

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

2022–23 BUDGET ESTIMATES



**TRANSCRIPT OF EVIDENCE
TAKEN AT PERTH
THURSDAY, 23 JUNE 2022**

SESSION THREE

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITIES

Members

**Hon Peter Collier (Chair)
Hon Samantha Rowe (Deputy Chair)
Hon Jackie Jarvis
Hon Nick Goiran
Hon Dr Brad Pettitt**

Hearing commenced at 3.15 pm

Hon SUE ELLERY

Minister for Education and Training representing the Minister for Community Services, examined:

Mr MIKE ROWE

Director General, examined:

Mr GLENN MACE

Acting Deputy Director General, Community Services, examined:

Ms JACQUI HERRING

Executive Director, Office of Homelessness, examined:

Mr LEON McIVOR

Deputy Director General, Housing and Assets, examined:

Mrs LUDISHA KALASOPATAN

Acting Director, Management, Accounting and Financial Analysis, examined:

Mr MICHAEL CREVOLA

Chief Finance Officer, examined:

Ms NICOLE LEGGETT

Executive Director, Office for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence, examined:

Mr PHIL PAYNE

Executive Director, Regulation and Quality, examined:

Ms CLAIRE COMRIE

Chief of Staff, Minister for Housing, examined:

The CHAIR: Welcome to today's estimates hearings. The committee acknowledges and honours the traditional owners of the ancestral lands upon which we meet today, the Whadjuk Noongar people, and pays its respects to their elders both past and present. Can I just ask all the witnesses through a collective nodding of the head to indicate that you have read, understood and signed the document titled "Information for Witnesses"? Done.

Your testimony before the committee must be complete and truthful to the best of your knowledge. This hearing is being recorded by Hansard and broadcast live on the Parliament's website. The committee will place the uncorrected transcript of your evidence on the internet a few days after the hearing. When the transcript is finalised, the uncorrected version will be replaced by the finalised version. This is a public hearing, but the committee can elect to hear evidence in private. If

for some reason you wish to make a confidential statement, you should request that the evidence be taken in closed session before answering the question.

Members, before asking a question, I ask that you provide the relevant page and paragraph number wherever possible.

With that, I will ask the minister whether she would like to make a short opening statement.

Hon SUE ELLERY: No, thank you, chair.

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE: My first question is in relation to homelessness. I refer to budget paper No 2, page 536, “Aboriginal Short Stay Accommodation”—the first line item under “Works in Progress”. Acknowledging how important it is to have culturally appropriate accommodation, are you able to outline the Aboriginal short-stay accommodation and what the facilities are going to deliver for a safe space for Indigenous people when they are travelling to metro centres?

Hon SUE ELLERY: This is an important initiative. On many occasions when Aboriginal people have to travel, particularly for medical purposes, but for others, they can find themselves homeless while they are trying to get treatment or attend to other matters. The Aboriginal short-stay accommodation is an innovative solution. It is around about a \$60 million investment to deliver three facilities in Geraldton, Perth and Kununurra.

Homelessness can be cyclical, and the homeless population is often transient. That is often true for Indigenous people coming to Perth or into regional centres for a range of regions. The Geraldton Aboriginal short-stay accommodation has work scheduled to begin in the first half of 2023. Kununurra has gone to tender for the architect for this year. The preferred site is expected to be released this year for the Perth facility as well. They will, we hope, provide a critical way of preventing the cycle of homelessness for Indigenous people who are travelling for a range of reasons.

[3.20 pm]

The CHAIR: Just on that—just a quick one. Are they going to be similar to the ones already in Kalgoorlie and Onslow?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am not sure. I might get Mr McIvor to respond to that.

Mr McIVOR: Three facilities are already operational in Kalgoorlie, Derby and Broome, and there is an element of a small amount of funding available for reviewing that operational model and making sure that any feedback is folded into the additional facilities that are now planned.

The CHAIR: They built and extended them for people coming in from the lands, and they are really good.

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE: The next question is under the prevention of family and domestic violence, so it is page 523 of budget paper 2, points 20, 21 and 22. Are you able to outline the total amount of the funding boost for the initiatives to help prevent family and domestic violence?

Hon SUE ELLERY: There is an additional \$34.4 million to support measures to prevent family and domestic violence. That includes \$14.7 million for the election commitment to establish the third one-stop family and domestic violence hub in Armadale. The Armadale hub will have living space for women experiencing family and domestic violence, and could include legal, financial and housing assistance as well as counselling and alcohol and drug services. That hub will also have a separate off-site men’s service, and a specific youth service, acknowledging the importance of involving all family members in the healing process. That will be the third hub to be established in addition to the ones that are up and running in Mirrabooka and Kalgoorlie, and there is a further one to be established in the Kimberley. There is also a \$7.7 million increase to enhance the work of the family

and domestic violence response teams. They are the multi-agency teams, made up of police, child protection workers, and NGO domestic violence advocates, who work together to provide an early and coordinated response to incidents of family and domestic violence. Then there is \$4.5 million to extend two programs into the Kimberley for a further four years. That is the Derby family violence service and the Changing Ways Kimberley project, an Aboriginal men's behaviour change program, run by the Men's Outreach Service Aboriginal Corporation. That will continue to operate in those remote communities in Bidadanga, Fitzroy Crossing, and Balgo-Kutyungka. That is supported by us signing up to the commonwealth national partnership, which provided a further \$7.5 million.

Hon JACKIE JARVIS: Minister, I have a question related to page 521, child protection and early intervention services. It refers to the third dot point at the top of the page. It mentions that the department is progressing child protection reforms, and at point 3.1 it is stated that there is an additional \$20.8 million to extend services. Practically, what does this mean for frontline services and operations?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Children in care are some of the most vulnerable in our society, and we are committed to getting better outcomes for vulnerable children. I make the point that, for many years, every year the number of Indigenous children coming into care just kept increasing. Through some concerted efforts in a range of programs, that number has now started to decrease, which is an outstanding effort. With a total of \$114 million, as part of the budget, the comprehensive package on child protection, there is \$19.3 million to deliver dozens more child protection workers to the front line. That investment will help address caseload pressures by increasing the number of staff in frontline child protection roles. Removing children from their family home is always the last resort, but it is about making sure that children are safe. In my experience, when I was minister in this area, what children want is for the bad stuff to stop. They still love their parents. So if we can get the bad stuff to stop, and the family to remain together, that is a good outcome, but it is always about the bad stuff that has to stop, and it is about keeping the children safe. There is \$23.9 million for early intervention initiatives, so that children can remain safely at home. That extra funding means we will reach more children and families and meet the increased demand, in particular in Midland and Armadale, and there is a trial of the program in Halls Creek and the south west. There is about \$11.1 million to expand the very successful Target 120 to nine more locations around the state, and that is about steering youth at risk away from the criminal justice system. They have showed already encouraging results with participants' contact with police reducing by 50 per cent, which again is an extraordinarily successful outcome. This money will expand that program to Broome, Halls Creek, Fitzroy Crossing, Derby, Karratha, Newman, Carnarvon, Mandurah and Ellenbrook. Through this investment, we are keeping more families together, as I said. The rate of children coming into care has dropped for the first time in about 25 years. That is the largest reduction in the number of children coming into care for the last two decades. This investment, and this budget, is about investing really heavily in early intervention, so that we can stop families breaking up, but fix whatever is the core of the issue leading to family and domestic violence in particular.

Hon JACKIE JARVIS: On page 520 there is a line item referring to working with children check reforms. At the bottom of page 521, point 5.1 refers to \$4.2 million in new funding being provided to implement the first phase of proposed reforms intended to address certain key recommendations from the royal commission in relation to working with children checks. Again, practically, what would that budget line item deliver?

Hon SUE ELLERY: The member would be aware that the working with children check is a compulsory screening strategy. It aims to increase the safety of children by preventing people with a criminal history that indicates that they might harm a child from gaining employment in child-related work. It has been in place now—I think the act came in in 2004 as one of the responses to a royal

commission at the time, in my recollection. There is \$4.2 million in new funding to implement the first phase of proposed reforms intended to progress in 2022–23, which seeks to address certain key recommendations. The money is from the digital capability fund, and in 2021 the proportion of working with children cards issued within 30 days of lodgement, where the applicant had a clean record, was 98 per cent. That has been met again. In 2021, for the proportion of decisions finalised within 60 days, where the applicant had a criminal record, the budget target was 96 per cent, where it had been 37 per cent.

Working with children checks are important. It just needs to be acknowledged that, of course, they are not a silver bullet in themselves. They do not stop someone from harming a child, but they help those people working with children screen out those people who have had charges or convictions laid against them.

[3.30 pm]

Hon JACKIE JARVIS: Also on page 520, about halfway down, there is a line item that says “Regulation and Quality Assurance to Safeguard Children”. I could not find an explanation for that—“Regulation and Quality Assurance to Safeguard Children”. Could you outline what that program is? I think it is \$9.1 million. I added it up roughly. No, it is more than that. Anyway.

Hon SUE ELLERY: This is about children in early childhood education and care across the state. ECRU—the education and care regulatory unit—supports early childhood education and care by approving provider and service applications, completing assessments and ratings against the national quality standards, monitoring compliance and completing investigations. The \$9.1 million included in the budget is to support the ongoing activities of the unit. Since the introduction of the Education and Care Services National Law (WA) Act 2012, there has been a significant growth in the sector across Western Australia. This investment will ensure that ECRU is able to continue to monitor and support through an increase in the frequency of rating and assessment of services and more frequent visits to remote and regional areas. One of their key roles is to assess and rate education and care services against the national quality standard, and the regs set out how those services are to be assessed. This money will assist and make sure that they stay up to date with the growing sector.

Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT: I start on page 527 and the part that talks about waiting times, which is down towards the bottom. I want to start by acknowledging that the state government is doing some good investment in social housing over the coming years. My questions are around now and some of the challenges we are currently facing in what some people might call a crisis in terms of housing. My first question is: what is the government’s interim plan to support people, especially families, who are currently without accommodation while they wait for public housing stock to catch up with existing and growing demand?

Hon SUE ELLERY: The reference you are giving us is page 527. I am assuming that you are kind of linking your question in a broad sense to affordable housing options. Is that what —

Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT: It is “Waiting times for accommodation – Applicants housed”. You can see it down there. I guess part of the challenge is—just to link it back to that—we have seen that the growing waitlist in terms of the budget target for next year is 115 weeks.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Right. I understand your question, honourable member. What are we doing now to assist those people on the waitlist? Is that correct?

Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT: That is right, and in terms of getting a roof over their heads.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Thank you. I will give you an answer as soon as someone gives me an answer.

Sorry, honourable member, this is just me trying to learn how to properly drive this file. I am getting there. Just bear with me.

The CHAIR: You have stumped them, mate.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am sorry. I think what you are looking for is: what are the services that are provided now?

Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT: Maybe I could help by adding to the question. What is the government doing now? Obviously, there is a plan for long-term housing. I appreciate that. That is good, and there is lots of investment coming through, but there is the crisis in transitional and emergency accommodation piece that is needed now whilst that waitlist is reduced.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I know that I have answered questions along similar lines previously. The first point to make is that most people on the waitlist are not actually without a roof over their heads. It certainly may not be optimal—they might be couch surfing, staying with friends or a range of alternatives that are not sustainable into the future, and that is why they have been deemed eligible to be on the waitlist—but most of them are not actually immediately homeless.

Let us see what I can tell you. The \$2.1 billion in social housing over the next four years is, the honourable member would be aware, the single largest one-off investment. That will deliver up to 3 300 new social housing properties, ensure future social housing projects, and provide, obviously, the construction industry with a pipeline of work. The strategy for homelessness is a 10-year strategy and really creates the foundation for a significant shift in homelessness policy, moving from managing to aspiring to end homelessness. If you were looking for some particular service —

Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT: That is all stuff that I like and agree with, but there is a key bit missing. Let me just maybe put this in context. The minister is very good and has been very responsive on this, but it is fair to say there have not been solutions. A number of families contact my office; they literally are families who have nowhere to go and do not have a roof over their heads. They are sleeping in tents. Occasionally, they are getting in with relatives for a day or two, then they are back into a tent. These are families in the metropolitan area, up north and down south for whom there literally are no options. I guess that is, for me, the missing bit. I am waiting to see what is in this budget to address what is clearly a spike that is going to occur over the next 12 months or 24 months in the crisis part. What is in here to address that? Whilst acknowledging that we do not want to distract ourselves—I think this is important—from the longer term goal of ending homelessness, which is good, there is clearly a piece that needs to be managed in the middle right now for those families who literally do not have a roof over their heads.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Those who are in crisis now.

The CHAIR: Minister, could I just add to that because I get them in my office as well. I would be very interested in that emergency accommodation of people. We are not questioning the government's commitment in the long term, but it is the immediacy that we have at the moment of people who are homeless. We ring the department et cetera. They are very helpful, saying, "You might try this place or that place", but you cannot get in. That is what I think the member is asking: what do you do for those emergency situations where people just are homeless?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I might get Ms Herring to make some comments about the \$140 million invested in homeless services across government. I will get her to make some comments and we will see whether that takes us any further.

Ms HERRING: Thank you, minister. Certainly, we have invested significantly in relation to Boorloo Bidee Mia, which has actually provided relief and provided some services to support those people who are escaping homelessness. In the budget, we also have extended Koort Boodja for a further

12 months to enable additional accommodation to be provided for those people who are seeking accommodation in the crisis space and also in the return to country—to assist people returning to country as well.

[3.40 pm]

Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT: I guess the bit that is missing there and why I am focused on families in particular, and the bit that we have found hard as an office to try to get people pointed in the right direction, is if they are a family, especially a large family. One of the families that contacted us is a very large family and that has kind of meant that it feels like we have a gap. I am just wondering if there is anything in this budget that acknowledges that and is addressing that.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Perhaps I can get someone to explain—I literally just asked—if someone was to ring the minister's office now and say, "I've got a homeless family in my electorate office; what I am supposed to do with them?" I can get somebody to explain Entrypoint. I think it is triaging. Perhaps we can start there. Ms Herring.

Ms HERRING: We do provide a range of services across the state for those people who are experiencing homelessness, and certainly with those in the metropolitan area where we have received phone calls from electorate officers in particular, we have sent out the HEART workers to go and talk to those individuals and identify what their support needs and accommodation needs are and then try to provide assistance in accessing accommodation. Entrypoint is the telephone number that people can contact for accessing that support and they can be directed to a range of accommodation options through Entrypoint that that service provides.

The CHAIR: I will just give an example here. I am not being contrary, but we have this couple in particular that we are dealing with, and have been dealing with for a couple of months now. They are living behind the Warwick community centre, which is a couple of blocks from my office, so we look after them, quite frankly. They get told that they need to go online and do this or do that. They have not got access to go online. So my office really does do all of their administrative work for them to try to assist them in the process. My electorate officer has now become their advocate with the department to try to assist them in that process. It would be naive to assume that they are the only couple that are like that. As I said, they are two of, I promise you—I am not exaggerating here—the dozens that we get. That is the point that I think is being raised.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I think there are lots of electorate officers who contact our people.

The CHAIR: Yes. I am not saying we are the gold standard at all.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I think the point needs to be made as well that sometimes those people who come to our offices—although it is probably not the ones who come to our offices—have incredibly complex situations and, through no fault of their own, it is difficult to engage them in a service that is going to be ongoing and that has requirements of them as well. I think when we are talking about the cohort of people who, for example, might be on the streets, they are some of the most complex people to deal with because of a whole range of circumstances applying in their lives. They are very difficult for even the most dedicated service providers sometimes to deal with, so we need to acknowledge the complexity of some of those people and how hard it is to get them engaged in services as well.

Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT: Can I just follow this up? I agree; in some circumstances, that is true, although some of the people who have come to us are actually people who had a private rental six months ago, and, through no fault of their own, that private rental ended and they are now finding themselves in a situation where they simply cannot find anything and are literally sleeping rough. Without those complexities, the longer people are on the street, the more complex it gets. What I

am trying to get at in this budget is that it feels to me like there should be an opportunity for an increase in that short-term emergency accommodation while we are waiting for the next tranche of housing to come on board. We appreciate that there will be 22 000 new houses built this financial year, I understand, and a range of others that certainly are all good investments in the longer term housing issue, but there is an immediate crisis of a lack of housing that feels like it needs a department and government to actually step up and acknowledge that we have got a spike, a short-term issue, we need to get through if we are not going to actually force a whole range of people who otherwise would not be experiencing homelessness to be experiencing it over the next 12-plus months.

Hon SUE ELLERY: It is just not accurate to say the government does not recognise that there is an issue with homelessness.

Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT: No. What is in the budget to address it is my question.

Hon SUE ELLERY: What is in the budget is the funding to literally hundreds of services, and I am happy —

Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT: This question is not about services; this question is about accommodation.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Services provide accommodation.

Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT: But it needs the actual roof, as well as the service.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Indeed, and many of these are accommodation and refuges and all manner of services, honourable member.

Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT: Do you mind, chair, if I take a different angle? This is coming back to some of the comments earlier about Entrypoint Perth. Do we have data around how many people are contacting Entrypoint Perth each day; and is this an increase or decrease in terms of this financial year and previous financial years?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I think I will take it on notice. I am told we do not have it here. My understanding is that the data is collected.

[Supplementary Information No C1.]

Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT: I will add to that, if that is okay. My assumption is that Entrypoint is under much more pressure at the moment. I know that my staff who use that service certainly get the impression that that is under increasing pressure. I will move on to a subpart of this, and feel free to move me on, chair, when I have had more than my turn.

The CHAIR: You are fine.

Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT: This is around spot purchasing, which I think is a good initiative. This is at page 522 of budget paper No 2, volume 2, paragraph 10.1. I understand from some answers to prior questions that 233 properties have been settled and a further 53 are under contract. How many of those are now tenanted, and how many are currently vacant?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Somebody is going to give me a note, I am sure. Spot purchase acquisitions of supported housing is a total of 311 people. In 2022–23, the spot purchase budget is \$45 million, with the aim of purchasing 124 properties by 30 September this year. What was the precise question, honourable member?

Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT: I have a total of 286 properties that have settled or are under contract. How many of those are actually occupied with new tenants?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Have we got people in them?

Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT: Yes.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Good question. I am told we do not have that here but I am happy to take that on notice.

[Supplementary Information No C2.]

Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT: I note that the department has been “taking a prudent approach” to rolling out the spot purchase program so that there are no unintended consequences in the local market, which I think is sensible. Has the department undertaken or contracted any modelling for potential consequences on markets for spot purchasing at \$45 million, or at the larger amount of \$91.6 million in the 2022–23 budget?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will ask Mr McIvor to provide the member with an answer to that.

Mr McIVOR: Thank you, minister. There are more than 40 000 residential transactions each year. As the member has previously highlighted, we are looking to achieve approximately 280 transactions this year. That comprises less than half of one per cent of the residential transactions. The team is very cautious about the approach to spot purchasing, looking at where it is appropriate and where it can be done. It is a small percentage of the transactions in Western Australia.

Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT: So you feel pretty confident that it is not having an undue influence on local markets? I know there was a concern at one point that it would push prices up.

This is my last question, and it is on a different issue. I refer to page 539 of budget paper No 2, volume 2, under election commitments, the local government homelessness fund. I understand that in 2021–22, the department received 11 applications for funding through the local government partnership fund for homelessness. Can the minister please advise the total amount of funding applied for in this grant round, how many applicants were successful, and the amount of funding that was allocated to those applicants?

[3.50 pm]

Hon SUE ELLERY: I can tell you that the assessment process for the first round is complete but we have not made the public announcement about who was successful. We will do that once all applicants have been notified.

The CHAIR: Why don't you give us a heads up?

Hon SUE ELLERY: No. This is not the place we make government announcements.

The CHAIR: We will not tell anyone!

Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT: But this has been going for quite a while. I partly ask this because the City of Albany—I was speaking to them recently—they were given a deadline to put their application on 15 October 2021, so it has been nine months in the making. I was informed in Parliament on 24 February that the application was complete then, which was four months ago, so I am just trying to understand why it is taking so long. Given the urgency around actually getting these projects up and running, why has not this happened?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I cannot give you any further information, honourable member. I am happy to take it on notice but I do not have any other information available to me.

The CHAIR: You have got no idea when the announcement will be or how soon it will be?

Hon SUE ELLERY: No. We do not make announcements in estimates.

The CHAIR: I am not asking you to make the announcement.

Hon SUE ELLERY: You are asking me a different question to what the honourable member asked me.

Why the delay? I do not have any other further information available to me. When the announcement will be made? The word used to me was “imminent”.

The CHAIR: That is good though. I mean, that is better than not telling us. Can I garner from that you are going to find out?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am happy to take it on notice.

[Supplementary Information No C3.]

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Minister, if I could get you to turn to page 519, you will see there at the top that the total cost of services for this financial year is estimated to be some \$3.3 billion dollars. This is an increase on the previous year of nearly \$3.2 billion. One of the costs has been a report prepared by Indigenous Psychological Services, sometimes referred to as the Westerman report. What was the cost of procuring that report?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am not sure that we would have that information here. I will check. No, I do not have it here, honourable member, but I am happy to take it on notice.

[Supplementary Information No C4.]

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Which part of this mega department is leading the implementation of the report’s recommendations?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am advised it is the Aboriginal outcomes division.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Have all of the report’s recommendations been implemented?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am advised there were 49 recommendations. I am advised that the agency is taking the intent of them. So not all of them will be implemented precisely according to the language of the particular recommendation, but they have taken the intent and they are working their way through that. I think, honourable member, you would be able to correct me if I am wrong, that I have answered a question along those lines in the Legislative Council before.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: On the Westerman report, yes, but I do not know about whether all the recommendations have been implemented. Is there a document that could be tabled at a later stage that indicates which of the 49 recommendations are being implemented and which ones have not been accepted?

Hon SUE ELLERY: The response has already been made public. I am told it is publicly available on the website, but if you want a hard copy, I am happy to provide you with one.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: When was the director general last briefed about the implementation of that report’s recommendations?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am advised that the director general is regularly updated. Regular reports are provided to the minister. In terms of a precise date, within the last month would have been the most recent.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Not to confuse a briefing to the minister, I am just asking —

Hon SUE ELLERY: No, I am saying the director general himself is briefed.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Regularly?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes, regularly, and then provides regular briefings to the minister as well. The director general tells me that, without having the precise date here, the most recent would have been within the last month.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: At that most recent briefing, would the director general have received a briefing note?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Could that be tabled?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will ask the minister whether she is prepared to table that. I will not give a commitment that I can table it; I can ask her the question.

[Supplementary Information No C5.]

Hon NICK GOIRAN: The Minister for Child Protection made a statement on 10 May with regard to some legal proceedings that she was involved in with respect to Dr Westerman, and said that \$16 500 was required to settle those legal proceedings. Is that \$16 500 part of the total cost of services found here at page 519?

Hon SUE ELLERY: No.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Why not?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Because for those sorts of things, I think there is a central fund. All ministers are covered, if you like, for legal matters taken out in their name when they are representing the state, so it does not come out of the agencies.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Right. So it perhaps may be a Department of the Premier and Cabinet matter?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Maybe—or Attorney General; I am not sure which one it sits within.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: With regard to any costs that were incurred by the state in defending that matter, as distinct from the \$16 500 that was paid to Dr Westerman, are those costs not dealt with by this agency?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Correct—if there were any costs, honourable member. If the minister was represented by the State Solicitor's Office, for example, there would not necessarily be an exchange of funds. There might be —

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Time.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes, but I do not think a bill would be issued, honourable member.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: I note in passing that when we had the State Solicitor's Office here on Monday in budget estimates, they do look to recover the costs for certain services, so they do seem to issue invoices and the like. Can we perhaps confirm that the Department of Communities has not received any invoice or fees from the State Solicitor's Office with respect to the dispute between the minister —

Hon SUE ELLERY: Can I suggest you put that question to the Attorney General's office? I will take it on notice because I will not have that information here—if the minister is able to give you an answer. I suspect there is a whole-of-government approach to how these matters are dealt with.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Fair enough.

[Supplementary Information No C6.]

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will ask, but I think you will get a fuller answer if you go to the agency that is responsible for administering that system.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: That is not unfair, but we will try both and see what happens. Does the minister have copies of the answers to questions prior to hearings?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I think I do.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Maybe one of your officers will be able to assist you, specifically with respect to number 8.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Just give me a minute, honourable member. This has a part (a): Is Communities automatically notified —

Hon NICK GOIRAN: That is the one; perfect. What that does confirm is that the department is automatically notified when a person with children in their care is charged with or convicted of child sex offences. How many convicted child sex offenders in WA currently live with children?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I just missed the second half of your question.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: How many convicted child sex offenders in WA currently live with children?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Have children in care with them?

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Currently live with them.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Oh, live with them.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Yes, because they may not be their biological children and so forth, but we know that the department is automatically notified.

[4.00 pm]

Hon SUE ELLERY: I do not have that information here. I am happy to take it on notice if there are any children in such a situation.

[*Supplementary Information No C7.*]

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Yes, okay. Maybe I will just leave that extra qualifier from the minister to one side. There must be, but we will get the exact information in due course.

Are we then able to confirm whether the department currently has any cases under investigation as a result of this automatic notification process? By way of further explanation, minister, the answers provided prior indicate that the department automatically opens a file.

Hon SUE ELLERY: We do not have numbers here, honourable member. I am advised when they get the notification, they will have discussions with WA police and open a child safety investigation. I am happy to take on notice what the question was, “Are there any current matters open?”.

The CHAIR: That will be part of C7

Hon NICK GOIRAN: This will probably need to be taken on notice. Are there any policies, procedures or protocols which outline how and how often the safety of each of those children and their situation is reassessed from time to time; and, if there is such a document, can it be tabled?

Hon SUE ELLERY: We think there would be. We do not know if it is a policy document or if it is in the practice manual, but I am happy to take that on notice.

The CHAIR: That is still all part of C7.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Minister, what the answer does reveal prior to the hearing is that there is a reassessment process that occurs any time the department gets any new information from WA police and then they will undertake this reassessment process in accordance with the manual, and we will see the tabled document in due course. But does the department then also initiate any reassessments, if you like, in a proactive fashion or are these reassessments only occurring when WA police provides new information?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will ask for some advice. I would hazard a guess based on my own personal experience that it would depend entirely on the circumstances. There might be some circumstances which trigger an assessment more frequently than others, but I will check.

I am advised it will be dependent on the particular circumstances and it may well be that the case is reopened with WA police and there is another conversation with WA police, but for completeness, to check that there is nothing missing out of that answer, I am happy to take that on notice as well. [Supplementary Information No C8.]

Hon NICK GOIRAN: In part (b) of the answers that were provided prior to the hearing, it stated that Communities automatically opens an investigation. Can you confirm whether the opening of that investigation is in respect to the child where the offences are alleged to have occurred or is it in respect to the child that is living with the alleged offender?

Hon SUE ELLERY: That answer, as I am reading it, says “assess all matters relating to the child’s safety”.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: I am trying to understand which child they are referring to there. Is it a child that happens to be living with the—the primary victim might not necessarily be living with the alleged offender.

Hon SUE ELLERY: To give you the completeness, I will take it on notice, but the way I am reading that answer it is says “all matters relating to the child’s safety”. The way I understand the way that they do their work, they would actually be looking at all children in that household as a consequence. But for completeness, I am happy to take that on notice.

[Supplementary Information No C9.]

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Are any children in the care of the department currently living with a convicted child sex offender?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Again, for completeness, I am happy to take that on notice.

[Supplementary Information No C10.]

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: I turn to page 526 of budget paper No 2, volume 2, under “Service Summary”. My question relates to the first dot point, “Community Services”. I note that there are some fluctuations and a decrease in funding over the out years. I presume some of that relates to the cessation of some funding related to COVID. Could I get some clarification on that, particularly right through to 2025–26?

Hon SUE ELLERY: The variance is largely due to the cessation, as you indicate, of a range of programs. In addition, there is a decrease associated with the essential and municipal services upgrade program—if you ask me what that is, I will have to get further advice—and also due to an expected shortfall in funding in 2022–23 of \$1 million associated with the safety and security rebate, which was re-profiled out of 2023–24 into 2022–23.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Minister, I think you indicated that a number of programs were ceasing. If you are able to take on notice for me, I would like a list of those programs.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I can take that on notice.

[Supplementary Information No C11.]

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: I am happy to continue to ask these questions under this line item or at page 528 under community services generally, because there are some things I am going to raise now that are under community services but are not specifically listed here, but it is the best place for me to put it. These all come under community services, so hopefully you will be able to take some advice.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am just going to scribble some notes so that people are looking for the notes while I am scribbling this.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Excellent. My first question relates to the review that was undertaken of the Carers Recognition Act 2004. A number of recommendations—I think 12 in total—were made as part of the government's report that was tabled in November last year. In response to a question that was put by me towards the end of last year, I seem to recall, the government indicated it would be working to implement those recommendations throughout 2022. Is the department or you, minister, able to provide an update on the implementation of those 12 recommendations made as part of the review?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am advised that the department is developing an implementation plan in consultation with the Carers Advisory Council, Carers WA and other stakeholders. Those consultations will inform actions and initiatives to implement the recommendations, including a campaign to increase community understanding of carers and their social and economic contribution to the community; resources to support organisations and service providers to increase understanding of the role of carers; and improving state government agencies' understanding of carers and carers' rights.

That one in particular is really important because often, for example, in my own portfolio there are children who are carers, and making sure other agencies understand what that means for those children is important. There are capacity building initiatives to enable the Carers Advisory Council to enhance compliance reporting and advisory and advocacy functions. The most recent meeting with the Carers Advisory Council on that work was on 19 May, so there is scoping work being done on the things that I outlined.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: What I am understanding is that since the report was released in November last year, the department and the advisory council are still developing a plan on these 12 recommendations. I can confirm then that none of the recommendations have been implemented yet?

Hon SUE ELLERY: It looks to me that is the case. Yes, because the implementation plan is still being worked through with the stakeholders. It is worth noting as well that everybody who was engaged in having meetings in the first three months of this year got slowed down a little bit.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: I understand that, but I will also say that the review of this act was a long time coming and was delayed quite considerably from when it originally said it would be reported. Now we are getting another delay with regard to developing plans. I think people would like to see some action and activity. I appreciate the minister is just representing the minister in this regard. Can you advise whether or not the recommendations will be completed by the end of this year?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I do not think I can tell you. I do not have that information in front of me, but I can ask the minister what her expectation is in terms of the time line to get the work completed.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: I would appreciate that.

Hon SUE ELLERY: If I can also make this point: the information that is available to me says this is not the department sitting in isolation working this out; they are engaged with the stakeholders, not just the advisory council, which is appointed by the minister, but Carers WA as well. The stakeholders, it seems to me, based on the information that is available to me, understand the process.

[Supplementary Information No C12.]

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Just to confirm, the answer I was provided last year said that the recommendations will be implemented throughout 2022; hence, I am wanting actually a current time line.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Sure.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Minister, perhaps if we could add to that, if I could have a full list of the stakeholders to whom the department is liaising and consulting with.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Happy to provide that.

[Supplementary Information No C13.]

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Again, under this line item, my question is in relation to the development of a child wellbeing strategy for Western Australia, which was recommended by the former Commissioner for Children and Young People and is also continuing to be supported by the new commissioner, and which was agreed to in principle back in 2019 by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. Is the department aware whether a working group or something similar has been established to develop a child wellbeing strategy in WA?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am advised I do not have information on that here. I am happy to take that on notice to the minister.

[Supplementary Information No C14.]

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Thank you. If you do take that on notice, I suppose we could also add to that: if there is a working group that has been established, is it this department that is chairing that working group or, if not, are they a member of that working group and when was that working group established?

The CHAIR: That is all part of C14.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am advised for a fact that we know it has not been completed yet. I cannot add anything further to what I have just said.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Can I clarify that? I think the minister said it was not completed. Is something underway at this point in time?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am advised that the answer is yes.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: If the minister is happy to take this on notice, what is the time frame as to when that evaluation is anticipated to be completed?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am happy to take that on notice.

[Supplementary Information No C15.]

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: I turn to another page now. I refer to page 543, under “Grants and Subsidies”, and the line item “Parenting Community Funding”, which ends in 2021–22. My understanding from a previous estimates hearing is that that line item refers to the Ngala parenting line. I seek some clarification. I understand that the funding for this service involves an MOU between this department and the Child and Adolescent Health Service, and that ceases on 30 June this year. Is that why I am not seeing any additional funding in the out years at this point in time? I just want some clarification around it.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am advised that this note does not refer to Ngala at all but it does refer to the Child and Adolescent Health Service.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Just by way of clarification, when I asked the question last year, the department could not answer the question but it came back confirming it was Ngala.

Hon SUE ELLERY: It is about contributing to parenting services in order to provide sessional or occasional early education and care services in regional areas, many of which have limited or no alternative childcare options.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: This is the parenting community funding.

Hon SUE ELLERY: That is what I am told. It does not sound like to me like it is Ngala at all. With respect to that, I am advised that there is a new agreement with the Child and Adolescent Health Service to extend that funding.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Just so we are making sure we are all talking the same language, maybe the minister is happy to take on notice to clarify the parenting community funding. I suppose if we can also have an additional one with regard to the Ngala parenting line, I would be interested to know what portion of funding this department is providing to that parenting line, both this coming financial year and the out years and whether or not the MOU has been signed for the continuation of that funding.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I can tell the member that a new agreement with the Child and Adolescent Health Service for a funding extension for a further five years has been finalised.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Is that for Ngala?

Hon SUE ELLERY: No, but the bit I will take on notice and check is the funding arrangements for Ngala and the phone line.

[*Supplementary Information No C16.*]

[4.20 pm]

Hon AYOR MAKUR CHUOT: My question relates to child protection on page 520 of budget paper No 2. I refer to the line item “Perth Children’s Court—Therapeutic Pilot”, a new initiative. Can the minister explain how the therapeutic pilot at the Perth Children’s Court is helping Western Australian parents to be unified with their children?

Hon SUE ELLERY: This pilot is being led by the Department of Justice in collaboration with the Department of Communities and does operate from the Perth Children’s Court. It started in July 2020 and it assists families by way of judicial monitoring in a mediation-style environment that is less intimidating and deals with matters in a less adversarial way. Its aim is to improve family relationships and enhance the family’s capacity to remain focused on their child. Families have been engaging well in the pilot. Contact with their children has improved and increased. Referrals have been made to treatment services for family members to commence rehabilitation. The kind of feedback that parents are finding and providing is positive. Parents are feeling like they feel listened to and they look forward to engaging in the process.

In the 2020–21 financial year, 287 pilot meetings were convened with 41 families, and a total of 63 children were accepted into the pilot. There have been five reunifications through the pilot court since it commenced. In this budget, there is \$400 000 to continue that for another two years. The funding also provides an expansion of the pilot from two sitting days to four sitting days a week, with a fifth day available for emergency crisis hearings. An evaluation of the pilot is being conducted by the UWA. The work is generally deemed to be very positive.

Hon AYOR MAKUR CHUOT: Thank you, minister. My other question is on housing. It is on page 533 of budget paper No 2. I note the Keystart eligibility changes and other tax reform. How will this contribute to housing affordability and social housing in Western Australia?

Hon SUE ELLERY: There is now an investment of \$2.4 billion into social housing, but also work is being done in the way that the government deals with the costs surrounding private dwellings, and there is a range of measures in place to deal with that. Keystart reform will not only see the income limits changed permanently to \$105 000 for singles and \$155 000 for couples, but the government is also introducing a new Keystart product aimed at assisting people to purchase in medium to high density residential units in Metronet precincts and priority urban infill areas. There are changes to stamp duty, which will see a 100 per cent rebate for apartments in multistorey dwellings below

\$500 000, tapering off to 50 per cent for dwellings over \$600 000. Another initiative is the 50 per cent build-to-rent land tax concession, which aims to reduce barriers to investment and increase the supply of rentals. That scheme is also designed to protect renters from market fluctuations. Another initiative designed to increase social housing supply is the density bonus, which is part of our planning reform measures.

Hon AYOR MAKUR CHUOT: Thank you, minister. I have one last question on child protection under community services on page 520 again under COVID responses and the significant issues impacting the agency, items 1 and 2. Could the minister please outline Communities' role in managing the impact of COVID-19 during the pandemic in Western Australia?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes, thank you. The role that the Communities plays in the pandemic is similar to the role it plays in other emergencies. It is responsible for providing emergency accommodation, food provision, clothing and personal items, personal support services, registration and reunification and financial assistance to people in need. Communities has the capacity to mobilise at very short notice. Whether it is a bushfire or for a pandemic, Communities can be there to help people in the immediate period that they need assistance. In 2021–22, \$11.3 million was invested to provide emergency accommodation for people who were otherwise unable to safely self-isolate; \$1.2 million to fund the small business financial counselling and advisory services; and \$30 million for the test isolation payment for individuals who had to forgo paid work. Communities also partnered with organisations on the ground to deliver food and emergency relief supplies to people in need across the state. Also, \$1.4 million was allocated to the Western Australian Council of Social Service to provide grants to the sector to assist with additional cleaning costs and other incidental costs incurred due to COVID. It also supported the development of a sector-wide response for surge workforce requirements. Then there was the RATs program, with community services organisations being provided with significant supplies of PPE, masks and other supplies, including 345 000 RATs. For example, if you are running a women's and children's refuge, you would need RATs for those residents while they are with you, and for staff working in those environments. In addition, 2.8 million masks, 17 000 safety glasses, 381 000 gloves—I do not know if that is pairs of gloves or actual delivers—and 1 421 litres of sanitiser. The State Welfare Centre Incident Coordination centre—SWICC—is part of Communities and that responds, as I said, to a whole range of emergencies, but it also included dealing with the pandemic. SWICC is presently providing emergency welfare support in relation to the pandemic as directed by the SHICC, which is the State Health Incident Coordination Centre. The COVID welfare response through the Department of Communities really highlighted the flexibility and responsiveness and they were providing regular updates to ministers as part of the cabinet subcommittee process as well.

Hon AYOR MAKUR CHUOT: Thank you, minister and chair. I am done.

Hon PETER FOSTER: I have a question about Target 120. I refer to budget paper No 2, page 520 and the line item "Target 120 Expansion". Given the challenges of tackling youth crime and the recent attention on this issue, in particular across the Kimberley and the Pilbara, can you please provide further details on the Target 120 expansion?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Thank you, chair. There is new funding of \$11.1 million to expand Target 120 to nine additional communities. That is Broome, Halls Creek, Fitzroy Crossing, Derby, Carnarvon, Karratha, Newman, Mandurah and Ellenbrook. It focuses on young people between 10 and 14 who are at risk of becoming repeat offenders and who have been interacted with police but not yet sentenced to attention. Youth workers interact with the young people and their family and they develop case management tailored support plans. The three most common areas of concern affecting their behaviour are education and employment, family circumstances and parenting, and

leisure and recreation. That is pretty much everything. By directly tackling the drivers of youth crime that increase the chances offer reoffending, like substance abuse, domestic violence, trauma, mental health and poor school attendance, the program creates safer and more connected communities.

Hon SUE ELLERY: This is the most important thing: almost half of the young people involved in Target 120 have had no further contact with police, which is outstanding. Where young people in the program are predominantly Aboriginal, the Communities partner with Aboriginal community-controlled organisations to lead the program. For example, of the original sites, Kununurra, Albany and Port Hedland are now led by Aboriginal community-controlled organisations. They also work in partnership with police, juvenile justice; Department of Health; Department of Communities; and Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries. That is in addition to the \$20.4 million this government has already spent on implementing Target 120.

Hon PETER FOSTER: Thank you, chair. Minister, I have a question in respect of housing. Housing is also talked about a lot up in regional WA. I refer to page 522, paragraph 9, in particular the government's modular build program. Can the minister please outline how funding in this area has helped speed up delivery of social housing, particularly in regional WA, despite some very challenging market conditions?

Hon SUE ELLERY: It is certainly the case that labour shortages, global supply chain issues and cost increases are impacting capacity to deliver in both the private market and in social housing, and that is why this innovative approach has helped us during this challenging market. Looking at alternative building methods like timber frame builds that speed up delivery has seen some homes completed in 22 weeks. The modular build program has been particularly useful in supplying homes in the regions. We are aiming for 150 social homes to regional areas across WA. Some have been delivered already six months after being contracted. It speeds up delivery by bringing all of the trades required in to the one place, as well as providing the ability to work on and offsite simultaneously so you avoid issues around weather. The modular program is particularly critical for the regions. So far, we have contracted 36 modular homes worth \$16.5 million, the first of which we have seen delivered to Tom Price—this says in the Kimberley, and we know it is not in the Kimberley, honourable member!

Hon PETER FOSTER: It is not. We have received four; it is fantastic.

Hon SUE ELLERY: It is the Pilbara, the Kimberley, great southern, south west, wheatbelt and midwest as well.

Hon PIERRE YANG: Thank you, chair. I have a couple of questions, minister. The first one is in relation to a line item on page 539 under community services about grandcarer support grants. Minister, I want to ask: how is the McGowan government assisting informal grandparent carers?

Hon SUE ELLERY: It is certainly the case that grandcarers play an important role in their families and our community. The number of grandparents who are taking over responsibility is increasing, either formally, through the courts, but many of them informally. We have made an election commitment to increase the annual support that we give to grandcarers. Previously, \$400 a year was provided for the first child in care, and then \$250 for each subsequent child in their household. Our election commitment was to increase that amount to \$1 000 for each child in a grandcarer's care. It was backdated to ensure all eligible grandparent carers receive the new amount from the commencement of the new financial year, so it appeared first in the last budget.

In the addition to that support, which more than triples the support available to a family, we know that there was a need for grandcarers to access some of the supports that the Department of

Communities gives to kinship carers and foster carers, those who are formally recognised through the courts. So now there is training available to grandcarers. The first tranche of that training has been rolled out at Grandparents Rearing Grandchildren's headquarters in the northern suburbs. They did a workshop on identifying trauma and giving grandcarers the tools to identify and respond to their grandchildren. It is certainly the case that being a grandcarer is challenging. It is physically challenging and financially and emotionally demanding, but we know they do it out of love, and to keep their families together during times of crisis.

Hon PIERRE YANG: I have one more question in relation to homelessness. Minister, if I may bring you to page 522, line 12.1 in relation to the \$2.8 million Safe Perth City initiative, how is this investment going to address homelessness in conjunction with the sector?

Hon SUE ELLERY: This was organised as a high priority state government intervention as part of a coordinated response to address both homelessness and antisocial behaviour in the CBD and Northbridge. It simultaneously provides measures to tackle antisocial behaviour as well as providing outreach for vulnerable people with the intention of connecting them to services. This includes both HEART and Koort Boodja, which we heard a bit about earlier, who provide wraparound support to people experiencing homelessness. We also have RooForce carrying out security patrols to ensure the safety of those in the city, and, in building a rapport with rough sleepers, service providers can ensure that they understand their personal needs and gain the trust of the person. It is the case that rough sleepers generally have a chronic distrust of government and agencies, such as police, so we have to make sure that we build those relationships and provide better and more targeted supports for those people.

Hon PIERRE YANG: Can I just have a follow up on that? I know that Hon Dr Brad Pettitt had a number of questions in relation to homelessness and he voiced his support for many of the government's initiatives and policies. I just want to note also the significant investment in homelessness services and initiatives in this budget and I ask how this differs from the previous government's approach and record on homelessness.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Much better.

The CHAIR: Dear me. Really? At estimates?

Hon SUE ELLERY: And I have answered it. Much better.

Hon STEVE MARTIN: I start, minister, with a couple of follow-ups from some questions that have already been asked on the short-stay accommodation in Geraldton and other locations. I believe Geraldton has been delayed for 12 months. Can I have an indication as to why that delay has occurred? This is the Aboriginal accommodation.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am advised it is not 12 months, but there has been a delay of some months to enable further consultation with local Aboriginal people.

Hon STEVE MARTIN: On what issues?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I think in answering one of the earlier questions, honourable member, I was making the point that it is really important that Aboriginal people are engaged in how the service will be run, what it will look like, all those sorts of things, to give them a sense of ownership, as opposed from designing something that you think they want and imposing it on them. So time is being taken to consult them on the whole project.

Hon STEVE MARTIN: Has a similar delay for those processes taken place in the other locations?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am advised no, because they are at different stages of the process and that Aboriginal consultation was built in as part of the processes that have already been done to date in the Perth and Kununurra sites.

[4.40 pm]

Hon STEVE MARTIN: I assume all three were announced at the same time. Was there a slip in Geraldton or did it just not happen early enough?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Not that I am advised.

Hon STEVE MARTIN: I see in the line item referring to that that some \$349 000 is estimated to be spent this financial year in Geraldton. Can I ask what that is for?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Are you now referring to the answer or are you referring back to the budget papers?

Hon STEVE MARTIN: Sorry—the budget papers, which is page 536, where it refers to Aboriginal short-stay accommodation. There is a Geraldton line item and there is a spend to 30 June.

Hon SUE ELLERY: There is \$6 million for the budget year 2022–23. The \$349 000 that you are talking about I am advised would be on planning, consultancy and some of that consultation work.

Hon STEVE MARTIN: Thank you. I will move on to another line item if I may. Again, it is a follow-up, in a way, to an earlier question raised by Hon Dr Brad Pettitt about crisis accommodation. How many extra crisis beds have been delivered since the announcement of the very large spend on housing and homelessness in the last budget and in this one? So how many extra crisis beds in the metropolitan area are there?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am advised it is in the order of 90. If you want a precise number, I will take that bit on notice.

Hon STEVE MARTIN: Yes, please.

[*Supplementary Information No C17.*]

Hon STEVE MARTIN: Following on from that, minister, I think Boorloo Bidee Mia was referred to in earlier answer as a crisis option when MP offices take a call and so on, someone can be referred there. Is that the case? Is that the nature of that facility? Is it either a walk-in or a very short —

Hon SUE ELLERY: It is not a walk-in, and I think the honourable member knows that.

Hon STEVE MARTIN: Well, I thought I did, but then it was referred to as one of the crisis accommodations—unless I misheard. I apologise.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes, but in the context of an assessment needing to be done as to whether a person is suitable to go in there, I think the honourable member has already been advised on how that service works. It was used as an example. If it is the right person and the right fit, that could be a pathway for a person that comes through your electorate office.

Hon STEVE MARTIN: Thank you. I was aware of that process. I was just double-checking the earlier response. I have asked a number of questions about that facility. That facility is doing some great work, and I appreciate the minister's offer of a visit. Various COVID situations—theirs and mine—have precluded that from happening, but I will get there at some stage when I am healthy.

The original budget announcement was for 100 beds, so I am assuming there was an assessed need for approximately 100 beds. That facility has now been open for nine months or so, and it appears to have peaked at somewhere between 60 and 70. There are a couple of things in that. First, was the 100-bed announcement based on what the assessed need was?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I think the answer to that is yes, but it is also the case—I think this information has been given, maybe even by me when I appeared before the inquiry that estimates was doing into homelessness and homelessness services or maybe I have answered it through parliamentary questions—that it is about not just having 100 people in there for the sake of having 100 people in there. These are complex people. It is about the right policy fit for those individuals and making sure that the service can run safely.

For example, I am told at 22 June there were 62 individuals residing in 59 of the available 66 rooms. Four individuals have transitioned to public housing, one to alternative supported transitional accommodation, one to live with family, and five individuals have left the service due to unacceptable behaviour. But the referral process is led by a group of service providers and agencies who work collaboratively and they identify appropriate candidates, if I can call them that, to go into the service. It differs from a walk-in or a drop-in because it is about trying to provide longer term accommodation and wraparound supports to enable that transition to happen successfully.

Hon STEVE MARTIN: I appreciate that, minister, and I do understand the complex needs of the people—the clients, if you will—at that facility. But my question was about the need was assessed at 100. It appears this facility is going to work to its optimum of approximately 60 to 70. That would then indicate there is an unmet need. Is the department considering a similar facility in a different location or is that unmet need still there?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will just get some advice. I am advised that the analysis is that, given the nature of the individuals, 70 is probably around the optimum number. There is another 20 at Koort Boodja and then, as ever, the department is always looking at where it can look and provide additional services as well.

Hon STEVE MARTIN: I will move on, minister, to the conversation around Entrypoint. I am not entirely sure there is a line item, but can I just follow on from the conversation that was had about Entrypoint and there was a question put on notice. Either can I add to that or add an extra bit to it where—it was a breakdown of the demand of how many people had been using Entrypoint. Can I also get that as a region by region breakdown and can I ask for the assessment of whether it is working? How many people who call Entrypoint are actually housed? I do not want to misquote anyone, but the conversation was there is a range of accommodation options available when you call Entrypoint and that is not the evidence, at least anecdotally, that has been brought to my attention.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I think I need to take that on notice. I am not sure how much of that the minister will be able to provide, but I will take the question on notice. My understanding—someone correct me if I am wrong—is that the key part of what it essentially does is triaging, so it might not be that the person goes immediately into housing or if they do not, that that is a failure of Entrypoint. It may be that Entrypoint is able to, kind of, triage into other support services which might not actually be a physical building. If I am able to provide additional information, I will. I cannot give that guarantee. I do not know if that other information is available.

[Supplementary Information No C18.]

Hon STEVE MARTIN: I move on to the SHERP program, which is page 520. I received an answer to a question submitted prior to the hearings and it talked about the nature of the SHERP program and what has been delivered so far. It said that 13 social housing dwellings have been completed through the SHERP package. Can I get an indication if that was the level that had been hoped for or budgeted so far in the life of that program because, quite frankly, 13 sounds on the low side?

[4.50 pm]

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am advised that the SHERP program was part of the economic recovery response to COVID, and it was primarily around maintenance. We deliver building through the HHIP program—do not ask me what that stands for! I might get Mr McIvor to make a few comments about that.

Mr McIVOR: In regards to the SHERP, yes, it was part of a broader economic recovery program of which there are three particular streams related to housing; that is, there is a SHERP maintenance stream that also looks at supporting remote Aboriginal communities through grants; a SHERP new build stream that works to partner with the sector to provide funds in order for them to build additional properties to support social and crisis accommodation; and a SHERP refurbishment scheme that allows us to, again, provide some grants in order to undertake a range of refurbishments, as well as refurbishing many social housing properties. There have been three remote communities provided with SHERP maintenance remote community grants. On the SHERP new build, as you highlight, whilst 13 have been completed this year, as at 30 April, there were 397 additions to the social housing stock in total, because there are many, many programs through which we are looking to invest in increasing social housing. In fact, this week we delivered our 500th addition for the financial year. There are more than 800 under contract for additions across numerous programs of work. That is part of our rolling program, including seeking to add 3 300. In the SHERP line, there are currently 88 properties under contract at present, in addition to the 13 that were completed this year.

Hon STEVE MARTIN: I appreciate that detail and you mentioned a number of builds and a number of funds. I am interested in the \$319 million of SHERP money that was a discrete bucket of money. On notice, if you do not have it available—I think it was 250 dwellings were supposed to be built or purchased out of SHERP, and we talked about 13, plus another 70 or 80—can I get the achievements of SHERP, if you like, and does that program have an end date?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am happy to take that on notice.
[*Supplementary Information No C19.*]

Hon NEIL THOMSON: I refer to page 334 and just broadly want to have a discussion around the machinery-of-government changes of commercial land development functions as they were transferred to DevelopmentWA.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Where are you looking, honourable member?

Hon NEIL THOMSON: If you look at “Land and Housing Supply”, there is a note at the bottom at point (a)—“Due to Machinery of Government changes”. Basically, in summary, there is a further note there under “Explanation of Significant Movements”. What has happened has been a transfer of all those englobo lands, so I would like to just make some inquiries about that. Since the machinery-of-government reforms have been implemented, how many hectares of englobo land formerly held by the Housing Authority have been transferred to DevelopmentWA?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Honourable member, we would not have that information here.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: Can you provide it?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I can. I will take it on notice. That has nothing to do with the budget, but I will take it on notice, if the minister wants to give you an answer.
[*Supplementary Information No C20.*]

Hon NEIL THOMSON: It does because it is in the budget and it does actually refer to the asset base of the department. The question you could add to that is: what was its value? I will give you a list of the questions I am asking, because these are asset related. Did the Housing Authority get paid for

all or part or any of its value, and how many lots would that normally represent? If those could be asked.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I have got some information. The second tranche of assets transferred from the Housing Authority to DevelopmentWA on 1 July 2021. The transfer has involved over 1 300 lots, with a book value of over \$570 million.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: My reading of the budget is that that has been written off. Is that correct? The Housing Authority has not been paid \$570 million by DevelopmentWA?

Hon SUE ELLERY: The value of the assets is added to DevelopmentWA. It is not a handover of \$570 million.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: That is right. It has just been written off by the Housing Authority and put into the books.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am not sure you could say it is written off, honourable member. It is transferred. It is not like a debt or something that you write-off. It is transferred off to the other agency, and the value of those lots sits now with the other agency.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: Okay, and that is important, because we now see in DevelopmentWA's budget that there is a line item, "Sale of goods to the Department of Communities". I assume that for all future social housing developments the Department of Communities now has to purchase those lots in order to produce new social housing?

Hon SUE ELLERY: No, honourable member. If you want to put questions to DevelopmentWA, you need to do that to it. That is not how the system is going to work.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: So that I can clarify, will the Department of Communities be purchasing in the out years any land that is transferred back to DevelopmentWA for the purposes of social housing?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will ask Mr McIvor to explain it.

Mr McIVOR: Thank you, minister. The machinery-of-government changes mean that the Department of Communities will focus primarily on developments of 30 units or less, and DevelopmentWA will continue to focus on a range of land development functions but also work with developers to develop apartment blocks for a range of purposes, including that at times they will have social or affordable outcomes in those development agreements. We would usually then come up with a cost model, because the developer will typically build that apartment, whereby we will pay a fee, whether that is a construction cost schedule or any other fee, to take out lots or to take out properties in advance of them being completed. It is essentially a buy off the plan-type method of sale.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: That is clear for those 30 units or less. In an englobo development like a Brabham or an Ellenbrook, which are well developed now, but which the department is no longer involved in, is the department still acquiring land to build social housing in those development that no longer in the department's asset base?

Hon SUE ELLERY: The answer is yes.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: A related matter is to do with shared equity. My understanding is that the model of shared equity prior to the machinery-of-government reforms was such that the developer, through the joint venture, where the department had those partnerships, would offer a certain percentage and a negotiated outcome in terms of shared equity. I see that on page 536 of the *Budget statements* there is now a line for shared equity. I assume that is for the acquisition. Is that budget amount of \$19 million for shared equity for the acquisition of fully developed properties in order to then onsell them through the Open Doors program?

[5.00 pm]

Hon SUE ELLERY: We are fighting about who is going to give you the answer. Mr McIvor.

Mr McIVOR: That \$19 million reflects shared equity where we share the equity of the property with citizens who are deemed eligible to join into a shared equity program, where the state will take up a proportion of the cost of the dwelling. That is what that \$19 million is allocated for.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: So that \$19 million goes towards the 10 or 20 per cent or whatever percentage you purchase. Are those purchases through the Opening Doors program—I assume it is still the Opening Doors program; yes, he is nodding—restricted to government lands or could that be the purchase of any house that is a new development?

Mr McIVOR: My understanding is that, traditionally, the Opening Doors program is linked to where the Department of Communities has developed houses distinctly for the affordable housing program, and then eligible people who are eligible through their income limits can then access the Opening Doors and/or Keystart.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: One last question on this particular matter. Under the current arrangements, post-machinery of government versus the pre-machinery of government, has there been any change as a result of those changes in terms of the ability of the department to deliver on the shared equity program?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will ask Mr MacGyver—McIvor. Did I just call you MacGyver?

Mr McIVOR: It is all right; it is not the first time.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: A very good show.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Oh, my God; more and more is revealed about Hon Nick Goiran!

Mr McIVOR: In recent times, the minister has announced that we have repurposed product from what we refer to as our affordable sales program to boost our social housing stock as part of a deliberate decision to increase social housing stock in the short term.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: And one last one. Would the department be able to provide me, on notice, the number, by year, of shared equity dwellings that have been able to be released into the marketplace?

Hon SUE ELLERY: We can take that on notice.

[Supplementary Information No C21.]

Hon NEIL THOMSON: And if it is all right —

Hon SUE ELLERY: Your third final question!

Hon NEIL THOMSON: I do have another question, related more to my community. “Children and young people needing protection are safe from abuse and harm” is an outcome within the key effectiveness indicators on page 527. I also refer to some of the comments made by senior police, where there was concern about being treated as babysitters when particularly children are picked up on the street after hours. A child could be picked up on the street at 2.00 am, for example, and no responsible adult or guardian can be found. If this occurs in the Kimberley, talking locally—there seemed to be a bit of misunderstanding about the issue in some of the commentary that came later—in the town of Broome, Derby, Fitzroy Crossing, Halls Creek or Kununurra, is there a place other than the watch house or the lock-up where that child can be placed?

Hon SUE ELLERY: There was a bit of a debate—I think this is where you are heading, honourable member. While the officers are looking for some more precise information, there was a bit of a debate that the answer ought to be—I do not know what they would be called—a kind of safe house.

There are pros and cons to such a model. The cons include that if you put all those children who have significant issues happening in their lives, from five to 17, in the one safe house overnight, nobody is safe.

It might be an attractive model in one sense, but it is not a catch-all, and it is not necessarily the safest model. But I will see if I can give you some more information. What I am advised is that the police will call the central hotline—this is after determining that the actual people with responsibility for the care of those children are their immediate family and, for some reason, they cannot be returned to the immediate family—then they can contact Communities' crisis care unit, who will get local child protection workers to step in and deal with the child if that is what is required.

Hon WILSON TUCKER: I have got a few questions in relation to GROH properties. I believe we are looking at page 536, budget paper No 2. By way of explanation, minister, I asked several questions last year in respect to GROH properties in Kalgoorlie. I received an answer that the Minister for Housing had made a request to the Department of Communities to undertake an assessment around how the GROH properties were allocated. There were a number of properties that were quite old and they were looking at optimising their process to allocate them in different ways. My first question is: has this assessment been completed and, if yes, what was the outcome of that assessment?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will see if anyone has got a specific answer in respect to Kalgoorlie. I can tell you in respect to Kalgoorlie, some of those have been maintained, some have been allocated to other agencies. For completeness of answer, we will take that bit on notice. But I can also tell you that the Department of Communities is leading the work with agencies like mine—education—police and health, who are allocated large kind of buckets, if I can call them that, of GROH housing about how we maximise the use of them, how we make sure if one of those agencies has spare capacity in a particular area how we make that available to others. It is complex, because if you just take my agency, education, there is a big turnover in teaching staff. The workforce is predominantly female. Many of them will take time out of the workforce to have kids and such and also teachers regularly move through regional Western Australia. So just because we have got five houses vacant in that particular regional centre at any one time does not mean we can give them up immediately, because we have a big churn and there are always teachers coming through the system. We have got to be able to hold some capacity ourselves. It is a piece of work that is being done now. I have certainly, from my point of view, directed my agency to be helpful, to be good corporate citizens in ensuring that we come up with a system at the end that maximises our capacity to be flexible with how those housing units are managed.

[Supplementary Information No C22.]

Hon WILSON TUCKER: Thank you for that answer, minister. Does the question on notice include the status of the properties in the goldfields or is that more of just a breakdown of the methodology that you are using going forward?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will give you the information about Kalgoorlie to the extent that we are able to. Following on from the question you had asked previously, some have been maintained, some have been allocated to different agencies. We will give you information about that status as much as we are able to.

[5.10 pm]

Hon WILSON TUCKER: I appreciate the anonymity of some of these houses has to be maintained, but previously I was provided with a breakdown of the vacancy rates—typically three months, six months and 12 months. There was a case that one house was actually vacant for over 10 years. I

appreciate that there is a significant amount of turnover, but 10 years does seem quite a long time. If you are able to provide the time line breakdown, that would be appreciated.

The CHAIR: That is all part of C22.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Honourable member, are you sure you do not have the answer to that?

Hon WILSON TUCKER: I received an answer for goldfields property, I think it was in December 2021, but I do not believe I have received one recently.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I have an answer that has been signed off as having been given to you, with a table of that kind of information as at 30 April 2022.

Hon WILSON TUCKER: I can go back and have a look; and, if it has already been answered, I apologise.

Hon SUE ELLERY: If we can do it this way, chair: if you still need that information, and you put in a question after that time, we will provide an answer then, but check what you have been provided already.

Hon WILSON TUCKER: Okay; that is good.

The CHAIR: If you put in an additional question to the electronic lodgement system to say you have got the information.

Hon WILSON TUCKER: As part of that undertaking, minister, is it possible to extend it out to other regions as well?

Hon SUE ELLERY: The information I have is that you have been given that.

Hon WILSON TUCKER: Great; I will go back and have a look.

The CHAIR: I have two quick ones from me. On page 538, which is the best I can find, this is in regard to the number of full-time equivalents in the department. Minister, as you know, this is an issue that I have been dealing with. I have just got a very general question on 13 of those FTEs who are under investigation for allegedly leaking information to the media. I do not want to know anything about the individuals. I do not want to know any specifics. All I want to know is when is it anticipated that those investigations will be concluded?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will take it on notice. If the minister is able to give you a response, she will.

The CHAIR: That is the new 22. Are there any other officers in the department, other than those 13, who are under investigation, either for leaking of information or any other issues?

Hon SUE ELLERY: With the greatest of respect, chair, that has absolutely nothing to do with the budget. However, I will take it on notice and if the minister is able to give you an answer, she will.

The CHAIR: Thank you. minister, but it does relate to the operations of the agency and the FTEs are listed within the budget papers.

Hon SUE ELLERY: It is drawing a long bow, I would say, but anyway the minister will determine that.

The CHAIR: That is why we have budget estimates, I can assure you.

One other thing, just as a matter of interest, getting back to the homelessness issue. Is it practice or have there been instances where children under the care of the department are released to the care of relatives who are homeless?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I think a question might have been answered about this. It is definitely a child protection question, not a homeless question. There was an answer provided to Hon Steve Martin, who put a question on notice beforehand. The answer I can give you is that the department would

not knowingly release a child out of care to effectively then become a rough sleeper. It may well be the case, though, that the safest place for a child is with their immediate family; and for some of those immediate families, they may be living in crowded houses. But in all the circumstances, and the assessment of what is best for that child, the assessment is it is best for that child to be with the family. For completeness, chair, if there is further information I can provide, I will take that on notice.

The CHAIR: That will be really good, thank you. That is C23.

[Supplementary Information No C23.]

The CHAIR: I am now going to have a comfort break. We will come back in five minutes and there will be ample opportunity for everyone to get a few more questions in I would imagine.

Proceedings suspended from 5.15 pm to 5.20 pm

The CHAIR: Hon Samantha Rowe.

Ms C.M. ROWE: Thanks, chair. Minister, my question is in relation to community services and it is on page 519 under “Total Appropriations” and it is in relation to the Esther Foundation. Are you able to outline what the government has done to respond to the allegations of abuse and mistreatment of young women and girls at the Esther Foundation?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Thank you, chair. I am advised that at the beginning of the year there were numerous allegations of abuse and inappropriate behaviour at the residential rehab facility, the Esther Foundation. Minister McGurk made an offer for women to approach her office if they wanted to raise concerns. She then received a flood of complaints and a range of concerning allegations. That included former residents, former staff and family members of ex-residents who have made complaints about experiences of abuse and mistreatment. It is important to note that the Esther Foundation did not have any ongoing operational state government funding. However, it had received some from the former federal government. The state government did have a peppercorn lease of two properties to the Esther Foundation. They were entered into by the previous government. The foundation entered voluntary administration after the allegations came to light. At the time the allegations came to light, it was supporting 19 women and seven children when it went into administration. Those clients were spread across several properties, including at the two that were leased from the Department of Communities. The announcement of a new provider to step in and commence delivery of services from the former Esther Foundation properties has meant continuity of service. Cyrenian House has taken over the facility. The immediate priority is the safety and wellbeing of those immediate clients. The department has been working closely with the Mental Health Commission, which has a well-established relationship with Cyrenian House, on the establishment of interim services. Cyrenian is now providing support to those residents and developing a new service to support young women and young mums at risk or in crisis. The interim service will deliver a residential therapeutic community service that addresses substance misuse and includes support for mental health concerns, transitioning over time to help young women with a range of complex needs. The state government has funded Cyrenian via a grant agreement for a two-year period with around about \$2.2 million a year while the longer term options are being examined. The member would be aware that in the other place the government referred those allegations to one of their standing committees to conduct an inquiry.

Hon JACKIE JARVIS: Minister, I am on page 520. About halfway down the list of spending changes is the regional renewal program. I believe that might be a regional housing program. I am just wondering if I can get an update on that?

Hon SUE ELLERY: The regional renewal program is part of investing in our regions. There is \$9 million in Spalding in Geraldton, \$6 million for Spencer Park in Albany, and \$7 million for Withers in

Bunbury. We will revitalise those areas in those communities, making sure that those communities become better connected while providing social housing for those towns. In all three of those areas works have commenced. In Spalding, 14 refurbishments have commenced; in Spencer Park, two, with a further eight in the design phase; and in Withers in Bunbury two properties awarded a contract for refurbishment while the design phase has commenced for nine new units.

Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT: I had a question referring to budget paper No 2, significant issues impacting the agency points 7 to 13. I put in a question earlier, which provided a table around funding committed by programming. One part of that, which is committed from 2020–21 to 2025–26 outlines, if I am not mistaken, \$269 million for land acquisition.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Honourable member, can I interrupt you? Are you looking at an answer that we gave you? Is that what you are looking at?

Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT: That is right. Sorry if you do not have that in front of you. It is an answer that the department gave me in questions prior. So the land acquisition program under committed funding, table 1, which is about \$269.5 million for the acquisition of land. I guess the obvious question that arises is why is the department spending a large amount of money acquiring land when there is at least, in my experience, huge amounts of vacant land that the department owns and has not developed?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will ask Mr McIvor, as opposed to Mr MacGyver, to provide an answer.

The CHAIR: It is not funny the second time!

Mr McIVOR: Thank you, minister. As far as land acquisition is concerned, the department holds some 2 000-odd lots of land now, and a range of those are still under part of a transfer with DevelopmentWA. A large amount of the larger lots that need development will move to DevelopmentWA. The continuum of work from acquiring land, developing appropriate designs, looking at the yield of the homes, whether we can fit three or four on a corner block, whether we can build an apartment, going through the development approval and then to construction is part of this rolling program. There is always consideration of whether we purchase new land to come in. We will always look very closely at whether we dispose of land or whether we demolish existing properties when they get too old, to try to increase the yield. We might have a large property with a house on it, and we look to demolish that and put three townhouses on it. We look at the demand profile for the waitlist. We look in the regions. We still need to have a program of work to always have new land coming on as part of it. We could not have a zero-sum game as such.

Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT: Thank you for that answer. I am partly coming to this from my experience of my time as Mayor of Fremantle, where we have large amounts of land previously owned by Communities, some of it I appreciate now transferred to DevelopmentWA, which has literally sat empty for a decade undeveloped. The frustration around that community, and I point to Burt Street, which still has not started, and probably the most stark one is Davis Park, otherwise known as the heart of Beaconsfield project, which has spent the past five years demolishing properties. I am told it is likely that there will be no new construction there in the near future. Is that correct? It comes back to why you are acquiring land if you are not just going to build on the land that is now vacant and within the control of the Department of Communities?

Hon SUE ELLERY: There is a range of reasons, honourable member, and you might be more familiar with ones you referred to—Beaky and other places—than the people sitting here are. But there are a range of reasons including whether or not the land is contaminated —

Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT: It is not.

Hon SUE ELLERY: — and whether there is high density already.

Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT: It is not.

[5.30 pm]

Hon SUE ELLERY: You may well shake your head at me, honourable member, but if you want to ask a question that I take on notice in respect to specific named sites, I am happy to take that on notice.

Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT: I do think there is a systemic issue here which I am trying to bring to the attention, which is a budgetary one, where we are spending \$269 million on the forward estimates on buying new land whilst large tracts of existing land are left creating blight, frankly, and also not providing housing for people who need it. I certainly think there is great frustration from my colleagues in Fremantle who in collaboration with Communities went down a process which has now stalled where Communities are announcing they are not going to redevelop that land. They are literally going to sit on it indefinitely, and they will continue to demolish houses but not—and correct me if I am wrong—build any more. There are no plans to build on existing vacant land where housing was previously demolished in the past five years.

Hon SUE ELLERY: In respect to Davis Park, for example, because DevelopmentWA is working on the master plan for the old TAFE site, they are going to—well, you can shake your head, but I am giving you the best answer I am able to, honourable member. I am advised that DevelopmentWA is working on a master plan that will consider the area around it as well. If there are other specific sites that you want to give us the address of, I am happy to provide you with an answer there.

Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT: I just —

Hon SUE ELLERY: I also make this point—let me finish what I am saying. I will also make this point: the government is looking at, and particularly under the leadership of this Minister for Housing, innovative ways of tackling the serious issues that we face in housing and in homelessness, and I think it would be unfair to characterise the work that has been done under his leadership as kind of being blind to one particular option. He is looking at all of the options that are available to him and taking, I think, quite an innovative approach. But, as I said, if you want to give us—name the sites and I will provide you with additional information as to why that particular piece of land is not being progressed.

Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT: I certainly would like that, and I would just make the point on this one—and Fremantle is a whole—500 social housing units have been lost in a community that wants more. I think that needs to be said. The community said we want more social housing in our community and what we have seen over this government—and I do think this minister is a good minister, but this government—is 500 units lost and very few replaced.

Hon SUE ELLERY: But you need to give the sites.

Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT: I have given the site.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Davis Park.

Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT: The site is Davis Park.

The CHAIR: So, Davis Park. We understand the question?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes.

[*Supplementary Information No C24.*]

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Minister, page 532 refers to care arrangements and support services for children in the CEO's care. Now, you will note there below the table in note (b) that the number of residential-based care arrangements are estimated in this financial year to be 34 540, yet I am a bit disturbed to see that the budget for the coming financial year is only 34 000. Now, there was a

review by the Commissioner for Children and Young People last year, an independent review into the Department of Communities' policies and practices and the placement of children with harmful sexual behaviours in residential-care settings and in that review, the commissioner stated that residential-care placements are limited and insufficient and that the department staff spoke about leaving children in dangerous or risky situations because there were no other alternatives. In those circumstances, why are we reducing the number of residential-based care arrangements by 540?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will get you the answer, honourable member.

The CHAIR: We are going to have to move on, guys.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I cannot get a neat answer, chair, so I am going to take it on notice.

The CHAIR: I appreciate that, minister.

[*Supplementary Information No C25.*]

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Still on this theme of residential care arrangements, the ABC recently published an article entitled "Bad parent", which outlined that children are being placed in residential care homes too young. There was a WA caseworker who was, if you like, interviewed in this article and she said that she left a child under the age of 10 in a group home and, due to the beatings and bullying by the much older residents, within six months the child was talking about wanting to kill themselves. I note, minister, that the *Residential care practice manual*, at 1.1.a, states that residential care homes are for children aged between 10 and 17. Are there any children under the age of 10 currently in a residential care home?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will have to take that on notice.

[*Supplementary Information No C26.*]

Hon NICK GOIRAN: I just make the observation, minister, and this is not a criticism of you, that, so far, essentially every single question I have asked has had to be taken on notice. When we are talking about the Commissioner for Children and Young People having to inquire into these matters, I would have thought that there would be a senior officer who would know something about these things and be well equipped. We talked about having regular briefings, including the director general. I am surprised that all this information has to be taken on notice. That is a bit of running commentary from me, and not a question, and you will say that I am wasting my time.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes, but I am going to respond to it, honourable member.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Please do.

Hon SUE ELLERY: What I try to do, if I cannot be confident that I have a precise answer, is I will make a conscious decision to take it on notice because I do not want to give an answer that I think might be the case. If an officer is saying to me, "I think it's around X, but I don't know", I am not going to give you that answer. I am trying my hardest to make sure the answers I give you are complete and, if the safest way for me to do that is to take it on notice, that is what I am going to do.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: I understand that and, as I say, the criticism is not directed at you.

The CHAIR: Can we move on, because we have limited time?

Hon NICK GOIRAN: I want to then move to again pages 520 and 521 about spending changes in relation to the increased budget for ongoing initiatives relating to child protection delivery of services. Does the budget include any increased number of caseworkers; and, if so, how many?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes, it does, and I will get you some numbers. There are 36 in this budget, but I am confident, and I had this discussion with the minister the other day, that over the last two budgets, I think the number is around—I will get you a bigger number.

[5.40 pm]

Hon NICK GOIRAN: What the minister is telling me is that there is funding in this budget for an extra 36 case workers, and over the last couple of years there has also been a budget for an increased number of case workers. That is great, and that is supported by the opposition, but the question is: are we actually recruiting more case workers? For example, in this financial year, how many new case workers have been employed?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Sure. I understand the question, but I will just add this. Since we were elected, we have increased the number of child protection FTE by 29.1 per cent, which equates to 224.1 FTE. I will see whether there is information about recruitment levels, but the honourable member would know that whether we are recruiting a child protection worker, a teacher, a plumber or a Hansard reporter, there are significant labour market pressures right now, and everyone who is trying to recruit people is struggling with that. I will see whether I have some numbers on actual recruitment. I will get the director general to talk to the member about the recruitment processes that are in place now.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: I do not want to know about the processes. I want to know how many new case workers have been employed in this financial year. If the minister cannot tell me that now, she can take it on notice?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will take that on notice, but I want to reiterate that funding is available, but there are labour market shortages in any profession across the area.

[Supplementary Information No C27.]

Hon NICK GOIRAN: My last question, minister, is that there is an industrial instrument that says that case workers are not to have more than 18 cases. It is not an option to give them more than 18; they are not to have it as a matter of law. Are there any case workers in Western Australia with more than 18 cases at the moment?

Hon SUE ELLERY: But I also understand, and I will stand corrected if I am wrong, that there are provisions within that industrial instrument that say that in the event that this happens, this is how you work it out. I am advised that in the June reporting period, there were 10 who had more than 18.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: I go back to page 528 under “Services and Key Efficiency Indicators”, and it is again service 1, community services. It is a question in and around the supporting communities’ forum. Have any reviews or evaluations been undertaken to determine the forum’s impact and effectiveness within the community services sector since it was established?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Good question. Not that the director general is aware of, but I hasten to make the point, I guess, that the sector would be loud and clear if it thought it was not working properly.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: I speak to the community services sector and it certainly has some views. What I would say is that some documents that I have from the internet indicate that there would be an evaluation after two years of operation. If the minister is happy to take this on notice, what I am keen to understand is: if a review has not been undertaken, is a review intended to be undertaken; and, if so, what is the time frame for that?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will take that on notice. It was established, I thought, in 2018 or 2019, so a review might have been done before the life of this director general, but I will take it on notice.

[Supplementary Information No C28.]

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: I again turn to page 528 in the context of regulation and quality assurance of early education and care services. I think Hon Jackie Jarvis has asked some questions in and around this.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: It relates to the \$9.1 million that has been allocated to—I think it was in the minister's press statement—keeping children in early childhood education safe. My understanding, as a result of a question that I asked, is that that relates to funding being allocated to ECRU. Can I just double-check. Is that funding for additional staff only, or is that a component of it? I suppose I want a breakdown of that funding.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Part of the answer that I already gave to Hon Jackie Jarvis was that it was a reflection of the growth in the sector, so the need to have more people to do more assessments and to manage the compliance. But I also recall from that answer—maybe someone can find it for me—that it was about doing a higher amount of checks than were previously done. I will see if someone can find that answer for me. I will ask Mr Payne to provide you with some information.

Mr PAYNE: The funds predominantly relate to the additional FTE for the business area. That applies across assessment officers that go out and visit childcare centres; it applies to compliance officers, investigation officers, who undertake investigations for breaches of the legislation; and it provides additional resources to back those officers up, generally administratively. There are also funds that contribute to being able to carry out those functions—travel et cetera—but predominantly it is assessment officers. They do the checks on the assessment of ratings, as the minister mentioned earlier, against the national framework, and also general compliance activities to make sure that businesses have in place appropriate practices and policies that keep children safe.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Thank you for that. Perhaps if the minister was amenable, it would be great if we could take on notice a full breakdown of that \$9.1 million and, within that, the allocation of FTE that that money will support. I appreciate that it will not be the entirety of the \$9.1 million. I want a breakdown of the \$9.1 million and then the allocation of staff, if that is possible.

Hon SUE ELLERY: If we are able to, we will.

[Supplementary Information No C29.]

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Can I just clarify: is the \$9.1 million allocated for this financial year only or is it spread across the forward estimates?

Hon SUE ELLERY: It is across the forward estimates.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: A continuation on this theme with regard to ECRU; it is in relation to the number of breaches that have been issued by ECRU to childcare and day care centres. I did ask a question on notice and I did note that there was a fairly significant increase between 2020 and 2021 in the number of breaches that have been issued by ECRU. There has obviously been quite a bit of media on occasion in relation to these matters. I suppose what I am trying to get some clarity on is in relation to the staffing component of ECRU. Are all of the staff there to, I suppose, assess and monitor and ensure compliance? I understand this may have been a case in previous years that there might have been some staff that would provide some sector support, if I might put it that way, to centres. Obviously, there is a line of what a breach may be; it may be very minor in nature to, obviously, an extreme case. Is there any sector support—I do not know if that is the right word but I am going to use it—from the department to assist centres to try and work through what might be relatively minor breaches so that it does not happen again?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will ask Mr Payne if he can make some comments. Certainly, historically, there was.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Yes. My understanding is that it might not be there so much now, so I am keen to hear.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am not sure, but I will ask Mr Payne to provide a comment.

Mr PAYNE: In relation to the assessment and rating process—that is the quality of the service of educational-type activities—we provide support proactively. All centres can prepare for visits where we do those assessments. In relation to the child-safety element of a childcare centre, which I suspect you are referring to mainly, we do undertake visits across all of our assessment visits. That includes looking at serious offences, minor offences, administrative offences and the physical safety of the premises itself. Where they are very minor issues, whilst we might record that as a breach, we also provide the centre with an opportunity to deal with that matter instantly or over time. We will conduct visits in three months or six months' time to see if they have corrected that.

[5.50 pm]

Where there are very serious matters, we will obviously look at disciplinary proceedings, which is what you see through the media. But, generally, activities are recorded as a breach, but we give centres an opportunity. Proactively, we also engage with the sector through monthly or regular newsletters where we try and identify issues that we find typical or common in relation to breaches and we provide general information as to where they might be able to go to improve their business practices or how to update their business policies in relation to those requirements under the legislation. There is a suite of different approaches that we have to try and support those sectors. We also work with sector peaks or different bodies that many of them belong to in relation to the type of advice that they can give to centres as well. But predominantly our information is about giving them information on what is required under the act. We do not provide direct assistance or advice as to what they should do specifically to comply with the act.

Hon STEVE MARTIN: On page 528, there is an explanation of significant movements. Item 3 talks about the public housing waitlist and it mentions a recent increase to income that will add numbers to the waitlist. Has any modelling been done on how many, and can I get a little bit of background about that process?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am advised it is not expected to significantly or in any meaningful way add to the waitlist. I am advised there had not been an increase between 2006 and 2016 and if we did not make an adjustment, essentially, because of CPI, pensioners would drop out of being eligible for that public housing support, which is not what we want to happen. There was an adjustment in the previous year and then the most recent adjustment.

Hon STEVE MARTIN: The first two are recent increases and we do not know what that will add to the list.

Hon SUE ELLERY: The expectation is it will not make a significant difference to the list.

Hon STEVE MARTIN: I appreciate that, minister, but do we have a number?

Hon SUE ELLERY: No. If the purpose of the question is “Is this going to create a significant problem for us going forward?” the answer to that is no, it is not anticipated to make a significant difference. It is just making sure that we keep pensioners—obviously those on a fixed income—eligible.

Hon STEVE MARTIN: I appreciate that minister. It was raised as a note explaining why there would be an ongoing issue with the waitlist.

I received some information, minister, in a question that I submitted prior to the hearing regarding the waitlist numbers, which I appreciate. Can I ask for an up-to-date to the end of May, or even June

to date if that is possible? The numbers, I believe, were to the end of April 2022. Is it possible to get a May number? I assume that will have to go on notice.

The CHAIR: What is it for?

Hon STEVE MARTIN: The social housing waitlist numbers, wait turn applications, priority applications.

Hon SUE ELLERY: We can, but we will take that on notice. We do not have it here.
[*Supplementary Information No C30.*]

Hon STEVE MARTIN: When did you want it to?

Hon SUE ELLERY: May.

Hon STEVE MARTIN: The end of May would be great; thank you. Can we also include the number of people that those applications—it says 18 837 applications. Can we get the number of people that that figure represents?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes, we can.

The CHAIR: That is all part of C30.

Hon STEVE MARTIN: A follow up to a question that I think was asked by Hon Jackie Jarvis about the regional renewal fund. It mentioned how many houses have been refurbished. Can I ask: how many have been occupied that have been refurbished?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am not sure if I have that here. We do not have that here, but I can take it on notice, honourable member.

[*Supplementary Information No C31.*]

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am not sure I have that here. We do not have that here, but I can take that on notice.

The CHAIR: You have got time for one more; I am giving you seven minutes each.

Hon STEVE MARTIN: The north west Aboriginal housing fund—I asked this during the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development's hearing because it appears on their books as a royalties for regions spend. They referred me back to this department. I was trying to assess how many people had been housed through that program. It is page 519 in Communities.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am getting excited because I am told we have got that. I might have pre-empted myself. I will save time and take it on notice.

The CHAIR: C32.

[*Supplementary Information No C32.*]

Hon STEVE MARTIN: On the spot purchasing program—we have some numbers about the spend across WA. Can I get some explanation? For example, in the west Kimberley, zero; goldfields, 2; and wheatbelt, 2. It is a good program.

The CHAIR: Can you just ask the question really quickly?

Hon STEVE MARTIN: Why have we got, for example, zero in the west Kimberley? Has the region been assessed and does not need any?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I ask Mr McIvor to provide some comments about that.

Mr McIVOR: Spot purchasing has focused heavily on one and two-bedroom dwellings where we can. It has been probably close to 70 per cent metro and 30 per cent across the regions in the current year. Some regions are more difficult than others to find properties that meet our needs or we need

to be cautious about the age of properties in different regions. In some regions we have had less spot purchasing than others.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: If I can just for a moment continue on the line of questioning I had about that hotline. Just to clarify when we left off at the last point.

Hon SUE ELLERY: You will have to remind me, honourable member. I cannot keep everything in my head at one time.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: It was the police ringing the hotline if they children. They ring the hotline and that has somebody that answers the phone. I assume that is based in Perth.

Hon SUE ELLERY: It is 24/7. It is the centralised crisis care.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: Assuming there is one or more children that cannot be placed in a safe place at 2.00 am in the morning, what is the prospect, in the communities I listed before, in the Kimberley communities, of somebody arriving to assist the police in that situation that evening? What is the prospect of that?

Hon SUE ELLERY: It is going to depend entirely on circumstances, honourable member, so I cannot tell you someone will be there within 30 minutes or an hour; it will depend entirely on the circumstances.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: Has the department sat down formally with WA police to assess the number of times that situation might arise?

Hon SUE ELLERY: It is ongoing. The department is working in collaboration with police and the other agencies involved in those operations. That is an ongoing conversation.

[6.00 pm]

Hon NEIL THOMSON: I will move on from that issue. I want to return to a matter that was raised by my honourable colleagues relating to the number of Aboriginal children in care. We see, which is a good thing, that the number of children in care may have been reduced by a very small amount—3.3 per cent. There was a comment about that on page 521. It has been referred to previously, and the minister has spoken to it.

How many referrals does the department have for a child going into care when it cannot place them in care? It could be a negative, and if the number is going down, it may not be able to find an appropriate point.

Hon SUE ELLERY: No, honourable member. It is a function of deliberate strategy around early intervention to take action before a child needs to be taken into care. It is a deliberate, well-considered, well-planned and resourced strategy to support in the family way before a child has to be taken into care. It is not a function of there not being enough placements. It is a direct function of a deliberate strategy to intervene early.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: Are there currently any children who are not able to be placed in appropriate care?

Hon SUE ELLERY: At any one time it will depend entirely on the circumstances what kind of care is required for that child and the needs of a particular child. Every case is treated on its merits. It might mean that the child is temporarily placed with another family member while a more suitable, longer term arrangement is made. It depends entirely on the circumstances.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: Does the department keep a record at any one time of the number of children who have not yet been able to be placed into appropriate care?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am not sure that the honourable member understands the way the system works. It is a large system. There are regular—like daily—reports of children for whom an assessment needs to be made. A rigorous assessment is done as to the safety of that child. There is a whole triage system. There is a further really detailed policy on how the risk assessment and safety of that child is assessed and then determined what is the best way forward, including whether that is a court order or whatever the case may be.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: I appreciate that. I understand it is not an easy job. We are only seeing the headline data, and that is the number of children who are currently in care. Is there any prospect of providing the identified data, with trends, over the last two years of the number of children who are subject to some court order or some decision by the CEO who cannot yet be placed in care?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I cannot provide that kind of data. The member can look at the annual report of the agency, and that will give him a much better understanding of the system and the metrics that the department uses to demonstrate its success or otherwise with dealing with children who are at risk. That is probably the best starting point for the honourable member because this is a large and complex system and children move in and out of the system. I have to say that the work was started by the previous government around a much greater focus on early intervention to ensure that fewer children are coming into care.

Hon JAMES HAYWARD: My question relates to budget paper No 2, volume 2, page 529, “Homelessness Support Services”, “Total Cost of Service”. I would like to ask about the Housing First initiative designed to provide accommodation support to people experiencing homelessness. I am told by service providers such as Anglicare WA and Accordwest that a shortage of actual physical housing makes it almost impossible for them to help those in need, largely given that that service is about trying to get people who are sleeping rough into a more formal living arrangement. I am interested to know what the department’s view is about how that is all going and what it is doing to mitigate those challenges around the lack of available housing.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Sorry, but that is where we started the session about three hours ago.

Hon JAMES HAYWARD: I was present, member. This is in relation specifically to this particular model. Perhaps somebody from the department or yourself could talk a bit about how that model is aimed to work and the challenge that is overcome? I understand that the questions earlier in the day were very much talking about that transient accommodation, but this is a specific program aimed at getting people who are sleeping rough into housing. There is no housing, you are still funding the program, so what is happening with it?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will see what I can find for you, member.

I can give you numbers of people that are being managed through the Housing First support services, but I can also tell you that COVID has impacted the Housing First support services with each region stating that staff shortages due to sickness and isolation requirements has had an impact. But in terms of the Anglicare service in Bunbury, the number of people being case managed is 17; the number of people in long-term housing, five; the number of people in crisis and transitional accommodation is four. As at the end of April 2022, the Housing Choices Bunbury supportive landlord service has been successful in housing five households, which includes two individuals and three single-parent families. The demographics of that are that two out of the five are in the over 55s, three out of the five are women, two out of the five are Aboriginal.

Hon JAMES HAYWARD: Thanks for that. I am just looking at budget paper No 3, economic and fiscal outlook, at page 146. I would just like to ask about the \$24.9 million allocated to the extension of service contracts for 2022–23. The explanatory notes go on in some detail, but can the government

give a couple of examples of contracts that are being extended, and what is behind the decision to extend these contracts rather than re-tendering for them?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Sure. I will see what I can find. One example I have been given is that all of the family and domestic violence contracts have been extended to five-year contracts. That is the first time that those services have had that kind of contract certainty going forward. That is one example of that.

The CHAIR: Last one, Hon James Hayward.

Hon JAMES HAYWARD: Thank you. I just refer you to budget paper No 2, volume 2, page 536. That is pretty close to where we were before; I am sorry, I should have asked that earlier. I am just interested, I know that you did speak about some of the things that the government is doing, but I am wondering if—I have raised it before—the Bullsbrook centre, or if there are other centres similar to that, could be used for housing people for that transitional space? Is there any work being done by the department looking at any of those types of solutions?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Government more broadly rather than this agency. Government more broadly is looking at what we might be able to do with that Bullsbrook site, for example, but services for homeless people in an area that does not have kind of connections to public transport—I do not think it is going to work for that kind of service delivery. The design of the building, as well, is not designed the way that you would want to design homeless services in 2022. Government more broadly is looking at what we might do with that, but I have said it in here before: federal government acted too late, and—yes.

[6.10 pm]

The CHAIR: I am going to give the final call to Hon Donna Faragher to serve a final blow and bring down the government.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Okay, here we go. I refer to page 524 under “Other Strategic Issues” and the state commissioning strategy. Can you advise if there is an anticipated time frame as to when both the strategy and the implementation plan will be finalised and released by the government?

Hon SUE ELLERY: The state commissioning strategy is being led by Finance. There are a range of respective agencies—this agency is one of them and the Mental Health Commission is another—that have done their own commissioning, and that information is publicly available. But the state commissioning strategy for the whole of government is being led by Finance. Your questions are better targeted there.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Albeit it is stated in here. Are you happy to take it on notice for me, given it is reflected in this part?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I can. Yes, I will take it on notice. I am not sure what information this minister will be able to provide you, but I am happy to ask her.

[*Supplementary Information No C33.*]

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Thank you. On page 542 under “Statement of Cashflows” there actually is not a line item; however, the reason why I ask it here is it relates to men’s sheds and sector support. Previously there was a separate line item on this particular section, but in answer to a question in estimates last year, I understand that it has been incorporated into the statement of cashflows because it is no longer a grant. My question is: given it is no longer a separate line item but I know funding is provided to the association, what is the total amount of funding that has been allocated to the men’s shed and sector support in the 2022–23 financial year?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I do not have it here, honourable member, but I am happy to take that on notice.

[*Supplementary Information No C34.*]

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: If you would. And, as part of that, can I just confirm that the amount of funding that is being provided, is that funding going in its entirety to the Men's Shed association; and, if not, what is the breakdown of that funding?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Sure. I will ask that question.

The CHAIR: Do you want one more?

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Yes, please. Again on page 519 under "Spending Changes" is the line item "Small Business Financial Counselling and Advisory Services". I am happy for this to be taken on notice, but would the minister be able to provide a breakdown of the organisations that received funding as part of this line item in the 2021–22 financial year, including the total amount of funding allocated to each?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will take that on notice, honourable member.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Thank you very much.

[*Supplementary Information No C35.*]

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Can I keep going?

The CHAIR: One more.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Thank you. On page 539 under "Details of Controlled Grants and Subsidies" under the heading "Community Services" there is a line item for "Social Support Coordinator". I want to get clarification on exactly what the social support coordinator is and what that funding allocation is for. I am presuming it is for a person, but —

Hon SUE ELLERY: You never know your luck in a big city.

It assists women to navigate the service system by providing case management and facilitating the integration of the support services network in the Murchison region.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Right. So it is a person—an FTE allocation?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I think so. Yes.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Thank you.

The CHAIR: Just before I do my concluding comments—that is a wrap now, guys—I just want to thank all members who have contributed—this is our last session; yes!—to estimates over the last week. It has been a very long but very effective week. I would particularly like to go thank the hardest working committee in the Parliament, that is the estimates committee: Hon Samantha Rowe, deputy; Hon Jackie Jarvis; Hon Dr Brad Pettitt; and Hon Nick Goiran. It is a very, very hardworking committee. I would also like to pay tribute to the extraordinarily efficient staff, Andrew Hawkes, Denise Wong and Margaret Liveris, and also to the chamber staff and Hansard, as always. Thank you very much to everyone.

Now to conclude. I thank you for your attendance today, witnesses. It is very much appreciated.

Members, you may submit your remaining questions through the electronic lodgement system, which will close at 5.00 pm on 1 July 2022. Witnesses, the committee will forward the uncorrected transcript of evidence, with questions taken on notice highlighted, as soon as possible after the hearing. Responses to questions on notice are due by 5.00 pm on 20 July 2022. Should you be unable to meet the due date, could you please advise the committee in writing as soon as possible before the due date. The advice is to include specific reasons why the due date cannot be met. Thank you very much for your attendance once again today; it has been very much appreciated. Thank you.

Hearing concluded at 6.15 pm
