

LIBRARIES — FUNDING

88. Hon HELEN BULLOCK to the minister representing the Minister for Culture and the Arts:

- (1) By how much was library funding cut, both percentage and figure, in each of the following local government areas —
 - (a) Canning;
 - (b) Wanneroo;
 - (c) Bayswater; and
 - (d) Albany?
- (2) Was any consideration given to patronage at each of the libraries; and, if not, why not?
- (3) Were local government authorities consulted prior to the cuts being implemented?

Hon ROBYN McSWEENEY replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

- (1) The library materials funding allocation for 2009–10 across local governments is \$6.5 million. Allocations for the specific local government areas in 2009–10 are —
 - (a) City of Canning, \$198 403;
 - (b) City of Wanneroo, \$338 397;
 - (c) City of Bayswater, \$139 993; and
 - (d) City of Albany, \$81 556.

In addition to the above allocation from within the \$6.5 million, each local government is provided with a licence to access a number of electronic resources and databases purchased as a whole-of-Western Australia licence, and access to a pool of new items purchased in languages other than English as a whole-of-Western Australia collection.

As well as the \$6.5 million specifically allocated for the purchase of new public library materials, \$6.98 million from the recurrent budget of the State Library of Western Australia was used to support the WA public library network in 2008–09 through a range of services, including the provision of the extensive interlibrary loans system, the management of public library stock, advice and training services to local government, and the delivery of a statewide book club for adults. The support has continued in 2009–10; allocations for 2010–11 are yet to be finalised.

- (2) Since the 1950s, funding for public libraries has been allocated to support equity of access to services for all Western Australians regardless of whether they live in metropolitan, regional, or remote Western Australia. Although local government area population is the major allocation factor, in remote and regional Western Australia a minimum level of allocation is provided regardless of the population level. Local governments with small populations—mainly remote—receive a minimum allocation for each library each year before any further allocation is made. The remaining funds are then allocated across the remaining local governments, based primarily on population. Therefore, the changes in funding levels from year to year for each local government do not exactly equate to the changes in the available funding overall.
- (3) Allocations for 2010–11 are yet to be determined.