

**PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA**

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES  
(HANSARD)**

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL**

**FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT**

**FIRST SESSION**

**ANSWERS TO CONSTITUENCY QUESTIONS**

**7 September to 20 September 2018**

**(Extract from book 14)**

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## **The Governor**

The Honourable LINDA DESSAU, AC

## **The Lieutenant-Governor**

The Honourable KEN LAY, AO, APM

## **The ministry**

(from 16 October 2017)

Premier . . . . .	The Hon. D. M. Andrews, MP
Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Minister for Emergency Services . . . . .	The Hon. J. A. Merlino, MP
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Special Minister of State . . . . .	The Hon. G. Jennings, MLC
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Minister for Training and Skills, and Minister for Corrections . . . . .	The Hon. G. A. Tierney, MLC
Minister for Planning . . . . .	The Hon. R. W. Wynne, MP
Cabinet Secretary . . . . .	Ms M. Thomas, MP

### Legislative Council committees

**Privileges Committee** — Mr Dalidakis, Mr Mulino, Mr O’Sullivan, Mr Purcell, Mr Rich-Phillips, Ms Springle, Ms Symes and Ms Wooldridge.

**Procedure Committee** — The President, Dr Carling-Jenkins, Mr Davis, Mr Jennings, Ms Pennicuik, Ms Pulford, Ms Tierney and Ms Wooldridge.

### Legislative Council standing committees

**Standing Committee on the Economy and Infrastructure** — Mr Bourman, #Mr Davis, Ms Dunn, Mr Eideh, Mr Finn, Mr Gepp, Mr Leane, #Mr Melhem, Mr Ondarchie, Mr O’Sullivan and #Mr Rich-Phillips.

**Standing Committee on the Environment and Planning** — Ms Bath, #Mr Bourman, Mr Dalla-Riva, Mr Davis, #Ms Dunn, Mr Elasmarr, Mr Melhem, Mr Mulino, #Mr Purcell, #Mr Ramsay, #Dr Ratnam, #Ms Symes, Ms Truong and Mr Young.

**Standing Committee on Legal and Social Issues** — #Ms Crozier, #Mr Elasmarr, Ms Fitzherbert, Mr Morris, Ms Patten, Mrs Peulich, #Dr Ratnam, #Mr Rich-Phillips, Ms Shing, Mr Somyurek, Ms Springle and Ms Symes.

# participating members

### Legislative Council select committees

**Port of Melbourne Select Committee** — Mr Mulino, Mr Ondarchie, Mr Purcell, Mr Rich-Phillips, Ms Shing and Ms Tierney.

**Fire Services Bill Select Committee** — Ms Lovell, Mr Melhem, Mr Mulino, Mr O’Sullivan, Mr Rich Phillips, Ms Shing and Mr Young.

### Joint committees

**Accountability and Oversight Committee** — (*Council*): Mr O’Sullivan, Mr Purcell and Ms Symes. (*Assembly*): Mr Angus, Mr Gidley, Mr Noonan and Ms Thomson.

**Dispute Resolution Committee** — (*Council*): Mr Bourman, Mr Dalidakis, Ms Dunn, Mr Jennings and Ms Wooldridge. (*Assembly*): Ms Allan, Mr Clark, Ms Hutchins, Mr Merlino, Mr M. O’Brien, Mr Pakula and Mr Walsh.

**Economic, Education, Jobs and Skills Committee** — (*Council*): Mr Bourman, Mr Elasmarr and Mr Melhem. (*Assembly*): Mr Crisp, Mrs Fyffe, Ms Garrett and Ms Ryall.

**Electoral Matters Committee** — (*Council*): Ms Bath, Ms Patten and Mr Somyurek. (*Assembly*): Ms Asher, Ms Blandthorn, Mr Dixon and Ms Spence.

**Environment, Natural Resources and Regional Development Committee** — (*Council*): Mr O’Sullivan, Mr Ramsay and Mr Young. (*Assembly*): Mr J. Bull, Ms Halfpenny, Mr Richardson and Mr Riordan.

**Family and Community Development Committee** — (*Council*): Dr Carling-Jenkins and Mr Finn. (*Assembly*): Ms Britnell, Ms Couzens, Mr Edbrooke, Ms Edwards and Ms McLeish.

**House Committee** — (*Council*): The President (*ex officio*), Mr Eideh, Ms Lovell, Mr Mulino and Mr Young. (*Assembly*): The Speaker (*ex officio*), Mr J. Bull, Mr Crisp, Mrs Fyffe, Mr Staikos, Ms Suleyman and Mr Thompson.

**Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission Committee** — (*Council*): Mr Ramsay and Ms Symes. (*Assembly*): Mr Hibbins, Mr D. O’Brien, Mr Richardson, Ms Thomson and Mr Wells.

**Law Reform, Road and Community Safety Committee** — (*Council*): Dr Carling-Jenkins and Mr Gepp. (*Assembly*): Mr Dixon, Mr Howard, Ms Suleyman, Mr Thompson and Mr Tilley.

**Public Accounts and Estimates Committee** — (*Council*): Ms Patten, Ms Pennicuik and Ms Shing. (*Assembly*): Mr Dimopoulos, Mr Morris, Mr D. O’Brien, Mr Pearson, Mr T. Smith and Ms Ward.

**Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee** — (*Council*): Ms Bath and Mr Dalla-Riva. (*Assembly*): Ms Blandthorn, Mr J. Bull, Mr Dimopoulos, Ms Kilkenny and Mr Pesutto.

### Heads of parliamentary departments

*Assembly* — Acting Clerk of the Legislative Assembly: Ms Bridget Noonan

*Council* — Acting Clerk of the Parliaments and Clerk of the Legislative Council: Mr A. Young

*Parliamentary Services* — Secretary: Mr P. Lochert

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**FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT — FIRST SESSION**

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**Deputy President:**

Mr N. ELASMAR

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**Deputy Leader of the Government:**

The Hon. J. L. PULFORD

**Leader of the Opposition:**

The Hon. M. WOOLDRIDGE

**Deputy Leader of the Opposition:**

The Hon. G. K. RICH-PHILLIPS

**Leader of The Nationals:**

Mr L. B. O'SULLIVAN

**Leader of the Greens:**

Dr S. RATNAM

Member	Region	Party	Member	Region	Party
Atkinson, Mr Bruce Norman	Eastern Metropolitan	LP	Mikakos, Ms Jenny	Northern Metropolitan	ALP
Barber, Mr Gregory John <sup>1</sup>	Northern Metropolitan	Greens	Morris, Mr Joshua	Western Victoria	LP
Bath, Ms Melina <sup>2</sup>	Eastern Victoria	Nats	Mulino, Mr Daniel	Eastern Victoria	ALP
Bourman, Mr Jeffrey	Eastern Victoria	SFFP	O'Brien, Mr Daniel David <sup>8</sup>	Eastern Victoria	Nats
Carling-Jenkins, Dr Rachel <sup>3</sup>	Western Metropolitan	Ind	O'Donohue, Mr Edward John	Eastern Victoria	LP
Crozier, Ms Georgina Mary	Southern Metropolitan	LP	Ondarchie, Mr Craig Philip	Northern Metropolitan	LP
Dalidakis, Mr Philip	Southern Metropolitan	ALP	O'Sullivan, Mr Luke Bartholomew <sup>9</sup>	Northern Victoria	Nats
Dalla-Riva, Mr Richard Alex Gordon	Eastern Metropolitan	LP	Patten, Ms Fiona <sup>10</sup>	Northern Metropolitan	FPRP
Davis, Mr David McLean	Southern Metropolitan	LP	Pennicuik, Ms Susan Margaret	Southern Metropolitan	Greens
Drum, Mr Damian Kevin <sup>4</sup>	Northern Victoria	Nats	Peulich, Mrs Inga	South Eastern Metropolitan	LP
Dunn, Ms Samantha	Eastern Metropolitan	Greens	Pulford, Ms Jaala Lee	Western Victoria	ALP
Eideh, Mr Khalil M.	Western Metropolitan	ALP	Purcell, Mr James	Western Victoria	VILJ
Elasmar, Mr Nazih	Northern Metropolitan	ALP	Ramsay, Mr Simon	Western Victoria	LP
Finn, Mr Bernard Thomas C.	Western Metropolitan	LP	Ratnam, Dr Samantha Shantini <sup>11</sup>	Northern Metropolitan	Greens
Fitzherbert, Ms Margaret	Southern Metropolitan	LP	Rich-Phillips, Mr Gordon Kenneth	South Eastern Metropolitan	LP
Gepp, Mr Mark <sup>5</sup>	Northern Victoria	ALP	Shing, Ms Harriet	Eastern Victoria	ALP
Hartland, Ms Colleen Mildred <sup>6</sup>	Western Metropolitan	Greens	Somyurek, Mr Adem	South Eastern Metropolitan	ALP
Herbert, Mr Steven Ralph <sup>7</sup>	Northern Victoria	ALP	Springle, Ms Nina	South Eastern Metropolitan	Greens
Jennings, Mr Gavin Wayne	South Eastern Metropolitan	ALP	Symes, Ms Jaclyn	Northern Victoria	ALP
Leane, Mr Shaun Leo	Eastern Metropolitan	ALP	Tierney, Ms Gayle Anne	Western Victoria	ALP
Lovell, Ms Wendy Ann	Northern Victoria	LP	Truong, Ms Huong <sup>12</sup>	Western Metropolitan	Greens
Melhem, Mr Cesar	Western Metropolitan	ALP	Wooldridge, Ms Mary Louise Newling	Eastern Metropolitan	LP
			Young, Mr Daniel	Northern Victoria	SFFP

<sup>1</sup> Resigned 28 September 2017

<sup>2</sup> Appointed 15 April 2015

<sup>3</sup> DLP until 26 June 2017;  
AC until 3 August 2018

<sup>4</sup> Resigned 27 May 2016

<sup>5</sup> Appointed 7 June 2017

<sup>6</sup> Resigned 9 February 2018

<sup>7</sup> Resigned 6 April 2017

<sup>8</sup> Resigned 25 February 2015

<sup>9</sup> Appointed 12 October 2016

<sup>10</sup> ASP until 16 January 2018;  
RV until 14 August 2018

<sup>11</sup> Appointed 18 October 2017

<sup>12</sup> Appointed 21 February 2018

**PARTY ABBREVIATIONS**

AC — Australian Conservatives; ALP — Labor Party; ASP — Australian Sex Party; DLP — Democratic Labour Party;  
FPRP — Fiona Patten's Reason Party; Greens — Australian Greens; Ind — Independent; LP — Liberal Party;  
Nats — The Nationals; RV — Reason Victoria; SFFP — Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party; VILJ — Vote 1 Local Jobs



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**ANSWERS TO CONSTITUENCY QUESTIONS**

*Answers have been incorporated in the form supplied by the departments on behalf of the appropriate ministers and received by Hansard in the period shown.*

**10 September to 20 September 2018****Eastern Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Mr Leane  
**Directed to:** Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence  
**Asked on:** 19 October 2017

**ANSWER:**

In my role of Minister for Prevention of Family Violence I am committed to meeting with stakeholders in the family violence sector to better understand the work of their organisation. On 18 October 2017, I had a very productive introductory meeting with the Chief Executive Officer of Eastern Domestic Violence Service (EDVOS), Ms Jenny Jackson. This meeting has given me a very clear sense of how EDVOS operates and how their programs are improving the lives of people in the Eastern metropolitan region of Melbourne.

As part of the Victorian Government's commitment to the prevention of family violence and all forms of violence against women, the 2016-17 State Budget allocated a total \$3.85 million to the Community Partnerships for Primary Prevention (CPPP) grants program. The \$3.85 million has funded 34 primary prevention partnerships across Victoria, including the EDVOS HAIr project, which I understand received \$135 000.00 funding.

This project has now concluded, and I note its success in providing training to over 300 salon professionals. The project evaluation stated that the training significantly increased salon professionals' understanding and knowledge of the drivers and impact of family violence, how to create a safe and inclusive environment for their clients, and how to respond when a client is experiencing family violence.

The Victorian Government has further demonstrated its commitment to the prevention of family violence and all forms of violence against women through a record 2017-18 State Budget allocation of \$1.91 billion over four years to continue implementing the Royal Commission recommendations, including \$50.8 million dedicated funding to deliver ongoing prevention activities. In addition, a further \$24 million over 4 years was allocated in the 2018-19 State Budget for behavioural change campaigns and research to build evidence about what works in the prevention of family violence.

On 1 August 2018, I announced the launch of Respect Victoria, a new family violence prevention agency that will lead and guide our work in the prevention of family violence.

These important steps take forward the Victorian Government's vision to build a state free from violence, create a safer Victoria and stop violence before it starts.

**Northern Victoria Region**

**Question asked by:** Ms Lovell  
**Directed to:** Attorney-General  
**Asked on:** 29 November 2017

**ANSWER:**

The Victorian Government acknowledges that honorary justices play an important voluntary role in the justice system, and provide valuable and accessible services to the community.

The Department of Justice and Regulation has implemented a targeted recruitment approach via an expression of interest process to ensure new Justices of the Peace are recruited in areas of identified or demonstrated need. This approach aims to ensure that all Victorians have appropriate access to Honorary Justices.

Proposed recruitment of JPs is currently being reviewed in conjunction with the assessment of need across Victoria. Mr Lamour's correspondence will be taken into account when assessing areas of need.

**South Eastern Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Mrs Peulich  
**Directed to:** Treasurer  
**Asked on:** 21 February 2018

**ANSWER:**

I thank the Member for her question, and I refer her to the previous answer given on this topic. I encourage her constituent to raise their issue with both the Essential Services Commission (ESC) and the Victorian Energy and Water Ombudsman if he has been unable to resolve the dispute with United Energy directly.

**Western Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Mr Finn  
**Directed to:** Minister for Roads and Road Safety  
**Asked on:** 27 March 2018

**ANSWER:**

The 2018-19 Victorian State Budget included a massive investment in the Suburban Roads Upgrade, with over \$1 billion to be spent on widening and improving safety on roads across Melbourne's northern suburbs. This is in stark contrast to the former Coalition Government that ignored the transport infrastructure needs of the northern suburbs communities during their time in office.

As part of this package of works, Sunbury Road will be widened from two lanes to four between Powlett Street and Bulla-Diggers Rest Road in Sunbury. These works are needed to support any future Bulla Bypass.

As you are aware, VicRoads has completed a planning investigation for the Bulla Bypass and has been undertaking further work to consider additional options in response to a request from the Minister for Planning, the Hon Richard Wynne MP. Investigations to finalise the land corridor needed for a new future major road link to bypass the Bulla township are continuing.

**Northern Victoria Region**

**Question asked by:** Ms Lovell  
**Directed to:** Minister for Health  
**Asked on:** 5 June 2018

**ANSWER:**

The Andrews Labor Government supports Goulburn Valley Health and through our Regional Health Service Infrastructure fund, it has received almost \$10 million to support the co-location of acute health, aged care and community health services from the Waranga Memorial Hospital on a single, central site in Rushworth.

We take the issue of occupational violence in our health services very seriously, and that is why in October 2017 the Government allocated additional funding to Goulburn Valley Health to increase security personnel by four full time equivalent positions. The health service has recruited the positions and the four full time equivalent additional security personnel are in place.

Capital funding of \$171 million has also been provided for a major redevelopment and expansion of the Goulburn Valley Health to meet the needs of the local community.

**Southern Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Mr Davis  
**Directed to:** Minister for Finance  
**Asked on:** 5 June 2018

**ANSWER:**

WorkSafe inspectors have enquired into circumstances surrounding the purported 'cessation of train movements' at Carnegie on the 4 June 2018.

Neither incident related to the construction project, and the matter was reported to the Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator.

**Western Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Mr Finn  
**Directed to:** Attorney-General  
**Asked on:** 19 June 2018

**ANSWER:**

Our equal opportunity laws protect Victorians from unfair discrimination on the basis of personal attributes like gender, race, and parental status.

Under the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*, I do not have the power to investigate alleged discrimination, nor do I have the power to refer a matter for investigation. That is for the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission, which is an independent statutory body.

**Southern Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Ms Fitzherbert  
**Directed to:** Minister for Sport  
**Asked on:** 22 June 2018

**ANSWER:**

I refer to your constituency question regarding visitation rates at State Sport Centres Trust venues for 2016-17 and 2017-18 financial years.

Visitor numbers at all venues in the 2016-17 year totalled 2.422 million which was an improvement on the previous year's 2.415 million visitors.

For the 2017-18 financial year, visitation totalled 2.104 million. I am advised that this reduction is primarily due to closure of some assets for lifecycle maintenance such as the leisure pool area which was closed for approximately 3 months and an increase in traffic congestion affecting facility access.

**Western Victoria Region**

**Question asked by:** Mr Morris  
**Directed to:** Minister for Emergency Services  
**Asked on:** 24 July 2018

**ANSWER:**

The Victorian Government greatly values the work of Country Fire Authority volunteers, and the selfless contribution they make to the safety and wellbeing of the community.

The Lucas Fire Brigade has been active since 8 December 2017, operating in a temporary facility at Delacombe while its permanent integrated station is being built.

The Brigade is currently operating as a career-only brigade as the temporary facility does not adequately support volunteers. The Brigade's 31 current career firefighters will be joined by volunteers and additional career firefighters at the new fire station facility once it is complete.

**Western Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Ms Truong  
**Directed to:** Minister for Health  
**Asked on:** 25 July 2018

**ANSWER:**

The Andrews Labor Government has delivered record funding to health services in the West. Western Health has received \$664.36 million in the 2018/19 Budget, \$65.52 more than the previous 12 months or a 10.9 per cent increase.

Funding for Western Health has increased by \$145.78 million, or 28.1 per cent since 2014/15. Alongside this new investment, 600 new jobs are being created with the construction of the new \$200 million Joan Kirner Women's and Children's Hospital — meaning more women and children in the west will get the care they need, closer to home.

The Government has also boosted funding at Werribee Mercy by 17.4 per cent or \$52.6 million this year.

We have announced a major upgrade of the Sunshine Hospital emergency department. This \$29.6 million project will create additional treatment spaces and once complete will have the capacity to treat an extra 59 000 patients every year.

At Footscray, we have set aside funding for land and we make no apology for doing the necessary work to ensure that a new hospital there will meet the needs of the community.

Significant investments are already underway, and we have released a State-wide Design, Service and Infrastructure Plan for Victoria's Health System 2017-203 which sets out priorities for how we will combine and invest in health service and infrastructure capacity to better respond to changing population needs and growth.

**Eastern Victoria Region**

**Question asked by:** Mr O'Donohue  
**Directed to:** Minister for Police  
**Asked on:** 26 July 2018

**ANSWER:**

The Mooroolbark Police Station is a 24-hour police station that provides a 24-hour counter service and a 24-hour patrol response. It continues to be open 24-hours a day, 7-days a week. The Andrews Labor Government is

continuing to provide Victoria Police with the resources they need to protect and service our community. This includes the biggest recruitment of new police in Victoria Police's history, with 3135 new police rolling out to communities.

There are already 1324 more police FTE in Victoria, then when we came to government, including 26.8 more police FTE in the Knox Police Division, which includes Mooroolbark. This is in stark contrast to the previous Liberal Government who failed to invest in one single additional police officer. In 2018, the division is also receiving an additional 12 police officers, in addition to 2 additional police delivered in 2017 as part of our investment.

The Government is also investing \$210 million in the establishment of the Police Assistance Line and Online Reporting tool. Under this new system calls or online enquiries will be triaged by a contact centre run by sworn police officers and staff. This significant investment by the Andrews Labor Government will provide an expanded level of service to the community and assist to reduce the instance of peak service demands at all police stations.

In relation to the member's comments regarding crime in the Yarra Ranges Local Government Area (LGA), the Government uses official data from the independent Crime Statistics Agency (CSA). The most recent release of statistics from the CSA for the year ending 31 March 2018, shows that the offence rate in the Yarra Ranges LGA has actually decreased by 11.2 per cent.

The Andrews Labor Government will continue to work with the Chief Commissioner to tackle the complex law and order challenges we see today and to give Victoria Police the resources, powers and capabilities they need to keep our communities safe.

### **Southern Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Mr Davis  
**Directed to:** Minister for Public Transport  
**Asked on:** 26 July 2018

#### **ANSWER:**

The Andrews Labor Government is making an historic \$30B investment in Victoria's public transport network. The Metro Tunnel, the removal of 50 of Melbourne's most dangerous and congested level crossings, more than \$1.7B upgrading lines across our regional rail network, more than \$4B in new trams, trains and buses, and more than 900 new regional and metropolitan services added over the past 4 years.

This investment is especially important following the four wasted years of the Baillieu-Napthine Governments, where the system, and our metropolitan rail system was left to stagnate.

Major works, particularly in the east and south-east of Melbourne have impacted the rail network — at times passengers have been asked to use replacement services whilst these crucial projects are undertaken. We are grateful for the public's patience and understanding during these periods of work. Passengers often comment that, whilst there is an impact now, these upgrades and improvements are essential and long overdue.

Whilst the short-term construction shuts have caused some inconvenience to passengers, the upgrade of the Dandenong lines proposed by the Napthine Government would have seen Melbourne's busiest line closed for 9 months — and would have delivered significantly less for the communities along the line, with only 4 level crossings to be removed, and only 25 high capacity trains compared to the 65 in production under the Andrews Labor Government.

Major projects in these corridors include the removal of 11 level crossings on the Dandenong lines, 5 have been removed on the Frankston line, with a further 8 to go over the next 12 months, works to upgrade power, signalling and other infrastructure ahead of the introduction of 65 new high-capacity trains from 2019.

**South Eastern Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Mrs Peulich  
**Directed to:** Minister for Police  
**Asked on:** 27 July 2018

**ANSWER:**

As I have previously advised the member, neither Narre Warren, nor Endeavour Hills Police Stations have reduced their operating hours.

What has changed under this Government is a major investment in additional police resources, underpinned by a record \$2 billion investment through the Community Safety Statement. Growth corridors such as the City of Casey are a priority for this investment. That is why 50 additional frontline officers were deployed to the Southern Metro Division 3, which includes Casey, in 2017. An additional 46 frontline police officers, including 14 family violence specialist officers, are also currently being delivered and will be fully deployed by May 2019.

The Southern Metro Division 3 has 95.17 more police FTE than under the Liberals. Additionally, we have delivered 29 new Police Custody Officers to the Division which is freeing up thousands of police hours and putting more police back on the beat.

Independent data from Victoria's Crime Statistics Agency (CSA) indicates that the Government's record investment in police and community safety is making a real difference, driving down crime by 18.4 per cent across the Casey Local Government Area (LGA) in the year ending 31 March 2018.

Furthermore, the CSA data for the Casey LGA indicates a decrease of 28.2 per cent in Property and deception offences. This was driven by a 36.2 per cent decrease in Burglary break and enter offences (from 2752 to 1755) and a 7.4 per cent decrease of Property damage offences (from 1803 to 1669).

The Government is committed to ensuring Victoria Police has the resources they need to keep the community safe.

**Western Victoria Region**

**Question asked by:** Mr Morris  
**Directed to:** Minister for Health  
**Asked on:** 7 August 2018

**ANSWER:**

Bailan District Health and Care is an incorporated registered charity owned by the Community through the Bailan Hospital Association, operating as a not for profit private hospital.

Given the important services that Bailan District Health and Care provides to the local community, my Government announced an urgent \$500 000 assistance package in August 2018 to ensure that the service will continue to operate.

The Department of Health and Human Services continues to work with the board of Bailan District Health and Care to ensure the future viability of the health service. This arrangement will allow Ballan District Health and Care to find his feet again and ensure its long-term viability.

Unlike the Opposition who cut \$1 billion from the State's healthcare budget while in office, we will never turn our backs on the hard-working rural and community health services that regional and rural Victorians depend on.

**South Eastern Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Mrs Peulich  
**Directed to:** Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change  
**Asked on:** 8 August 2018

**ANSWER:**

I have met with SEMMA on several occasions to discuss energy prices and the Andrews Labor Government's actions to mitigate rising energy costs, including government business assistance programs. The August 2017 roundtable meeting included fourteen SEMMA members, predominantly small to medium manufacturing and engineering enterprises. My Department has also followed up with individual businesses providing details on business assistance initiatives and programs.

Manufacturers in Victoria rely on gas sourced from a competitive market. This means the price is set by market drivers rather than by state or federal governments. In 2015, the export of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) contributed to an increase in the price of domestic gas, which is now being passed through to gas customers.

The government has put in place a range of measures to ease the pressure of rising gas prices and gas availability:

- advocating for national gas market rule changes and policies that will put Australian consumers and manufacturers first,
- advocating to strengthen gas export controls, beyond the Commonwealth Government's introduction of the Australian Domestic Gas Security Mechanism, and
- investing \$42.5 million for the Victorian Gas Program, to better understand future onshore gas development and promote further exploration and development of offshore gas and gas storage.

Assistance is available to manufacturers, now, to help manage energy costs. In the Energy Efficiency and Productivity Strategy, released in 2017, the government allocated \$9.8 million to help businesses cut energy costs, including the \$6.1 million Boosting Business Productivity grant program. In addition, the Victorian Energy Upgrades program provides businesses of all sizes with discounts on energy products and services to upgrade their facilities and reduce energy costs. In 2017, 20 000 businesses undertook energy efficiency upgrades through the program, and will benefit from average savings of \$4500 in 2018.

**Southern Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Ms Fitzherbert  
**Directed to:** Minister for Roads and Road Safety  
**Asked on:** 8 August 2018

**ANSWER:**

I note the strong representations from the Member for Albert Park in delivering a 24 hour truck ban on Beach Road after advocating for it strongly.

VicRoads and Victoria Police manage compliance of truck curfews.

VicRoads will continue to patrol Beach Road to improve compliance of heavy vehicles based on indicators of non-compliance and other competing priorities across the road network.

**Western Victoria Region**

**Question asked by:** Mr Purcell  
**Directed to:** Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change  
**Asked on:** 9 August 2018

**ANSWER:**

Data about Victoria's waste, including our recovery rate and the proportion that we export, is collected and published online by Sustainability Victoria here: <http://www.sustainability.vic.gov.au/Government/Victorian-Waste-data-portal>.

Victoria's recovery rate is calculated by comparing the amount of material collected for reprocessing (published in the Victorian Recycling Industry Annual Report) with the amount of material disposed of to landfill (which Environment Protection Authority Victoria collects from landfill operators). The Victorian Recycling Industry Annual Report is available here: <http://www.sustainability.vic.gov.au/Government/Victorian-Waste-data-Portal/Victorian-Recycling-Industry-Annual-Report>.

Sustainability Victoria determines the proportion of materials that are exported overseas using data obtained from the Australian Bureau of Statistics. The most recent data we have, for the 2015-16 financial year, shows that 14 per cent of all materials recovered in Victoria were exported, with approximately half of that amount going to China.

I am advised that no commingled material collected from households for recycling by any council has been disposed of to landfill as a result of recent global disruptions to recycling markets.

On 3 July 2018 I announced the Recycling Industry Strategic Plan, which sets out the Andrews Labor Government's vision for a more sustainable, resilient and efficient recycling sector. The complementary suite of actions mapped out in this plan will help Victoria respond to China's trade measures by increasing our capacity to locally recycle materials, boosting local demand for recycled products, and educating the community to recycle more effectively. For more information and to read the plan visit this website: <https://www.environment.vic.gov.au/sustainability/victorians-urged-to-keep-recycling>.

**Eastern Victoria Region**

**Question asked by:** Mr O'Donohue  
**Directed to:** Minister for Public Transport  
**Asked on:** 9 August 2018

**ANSWER:**

As you are aware, V/Line trains on the Gippsland line were replaced with coaches from 6 August to 14 August 2018, while works were undertaken to power and signalling equipment along the Cranbourne Pakenham line. These essential works will improve the safety and reliability of trains on the Gippsland line.

Prior to any maintenance works, V/Line undertakes extensive planning for coach replacement services to ensure passengers can travel where they need to as comfortably as possible. V/Line also arranged for an additional coach to operate between Pakenham and Warragul for the remainder of the disruption period to ensure all passengers could travel.

Work is now underway on the \$530 million Gippsland line upgrade, which will deliver more frequent, reliable train services for passengers in Victoria's east.



### Northern Victoria Region

**Question asked by:** Ms Lovell  
**Directed to:** Minister for Public Transport  
**Asked on:** 9 August 2018

**ANSWER:**

Major maintenance and renewal works are being undertaken on the Seymour and Shepparton lines as part of the Government's work to get Northern Victorian passengers where they need to go sooner. Around 200 V/Line workers will complete \$10 million of works to upgrade track, signalling and structures, improving reliability across both lines.

For Shepparton passengers, these works come on top of an extra \$356 million invested by the Labor Government for the Shepparton Line Upgrade, which will pave the way for nine return services every day and allow V/Line trains to travel to Shepparton for the first time.

Additional cleaning and maintenance is being undertaken on the carriages that currently operate on the Shepparton line to increase the comfort of passengers, including during the period of the line maintenance and renewal works. A delivery program for heating, ventilation and air conditioning upgrades is underway, with all N-type and Z-type carriages.

Contrast this with the announcement of only \$77 million for the Shepparton line by the Liberal/National Opposition, which won't deliver the public transport improvements the Shepparton community is calling for.

### Southern Metropolitan Region

**Question asked by:** Mr Davis  
**Directed to:** Minister for Planning  
**Asked on:** 9 August 2018

**ANSWER:**

As Victoria is experiencing unprecedented population growth, Victoria needs to encourage growth and provide housing choices to suit our changing demographics and lifestyles but also manage this in a way that protects the neighbourhoods.

In 2017, I reformed the residential zones to introduce a range of new measures to manage residential growth and protect the low scale and open character of Victoria's neighbourhoods. These measures included replacing the dwelling cap with a garden area requirement, introducing mandatory height controls and providing the ability to define neighbourhood character objectives in the Neighbourhood Residential Zone.

The dwelling cap in the Neighbourhood Residential Zone was replaced by a new mandatory garden area requirement, which strictly controls the bulk of new developments and protects the open garden character of Victoria's neighbourhoods. The minimum garden area requirement requires a percentage of the land to be provided for open garden area that is not occupied by a dwelling, driveway or area set aside for car parking. It allows for small outbuildings and unroofed outdoor areas within the garden area.

Mandatory building height controls were also introduced to protect the low scale character of Victoria's neighbourhoods. The Neighbourhood Residential Zone restricts buildings to 9 metres and 2 storeys to recognise areas of predominately single and double storey residential development.

The reformed residential zones also provide the opportunity for a council to strengthen its local neighbourhood character policies by specifying objectives directly in the residential zones.

In addition to these state-wide controls councils have the capacity to locally vary these controls where they can demonstrate more restrictive requirements are necessary to protect the character of a neighbourhood.

The reformed residential zone changes encourage good design and protect character, while providing for new housing opportunities.

**Northern Victoria Region**

**Question asked by:** Ms Lovell  
**Directed to:** Minister for Health  
**Asked on:** 21 August 2018

**ANSWER:**

This Andrews Labor Government is committed to improving health services in the Shepparton region. That is why Goulburn Valley Health will receive funding of \$201.51 million in 2018-19, \$23.1 million, or 12.9 per cent, more than in 2017-18. Funding for Goulburn Valley Health has increased by \$54.74 million, or 37.3 per cent, since 2014-15 when the Liberals were last in government. The additional funding will support Goulburn Valley Health's initiatives to improve emergency department performance.

While the previous Liberal Government failed to properly invest in our health services, including services at Goulburn Valley Health, the Andrews Labor Government's \$171 million redevelopment of Shepparton Hospital will provide the community and surrounding districts with a modern health facility that will ensure more patients receive treatment with reduced wait times.

There has been a lot of work to restore our health services after the four years of neglect by the previous government. Our record demonstrates that only Labor will invest in our hospitals and support our hard working staff so that they can continue to provide patients with the very best care possible.

**Northern Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Mr Ondarchie  
**Directed to:** Minister for Public Transport  
**Asked on:** 21 August 2018

**ANSWER:**

The 2018-19 Victorian budget provides \$60 million for more than 2000 new and upgraded car parking spaces, secure bicycle storage facilities, better lighting and CCTV cameras at train stations.

As part of this package, Epping station will receive additional commuter car parking spaces. More than 120 new spaces have already been delivered at Regent station.

This extra car parking is part of Labor's previous and ongoing commitments which are delivering approximately 8000 new and upgraded spaces at train stations across the state.

In addition, works to remove the level crossing at High Street, Reservoir will be underway later this year. As part of the project, the Level Crossing Removal Authority (LXRA) will work to deliver a new station and safer access for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists. LXRA is also undertaking further technical investigations on possible design solutions for the level crossing in Bell Street Preston, which will improve pedestrian and cycling connections in the area, and will undertake consultation prior to works beginning.

**Western Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Mr Melhem  
**Directed to:** Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change  
**Asked on:** 21 August 2018

**ANSWER:**

The Victorian Government has demonstrated its strong commitment to ensuring Victoria has reliable, affordable and low emissions electricity supply with benefits for all Victorians. Through the government's Renewable Energy Action Plan and legislated Victorian Renewable Energy Targets (VRET), the state is experiencing strong

investment in renewable energy, with associated benefits in terms of emission reductions, reduced energy costs and jobs growth.

At June 2018, the Clean Energy Regulator recorded 44 657 small-scale solar installations in the Western Metropolitan region, which together represent 156 MW or almost 12 per cent of Victoria's total small-scale solar installed capacity. The newly announced Solar Homes program will extend opportunities to more households in this region, and across Victoria, to install solar panels, batteries or solar hot water systems, and realise savings in their bills.

The VRET policy is bringing forward investment, including 928 MW of new renewable energy that will be delivered by Victoria's first renewable energy auction, and will create thousands of jobs and cut the average cost of power for Victorians by around \$30 a year for households, \$2500 a year for medium businesses and \$140 000 a year for large companies. It will also drive a 16 per cent reduction in Victoria's electricity sector greenhouse gas emissions between 2019-20 and 2034-35 and provide a powerful legacy for decades to come.

The government's Victorian Energy Upgrades program is also delivering direct benefits to households and businesses across Victoria through incentives to invest in energy efficient products and services that deliver ongoing energy bill savings. In 2017 alone, 55 000 households and 20 000 business premises undertook energy efficiency upgrades through the program. This includes strong activity in the Western Metropolitan Region, including: over 2600 households and 700 businesses in the City of Brimbank; and over 1500 households and 825 businesses in the City of Wyndham, receiving upgrades through the program in 2017. On average, households and businesses participating in the program will save \$200 and \$4500, respectively, in 2018.

### **Western Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Mr Finn  
**Directed to:** Minister for Police  
**Asked on:** 21 August 2018

#### **ANSWER:**

The Andrews Labor Government provided funding in the 2018/19 State Budget for the identification and purchase of land for the establishment of a police station in Point Cook.

Victoria Police are currently exploring the service delivery model, as well as the resourcing requirements, to ensure an appropriate site is located to meet the future policing needs of Point Cook and the surrounds.

Point Cook is currently serviced by police from across the Wyndham Police Service Area (PSA), which received an additional 27 police in the twelve months to April 2018. An additional 12 police are currently being deployed to the Wyndham PSA, with a further 22 specialist resources allocated to the broader Westgate Division.

Point Cook residents are also serviced by mobile 'Pop-up' Police Stations that are erected at local community hubs. The mobile police stations provide residents with a visible policing presence also provide increased access for the community to engage with local police

Along with these community initiatives, Victoria Police also has dedicated Community Safety Tasking Teams operating from Werribee Police Station, which are tasked to various locations across the PSA where crime hotspots are identified. A Highway Patrol unit operating from Wyndham North Police Station addresses road policing concerns across Point Cook.

Though there is still work to do, I can confirm that for the year ending 31 March 2018, the crime rate has decreased in the Wyndham LGA by 10.3 per cent. This is thanks to the hard work of Victoria Police and the Government who are committed to seeing a reduction in crime and harm across the state.

**Western Victoria Region**

**Question asked by:** Mr Morris  
**Directed to:** Minister for Planning  
**Asked on:** 21 August 2018

**ANSWER:**

On 12 April this year, Amendment C209 was gazetted into the Ballarat Planning Scheme. The amendment facilitated the Ballarat GovHub Project which will revitalise the Civic Hall site, provide space for 1000 government employees and contribute to Ballarat's economic growth by relocating 600 government jobs from Melbourne. No demolition or construction works have commenced on the site.

Development Victoria has continued to liaise with the Save Civic Hall group over the course of the project and joined Ballarat City Council and Regional Development Victoria in meeting with the group to discuss the development in May 2018. To ensure a high-quality design which respects the heritage significance of the site, Amendment C209 introduced a new planning control that requires the approval of plans consistent with a design statement by John Wardle Architects and the recording of heritage elements. The Office of the Victorian Government Architect has stated that it supports the project and considered the initial design to be thoughtfully considered.

**Western Victoria Region**

**Question asked by:** Mr Ramsay  
**Directed to:** Minister for Regional Development  
**Asked on:** 21 August 2018

**ANSWER:**

I thank the Member for his question. The Geelong Saleyard is an asset of the City of Greater Geelong and the Victorian Government is not involved in the management or the future operations at this site.

I understand The City of Greater Geelong has had extensive engagement with impacted small holding farmers and are working closely with Colac Otway Shire and G21 on options for future livestock sales in the region though access to the Colac Saleyards.

**Southern Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Mr Davis  
**Directed to:** Minister for Public Transport  
**Asked on:** 21 August 2018

**ANSWER:**

The Andrews Labor Government has negotiated a more stringent contract with Metro Trains Melbourne (MTM), which commenced on 30 November 2017. Each month, public performance targets set out in the Franchise Agreement require MTM to deliver at least 98.5 per cent of the timetable, and ensure that at least 92 per cent of services arrive at their destination no later than four minutes and 59 seconds after the timetabled arrival time.

The contract ensures that MTM is penalised for the most common service disruptions, including early departures, late arrivals, cancellations, short services, and City Loop bypasses. The new contract ensures operators are held to account to ensure a more reliable passenger experience.

The Andrews Labor Government is investing around \$30 billion in transport projects that this State needs.

**Eastern Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Ms Dunn  
**Directed to:** Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change  
**Asked on:** 22 August 2018

**ANSWER:**

I thank the Member for Eastern Metropolitan Region for her question regarding the Westerfolds Park Manor.

I am advised that Parks Victoria has actively engaged with community-based organisations as well as other entities regarding the future use of the manor. However, it has not yet secured a viable tenant. Parks Victoria continues to liaise with the City of Manningham about the manor and the role the City of Manningham may play in its future use.

I have asked Parks Victoria to undertake a condition assessment of the site to determine the value and works required to enable the viable, future use of the manor.

Parks Victoria supports future use of the manor and is committed to the strengthening of Aboriginal partnerships and connection to Country along the Yarra River.

**South Eastern Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Mrs Peulich  
**Directed to:** Minister for Multicultural Affairs  
**Asked on:** 22 August 2018

**ANSWER:**

Government has committed to working in partnership with Victoria's African communities, including through an Implementation Committee comprising community leaders, which will advise on how best to allocate and prioritise the funding for the Action Plan.

At the launch of the Action Plan in April 2018, I announced an expression of interest process for membership of the Implementation Committee.

The membership of the Implementation Committee has been finalised, with consideration being given to achieving representativeness across age, gender, ethnicity and geographically across the state.

The Implementation Committee will be brought together in September, and its first task will be to advise government on how to achieve the initial priorities including employment, engagement with education, and addressing alcohol and drug abuse.

In this regard, from the \$8.6 million allocated specifically to the implementation of the Action Plan, \$3 million has been set aside to support these three priority areas for immediate action:

- \$1 million to assist high-need Victorians of African heritage in gaining employment
- \$1.5 million to support education outcomes of young people and their communities through increased support for homework clubs and school-community liaison officers
- \$500 000 to work with communities and service providers to develop and deliver programs that respond to drug and alcohol misuse.

Victoria's African communities understand their communities' issues better than anyone, and will be central to delivering the targeted responses. The Implementation Committee, in partnership with the government, will:

- help determine where and how efforts should be focused;
- be involved in deciding what success should look like, including appropriate targeted outcomes; and
- inform decisions about the organisations that are best placed to support implementation.

In addition, beyond the funding directly attached to the Action Plan, the government is investing in a range of initiatives to support our African communities. This includes:

- three new Community Support Groups in Greater Dandenong, Melton/Brimbank and Wyndham (total of \$5.5 million committed);
- targeted employment programs with more than 450 Victorians of African heritage having been placed into employment through the Jobs Victoria Employment Network program, including 128 young people; and
- funding to bolster community groups' African youth engagement efforts (\$500 000 allocated to 13 African community organisations).

This work is already underway.

### **Western Victoria Region**

**Question asked by:** Mr Morris  
**Directed to:** Minister for Police  
**Asked on:** 22 August 2018

#### **ANSWER:**

There have been no cuts to police in Ballarat. There are more police across the Ballarat division now than there were in November 2014. As the member is aware, Victoria Police allocates resources at a divisional level to provide greater flexibility and ensure resources can be utilised within the division where they are needed the most.

Changes to the allocation to resources across the divisions have been as a result of Victoria Police assigning extra resources to the family violence unit to meet this serious challenge for the region. The division will also receive an additional 14 police and family violence specialists over the next 12 months, under this Government's commitment to recruit and deploy 3135 new police.

We have also deployed 24 new police custody officers to the Ballarat division who have so far delivered over 5000 shifts which enable general duties police to be out in the community.

Ballarat will also be home to a new Victoria Police forensic hub as part of the Andrews Labor Government's commitment to tackle the scourge of ice and other illicit drugs, as well as the new \$210 million Police Assistance Line and Online Reporting Portal, which will create around 250 new jobs in Ballarat.

The Government's record investment in police and community safety is making a real difference, driving down crime by 9.5 per cent across the state as documented by the independent Crime Statistics Agency (CSA).

I am pleased to advise that, as indicated in the most recent CSA release, there has been a 5.7 per cent reduction in the rate of offences within the Ballarat LGA. This is testament to the relentless efforts of local police to keep the community of Ballarat safe.

### **Eastern Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Mr Leane  
**Directed to:** Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change  
**Asked on:** 22 August 2018

#### **ANSWER:**

I thank the Member for Eastern Metropolitan Region for his question regarding the Westerfolds Park Manor.

Parks Victoria has actively engaged with community based organisations as well as other entities regarding the future use of the manor. However, it has not yet secured a viable tenant. Parks Victoria continues to liaise with the City of Manningham about the manor and the role the City of Manningham may play in its future use.

Importantly, I have asked Parks Victoria to undertake a condition assessment of the site to determine the value and works required to enable the viable, future use of the manor.

**Western Victoria Region**

**Question asked by:** Mr Ramsay  
**Directed to:** Minister for Emergency Services  
**Asked on:** 22 August 2018

**ANSWER:**

The Victorian Government greatly values the work of the Barwon Heads Country Fire Authority (CFA) Brigade, and its selfless contributions to the safety and wellbeing of the community.

I understand that CFA will continue to work with the Barwon Heads CFA Brigade to progress their upgrade.

**Southern Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Mr Davis  
**Directed to:** Minister for Public Transport  
**Asked on:** 22 August 2018

**ANSWER:**

For reasons of privacy, I am unable to get into the specific concerns of Mr Papapavlou.

In addition to having project staff on 24-hour call, the Level Crossing Removal Authority has a contact centre which operates 24/7, where residents can raise construction-related issues through their 1800 number and email.

The project team assures me that they have made every effort to address concerns and issues raised by residents, traders and other stakeholders, in relation to the construction of the Caulfield to Dandenong Level Crossing Removal Project. This includes a process of assessing damage claims, as well as fixing damage to fences and property.

**Western Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Mr Finn  
**Directed to:** Minister for Police  
**Asked on:** 23 August 2018

**ANSWER:**

The Andrews Labor Government is committed to giving Victoria Police the powers and resources it needs to crack down on organised crime and protect the community from gang violence.

The Government has introduced specific and targeted stand-alone offences for aggravated home invasions. Home invasion now has a maximum penalty of 25 years and aggravated home invasion will attract a statutory minimum non-parole period of three years.

Bail laws have also been tightened, with a presumption against bail applying to aggravated burglary and home invasion unless exceptional circumstances exist. These laws reflect the seriousness of these crimes and as the community expects, the penalties are significant to reflect the significant impact they have on victims.

The Victoria Police Gang Crime Squad focuses on specific aspects of emerging and active criminal gangs, organised and network groups. The squad proactively targets organised crime offenders and high risk offenders who are managing and/or mentoring gang members for organised crime purposes.

Victoria Police continues to work closely with the National Anti-Gangs Squad to respond to incidents relating to organised crime at a national level. Members of the National Anti-Gangs Squad are embedded within the Victoria Police Gang Crime Squad. These members are deployed to Victorian regions to assist with operations involving high level offenders linked to organised criminal groups, with a focus on disruption, prevention and arrest.

Police are making significant arrests and driving down the occurrence of these offences. The latest crime statistics show the rate of residential aggravated burglary down 16.4 per cent and the rate of aggravated robbery down 7.0 per cent.

### Northern Metropolitan Region

**Question asked by:** Mr Elasmar  
**Directed to:** Minister for Multicultural Affairs  
**Asked on:** 23 August 2018

**ANSWER:**

The Victorian Government encourages all Victorians to embrace cultural diversity. The Capacity Building and Participation Program is one of the many ways we continue our efforts to ensure that every Victorian can contribute and belong.

The Capacity Building and Participation Program supports multicultural communities — both new and established — to participate in all aspects of Victorian life. The success of the previous funding round has resulted in a significant increase in demand and we received over 500 applications.

Applications have undergone a multi-stage assessment and review process that has included the Victorian Multicultural Commission and other relevant departmental representatives. I expect to be able to announce the outcomes very shortly.

### Eastern Victoria Region

**Question asked by:** Ms Bath  
**Directed to:** Minister for Corrections  
**Asked on:** 23 August 2018

**ANSWER:**

I thank Ms Bath for her question. The young man to whom she refers should be acknowledged for his efforts to do something positive while in prison.

I can assure Ms Bath that there are a range of remand-specific programs available and actively being delivered at the Metropolitan Remand Centre. Remand prisoners are not eligible for offence-specific treatment programs due to their legal status; rather, the primary focus of remand programs is on skill development, distress management and harm minimisation.

During June, July and August alone this year, there were 65 remand programs delivered at the Metropolitan Remand Centre, with a total of 523 prisoners attending these programs.

### Western Victoria Region

**Question asked by:** Mr Ramsay  
**Directed to:** Minister for Planning  
**Asked on:** 23 August 2018

**ANSWER:**

The Moolap Coastal Strategic Framework Plan, known as the Moolap Plan, is in the final stages of preparation. The Moolap Plan will set the strategic land use direction for the Moolap Peninsula, including the former saltworks and aluminium smelter at Point Henry, for the next 20-30 years.

Implementation of the Moolap Plan will include detailed design and approvals to enable land use change and the management of areas to be conserved. The protection of the environmentally significant wetlands in the former saltworks area is another important aspect of this plan.

Finalisation of the Moolap Plan is later than initially expected as we needed to get the planning right, and I requested further information from Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning on the implications of separation distances between existing industry and any proposed residential development.

There are many interested stakeholders, and we look forward to shortly advising them of the finalisation and release of the Moolap Plan and working with stakeholders on its implementation.



**Eastern Victoria Region**

**Question asked by:** Ms Shing  
**Directed to:** Minister for Water  
**Asked on:** 23 August 2018

**ANSWER:**

The Victorian Government understands that some farmers and irrigators are doing it tough with dry conditions limiting pasture growth. Parts of East and Central Gippsland that support dryland agriculture are some of the areas hardest hit and are currently experiencing drought conditions with a second failed winter/spring crop season.

The Victorian Government recognises that the next four to six weeks are critical for farmers in terms of rainfall and how spring crops will fair. The government has announced a \$5 million funding package to provide additional support and ease the financial burden on Victorian farmers experiencing drought conditions.

The \$5 million funding package will ensure farmers and irrigation, communities the support they need. The funding package includes:

- \$1.2 million to support a new Drought Employment Program to give drought-affected workers in the Wellington and East Gippsland shires the opportunity to earn an income off-farm by working with local Catchment Management Authorities;
- \$500 000 for a Community Resilience Program, working with local councils to provide social events and community infrastructure;
- \$1.4 million for Drought Infrastructure Grants, which includes grants to help farmers face the cost of establishing areas to contain stock;
- \$1 million for technical and business support for farmers to manage financial decisions on farm, including animal health, feed budgeting and land management;
- \$400 000 for the Look Over the Farm Gate program to better support the mental health of farmers through community awareness workshops and events; and
- \$500 000 for a drought co-ordinator in Gippsland, and additional coordination effort in the northern irrigation areas and north-west Victoria.

In addition, the government has also increased funding to Rural Financial Counselling Service by \$400 000 and has invested \$1.8 million as part of the Plan2Farm program to irrigators in the Goulburn Murray Irrigation District to help with financial and 'land' management decisions.

**Western Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Ms Truong  
**Directed to:** Minister for Roads and Road Safety  
**Asked on:** 23 August 2018

**ANSWER:**

All previous investigations have found that the noise levels experienced by residents near More Park in Ardeer are below the intervention thresholds outlined in VicRoads' noise policy. VicRoads is reviewing the circumstances for this resident and has offered to conduct further noise monitoring.

VicRoads will also install signs on the M80 Ring Road to discourage the use of engine brakes and has offered to meet this resident to discuss the matter in detail.

**Eastern Victoria Region**

**Question asked by:** Ms Shing  
**Directed to:** Minister for Roads and Road Safety  
**Asked on:** 24 August 2018

**ANSWER:**

The Andrews Labor Government is committed to the safety of all road users, particularly those most vulnerable in our community and I appreciate the Member's advocacy for this issue.

I have been advised that following concerns raised by both the Tipping Foundation and New Wave Gippsland, VicRoads has developed a proposal for a pedestrian refuge to assist pedestrians crossing the road to access the bus stop. This also includes a new indented bus bay and shelter, and connecting Disability Discrimination Act compliant pathways to the existing footpath network.

These works are now being considered for funding.

**Eastern Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Ms Dunn  
**Directed to:** Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change  
**Asked on:** 24 August 2018

**ANSWER:**

Improvement programs continue across the park including replacement of signage, entry gates and bollards, major plumbing works, repairs along the Main Yarra trail and carpark as well as vegetation maintenance. Over the last 12 months, Parks Victoria has repaired and replaced fencing, conducted ongoing weed programs and removed rubbish at Yarra Flats Park.

Parks Victoria works closely with Melbourne Water regarding the management of billabongs and wetlands along the Yarra River and continues to work with the City of Banyule regarding the Artists Trail. Parks Victoria also continues to work with the Friends of Riverland Conservation Society to undertake valuable environmental works such as the recent weed spraying, preparation and planting at Annulus billabong.

**Northern Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Ms Patten  
**Directed to:** Minister for Public Transport  
**Asked on:** 4 September 2018

**ANSWER:**

I thank the Member for Northern Metropolitan for her question, and advise that, as this matter falls within the responsibility of the Minister for Roads and Road Safety, her question should be directed to that Minister.

**Eastern Victoria Region**

**Question asked by:** Mr Mulino  
**Directed to:** Minister for Small Business  
**Asked on:** 4 September 2018

**ANSWER:**

The Andrews Labor Government continues to ensure that small businesses are provided with the necessary support services and information, to help them excel and grow. The tailored support includes as mentioned the Small Business Bus, business workshops and mentoring services.

In August and September, the Small Business Bus visited Pakenham, Cranbourne, Hastings and Mornington. In October, there will be two business workshops being held in the Mornington Library and five small business mentoring clinics during September to November in the Mornington Peninsula and Pakenham areas.

I encourage small businesses in the eastern Victoria region to visit [fousiness.vie.gov.au](http://fousiness.vie.gov.au) to book into a variety of workshops covering and access a wide range of other resources.

### Northern Metropolitan Region

**Question asked by:** Mr Ondarchie  
**Directed to:** Minister for Police  
**Asked on:** 4 September 2018

#### ANSWER:

I can assure the Member and his constituents that the Andrews Labor Government is committed to tackling crime in Victoria. The Government is funding an additional 3135 frontline police over the next five years. This is the biggest boost to frontline police in Victoria's history and is crucial to dealing with the growing demand on police services.

As part of this deployment an additional 61 police have been allocated to the Diamond Creek Police division which services Epping and the wider electorate of Northern Metropolitan Region. This includes 39 specialist unit resources, including 2 highway patrol specialists and 17 crime investigation unit specialists. This is the second wave of police resources to hit the beat since the deployment of additional frontline police funded under the 2016-17 State Budget.

The Andrews Labor Government has also introduced tough new laws to address hoon and reckless driving. As part of the package of reforms under the *Transport Legislation Amendment (Road Safety, Rail and other matters) Act 2017*, Victoria Police has been given new tools and powers to stop reckless drivers in their tracks. This includes the power to immediately impound vehicles, as well as the permanent forfeiture of vehicles for repeat offenders.

In relation to Buch Avenue in Epping, I am advised that Local Police and the divisional Highway Patrol are continuing to work collaboratively with the City of Whittlesea to combat crime in Epping. Over the past two months, joint operations have targeted anti-social and criminal behaviour in this area. These operations have successfully led to the identification of various persons of interest and valuable intelligence gathering. Police investigations in this area involve the deployment of specialist crime units and remain ongoing.

The City of Whittlesea has also used local laws to tow derelict vehicles away from the Epping area.

The resealing of the road remains a matter for the City of Whittlesea and VicRoads, however I can assure the member that Victoria Police will continue to patrol this area and conduct enforcement as required.

### Eastern Victoria Region

**Question asked by:** Ms Bath  
**Directed to:** Minister for Agriculture  
**Asked on:** 5 September 2018

#### ANSWER:

In response to feedback from farmers I wrote to the Hon. David Littleproud MP on Thursday 6 September to highlight the complexity of Farm Household Allowance applications and slow processing times for applications. I urged him to look at further ways of simplifying the application process. I also provided an update on seasonal conditions in Victoria and the current areas of most concern.

On 12 September 2018, the Victorian Government announced an additional \$5 million in funding as the next stage in supporting farmers affected by drought conditions in Central and East Gippsland. This funding will also support farmers in Northern and North West Victoria where 2018 rainfall has been significantly below average.

The increased support includes:

- \$1.4 million for Drought Infrastructure Grants in Central and East Gippsland
- \$1.2 million for a Drought Employment Program in Central and East Gippsland through the Catchment Management Authorities
- \$1 million for increased technical and decision-making support for farmers in Central and East Gippsland, Northern and North West Victoria
- \$0.4 million for the Look Over the Farm Gate program in Central and East Gippsland and Northern Victoria
- \$0.5 million for a drought coordinator in Gippsland and Drought Preparedness Coordinators in Northern and North West Victoria
- \$0.5 million for a Community Resilience Program in Central and East Gippsland.

The Victorian Government has also made \$400 000 available to boost the Victorian Rural Financial Counselling Service (RFCS) in response to increasing demand for the service arising from the dry seasonal conditions.

In relation to The Honourable Member's question regarding the approval of permits to control wildlife, I am informed that my department has raised this matter with the Department for Environment, Land, Water and Planning.

### Western Victoria Region

**Question asked by:** Mr Morris  
**Directed to:** Premier  
**Asked on:** 5 September 2018

**ANSWER:**

As its title suggests, the authority responsible for the City of Ballarat's CBD Parking Action Plan — updated as the Smarter Parking Plan — is the City of Ballarat.

In its original Action Plan — part of a broader master strategy for the CBD — the City of Ballarat committed to 4367 free car parks.

In seeking to assist the City of Ballarat in reaching its target, we provided it with \$2 million, contributing an extra 1000 new car parks in Ballarat's city centre.

The proposal of instigating new paid parking in residential streets was raised, moved and seconded by Cr Amy Johnson and Cr Samantha McIntosh.

As they initiated this proposal, I suggest raising this issue with them may be of benefit.

As ever, we will continue to encourage the City of Ballarat to listen and respond to the needs of local people.

As previously advised, if you have any further questions relating to the City of Ballarat's plan for parking, I suggest you direct them towards the City of Ballarat.

**Eastern Victoria Region**

**Question asked by:** Mr O'Donohue  
**Directed to:** Minister for Police  
**Asked on:** 6 September 2018

**ANSWER:**

In May this year, Victoria Police commenced the deployment of an additional 825 police to areas across the state 2018-19. This boost in resources is funded as part of the Government's \$2 billion investment in 3135 additional police under the Community Safety Statement 2017.

As part of this deployment, an additional 46 police have been allocated to the Dandenong Police Division which services the City of Casey, recognising the need for greater police presence in this area. This includes 40 specialist unit resources, including 14 family violence specialists. This is the second wave of police resources to hit the beat in the City of Casey since the deployment of an additional 50 frontline police to the Dandenong Division in the twelve months to April 2018.

The Government's record investment in police and community safety is making a real difference, driving down the crime rate in the City of Casey by 21.6 per cent, as documented by the independent Crime Statistics Agency. You can find out more about the decreases in crime by visiting [www.crimestatistics.vic.gov.au](http://www.crimestatistics.vic.gov.au).

**Western Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Ms Truong  
**Directed to:** Minister for Health  
**Asked on:** 6 September 2018

**ANSWER:**

The Victorian Government is committed to building a new and improved hospital for Melbourne's western suburbs. The location of a new Footscray Hospital will be sited to best meet the needs of the community for generations to come and to leverage this unique opportunity to further transform the Inner West.

The process for determining the location of a new hospital takes into consideration access to public transport for patients, visitors, staff and volunteers. Opportunity will also exist for the hospital to provide education and research partnerships.

These factors form part of the Government's extensive and detailed site selection process which includes the following criteria:

- Location, including the ability of the site to meet the service needs of the community, proximity to complementary services and opportunities for urban renewal;
- Site features, such as size, topography and ability to accommodate a functional design;
- Accessibility for patients, staff and support services, including proximity to public transport and major arterial roads for emergency vehicles and logistics;
- Planning, property and acquisition considerations, such as zoning and planning overlays; and
- Resilience of the site to major natural and other risks.

**Eastern Victoria Region**

**Question asked by:** Ms Bath  
**Directed to:** Premier  
**Asked on:** 6 September 2018

**ANSWER:**

The inclusion of these personal details was inadvertent. The Parliament has passed a motion allowing the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly to remove documents that don't relate to Ventnor, which he will do.

But let's be clear — the only thing 'shocking' about the Ventnor documents is the potentially criminal behaviour of Liberal Leader Matthew Guy.

Matthew Guy paid out \$3.5 million of taxpayers' money to save his job.

Mr Guy still hasn't been able to provide a single document that supports his version of events.

**Northern Victoria Region**

**Question asked by:** Ms Lovell  
**Directed to:** Minister for Aboriginal Affairs  
**Asked on:** 6 September 2018

**ANSWER:**

I thank the honourable member for Northern Victoria for raising this matter.

In response to the Adjournment Debate matter raised by the same member on 24 July 2018, I advised I had met with representatives of the Bangerang Cultural Centre (Centre) on 10 July 2018 to discuss how the Victorian Government may be able to support the Centre.

The Victorian Government has since invited the Centre to apply for funding under the Aboriginal Community Infrastructure Program (ACIP). This program provides funding to eligible Aboriginal organisations to build new infrastructure or develop existing infrastructure to meet the emerging needs of Aboriginal Victorians. Applications for funding in 2018/19 closed on 10 September 2018 and are currently being assessed.

I further advised the member on 24 July 2018 that representatives from the Centre met with Senator the Hon Nigel Scullion, Commonwealth Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and the Hon Damian Drum MP, Member for Murray, on 1 June 2018 to discuss financial assistance.

Following this meeting, support from the Commonwealth was offered to assist the Centre in preparing an application to the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet for up to \$50 000 to develop a business plan.

I am also advised that the Centre can access \$1 million held in trust by the Commonwealth Department of Communications and the Arts to purchase a property as well as \$12 000 annually from the interest earned on these funds to support its operations.

**Western Victoria Region**

**Question asked by:** Mr Morris  
**Directed to:** Minister for Police  
**Asked on:** 6 September 2018

**ANSWER:**

The Government makes no apologies for delivering major reforms to our bail laws to put the safety of the community first.

Our record investment in Victoria Police, including 3135 extra police officers, and tougher bail and sentencing laws means more people are in prison and bail is now harder to get for those accused of serious crimes. This means there are more people in custody — in police cells, prisons and youth justice centres — than ever before.

Victoria Police, the Courts and the Department of Justice and Regulation are working together to manage the demands on Victoria's custodial settings resulting from the Andrews' Government's strengthening of the criminal justice system.

Ballarat police station has 10 cells that can be used to hold persons overnight. The cells are used to detain remand prisoners, suspects who have been arrested or charged and are awaiting a bail hearing, and prisoners waiting to appear before a court for a sentencing hearing or to give evidence in another matter.

To maintain the safety of all persons within the police station and cells, Victoria Police follows relevant legislation and operational policies regarding the holding and management of detainees. It is standard practice, as it was under previous governments, for prisoners to be transported between police stations to manage capacity and facilitate the movement of prisoners to court and prison.

Victoria Police work with Corrections Victoria to manage the daily movement of prisoners across the criminal justice system, with the support of external contractors G4S to physically transport the prisoners.

On a daily basis, Victoria Police requests G4S to transport prisoners across the criminal justice system, including between police stations to manage police cell capacity.

This approach ensures that police time is spent completing operational duties to protect the community rather than transporting prisoners across Victoria.

In 2015-16, the Government also invested \$148.6 million to roll out 400 Police Custody Officers (PCOs). Ballarat Police Station is one of 22 stations where PCOs and PCO Supervisors undertake management and custodial duties within police cells, allowing police to be deployed back to frontline duties. PCOs can also transport detainees between the police station and the court.

Twenty PCOs and four PCO Supervisors are currently employed at Ballarat police station. Under the previous Liberal National government, before the Andrews Labor Government's investment in PCOs, these positions would have been performed by Victoria Police officers, diverting valuable police resources away from keeping our communities safe.

### **Eastern Victoria Region**

**Question asked by:** Ms Bath  
**Directed to:** Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change  
**Asked on:** 7 September 2018

#### **ANSWER:**

I thank the Member for her question regarding the C37 track. The works described were undertaken by Forest Fire Management Victoria in preparation for a planned burn of approximately 1400 hectares. This burn is to the north west of Toongabbie and its aim is to reduce bushfire risk to this community.

The planned burn is scheduled in the next two to three years. In the meantime, DELWP will include this area in its planning processes to be nominated as designated firewood collection area. This approach provides resources for the local community, without compromising the fuel management operation.

This area will be assessed for environmental and other values. Based on the outcomes of this assessment, the area will be gazetted as available for firewood collection and the community will, be advised when it is open for firewood collection.

**Northern Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Dr Ratnam  
**Directed to:** Minister for Planning  
**Asked on:** 7 September 2018

**ANSWER:**

I thank the Member for her question regarding 2-16 Nicholas Street, Broadmeadows.

This site was declared surplus in December 2015 and in April 2017 a First-Right-of-Refusal process was undertaken. This gave all government departments and agencies, including Hume City Council, the opportunity to express an interest in obtaining the site. No offers were received for the site.

The site was nominated in May 2017 as one of six sites to be included in the Inclusionary Housing Pilot. The pilot is part of the government's 'Homes for Victorian's' strategy to improve affordability and help vulnerable Victorian's access a safe, stable and secure home.

The pilot will deliver new social, affordable and private housing. The key purpose of the pilot is to deliver much needed new social housing dwellings. Social housing is housing that is provided to eligible households with rents subsidised to ensure that households pay an affordable rent.

The pilot is an innovative way to utilise surplus government land to deliver a minimum of 100 new social housing dwellings, as well as provide opportunities for affordable housing across six sites in areas close to services, jobs and transport.

Proposals for the development and sale of the six pilot sites have being sought through an Expressions of Interest (EOI) process that commenced on 8 August 2018.

Until the finalised bids are received in 2019, the number and make up of dwelling types, including the number of social housing dwellings, is yet to be decided. This will be identified through rigorous evaluation of bidders to the EOI.

The site is zoned within the Hume Planning Scheme as a Residential Growth Zone. It has a total area of 2.16ha, 1.41 ha of which is to be sold through the EOI process with 0.75ha dedicated to a public neighbourhood park.

The new planning controls for the Broadmeadows site, which were introduced on 5 July 2018, require a public park linking to the adjoining Medowlink Linear Reserve that is visible and accessible from within and around the site.

Selected bidders will be required to partner with registered community housing providers to deliver housing on each site. An initial short list of bidders, pre-qualified for suitability and commercial viability, will be announced in October 2018.

**South Eastern Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Mr Rich-Phillips  
**Directed to:** Minister for Planning  
**Asked on:** 7 September 2018

**ANSWER:**

I appreciate Mrs Peulich's concern for Dingley Village and the proposal detailed in Amendment C151 to the Kingston Planning Scheme, which proposes to rezone the former Kingswood golf course and seeks approval of an associated planning permit for subdivision and development of the land. I note her request for clarification of statements made in the Planning for Golf in Victoria Discussion Paper.



The Discussion Paper from 2017 to which Mrs Peulich refers does not represent an official government position on whether rezoning of the Kingswood site is supported. It is merely a statement on the number of courses that are either being redeveloped or facing potential redevelopment proposals.

The government has yet to reach a final decision on whether to support the proposed amendment as it would pre-empt the planning process. My final decision will be made following the fair and orderly planning scheme amendment process that is currently ongoing.

I direct Mrs Peulich to the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* for the relevant timeframes prescribed for the planning scheme amendment process.

Under the Act, planning scheme amendments require an exhibition time of no less than one month. The planning authority, Kingston City Council, allowed for an extended exhibition period for Amendment C151 to give the community sufficient opportunity to participate in the consultation process. The exhibition period closed on 30 August 2018, and I am advised that over 7500 submissions were received.

The council will consider all of the submissions, and if any submissions cannot be resolved, it may request that I appoint an independent planning panel to review the amendment and hear from submitters. On receipt of the panel's report, the council can decide whether to adopt the amendment or not. If the amendment is adopted, the council can then submit it to me and I will make the decision about whether to approve the amendment based on its merits. The council recently requested additional time to consider the large volume of submissions.

### Western Metropolitan Region

**Question asked by:** Mr Finn  
**Directed to:** Premier  
**Asked on:** 7 September 2018

#### ANSWER:

The Victorian Labor Government acknowledges Melbourne's rapid population growth and knows that a lot of these growth pressures are borne by Melbourne's west.

We understand that a coherent and collaborative plan which involves all levels of government is vital for ensuring that jobs, services and infrastructure meet the demand from this growth. By contrast, the former Coalition Government did nothing for four years — no major road projects, no investment in maintenance — traffic backed up across the state while the Liberals sat on their hands.

Our government's metropolitan-wide plan — Plan Melbourne 2017-2050 and the western-region specific The West Growth Corridor Plan will continue to guide the delivery of housing, services, jobs and transport infrastructure for Melbourne's west.

These plans have helped guide investment in vital services and infrastructure that will benefit the west. These investments include \$836 million state-wide for new and upgraded schools, including schools throughout the west, \$ 1.8 billion for upgrades to eight key arterial roads and funding through the Victorian Budget 2018/19 to acquire land for a new hospital in Footscray. While the Liberals talk about infrastructure, we're building it.

We are also continuing with the delivery of the \$6.7 billion West Gate Tunnel, the removal of nine dangerous and congested level crossings in the west, strengthening the role of key employment and activity centres such as Sunshine and undertaking detailed structure planning for new communities in the western growth corridor.

These initiatives will reduce congestion, improve community infrastructure and provide the vital services that ensure that people who live in the west have access to the jobs and services they deserve, and support the west as a fantastic place to visit, work and live in.

**Southern Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Mr Davis  
**Directed to:** Minister for Public Transport  
**Asked on:** 7 September 2018

**ANSWER:**

I'm advised that the Member for Oakleigh has fully complied with all public interest disclosure requirements and no conflict of interest issues have ever existed in relation to the removal of level crossings within his electorate.

**Northern Victoria Region**

**Question asked by:** Ms Lovell  
**Directed to:** Minister for Families and Children  
**Asked on:** 18 September 2018

**ANSWER:**

The Andrews Labor Government is backing our neighbourhood houses as we want to ensure more Victorians have access to the vital employment, training and volunteering services that many neighbourhood houses provide in local communities across Victoria.

Through the Neighbourhood House Coordination Program, the Labor Government provides recurrent funding of over \$30.11 million per annum to support 375 neighbourhood houses, 16 neighbourhood house networks and the peak body, Neighbourhood Houses Victoria.

And as part of the 2018/19 Budget we saw record new funding of \$21.8 million to expand the neighbourhood house network and support staff, volunteers and the local communities they serve.

In one Budget, the Labor Government has invested almost eight times what the former Liberal Government spent during their entire term in support of neighbourhood houses.

Our record investment has funded additional coordination hours to houses who previously received less than 25 coordination hours per week. A total of 162 neighbourhood houses have had their coordination hours increased. This is the biggest ever funding boost in neighbourhood house coordination hours in Victoria's history.

We have also increased funding to neighbourhood house networks to deliver 4800 additional hours of support to neighbourhood houses. These networks provide valuable advice and support to neighbourhood houses to improve access to key services and activities.

Further, neighbourhood houses funded through the Neighbourhood House Coordination Program are now eligible to apply for non-recurrent grants of up to \$30 000 to support small scale infrastructure modifications to improve accessibility, as well as grants of up to \$10 000 for minor works, equipment and ICT upgrades.

We are also providing coordination hours funding to a number of new or existing unfunded neighbourhood houses. The application process for new or unfunded neighbourhood houses closed on 31 July and I look forward to announcing the newly funded neighbourhood houses soon.

While the Andrews Labor Government is continuing to back neighbourhood houses, the Federal Liberal Government have slashed the national occasional childcare program and put funding at risk.

This devastating cut has left more than 50 neighbourhood houses that deliver the occasional care program across Victoria stripped of more than \$800 000 funding from July 1 this year.

This includes cutting the Morrell Street Occasional Care program at Mooropna Education & Activity Centre which is now \$15 900 worse off per year as well as the Bridie Knight Child Care program at Numurkah

Community Learning Centre which has lost \$13 250 funding per year due to the Federal Liberals cuts. I note that neither the member nor any of her Victorian Liberal Party colleagues have questioned this funding cut.

The member would be familiar with the impact callous cuts like these do have on local communities like Shepparton when as a Minister in the former Liberal government in 2011, the member cut the popular Take a Break Occasional Care program which led to many services ceasing to operate, others increasing fees or offering reduced program hours.

I appreciate the work of the South Shepparton Community Centre and other neighbourhood houses in the Greater Shepparton region. The South Shepparton Community Centre receives approximately \$94 000 of annual funding to enable 30 hours per week of coordination support.

The Centre is located in a community facility owned and managed by the Director of Housing. A property and condition report found that the building does not meet accessibility requirements and the neighbourhood house should relocate.

My department is currently finalising an alternative new venue in South Shepparton. In the meantime the South Shepparton Community Centre's current lease with the Director of Housing will stay in place until the alternative site is confirmed and secure.

The Labor Government's unprecedented investment in neighbourhood houses will ensure neighbourhood houses like the South Shepparton Community Centre can continue to provide the vital employment, training and volunteering services that Victorians need.

### **Western Metropolitan Region**

**Question asked by:** Mr Finn  
**Directed to:** Minister for Local Government  
**Asked on:** 19 September 2018

#### **ANSWER:**

I am advised that Cr Khan has been convicted and fined by the Sunshine Magistrates' Court.

I would note that the Local Government Inspectorate has previously stated that the charges were not disqualifying offences under the *Local Government Act 1989*.

The Local Government Inspectorate is responsible for investigating and prosecuting alleged breaches of the Act and any questions in this regard should be directed to the Inspectorate.