

Division 65: Heritage Council of Western Australia, \$5 085 000 —

Ms L.L. Baker, Chairman.

Mr G.M. Castrilli, Minister for Heritage.

Mr S. Carrick, Acting Director.

Mr E.A. Munro, Management Accountant.

Mr E. Sima, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, National Trust of Australia (WA).

Mr P. Cirillo, Manager, Finance and Audit, National Trust of Australia (WA).

[Witnesses introduced.]

The CHAIRMAN: The member for Perth.

Mr J.N. HYDE: I refer to the major policy decisions on page 838 of the *Budget Statements*. There is only one major policy decision. It is the minister's portfolio.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: I realise that.

Mr J.N. HYDE: The only major policy decision is a cut to the amount paid for advertising and consultants. Given the lack of policy and vision from the minister and the non-appointment of an executive director of the Heritage Council of Western Australia, is the minister considering abolishing the Heritage Council and outsourcing some of its operations to the National Trust of Australia (WA)? Will the minister rule out devolving any of the duties or funds from the Heritage Council to the National Trust of Australia (WA) or any other bodies?

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: I have not thought about abolishing the Heritage Council. The member is referring to the line item in the budget regarding media and marketing and advertising consultants, I presume, and the reduction in funding.

Mr J.N. HYDE: It is under the heading "Major Policy Decisions". That is the minister's chance to show some vision, yet it shows a cut to the budget.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: In answer to the member's question about whether I will abolish the Heritage Council, I have not thought about doing that.

Mr J.N. HYDE: As a further question, perhaps the minister can tell us what he has thought about doing regarding heritage. The minister has reduced the Heritage Council's budget from \$6.379 million this year to —

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: Which line item is the member referring to now?

Mr J.N. HYDE: It is the net cost of services on page 838.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: The reduction in the net cost of services from \$6.379 million to \$5.081 million?

Mr J.N. HYDE: Yes. On page 839, the minister admits that the demand for grant assistance as an effective conservation incentive for significant places will continue to grow. How can the minister justify this cut in net costs?

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: That is quite simple to work out. If the member had read the budget notes, he would have seen that it says that the reduction is attributable mainly to the one-off grant allocation that was made to the Carnarvon jetty. A grant allocation of \$1.32 million was made in 2008-09 but that allocation will come to an end. A one-off grant for the Carnarvon jetty was made.

Mr J.N. HYDE: Every funding decision is a one-off decision. There is not a major project in the budget this year.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: The Carnarvon jetty was a major project in previous years, and that is nearing completion.

Mr J.N. HYDE: The government does not have any others.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: That was a one-off allocation.

Mr J.N. HYDE: That is right, but there are no other major projects in the budget.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: That was it in 2008-09.

The CHAIRMAN: The member has been given the answer.

Mr J.N. HYDE: I have a further question. What does the \$120 000 for Cossack involve?

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: Can the member point to a line item?

Mr J.N. HYDE: I refer the minister to details of controlled grants and subsidies on page 842 and the reference to funding for the Cossack town site. Is that funding of \$120 000 for 10 years ongoing or in perpetuum?

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: In about 2001, it was a heritage town and the management was transferred to the Shire of Roebourne and, as the member can see, the funding of \$120 000 has been paid for quite some time. It is the maintenance payment to the Shire of Roebourne, and will be continued for the foreseeable future.

Mr J.N. HYDE: Is it a 10-year service agreement, or is it triennial or in perpetuum?

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: My advice is that it has always been in the forward estimates and it looks as though it will continue to be for some time.

Mr M.W. SUTHERLAND: I refer the minister to details of controlled grants and subsidies on page 842. I would appreciate it if the minister could give me an outline of the heritage grants program that has been budgeted for in 2009-10.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: The heritage grants program has been allocated about \$700 000 for work done on privately owned places that have been entered on the Register of State Heritage Places. A minimum grant of \$20 000 applies. It covers also conservation plans to fund privately owned places that are eligible for entering on to the register; the minimum grant for which is about \$3 000. Applications for that closed on 24 April. They will be looked at and I hope to make some announcements from September 2009 onwards. The conservation incentive program has been allocated \$100 000 to assist conservation and development projects when rapid or timely intervention is needed to achieve a positive outcome. The heritage loan subsidy scheme is jointly administered by —

Mr P. PAPALIA: A question was asked specifically about heritage money.

The CHAIRMAN: Minister, I am mindful of the time.

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: I am trying to answer the question. The heritage loan subsidy scheme is administered jointly by the Western Australian Local Government Association and the Heritage Council and provides an interest rate loan subsidy scheme to help the local governments that participate in that scheme—of which there are 23. About \$35 000 is allocated to that program annually. I will not name all 26 local governments. Money is allocated for local government to support the state heritage tourism strategy and improve the capacity of the tourism sector to grow tourism at heritage-based attractions.

The CHAIRMAN: Minister, there is only a minute or so left and I would like to deal with the National Trust of Australia (WA). Would it be possible for the minister to finish?

Mr G.M. CASTRILLI: I will try to wrap it up as quickly as possible.

The local government services program supports local government in the area of heritage matters. Advisory services are partnering with local government and assisting local government to improve the quality of local heritage lists and planning policies and to help them establish online heritage databases. I will cut my answer short so that members opposite can ask questions about the National Trust of Australia (WA).

The appropriation was recommended.