues regarding compliance under section 45 to do with local governments and their reviews of their heritage registers, which is another example of local governments not meeting their obligations. What, if anything, is the government doing to make sure local governments undertake that heritage review?

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Currently there are no penalties. I think it is in the best interests of local governments on behalf of their communities to maintain their inventories, to review them and to look at how they can use heritage as an economic driver and an opportunity for their communities. We are seeing that occurring in regional Western Australia in a very effective way. The member for Moore would be interested in this. We only need to look at what is proposed and is currently under construction in Katanning with the Old Mill. It will be a hotel with high-level accommodation. In Northam, there are proposals for the heritage listed Shamrock Hotel. Those are two examples of many investments in heritage. Indeed, active re-use—is that the right term?—can become an economic driver and a tourism opportunity for towns and regional communities. I think that should be encouraged.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: What is the point of having a mandatory requirement for councils to review their heritage registers when there is no penalty for not doing it? In some cases, councils are not doing it all. There needs to be a penalty. If it is not mandatory, it can be voluntary. Alternatively, the government needs to somehow encourage councils to fulfil their obligations.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: It is currently mandatory under the act. I certainly will be encouraging local governments and I will certainly raise with the Western Australian Local Government Association the importance of compliance with the Heritage Act and local governments' responsibilities. Ultimately, local governments are the key custodians of many of our heritage assets. If they value them, they can work for them in terms of economic output and economic potential, and enhance the beauty of many of our towns and larger regional cities in Western Australia. Focusing positively on heritage can have only benefits for those local communities in a whole range of ways.

Mrs J.M.C. STOJKOVSKI: I refer to the second dot point on page 402 of budget paper No 2 under the heading "Significant Issues Impacting the Agency". Can the minister provide background on the Heritage Grants Program and how this investment has helped everyday Australians conserve their heritage listed homes?

[8.50 pm]

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: I thank the member. I will be brief. The Heritage Grants Program is a very important lever of support for private owners of heritage assets in the state. It is a grants program that I officially launched only last week at the Newmarket Hotel in Fremantle for this coming budget period. The old hotel has been beautifully restored and has active re-use into a cultural pursuit; it is now a ballet school. There has been a remarkable transformation by the owners. They were the recipients of one of our heritage grants. It is a matching

grant program, so the amount granted is required to be matched by the owners. Invariably, the owners spend over and above the matching amount, and in fact the owners of the Newmarket spent significant extra dollars to bring that asset to a now wonderful example of heritage and active re-use. It is very beneficial, and we encourage people who are the private owners of heritage assets to apply. We would like more money, but it is still a significant amount of money—\$1.22 million a year. I have to say that that amount levers a huge amount in investment by private owners. Interestingly enough, it also employs people skilled in heritage restoration, which is an important issue and consideration from a jobs perspective.

Mr R.S. LOVE: I have a question on the National Trust, so if we could move along.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: I have a question about the heritage revolving fund. I will not go into all the references, but I am sure the minister knows all about it. Which vacant government-owned assets are currently planned to be reactivated, revitalised or redeveloped?

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Do we have an extensive list?

Mr G. Gammie: No, we do not at this stage.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Can we provide that? Is that possible?

Mr G. Gammie: It would be under the consideration of —

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Okay. Look, we do not have a confirmed list at this stage; however, there are a couple of examples the member would be aware of, which includes the Warders' Cottages in Fremantle. That is an ongoing project as part of the revolving fund. I was at the Fremantle Warders' Cottages only a month or so ago with the member for Fremantle, inspecting the significant and remarkable restoration of those heritage assets in Fremantle, and the sale has reaped something like \$5.5 million. Is that correct?

Mr G. Gammie: No.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: No? What was the figure for the Fremantle Warders' Cottages? The heritage revolving fund is a fund that the Heritage Council is consistently looking at in terms of acquisition as part of that fund program.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: I have a further question.

The CHAIR: Yes. Member for Carine.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: It was \$8.2 million. There we are—it was more! An amount of \$8.2 million was realised from the Fremantle Warders' Cottages. That is significant.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: How much is in the revolving fund at the moment, and is it being added to?

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Is that the figure there—\$5.7 million?

Mr G. Gammie: Yes, that is after —

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Yes. Member, there is currently approximately \$5.7 million in that revolving fund.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: Does the government add to that in the forward estimates, or is it just whatever is reaped —

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: It depends upon the project that is under active work within the program. It will vary according to sales and purchases.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: If profits are made as a result of these investments —

Mr B. URBAN: That is the wrong division, is it not?

Mrs L.M. O'MALLEY: This is actually from division 25. We have concluded with division 25.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: It is 23.

Mrs L.M. O'MALLEY: The revolving fund?

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: It is under division 23 as well, the third dot point under "Significant Issues Impacting the Agency"; it is right down the bottom.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: It is a continual revolving process of reinvestment.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: Yes. Okay.

The appropriation was recommended.