

STATE BUDGET 2013–14 — DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIVE SERVICES

528. MR N.W. MORTON to the Minister for Corrective Services:

Can the minister please update the house on some of the savings measures outlined in the state budget for the Department of Corrective Services that will deliver greater value for money for Western Australian taxpayers?

Mr J.M. FRANCIS replied:

I thank the member for Forrestfield for his question.

I am very proud to be part of a government that is continually exploring opportunities to provide better value for money for the taxpayers of Western Australia in the delivery of essential services, and, in relation to the member's question, in the Department of Corrective Services. It is very important that a government continually explores opportunities to make savings and get better bang for the buck provided by the taxpayer. A classic example in the Department of Correctives Services is the Riverbank facility in, I think, the member for West Swan's electorate. Riverbank is a very old facility that was built in the very early 1960s, and one of the first things I did as minister was to go around and inspect the assets and facilities owned by the Department of Corrective Services. When I got out to Riverbank, it struck me as a value-for-money no-brainer that the amount of money it costs just to maintain this old building—about \$1.5 million a year—to run programs out of there can be —

Mr P. Papalia interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Warnbro, I call you to order for the first time.

Mr J.M. FRANCIS: Those programs can be and will be run just as effectively and efficiently in other locations. It struck me as an absolute value-for-money no-brainer to mothball that place and move those programs to another location that will provide the taxpayers of Western Australia with significant savings for their dollar. I said that the facility is in the member for West Swan's electorate; I am wondering what her position is on the decision to —

Mr P. Papalia interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Warnbro, I call you to order for the second time.

Mr J.M. FRANCIS: I wonder what the member for West Swan's position is on the government's decision to get out of Riverbank, because I understand the community up there is very welcoming of the decision to move on.

Dr A.D. Buti interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Armadale, I call you to order for the first time.

Mr J.M. FRANCIS: Thank you again, Mr Speaker.

The community is very welcoming of the decision to move out of this facility and to look at opportunities to return it to the community.

I also say, member for Warnbro—because he keeps interjecting about it—that almost all the money spent on Riverbank in the last few years was to provide facilities such as kitchen benches and workshop and woodworking equipment. It will be moved and used somewhere else. It is all machinery and equipment that can be relocated to a different site, which will cost taxpayers a lot less than the \$1.5 million it costs us at the moment just to do basic maintenance at Riverbank.

The reality is that this side of the house is serious about showing the political will to provide value for money for the taxpayers of Western Australia. The member for Warnbro's continued opposition to the closure of Riverbank just highlights the very fact that he does not have the political will to find value for money for the taxpayers of Western Australia, and he does not have the political will to do the right thing and get the —

Mr P. Papalia: You are a joke! Your predecessor spent \$2 million doing it up and you're going to sell it for \$1 million! Sit down! Sit down, you fool!

Mr J.M. FRANCIS: Case in point! He does not have the political will to get the savings the taxpayers of Western Australia deserve.