

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY
Thursday, 27 September 2018
ESTIMATES COMMITTEE A

Chair:

Mr P.A. Treloar

Members:

Hon. A. Koutsantonis

Hon. A. Piccolo

Mr D. Cregan

Mr S. Murray

Mr S.J.R. Patterson

Ms J.M. Stinson

The committee met at 09:00

Estimates Vote

**ADMINISTERED ITEMS FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF TREASURY AND FINANCE,
\$1,748,226,000**

Minister:

Hon. S.K. Knoll, Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Local Government, Minister for Planning.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr J. Oliver, Chief Executive, HomeStart Finance.

Mr D. De Luca, General Manager, Corporate Services, Renewal SA.

Mr M. Philippou, Director, Commercial and Industrial, Renewal SA.

Mr D. Redden, Project Director, Lot Fourteen, Renewal SA.

The CHAIR: Thank you all. Good morning Estimates Committee A. We begin this morning with the portfolio of HomeStart Finance. The minister appearing is the Minister for Planning. Estimate of payments is administered items for the Department of Treasury and Finance.

The estimates committees are a relatively informal procedure and, as such, there is no need to stand to ask or answer questions. I understand that the minister and the lead speaker for the opposition have agreed an approximate time for the consideration of proposed payments, which will facilitate a change of departmental officers. Can the minister and lead speaker for the opposition confirm that the timetable for today's proceedings, as previously distributed, is accurate?

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Chair, just to clarify, I thought the session this morning was for both HomeStart and Urban Renewal; is that correct?

The CHAIR: I have HomeStart at 9 o'clock until 9.30, and then we have to close that at 9.30, I am being advised, to refer it to committee B. We will then, at 9.30, go to the Urban Renewal Authority.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: I did not have that information, Mr Chairman.

The CHAIR: That is the information I have.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Is there a reason that it has been done in that order?

The CHAIR: I have been informed that committee B is considering that Treasury line as well today, so we need to finish—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: At the same time?

The CHAIR: No. That is why we need to finish this one at 9.30. That is the plan. HomeStart Finance will be at 9 o'clock until 9.30. I will continue. If the minister undertakes to supply information at a later date, it must be submitted to the committee secretary by no later than Friday 26 October 2018. Changes to committee membership will be notified as they occur. Members should ensure the Chair is provided with a complete request to be discharged form. I can advise that the following members have requested to be discharged from committee A: the members for King, MacKillop, Newland, Ramsay and Giles. They have been replaced by the members for Davenport, Morphett, Kavel, Light and Badcoe.

There will be a flexible approach to giving the call for asking questions based on about three questions per member, alternating each side; but, as members know, that is not necessarily as it runs. A member who is not part of the committee may ask a question at the discretion of the Chair. Questions must be based on lines of expenditure in the budget papers and must be identifiable or referenced. Members unable to complete their questions during the proceedings may submit them as questions on notice for inclusion in the assembly *Notice Paper*.

There is no formal facility for the tabling of documents before the committee; however, documents can be supplied to the Chair for distribution to the committee. The incorporation of material in *Hansard* is permitted on the same basis as applies in the house; that is, it is purely statistical and limited to one page in length. All questions are to be directed to the minister, not the minister's advisers. The minister may refer questions to advisers for a response. The committee's examinations will be broadcast in the same manner as sittings of the house are broadcast, through the IPTV system within Parliament House and via the web stream link to the internet.

I will now proceed to open the following line for examination, as referred to before: the estimate of payments relating to Administered Items for the Department of Treasury and Finance. I declare the proposed payments open for examination and call on the minister to make a brief opening statement if he wishes and introduce his advisers.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I would like to introduce, on my right, John Oliver, the Chief Executive of HomeStart Finance. To my left is acting chief executive, Damian De Luca, and to his left is Mike Philippou, who is the director of commercial and industrial.

The CHAIR: Does the lead speaker for the opposition wish to make any opening statement?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Yes, sir.

The CHAIR: The member for West Torrens has the call.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Given public events, I think it would be best if we moved directly to the Urban Renewal Authority, with the agreement of the minister, of course.

The CHAIR: My understanding is that we need to consider HomeStart Finance and have that finished by 9.30am so that it can be considered—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: What I am saying is that we consider it now and close it and then move straight to the Urban Renewal Authority for the remainder of the time.

The CHAIR: If that is agreeable?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: It is fine by me.

The CHAIR: It is fine by the minister. In that instance, member for West Torrens, if you have a question on HomeStart Finance, we can deal with that now.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: No, we are happy for you to close the line and go straight to—

The CHAIR: Okay, so you have no questions?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: We have several but, given public events, I think it is important that we move on.

The CHAIR: Alright. There being no questions at this particular time, I declare the examination of the proposed payments for the portfolio of HomeStart Finance to be completed and that the estimates of payments for the Administered Items for the Department of Treasury and Finance to be referred to committee B as that is complete.

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING, TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE, \$467,086,000

**ADMINISTERED ITEMS FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING, TRANSPORT AND
INFRASTRUCTURE, \$9,353,000**

**EQUITY CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING, TRANSPORT AND
INFRASTRUCTURE, \$276,848,000**

Minister:

Hon. S.K. Knoll, Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Local Government, Minister for Planning.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr D. De Luca, Acting Chief Executive, Renewal SA.

Mr M. Philippou, Director, Commercial and Industrial, Renewal SA.

Mr D. Redden, Project Director, Lot Fourteen, Renewal SA.

The CHAIR: The next portfolio is the portfolio of the Urban Renewal Authority and also planning. The minister appearing is the Minister for Planning. I declare the proposed payments open for examination and, once again, I call on the minister to make an opening statement, if he wishes, and introduce the advisers, who have changed.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The only update to the advisers is that now to my right is Dan Redden, who is the Project Director for Lot Fourteen for Renewal SA.

The CHAIR: Minister, do you wish to make an opening statement?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: No.

The CHAIR: Does the lead speaker for the opposition wish to make an opening statement?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Yes, sir. I find it stunning that the minister is not making an opening statement and explaining to the committee the whereabouts of his chief executive, Mr John Hanlon, the general manager of people, place and management, Georgina Vasilevski—

Mr CREGAN: Point of order: these remarks are in the nature of opinion and argument. I refer to rule—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: It is an opening statement.

The CHAIR: I have given the member for West Torrens the opportunity to make an opening statement, which will be brief. We will then move to questions.

Mr CREGAN: Very well.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Thank you for your generosity, sir. Georgina Vasilevski is not here. Mr Mark Devine is not here. There have been media reports that Mr Hanlon has been placed on forced leave. There have been no public remarks by the minister on the status of his general manager of people, place and management within Renewal SA. The only one of the four

executive team members from Renewal SA who is here today is Mr Damian De Luca, and I thank him for his attendance.

The opposition have grave concerns about what is occurring at Renewal SA, and the minister has made no public remarks whatsoever, even though the parliament affords him the privilege to say and explain to the people of South Australia what has occurred at that agency. It forces the opposition to ask questions to get some transparency into this agency because we have grave concerns now that three out of four of the executive team are not here to answer questions and advise the minister to give information to the house and the committee. The questions we have are: what would they have said if they were here? Who placed them on leave and how? Were they placed on leave so as not to give evidence to the committee?

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, if I can just interrupt, questions from the committee always go to the minister, anyway, and the minister has the opportunity—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Yes, thank you for interrupting my opening statement, sir. I know the government is very anxious about this and that is probably why there are some bureaucrats who are not here. The opposition wants to get to the bottom of this, and we will be asking questions throughout the time allocated to find out exactly where Mr Hanlon is, what his status is, what is the status of Renewal SA, and what is the status and the involvement of the minister and the minister's office with what is occurring. The people of South Australia have a right to know where these people are and why they have not presented here at estimates today. With that, I will go to my first question.

The CHAIR: The member for West Torrens has the call and will refer to a budget line, please.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I refer to Budget Paper 5, Budget Measures Statement, page 180. Where is your chief executive, Mr John Hanlon?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The chief executive is on leave.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Who placed him on leave?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The chief executive is on leave.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Is it voluntary leave or did you direct him to go on leave?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The chief executive is on leave.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Where is Ms Georgina Vasilevski?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The public statement that I made a couple of days ago in relation to this says that the chief executive is currently on leave, and one other executive is on leave. We have placed Damian De Luca as the acting chief executive in Mr Hanlon's stead. To date, they are all of the changes that have been made to the executive arrangements.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Why is Mr Hanlon on leave?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Mr Hanlon is on leave.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Did he write to you and seek permission to go on leave?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Mr Hanlon is on leave.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Is Renewal SA the subject of a search warrant?

Mr CREGAN: Point of order: this is clearly not related to a budget line—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: It certainly is.

Mr CREGAN: —that is open for examination.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: If you want to cover up, cover up, or you can answer the questions. Is Renewal SA the subject of a search warrant?

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, I will deal with the point of order. I will allow the questions at this point.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Chair, the public statement that I have made is everything that is appropriate to say about the matter at this point. That is all that we will be saying about the matter.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Have computers and telephones been seized?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: We have said everything that we can say publicly and are prepared to say publicly about this matter.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Is the minister's office subject to a search warrant?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I think the answer is exactly the same, member for West Torrens.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Has the minister's home been the subject of a search warrant?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Again, Mr Chairman, my answer is the same.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Have any Urban Renewal Authority public sector employees' homes been the subject of a search warrant?

Mr CREGAN: Point of order: these matters are clearly traversing ground that is well outside the scope of examination of line items.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: How do you know?

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, you are asking the minister—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Sir, this agency borrows hundreds of millions of dollars. Three out of the four executives are not present today. The minister is giving one-word answers about their whereabouts. We want to know where they are, why they are not here and why the minister is not answering questions.

The CHAIR: Well, in fact, member for West Torrens, the minister has answered the questions.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Really?

The CHAIR: He has answered the questions.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Where are they? On leave.

The CHAIR: He said they are on leave, yes.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: They are on leave. Three out of the four are on leave and that is completely normal, is it, before estimates?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I understand the member for West Torrens is getting quite agitated in relation to this issue. We are taking the appropriate approach to take.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: How and when was the minister informed that Mr Hanlon was on leave?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: We have made public statements in relation to what we are prepared to say and what is appropriate to say at this point in time. We have made those statements publicly.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: When was the last time you spoke to your chief executive, Mr John Hanlon?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Tuesday.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Tuesday. What was the nature of that conversation?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I am not here to reveal private conversations that I have had with public servants. Again, the public statements made in relation to this matter are the ones that are appropriate for us to make at this point in time.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Does the minister have confidence in his chief executive, Mr John Hanlon?

Mr CREGAN: Point of order: clearly not referable to any current budget item and I—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Cover up all you like.

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, there is a point of order. Member for Kavel.

Mr CREGAN: I repeat: this is clearly a question that is not directed at any budget item open before us today.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: The chief executive is not here.

Mr CREGAN: That is not germane to any budget item.

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, the relevant minister is to appear in front of the budgets committee.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: With all due respect, Mr Chair, are you actually telling us that three out of the four executives of Renewal SA are on leave? There are media reports of these people being forced to leave their offices, and now we are being told that the opposition should not even ask any questions about it.

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, what I am saying to you is that the minister is appearing and the minister brings with him those advisers he feels are necessary.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Where is Mr Mark Devine?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Mr Chair, I am happy to answer the previous question.

The CHAIR: The minister has the call.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The answer is that Damian De Luca is the acting chief executive, and, yes, I have every confidence in his ability to do the job.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Do you have confidence in Mr John Hanlon?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Look, I have made public statements in relation to the fact that Mr Hanlon is on leave. At this time, that is the appropriate thing for us to say.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Will Mr John Hanlon return from leave and take up his role as Chief Executive of Renewal SA?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I think that I have said everything that I can say publicly in relation to that.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Has Renewal SA been subject to a law enforcement search warrant?

Mr CREGAN: Point of order: you previously—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: The government just does not want to answer the questions.

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, there is a point of order.

Mr CREGAN: You previously ruled in relation to this matter that whatever external examination may or may not be ongoing, and I have no knowledge in relation to that matter, is clearly not referable to the budget item that is open before us today.

The CHAIR: Member for Kavel, in my view it could be determined that this is an operating matter. In such a case, it is relevant to the budget papers.

Mr CREGAN: If that be the case, Mr Chairman, I ask that you direct the member for West Torrens to bring the question to a head. Which budget item does he say this relates to?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: It is page 181 of the Budget Measures Statement, operating efficiencies. Are the three executives on leave on leave with pay?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Yes.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Are the three executives on leave subject to an investigation by an integrity agency?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The statement I made is that the chief executive is on leave and that one other executive is on leave. That is all that is appropriate for us to say.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Can I just say how unfair that is on the three executives who are on leave. If Mr Mark Devine, who is not here, is on personal leave unrelated to the matters that involve the chief executive and the minister will not clarify and separate him from that, I think it is deeply unfair. I ask him again: is Mr Mark Devine on personal leave or is he on forced leave?

Mr CREGAN: Point of order: I asked that it be heard—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Why is the government trying to hide this?

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, I am dealing with a point of order. Member for Kavel.

Mr CREGAN: I refer to standing order 97. In putting any such question, the question that the member for West Torrens has—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: He is just stonewalling. Three of the four executives are not here and he is trying to cover it up.

The CHAIR: Order, member for West Torrens! I am dealing with the point of order.

Mr CREGAN: A member may not offer argument or opinion. It is clear enough, I say that there has been substantial argument and now additional opinion—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: This agency procures hundreds of millions of dollars of taxpayers' money and the chief executive has gone missing.

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens! Member for Kavel, I thank you for the point of order. We have had this discussion in this committee previously this week already. It relates to the opportunities for committee members to ask questions of the minister, not to make statements or provide commentary. I remind the member for West Torrens of that and uphold the point of order.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Is Mr Mark Devine on personal leave?

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, the minister is dealing with the previous question. Minister.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Sorry, can you repeat the previous question?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Is Mr Mark Devine on personal leave, or is he on the same type of leave as Mr John Hanlon?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Mr Devine is on leave.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Have ICAC raided Renewal SA offices?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: That is a question that the member knows I cannot answer.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Yes, you can; this is privilege. This is the parliament. You can say whatever you like, and the people of South Australia deserve an answer. Have law enforcement officers entered a government building and seized documents, computers, files and mobile phones?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: That is not an appropriate question for me to answer.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: It is not an appropriate question for you? You are their minister. If police or law enforcement officers attend a government building, raiding an office using search warrants, do you think it is not the business of this parliament to know?

Mr CREGAN: Point of order: these are plainly matters that ought to be ventilated in the parliament, not in an estimates hearing.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: This is the parliament. Look around.

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, just a moment. This is a committee of the parliament. The member for West Torrens is correct on that: this is the parliament. Having said that, the minister can respond to the questions asked in whatever way he sees fit. Minister.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: And I have answered that question in the way I see fit.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Mr Chair, I have to say that these are non-answers from the minister, without even making a statement to the house on the status of three public servants in an agency that they lead. This is what the Renewal SA website says:

Our people exemplify ethical behaviour and professional integrity and are collaborative across the public sector and industry.

They are fine ideals. We would like to know why three out of those four officials have not bothered to turn up to the estimates to advise the minister; whether law enforcement officers have been through Renewal SA's offices; whether they have searched and seized documents, papers, mobile phones and computers; whether the minister's office has been subject to a search warrant; whether the minister's office has been searched and documents seized; whether people's homes have been raided by law enforcement officers; and what impact that has on the operations of Renewal SA.

Are there other matters being ventilated? Are there other issues that involve private contractors being debated here that we should know about? Renewal SA is the agency within government that touches the private sector the most. This agency, more than any other agency, transacts with the private sector, and three of your four executives have gone missing. You will not answer questions. We want an answer.

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, order! Your question is?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: My question is: the largest agency that deals with the private sector is under a massive cloud. Can the minister please inform the people of South Australia and the parliament what is going on?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I understand that the member for West Torrens is using his time here to create all sorts of smear and allegation. That is fine; that is his prerogative to do so.

Members interjecting:

The CHAIR: Order!

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: We are taking an appropriate and responsible course. In the course of the tirade that the member for West Torrens just gave to this estimates committee, he asked about 10 to 15 questions. If the member has a question in relation to a specific project or in relation to a specific contract or a specific tender process, then we are more than happy to answer those questions. Instead, what he has chosen to do is try to smear an entire agency without asking a specific question in relation to any of the projects that are being—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I am smearing an agency, am I? Well, if I am wrong—

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, as I have said earlier on a number of occasions, this is not the opportunity to make a statement: it is the opportunity to ask a question.

Mr PATTERSON: If I could ask a question, then, Chair.

The CHAIR: I will come to you.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: The government is trying to cover up again, are they?

Mr PATTERSON: I am asking a question.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Trying to cover up, are you? Typical.

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens!

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: My question to the minister is this: have any tender documents been seized by an integrity agency or law enforcement officers?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: If the member would like to talk about a specific project or anything of that nature, I am more than happy to answer those questions.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Have any of the tenders—

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: That is a clear question.

The CHAIR: It is a question, member for Light. I appreciate that, but the minister can answer—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Any way he wants.

The CHAIR: —how he wishes.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: And my answer is that I have made public statements that outline what is appropriate for us to talk about statement.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: You have just asked me to ask you questions about individual projects. I have then asked you a question. Are any individual projects that Renewal SA are involved in under investigation by law enforcement?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I do not find that question that specific at all, but we have said publicly what it is that is appropriate for us to say.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: So you will not give the parliament the courtesy of letting us know why three of the four of your executives are on leave?

Mr CREGAN: Point of order, Chairman: I think rule 97 clearly applies. There is an argument being made by the member—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Hide all you like.

Mr CREGAN: There is a substantial opinion being—

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, there is a point of order, and I am dealing with it.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Where are they?

Mr CREGAN: There is a substantial opinion being shared—

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, there is a point of order. I am dealing with it. The member for Kavel has a point of order.

Mr CREGAN: I refer to 97, sir, opinion and argument—perhaps the best exemplar of it so far.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Have any Renewal SA officers been charged with an offence?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: No.

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, I will just rule on that point of order.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Sorry, sir.

The CHAIR: I need to say yet again, and I have articulated it many times in this committee this week: the opportunity is for committee members to ask a question, not provide a statement or commentary, unless in the first instance. The member for Morphett has a question.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Has the minister—

The CHAIR: The member for Morphett has a question.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: —been interviewed by a law enforcement officer?

The CHAIR: The member for Morphett has a question.

Mr PATTERSON: Budget Paper 3—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Cover up all you like.

Mr PATTERSON: —page 88—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Asking questions of yourself.

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens!

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Asking questions of yourself.

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, I call you—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: This agency is in chaos.

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens!

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: This agency is in chaos, and you are asking questions, Dorothy Dixers—

The CHAIR: The member for West Torrens is called to order.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Where is the chief executive?

The CHAIR: The member for West Torrens is called to order.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: This is outrageous.

The CHAIR: And I remind the committee—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I cannot believe this. How can you possibly ask a Dixer under this cloud?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Sorry—

The CHAIR: The member for West Torrens!

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: —Mr Chairman, I think it is very clear that the member for West Torrens is trying to disrupt this committee's processes in order to have this committee suspended.

The CHAIR: I am on my feet. Member for West Torrens, I have given the member for Morphett the call. I am going over old ground, but every member of this committee, whether on the government side or the opposition side, has an opportunity in this 2½ hour period—2¼ hour period—to ask questions of the minister. And it is an opportunity for government backbenchers who otherwise would not necessarily have this opportunity to do so. The member for Morphett has the call.

Mr PATTERSON: Referring to Budget Paper 3, page 88, could you please inform the committee of the progress at Dock One at Port Adelaide and how that is progressing?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: My God! Law enforcement is turning up at Renewal SA offices, and the people of Morphett want to know that, do they?

The CHAIR: The minister has the call.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: The people of Morphett want to know that, do they?

The CHAIR: The minister has the call and will be heard in silence.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Just appalling! This is crazy.

The CHAIR: The minister has the call.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Mr Chairman, the member for West Torrens' behaviour here is clearly—

The CHAIR: Minister—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: My behaviour? Three of the four of your executives are missing—

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens!

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: —and you are questioning my behaviour?

The CHAIR: The member for West Torrens is called to order again. Minister, you will not reflect on the actions of a committee member. You will answer the question from the member for Morphett, and the members on the opposition benches will listen to the answer.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I thank the member for Morphett for his question and say that—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: He is bringing out a preprepared answer while his offices are being raided—just appalling.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I am sure if the member for West Torrens wants to make some allegations and would love to do so outside the parliamentary chamber—

The CHAIR: Minister, I ask you to return to the question, please.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: —he is welcome to do so. In relation to the Port Adelaide waterfront, there is actually quite an exciting project being undertaken there at the moment in relation to really helping to unlock some of the benefits of what is a fantastic part of our state and one that has long looked for and needed renewal. Certainly Renewal SA's work down there has been exemplary.

Down on the Port Adelaide waterfront, land release has culminated in sales of \$13.6 million for approximately 23 hectares of land to be developed over the next seven to 10 years. There are a number of developers who have chosen to take over sites down at Dock One. Specifically, Starfish Developments have taken over seven hectares of land at Dock One and the port approach south precincts.

Their aim is to deliver approximately 650 new dwellings and 1,400 new residents in what is helping to unlock \$160 million worth of private sector investment and additional public and community open space on existing inaccessible brownfield sites. I think everyone would agree that this is a prime location for urban regeneration, and the ability of Renewal SA to help unlock that has certainly been appreciated. It really does help to drive our state forward.

Cedarwoods have also purchased 14 hectares on the north-western Fletcher's Slip precincts to deliver approximately 500 new dwellings and 1,200 new residents at around \$120 million worth of private sector investment. Also, heritage buildings and sites and additional public and community open space on existing inaccessible brownfield sites will be retained. Renewal SA is an arm of government being used to unlock private sector investment in an area that a lot of people would think is a prime target for urban regeneration.

This project has prompted some significant private sector investment, including the reopening of the Port Admiral Hotel, Pirate Life brewing and the Precision Group in relation to the Port Canal Shopping Centre—several mixed-use developments on Commercial Road, which are now under construction.

It is a fantastic opportunity for us to use an agency of government to take what is otherwise a difficult site, one that has heritage elements and some significant legacy challenges attached to it, and use that arm of government that exists within and outside the Public Service as a vehicle to drive and facilitate private investment in South Australia, certainly in Adelaide. I must admit that I have not as yet visited the Port Adelaide site, but it is on the agenda in the next couple of weeks. The site is a great example of what the power of this agency can do.

In relation to Bowden and those other urban regeneration sites, Renewal SA has taken those on and been able to deal with those legacy issues that would otherwise make it not as exciting for the private sector to get involved with. Essentially, Renewal SA has become the enabler to unlock and beautify our state and to create economic drivers, which is an advantage.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I refer back to Budget Measures Statement, Budget Paper 5, page 180. When did the minister inform the board that three of his four executives were on leave with pay?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Typically, leave arrangements are not something that a minister would discuss with the board. Typically, that is not what happens. Certainly, leave that is taken is typically a matter for the agency.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: So the board have no concerns that three of their four executives are on leave, under a cloud?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Again, people taking leave is something that is not normally discussed between the board and the minister.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Sure.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The premise of the question is that there is something untoward in relation to that, and that is certainly not the assertion that I am making.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: What would Mr Hanlon have told this committee that so terrified you that he is now on leave?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I think that is a hypothetical question that is impossible for me to answer.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: What would Ms Vasilevski have told this committee that you are so terrified would be damaging to the government that you put her on leave?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I reject entirely the premise of that question. Again, I think it is a hypothetical question that is impossible for me to answer.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Maybe the minister can assist me. The parliament is not being told why three of the four executives are on leave. There are media reports of a sudden departure. There is rumour and innuendo. The best thing for this agency and the government—

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Certainly you have done your best to create rumour and innuendo.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: The best thing for this agency is for the minister to clear this up today. There are hardworking and decent people in this agency and the minister will not tell us why—

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens!

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: —three of his four executives are on leave.

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens!

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: That stinks!

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens! I have a point of order. Member for Kavel, I anticipate that the point of order is the same as before, and I uphold the point of order. It is not the opportunity to provide commentary or make a speech; it is the chance to ask a question. Member for West Torrens, ask your question.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Is there any legal reason for their absence?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Again, I have said publicly all that is appropriate for us to say. That is the statement that we are going to be making in regard to it.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: How many projects undertaken by Renewal SA is Mr John Hanlon personally in charge of—the ones that he is managing on his own as chief executive, that he has not delegated?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Member for West Torrens, I think it is quite axiomatic that a chief executive is personally involved with all the projects that that agency undertakes. That is normally the way responsibility works. Those responsibilities have been transferred to Mr Damian De Luca, and the acting chief executive is responsible for all projects.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Have any of those projects been put on hold, given Mr Hanlon's sudden departure?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: No.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Is any review being undertaken by the agency of any of those projects, given Mr Hanlon's sudden departure?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: No.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: So the sudden departure does not trigger any independent review of any of the projects in which Mr Hanlon was involvement?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I reject the assertion that there was a sudden departure. Mr Hanlon is on leave.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: It was planned leave, then?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: No, that has not triggered any—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: My God!

The CHAIR: Order! The minister has the call.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: It was not planned leave, so—

The CHAIR: The member for Light is called to order. The minister has the call.

The Hon. A. Piccolo interjecting:

The CHAIR: Member for Light, the rules of debate hold true even though this is a committee. You are not to interject. The minister has the call.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I think that member for Light is just upset that the member for West Torrens has come and essentially stolen his platform.

The CHAIR: We will come back to the question, please, minister.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Over the last four years, how many times has Mr Hanlon travelled overseas?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I think the budget line that is open today relates to the last financial year. I am happy to take that question on notice.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: How many times have all four executives travelled over the last four years? Will you take that on notice as well?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Again, I think the member for West Torrens does not understand how budget estimates work. We are actually talking here about the 2018-19 budget. I am also happy to take on notice questions in relation to 2017-18. I will also point out to the member for West Torrens that proactive disclosure arrangements are in place to the extent that those do not provide answers in relation to travel that has been undertaken by the executive team at Renewal SA. I am happy to take that on notice.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: How long will be Mr De Luca be acting chief executive?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: For as long as I ask him to do it.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Will you begin a process to procure a new chief executive, or will you leave the agency with an acting chief executive like you left DPTI for six months with an acting chief executive?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Mr De Luca, who I actually think—apart from the fact that the member for West Torrens would love to denigrate senior public servants within my agencies—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: No, I think he is highly qualified.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Then I think you will accept the fact that Mr De Luca is appropriate to act as the chief executive for as long as I see fit.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: So the minister sees no problem in having a chief executive on indefinite leave and an acting chief executive acting indefinitely as acting, rather than taking the role up permanently?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I reject the fact that anything is indefinite.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: So Mr Hanlon will be returning to his role?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Damian De Luca is the acting chief executive. I have asked him to—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Minister, people watching this would be thinking: why are you being so difficult? Why are you not just giving us the answers that we need?

Mr CREGAN: Point of order: clearly 97.

The CHAIR: Point of order, member for Kavel.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: They will be thinking that there is something wrong, something you are hiding—

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: —something you do not want said in this estimate committee—

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: —something you did not want those three executives to tell us.

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, I call you to order for the second time.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: What is it you do not want them to tell us?

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens!

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: What are you hiding, minister?

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, I am on my feet. It seems to be your intention to disrupt this committee.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: No, sir, I want answers.

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, I am on my feet and I am going to ask you to take direction from the Chair. This is a parliamentary debate, and the rules of debate and civility and decorum will come into play.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Well, sir—

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, I have not finished. There is a point of order from the member for Kavel. The member for Kavel.

Mr CREGAN: Standing order 97, sir.

The CHAIR: I uphold the point of order.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Sir—

The CHAIR: You are providing commentary, member for West Torrens—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Because we are not getting answers, sir. We are getting one-word answers, sir.

The CHAIR: —which you have done all—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: We are getting one-word answers, sir. The opposition deserves to know—

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, do not argue with the Chair.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: We deserve to know.

The CHAIR: You are called to order, member for West Torrens.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: We deserve to know. Minister, the people of South Australia deserve to know what has happened at this agency, what is the future of this agency, who its chief executive will be going forward, what happened to its former chief executive, why they are on leave. We deserve answers. We deserve to know.

The CHAIR: Thank you, member for West Torrens. The minister will answer this question.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Why won't you tell us?

The CHAIR: Member for Torrens, I am going to speak. The minister has the call; he will respond to that most recent question. We will then move on to another budget line.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Are you going to close this line?

The CHAIR: No. We will then move on to another budget line in the related portfolio. Minister.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Again, I think that it is the intention of some within this committee to try to disrupt the proceedings of this committee and to do so, again, to smear and to create a level of innuendo that the government and I certainly will not be engaging in.

Ms Stinson interjecting:

The CHAIR: Order!

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I think that the South Australian people expect their ministers to act in a responsible and appropriate way. I think that the people of South Australia expect their ministers to ensure that appropriate arrangements are put in place. The member for West Torrens has made the assertion in one of his many diatribes this morning that Mr De Luca is a highly competent and credentialed public servant. I would agree with that.

The Hon. A. Koutsantonis interjecting:

The CHAIR: Order!

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I think the arrangements that we have put in place are appropriate. There is no change to the projects that Renewal SA is undertaking in taking things going forward. I think that Damian De Luca, as the acting chief executive, is going to do an exemplary job. I am more than happy to have confidence, and to state that I have confidence, in this agency performing all the tasks that it has been asked to.

My experience over my time as the minister in charge of this agency is that it is an organisation that is well run, an organisation that is responsive to the government's agenda and it is also an agency that does fulfil its remit as a driver of economic growth and an unlocking of real urban change within our metropolitan precincts. Damian De Luca has been part of that for the past number of years. He steps into an acting chief executive role with an extremely good understanding of how this organisation works, and I have every confidence that the agency will continue to move forward and do exactly what it has been doing up until now.

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Who will be acting in the other three positions?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: No other acting arrangements have been put in place in relation to those.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: So Mr De Luca will be acting alone. Previously, Mr Hanlon was the chief executive and had three executives working with him, and now Mr De Luca can do the job on his own without any assistance.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I reject the assertion that Mr De Luca will be doing the job on his own without any assistance. There is an entire agency there.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Your executive team had four people on it: John Hanlon, who was the chief executive; Georgina Vasilevski, who is the general manager of people, place and management; Mr Mark Devine, who is the general manager of project delivery; and Mr Damian De Luca, who was general manager, corporate services. You have made Mr De Luca acting chief executive. I do not know the status of Mr Devine, I do not know the status of Ms Vasilevski—

The CHAIR: And your question is?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I am getting to it, sir. I do not know the status of Mr Hanlon.

The CHAIR: I beg your pardon?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I do not know the status of the other three.

The CHAIR: The question is?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: The question is: given that the minister has placed Mr De Luca in the acting position of Mr Hanlon's, who is acting as General Manager, People, Place and Management, who is acting as General Manager of Project Delivery and who is acting as General Manager, Corporate Services?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Quite clearly, given that Mr De Luca is now the acting chief executive, we are going to have to put in place alternative acting arrangements for Mr De Luca's previous position, and that is going to happen in due course, but no other changes to acting arrangements have been put in place at this time.

What I would also point out is that there are temporary arrangements that are put in place within an agency any time somebody takes leave. That is normal and happens any time somebody goes on leave for whatever reason, and those things are happening as normal within the agency.

Certainly, having now asked Mr De Luca to act in an acting chief executive capacity, he is going to have to backfill his role. That is something that is going to be worked through in due course. In relation to the other activities, I have every confidence that the agency is fulfilling those functions.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Has the minister or anyone in his office met with anyone from Crown law regarding the absence of Mr Hanlon and Ms Vasilevski?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I have said everything publicly that is appropriate for us to say.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Has the minister engaged private counsel?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I have said publicly what is appropriate for me to say. Again, in asking these questions, I think there is a desire to create an insinuation around the conduct of now anybody the member for West Torrens thinks I may have ever spoken to. The answer here is that we have said publicly what is appropriate to say. It is business as usual at Renewal SA and—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: You are kidding! Business as usual?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Yes.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: So three of your executives are out the door, on leave, you will not tell us why and it is business as usual.

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, you are providing commentary—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Business as usual? Really?

The CHAIR: The member for West Torrens is called to order. You are providing commentary again. The minister has the call.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The insinuation here is that Renewal SA is an agency that does not have the capability to undertake its project. If the member for West Torrens wants to make that assertion then I invite him to make it. My experience with this agency has been that it has a strong depth of talent, witnessed not only by the acting chief executive sitting here but by the two men sitting to my right and outer left. This is an agency that has strong people involved throughout it. This is an agency that, for the projects I have visited that I have inquired into and looked at, has a team of people who have very strong capabilities in order to undertake what it needs to.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: That is an interesting statement by the minister, Mr Chairman, because I am now going to ask him as a result of that statement if everything he has just said is true, why are Mr Hanlon and Ms Vasilevski on indefinite leave?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I reject the fact that they are on indefinite leave.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Why are they on leave?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: We have said everything that is publicly appropriate to say but, more than that, people do take leave and—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: The minister is implying to the committee—let's be very clear about this—

The CHAIR: And—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: No, Chair, this is important. The minister is implying to the committee—

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: It is also another question.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: —that there is nothing going on here and that these two executives have just taken leave. That is what the minister has just told this committee. This is a committee of the parliament and this parliament deserves accurate information. When the minister says that there is nothing going on here and they have just taken leave—they have not been directed to take leave; they have just taken leave.

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, you quite rightly pointed out that this is a committee of the parliament and, as such, the committee will take directions from the Chair. You have just made yet another statement. Member for West Torrens, can you ask a question, please?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: He is just upset that he is sitting over there, Mr Chair, that is all.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: That is true.

The CHAIR: Dare I suggest, member for West Torrens, that some of the questions are becoming repetitious.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: No, sir, they are not.

The CHAIR: As are the answers.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: When you ask a question and the minister says, 'I have already answered that,' or, 'I have made a public statement,' it is enough to infuriate anyone.

The CHAIR: Repetition is against standing orders. Do you have a new question, member for West Torrens?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Has Mr Hanlon or Ms Vasilevski sought assistance from the Crown for legal counsel?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Again, I reject that question creating an insinuation.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: No, it is not; it is a clear question—

The CHAIR: The member for Light is called to order.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Hold on, it is taxpayers' money—

The CHAIR: Member for Light, you do not have the call.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: If the member for West Torrens wants to understand the Crown law's books, then I invite him to ask those questions of the Attorney-General when that budget line is open.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Minister, will you tell us if these two officials will return in their roles?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: At the moment, they are on leave. At the point at which they are no longer on leave, I am more than happy to make that statement.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Will the minister and his office, and the offices of Renewal SA, cooperate with any investigation that is being undertaken?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I reject that question as a hypothetical and again reiterate the fact that—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: That implies there is no investigation.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Again, I make no assertion about anything. I understand the questioning is designed to create—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Well, then, why is it hypothetical?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The question is designed to create an insinuation. The statement that we have made publicly is the statement that is appropriate for us to make publicly, and that is what we will be saying on the matter.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Will the minister make available all relevant cabinet documents to any integrity agency that seeks them in relation to any investigation relating to Mr Hanlon and Ms Vasilevski?

Mr CREGAN: Point of order, Mr Chairman.

The CHAIR: Member for Torrens, I am dealing with—

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: And the member for West Torrens asks this question.

The CHAIR: Minister, I am dealing with the point of order from the member for Kavel.

Mr CREGAN: The member for West Torrens has been given considerable latitude to traverse a wide range of matters that, to my mind, do not bear directly on a budget line item. It certainly would assist me greatly if the budget line item could be identified.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: It is just appalling. Transparency and openness—so, if we ask questions about missing chief executives, somehow we are out of order?

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, order!

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: So it is okay for the minister to front up to this committee with three of his executives missing, not answering any questions about their whereabouts and why they are on leave, whether there is an investigation into his agency—

The CHAIR: The member for West Torrens is called to order.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: —whether computers have been seized—

The CHAIR: The member for West Torrens is called to order.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: —and offices raided, and you think it is inappropriate for us to ask questions.

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Unbelievable!

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, I do not like getting on my feet. I should not have to get on my feet in an estimates committee.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: No, you should not, sir. He should be answering these questions.

The CHAIR: No, I should not have to, but the behaviour exhibited in this committee has brought me to my feet for the third time. I am dealing with the point of order. Member for Kavel.

Mr CREGAN: Sir, I return to the point of order. There are questions that can be asked directly in relation to each budget line item, and that would assist other members of the committee greatly. It would also be in order to take that approach. I ask that the member for West Torrens direct his questions to budget line items.

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, I am going to speak before I call for further questions. Given that we shut off the previous line of questioning early, we have now spent 40 minutes on this line of questioning. I have no intention of shutting down this committee. The member for Kavel is quite right: the opportunity now, in the remaining 25 minutes, is to explore what is a very big budget line.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Yes, it is, sir. It is a very large budget line, a budget line so large, sir, that executives are missing.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Can I have the opportunity to actually answer the member's previous question?

The CHAIR: I am not actually finished yet, minister. The other thing I will say is that many of the questions, and many of the answers, understandably are becoming repetitious, and repetition is against standing orders. I strongly suggest that the opportunity is now for any committee members to ask questions on relevant budget lines.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: On the position of general manager, project delivery, my office has just received an anonymous call to say that Mr Devine is on planned leave with his family in New Zealand.

The CHAIR: So this relates to a budget line?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Yes, it does, sir. It is to make sure that Mr Mark Devine is in no way—

The CHAIR: Which budget line?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: —associated or smeared in any way by what is occurring in Renewal SA and that he is not the subject, to my knowledge, of any integrity agency, which I would have thought the minister would have cleared up initially to protect Mr Devine's reputation. From what I understand, Mr Devine and Mr De Luca are high-quality public servants who should not be tarred with the same brush as others.

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, your question is?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: My question is: why will the minister not just tell us what is going on in his agency?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: To answer that question, first off, no, I do not think it is inappropriate for the member for West Torrens ask questions, but I think it is appropriate for the government to give appropriate answers. If the member for West Torrens wants to ask questions about access to cabinet documents, he had the opportunity to ask the Premier that when that budget line was open last—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: We did not know he had stood down chief executives then.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: In relation to your last question about smearing the name of senior public servants within Renewal SA, that is certainly not something that the government has engaged in. If the member for West Torrens, who in my view is the one attempting to create a level of smear and innuendo, wants to reflect on his own behaviour, that is up to him. I have not made any statement other than to say that John Hanlon is on leave. There is another executive who is on leave.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Who is the other executive on leave?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I have made what is appropriate—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Why will you not tell us? Do you see the ridiculousness of what you just said to the house?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: No.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: You just told the committee that there is another executive on leave, but you will not name them.

Mr CREGAN: Point of order: clearly, 97.

The CHAIR: Yes, I uphold the point of order.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I thought you were going to be open and transparent.

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: This is ridiculous now, sir.

The CHAIR: No, look, member for West Torrens—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: This is ridiculous. He has mentioned that an executive is on leave but will not tell us their name. Why?

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, you are continually defying the Chair—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Oh, this is just appalling, sir.

The CHAIR: You are defying the Chair. I suspended this—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: No, sir, the minister is defying the parliament.

The CHAIR: I suspended this committee—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: He is defying the parliament.

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: The parliament deserves better than this.

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, I am talking. The Chair is speaking. I suspended this committee on Monday because of the behaviour exhibited. I do not want to suspend this committee again. I remind all committee members that the rules of parliamentary debate apply in this committee, although it is more relaxed and informal for the most part, but we should not ride that. The opportunity is for members to ask questions. The opportunity is for the minister to answer as he sees fit. It may not necessarily be the answer that committee members want to hear, and they can make of the answer what they will, but we are chewing up valuable time on repetitious questions and repetitious answers.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: My last question is this then, sir—

The CHAIR: Your last question, member for West Torrens.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: —before I hand over to the member for Light: can the minister please remind the committee of his public statements on this matter?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Sorry? My public statements on this matter?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Yes, you continually refer to your public statements on the matter. Can you please give the committee the courtesy of those public statements?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I have said that the chief executive is on leave. I have said that another executive is on leave and I have said that Mr Damian De Luca is acting chief executive. I have also stated that the people on leave are being paid.

The CHAIR: The member for Light has the call.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: I refer to Budget Paper 5, under Urban Renewal Authority, page 181, and operating efficiencies. This budget measure explains that significant cuts will be made, identified 'through a bottom up review of asset management plans', etc. and 'reduced employee related expenditure through a review of organisational structure and resourcing requirements'. Is the planned leave of the chief executive and other executives part of this review to change the structure of the Urban Renewal Authority?

The CHAIR: So your question is to the minister?

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Yes.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: No.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: No, it is not? I also refer to the minister's previous answer to this committee. He indicated that, again, in this provision, it is quite regular for people to take leave and people to be put in acting positions, which is a common occurrence, according to the minister, which is probably true. Is it regular then for a minister to announce that a member of his staff, in this case the CEO, has gone on leave? How often do ministers announce that their CEO is on leave in a public statement?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Well—

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Why did you find it necessary to make a public statement when your senior executives are going on leave? How often do you do that?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: To the extent that my senior executive team for this agency goes on leave, this is the first time that I have made a statement in relation to that.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Can you recall another minister making those statements?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I think that is a matter for other ministers.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: So your practice will be that every time your CEO or a general manager goes on leave you will make a public statement of their leave? So when an acting CEO goes on leave you will make a public statement? You probably will not.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: No, I made the statement that was appropriate for us to say in relation to this issue.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: This issue? So what is this issue? My question is through you, Mr Chairman.

The CHAIR: Through me to the minister.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Yes, that is correct. Mr Chairman, the minister said 'this issue'. What is this issue?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The issue that the acting chief executive and another executive are on leave.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: So that is an issue for you?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I reject the insinuation that 'issue' somehow has a negative connotation.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Mr Chair, I would appreciate the minister—

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: It is a fact. It is a situation.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: The minister needs to answer questions—

The CHAIR: No, member for Light; the minister has the call.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Yes, but he is not answering the question.

The CHAIR: You are not to interrupt, member for Light. The minister has the call. You have asked a question—

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: No, but he is avoiding—

The CHAIR: Do not argue with me, member for Light.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Well, he is not answering the question.

The CHAIR: You have asked the question. The minister has the call to answer it in whatever way he sees fit.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Not with a statement.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The member attempts to create an insinuation by the use of the word 'issue', and I reject that insinuation.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Point of order: the minister is implying improper motives for my question.

The CHAIR: No, I do not accept that. Minister, could you respond to the question asked please?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Can the member repeat the question?

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: The question is: what is the issue for you for this matter? Earlier in evidence, the minister indicated quite clearly that it is quite a regular practice for people to take leave and people to be put in acting positions.

Mr CREGAN: What is the budget line?

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: I have already stated it, if you listened—Budget Paper 5, Urban Renewal Authority, page 181.

The CHAIR: Which is operational matters.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: That is right, operational matters. The question is: what is the issue for you that you had to make a public statement?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Sorry, can you repeat the question?

The CHAIR: Could you repeat that question please, for me.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: In your previous answer, when I asked why a public statement was made, you said 'this issue'. I would not have thought that a CEO taking leave is an issue. It is quite a normal practice, as you indicated by your earlier answers. What is the issue for you that you had to make a public statement?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I think the use of the word 'issue' has been taken out of context by the member for Light. What I mean when I say 'issue' is fact or situation.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: No issue here.

The CHAIR: That is a comment, member for Light. Could you ask a question, please.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Just to clarify, the minister's evidence to this committee in parliament is that there is no issue with the CEO's leave. It is very important, Mr Chairman. This is a committee of the parliament.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: It is also very important for the member for Light not to verbal my answer.

The CHAIR: The question seems to be about the use of the word 'issue', which can mean many things to many people. If you could be a little bit more specific—

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: I will be very specific, Mr Chairman. Is it the minister's evidence to this committee today that the fact that the CEO is on leave would not be a matter which would need to be brought to this parliament?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I confirm that the chief executive is currently on leave is a fact.

The CHAIR: And, as a result of that response, has been brought to the parliament, and as a result of your questions, opposition questions.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: No. My question was this, and I will clarify it again. The minister said there is no issue with the CEO taking leave, the implication being it is just regular, ordinary leave. If that is the case, is the minister's evidence to this committee, then, that there will be no further statements to this parliament regarding the CEO's leave?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I think that is a hypothetical situation.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: No, it is not a hypothetical, not at all. It is or it is not.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: You are talking about something that may or may not happen into the future. That is, by definition, hypothetical.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: No, it is based on your answer.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I do not know everything that I plan to do over the remaining years of my life, member for Light, and I have not mapped them out with a degree of certainty and regularity that you would require of me.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Mr Chairman, I was not asking about his life, or his personal life either. What I was asking the minister was about the CEO's leave—quite a specific question, quite clear.

The CHAIR: And the responsibility—

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: So, to answer the question, member for Light, we have made a statement in relation to the chief executive's leave. At a point in time, at which it is appropriate for us to make a further statement, we will make it.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: What would be the cost to the taxpayers of this indefinite leave of the executives?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Quite clearly, for that period of leave the cost is yet to be determined, but it would exist within the normal agency arrangements and inside the normal contractual arrangements.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: In that case, it is either rec leave, sick leave, family leave. What is the contractual arrangement you are referring to?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The contract between me and the chief executive.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: I understand that. Which part of the contract provides for indefinite leave?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: That is not what I said. There are provisions in the contract around leave and those parts of the contract are being complied with.

The CHAIR: The member for Morphett has a question.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: He needs some time to regroup.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: No, I do not, I am fine.

Mr PATTERSON: I will give him that time. I refer to the same page, Budget Paper 5, page 181. Could the minister update the committee on the progress of Lot Fourteen, the old Royal Adelaide Hospital site?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I can. I note that this budget line is open here as it relates to the Renewal SA agency. I also state that I have delegated my authority for oversight in relation to this project to the Premier. That happened some time ago, and he certainly feels that this is a project that requires both him and a cross agency approach to look after it. Given the scope, the vision and the ambition that we have for that site, I think he is the most appropriate person to look after it. I think he has been doing a fantastic job in relation to that.

Lot Fourteen is a place where we are starting to see a lot of real work happen. We have seen the first stages of the demolition undertaken, and we are also beginning to see the refurbishment and redevelopment of a number of the heritage buildings. I think there are seven heritage buildings that we are going to keep on that site. As the Premier announced only a couple of days ago, a number of businesses have already started to move in, and we project that there are going to be over a thousand people working on the site next year. I think that is very welcome news for the businesses in and around the East End.

The old Royal Adelaide Hospital site was first slated for closure back in 2007. In 2014, things started to build, and over the past couple of years we have seen the progressive movement of people away from the East End corner of the city to the West End as they work inside the hospital. As I understand it, at its peak, the hospital will have had somewhere around 7,000 to 8,000 people who potentially would have worked in and around that site. The closure of that site has created significant issues for businesses and traders around the East End.

I think it is a real missed opportunity of the former government to get their act together more quickly in relation to that project. It is why the Premier has been extremely keen to move as quickly as possible, facilitated and helped by Renewal SA, who, since having taken control of what is now called Lot Fourteen, have really moved at great pace to reactivate the site. To date, as I said, we have seen some tenants starting to move into the refurbished Eleanor Harrauld and Margaret Graham

buildings, and we will see more and more businesses move into those areas over the coming months and years.

Essentially, the vision we have for that site is to create an innovation and creation neighbourhood to really help drive high-value jobs and industries. The vision we have is to create a hub, to create a cluster and ecosystem where we can marry smart science technology, information technology systems and people with creative elements and with graduates to create an ecosystem that is going to—

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Point of order: I do not think the minister is allowed to use all this time. The minister needs to provide a concise answer, rather than fill up the time. His answers to my questions were very precise, one-word answers—

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I was getting told off before for giving too brief an answer and now I am getting told off for giving too expansive an answer.

The CHAIR: Order!

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Again, this whole 'meaning of life' answer to this question is just trying to fill up time.

The CHAIR: Order, member for Light! I will make a ruling on the point of order, which I think was relevance.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Yes, thank you.

The CHAIR: As I understand, the minister is very close to winding up his answer. Can I also remind the opposition that at some point before 11.15am you will need to read the omnibus questions.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: 11.15am?

The CHAIR: My apologies—sometime today. Just keep that in mind.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: I will have time to do it later.

The CHAIR: Minister, you are winding up your answer.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Sure. I think that is exactly what is going on. What has really been exciting down at Lot Fourteen is the advent of Adelaide University getting involved at that site with their machine learning and robotics graduates. As we shift, the real competitive advantage for helping to drive business going forward is going to be talent retention and knowledge retention.

The ecosystem we are creating down at Lot Fourteen is a fantastic way for us to be able to partner those who are creating those skills in the universities and the students themselves with the businesses who want to take advantage of that. The more opportunities that we have to create those linkages, the more quickly we can develop our defence industry, cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, multimedia creative industries and a whole host of areas where those high-value jobs of the present and the future are being created. We can help to keep our young people in South Australia, as they are keen to work in those industries.

The CHAIR: The member for Light has the call.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: I refer to Budget Paper 5, page 181, regarding the Urban Renewal Authority. The Chair has quite correctly drawn my attention to operating efficiencies. In an earlier answer, the minister mentioned that he has not previously had the need to make any announcement about CEO leave. He has not made any public statements regarding CEO leave. Did the minister make a public announcement, or have cause to issue a statement, when the Acting CE of DPTI, Julianne TePohe, went on leave?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: You can ask me that question when that budget line is open.

The CHAIR: Member for Light, for your information, we are beginning questions on DPTI at 10.15, in four minutes.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: I will do that in four minutes, then. It gives you a chance to get an answer.

The CHAIR: Are there any further questions from committee members?

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Yes.

The CHAIR: The member for Light has the call.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: In an earlier response to the committee, the minister said that there was no discussion between the board of Renewal SA and himself or his office regarding the leave of the CEO. Am I correct in my understanding of your earlier answer?

The CHAIR: Your question is?

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: If my understanding is correct, then I have a question for him.

The CHAIR: So you are seeking clarification from the minister.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Clarification; that is correct. That is my question.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: No, I have not had a discussion with the board.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Did you have any discussion with the chairman of the board?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I have discussions with the chairman of the board on regular occasions as I need to.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Did you discuss with the chairman of the board the fact that the CEO was taking leave?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I think I have said publicly what it is that we are going to say publicly on that matter.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Hold on. Did you discuss with the chairman the fact that the CEO was taking leave?

The CHAIR: You have already asked that question.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Mr Chair, I am happy to give the same answer.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Did you advise the chairman why the CEO is on leave?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Again, that presupposes that I had a discussion with the chairman about the leave.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: So you are saying that you did not have a discussion with him about the leave?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: No. What I said was that I have made a public statement in relation to this matter, and that is what is appropriate for us to say.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Again, you have not made any public statements regarding other leave, but you found it necessary to make a public statement about this leave because there was an issue for you, and you will not elaborate on what the issue is; is that correct?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Your assertion creates a lot of innuendo that I disagree with. Again, I refer back to my earlier answers.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Mr Chair, I think that his omissions in his answers are probably creating more innuendo than any questions we ask.

The CHAIR: No commentary. Member for Light, we have talked about this before. It is not the opportunity to provide commentary.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: But he does.

The CHAIR: Ask a question, please.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: The minister's answers are mostly commentary, not answering. They are statements.

The CHAIR: The minister can answer as he sees fit. It is for the members of the committee to make of that answer what they will. The member for Light has the call.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: They will get there. It is four long years.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Again under that budget item on page 181, given that the budget paper implies that there will be a \$6.6 million cut to the budget for the Urban Renewal Authority—

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Sorry, which budget paper?

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Budget Paper 5, page 181, Urban Renewal Authority.

The CHAIR: We are actually looking at some budget figures here, member for Light.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Yes.

The CHAIR: Well done.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: A novel approach.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: It is quite relevant. The budget papers anticipate a \$6.6 million cut to the budget of Renewal SA through:

...a strategic review of project based marketing and communications expenditure and reduced employee related expenditure—

we have not done that so far—

through a review of organisational structure and resourcing requirements.

Can that \$6.6 million cut be achieved given that both your CEO and the person in charge of this program, the General Manager, People and Place Management, are not in place?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The short answer is yes, and the longer answer is that the agency has a depth and length of talent and personnel that is appropriate to be able to deliver on what the budget sets out to, and I have every confidence that the acting chief executive here is going to be able to deliver on that.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Given that you just said that there is zero impact on the agency of the leave of both the CEO and the general manager for people and place—

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I do not remember using those words but—

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: But that is what you have implied. Are you then suggesting that they are just surplus to need?

The CHAIR: I just remind the committee that this will be the last question in relation to the Urban Renewal Authority. We have had an extended period of time on this topic.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Mr Chairman, senior executives—

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Mr Chairman, I am just trying to clarify whether taxpayers are getting value for money.

The CHAIR: Order!

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Are the taxpayers getting value for money?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Yes.

The CHAIR: Member for Light and the minister!

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Clearly they are not because you just said there is no impact—

The CHAIR: Member for Light!

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: —and you are going to employ people—

The CHAIR: Order!

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: No, I need an answer.

The CHAIR: No, I am the Chair here.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Well, I need an answer.

The CHAIR: I have not finished yet. You might be surprised at what I have to say.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Okay. Thank you.

The CHAIR: This will be the last question on the Urban Renewal Authority. We have had an extended period of time on this particular topic. The member for Light has asked a question. I will give the minister an opportunity to respond to that, and from that point on we will be moving on to DPTI. The minister has the call.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Senior executives going on leave is something that happens regularly within agencies. When that happens, alternative arrangements are put in place, and that is appropriate. Renewal SA quite clearly needs to have the skills available within the agency to be able to manage when that occurs, and they do, and I have every confidence in the fact that they will be able to continue to deliver very well on the government's agenda. Any insinuation to the contrary I reject.

The CHAIR: I call for questions relating to DPTI.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Hang on, Mr Chairman. I would like the opportunity to be able to shuffle the deck chairs on some advisers.

The CHAIR: My apologies, minister; you are quite right. You will need to swap advisers, and then we will give you the opportunity to introduce your new advisers.

Departmental Advisers:

Ms J. TePohe, Acting Chief Executive, Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure.

Mr A. McKeegan, Chief Development Officer, Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure.

Ms S. Smith, General Manager, Planning and Development, Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure.

Mr A. Excell, Director, Portfolio Management Office, Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure.

The CHAIR: Minister, welcome to your new advisers, whom you will introduce.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I would like to introduce on my right my Acting Chief Executive, Julianne TePohe. To my left is the chief development officer, Andrew McKeegan, and to his left is Sally Smith, who is the general manager for planning and development. Let the games begin.

The CHAIR: Do you have an opening statement?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: No.

The CHAIR: If not, I will call for questions. The member for Light has the call.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: I would like to follow up on a question that I asked in the other session to which the minister was quite keen to provide an answer. When his acting CE of DPTI, Julianne TePohe, took annual leave early this year, did he announce that publicly through a statement?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: No.

The CHAIR: Just before we continue, I remind the member for Light that he has to refer to a budget line.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, program 7, page 183 and the highlights from last year.

The CHAIR: The minister has provided a response to that question?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I did, and the answer was no.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: My supplementary question to that one would be—

The CHAIR: Well, it is another question.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: It is another question. I will take your advice, Mr Chairman.

The CHAIR: Thank you. To somebody who has chaired these committees before, supplementaries are not usually accepted, so this will be a new question.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: My question is: why did you find the need to announce her leave?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Because the arrangements were dealt with in the appropriate manner internally.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: So there were no issues?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Again, that is a word that you continue to use, member for Light.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Could I just clarify that, Mr Chairman?

The CHAIR: You can seek clarification from the minister, yes.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Why was the CEO of the renewal authority inappropriate then?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I think that budget line is now closed, Mr Chairman.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: I see, so he can try to hide the answers—

The CHAIR: No, you are providing comment again. Stay with the questions, member for Light; you are doing a good job so far. Next question.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: My question would be: is the minister trying to hide the answer, then? That is a question, as to whether he is trying to.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Just not to this budget line.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Sorry?

The CHAIR: I would probably rule that one out of order, member for Light. Continue on your pursuit of questions relating to the budget.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: In Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 183, program 7, under highlights for 2017-18 there is reference to the establishment of the State Commission Assessment Panel and Building Committee. My question to the minister is: what actions or measures is the minister taking to ensure these bodies operate in a transparent and accountable fashion?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: That is a very good question, member for Light. It was actually reported in the media today in relation to—

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: I have a draft bill for you, if you would like to use it.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I do not think that is entirely necessary. Member for Light, that is something I have turned my mind to since coming into government. At times, there has been a certain degree of angst within the community about SCAP operating behind closed doors, to the extent that they do. Whilst that is appropriate, given that we are asking the members of SCAP to deliberate on some fairly detailed, complex matters, and they need the proper ability to be able to do that—and it is something that Tim Anderson, Chair of the State Planning Commission, has reported and I agree with him—I do think that creating a greater degree of information provided about the workings of SCAP is a good thing.

I have often found that in these instances the provision of more information helps the community to understand how and why decisions are made. As a department, we are working

through at the moment the best way to deliver on that. When we have more to say about it, we will certainly let you know.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Referring to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, program, page 183, targets 2018-19, I note that the second dot point refers to the development of the planning and design code in collaboration with planning practitioners and councils. Minister, can you advise this committee at what point the community will have an input into the preparation—

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The preparation of what?

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: —of the planning and design code.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The feedback I have had from individuals, councils, the community and the industry is that DPTI is consulting to death on the planning reform changes; in fact, some have suggested that we are almost consulting too much.

To date, we have undertaken consultation in relation to the state planning policies. There are a number of technical and discussion papers out there in relation to development approval processes, and the policy discussion paper is out at the moment as well. We are very shortly going to start a public process in relation to the development of the code, and I have no doubt that we will be making a song and dance about that when that is ready to come out.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: What would be the role of the state commission?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The Planning Commission?

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Yes.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: They will be the ones undertaking the statutory consultation.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: And what role have they had to date in the preparation of the document?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: In conjunction with the agency, that is the body that is here to provide oversight and governance on that process.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: No, that is not the question I asked. The question I asked was: what involvement have they had to date in the preparation of the planning and design codes?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: To date, the State Planning Commission has released papers in relation to integrated management systems and also in relation to the environment and natural resources. They are shortly to release discussion papers in relation to people and neighbourhoods and also about a productive economy. That is essentially work that the SPC is undertaking, a step down from the state planning policies, to really start to get into the detail of what code development is going to look like.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Just on that same matter, because I am not sure the minister has actually understood my question, or perhaps I have not understood his answer, the question I had is, and I will clarify: what involvement has the State Planning Commission had in terms of the preparation of those planning design codes? Will the process be that the department will prepare in consultation with councils and industry and then give that report to the commission to rubberstamp, or has the commission had active participation in the process to date with progress reports and feedback along the way?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Very active involvement in the process.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: An example?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The fact that two of the four discussion papers that are out at the moment have been put out there under intense consultation with the State Planning Commission.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: No, I am talking about the preparation. I am not talking about them being used as a vehicle for the consultation. I am talking about the preparation.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Well, there is a commission. It has a number of members, seven members. Its role and function is essentially to provide oversight governance as well as to have some

deliberative authority around the development of the new system. It has done that. The department is relied upon to provide a lot of the functional support, as is appropriate, given that on a day-to-day basis it is the department that has to ensure the implementation of the planning reforms.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: So it is your evidence to this committee that the department has been providing progress reports in the development of the planning and design code on an ongoing basis and that they have feedback from the commission on an ongoing basis?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Yes.

The CHAIR: The member for Davenport has the call.

Mr MURRAY: I have a question regarding the budget on Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 183. In particular, I am interested in the implementation and the progress of the reform of the Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act, given the immense change it is bringing about in the northern part of my electorate of Davenport.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Thank you, member for Davenport, for that question. As someone who has taken a keen interest in our ability to really fast-track the regeneration and development of his electorate, this is quite a timely question. Can I say from the outset that this is a piece of reform that both the current government and the former government have approached in a bipartisan manner.

We did vote for the absolute vast majority of these reforms when they came to the parliament. I have been very keen to take up the mantle. I actually say that the former minister for planning has done a pretty good job to conceptualise how we can turn our planning system into one that is a lot more facilitative and quicker and, it is hoped, also cheaper to administer and engage with and provides earlier and quicker decisions.

I think that fits very well within the new government's agenda. This is also a way for us to provide certainty to the development industry: the idea that this is one of the things that we can take outside partisan politics and actually deliver good and real reform. It comes off the back of another of the former minister for planning's reforms around return to work and our ability to work together to reduce the cost of doing business in South Australia.

To that end, we are now getting into the very technical end of what is essentially a wholesale reform of the entire system with the development of the code. We are roughly halfway through. We are now under two years to our July 2020 deadline to have the new system in place. Essentially what we are going to be doing is to take 72 development plans and put them into one rule book to create one code, and essentially to provide greater consistency around planning rules, especially as we go council by council. I have had a lot of feedback that we need to create one set of rules so that building a house in one council area is the same as building it another where those zones are the same, which I think is extremely worthwhile and important.

We want to standardise the interpretation of the legislation to improve assessment and reduce delays, again helping to reduce what can otherwise be at times a litigious process. The online delivery of the code and providing assessment authorities with the rules they need through the implementation of the e-planning portal is, again, something on which we have been working very hard together with councils to help them with what is essentially a shared portal. We are all going to be paying for it, but it is an opportunity to help councils save money on what is otherwise a very, very laborious paper-based system and to try to move that online.

Also, we want to create flexibility to deal with local issues while ensuring consistency with other issues. What excites me about these changes that the former government put in place is that we want to have certainty and quick decision-making at the simple end. Where somebody is complying with a zone and what the code says, they should be able to get a quick answer, a quick yes; where they do not, we should be able to provide a quick no.

However, where we deal with more complex development proposals, the idea that we could create a bespoke process that takes into account all of the relevant factors that are needed in relation to it is something that is one out of the box that our planning system struggles to deal with. I think that is a fantastic improvement as well. So flexibility and individuality of the assessment process at

the complex end, but consistency and speed at the simple end, I think, are very worthy aims and things that I am very keen to continue on with.

As I said, codevelopment will start to become more public over the coming months and into next year. Again, we all have a pretty hard deadline of July 2020 to get this thing turned on, and the department and I are working extremely hard to make sure that is the case.

The CHAIR: The member for Light.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Thank you, Mr Chairman. My question relates to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, program 7, page 183 with reference to the highlights of 2017-18. I note that the first dot point under the highlights of 2017-18 states:

Completed 30 Development Plan Amendments (rezoning) to align with state interests under the Development Act 1993 to allow for the transition to the planning and design code.

Minister, my question to you through the Chairman is: how many DPAs are currently under consideration?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: We are down to 31.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: How many did you have when you started government?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: We will take that on notice.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: I would have thought you would have that on the tip of your fingers.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: It was 34 a couple of months ago but, as to the number when I came to government, I can take that on notice and provide you with that answer.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Minister, what actions are you and your department taking to ensure that the changes to the state planning system under the Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act are not delaying the progress of these DPAs?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I thank the member for Light for his question and note with a level of irony the fact that, over the past two years, under the Labor government's regime—

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Mr Chairman, my question was quite clear. The minister has actually gone on a tangent.

The CHAIR: He is five—

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: He is either the minister or in opposition. He is trying to be in opposition as well.

The CHAIR: Member for Light!

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I am happy to answer the question, Chair.

The CHAIR: I am going to respond. Hold on, minister, please.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Just answer the question then.

The CHAIR: No, member for Light and minister, I am going to speak.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I think the member would be well aware of the fact that—

The CHAIR: Minister, I am just going to respond for a moment. Member for Light, the minister was just five seconds into his answer. You anticipated that he was going on a tangent; I am not convinced that he was.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Please, Mr Chairman!

The CHAIR: Let's wait and see.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: You are much wiser than that.

The CHAIR: Let's wait and see. Minister.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: He has form in parliament.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The reason that I am chuckling, Mr Chairman, is that since the start of this reform process, the majority of which happened before 17 March this year, there has been—

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: What about after 17 March?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: That was not the question, but there has been—

Members interjecting:

The CHAIR: Order!

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: —a discussion with councils to help them to understand that DPA development and progress becomes more difficult as we transition to the new code, because at some point, given that DPAs take a long time—in fact, there are some DPAs that are on the books that have been around for longer than just the previous government's last term of parliament—we have actually been winding down the number of DPAs for the last couple of years. That has been communicated consistently with councils because we do not want them to do work on a DPA process so that, as we now transition to the new code, it becomes wasted.

We have had strong discussions with councils about the work they can do to make sure that the work that they are doing can transition to the new code. The reason I smile is that what the member for Light is essentially asking is, 'We have been telling councils to hurry up and get their DPA processes in early because we are going to transition to the new code,' and now he is asking me to fix a problem that he thinks is there, which I do not think is there but, if the problem is there, it is a problem that John Rau created.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: So you are not responsible for anything; is that what you are saying?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Pardon?

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Are you saying you are not responsible for anything?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I take complete responsibility.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: You do?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Yes. In fact, since coming to government I have received eight new SOLs in relation to potential DPAs.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, program 7, page 183, highlights. The minister would be aware that the Economic and Finance Committee last year made a raft of recommendations regarding development issues for small artisan-type businesses. My question to the minister is: has the minister, as required under the act, provided a response to the committee on those issues raised in that report and, if so, what are the recommendations and actions he has reported to?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I will have to take that on notice, member for Light, but—

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: It is outside the six-month response period required by that committee and by parliament.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: There was an election in the way. The former government could have provided a response, but I will take it on notice.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: You have been in government for six months and you just told us that you are responsible for your department, so what have you done?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Member for Light, if I am allowed to answer the question, I was on that committee, as you well know, and I agreed with that recommendation, as you well know, and I have spoken to the State Planning Commission about asking them to inquire into what they can do to ameliorate this issue.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: When can that response to the committee be anticipated then?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: What has also happened over the past number of months is the finalisation of the review into the Barossa and McLaren Vale character preservation districts. Given

that they are two major parts of the environment and food production area, I made four recommendations in relation to that review. The State Planning Commission is currently considering those four recommendations. As part of that work, we felt it was appropriate to ask them to also look into what can be done to help to create better value-adding opportunities for primary producers on land. Given where we are in the stage of the reform process, it is very likely the outcomes of that will be essentially done as part of codevelopment.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: I will ask the question again because the minister did not answer it. When can the committee anticipate a response from you?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I will take that on notice to provide a more fulsome answer.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: So you need it on notice to know when you are going to actually answer?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: No, I have told you exactly what is going on. There is work that is currently underway. Your question is: when is it going to be finalised? I am happy to bring back an answer on that. As I have outlined, it is likely that the response will be conducted as part of codevelopment. Quite clearly, the time lines for codevelopment are there. Consultation on that will happen as we go forward. We have a July 2020 deadline for implementation of the code. That would axiomatically be the latest date at which these changes will occur.

Mr CREGAN: A question to the minister: I take the minister to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 183, land use planning. Can the minister explain the proposed Accredited Professionals Scheme as part of the new planning system and inform the committee how the scheme will operate to ensure better planning decisions for the state?

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Point of order, sir: did you indicate that the same rules of parliament apply to this committee?

The CHAIR: Pretty much.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: All the information that the member sought is in the public domain already.

Mr CREGAN: I think that is a matter for debate.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: No, it is not.

The CHAIR: Honestly, member for Light, I will allow the question.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: A brief answer, then.

The CHAIR: A brief answer. I think that is appropriate.

Mr CREGAN: I seek a fulsome answer. I am very interested in this topic.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: We can actually read it in—

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I am happy to provide a brief and fulsome answer at the same time.

Mr CREGAN: Given that you rezoned 1,300 hectares—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Yes, it is important; it is on the public record.

Mr CREGAN: —in my electorate, I am very interested in this answer.

The CHAIR: Order!

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: The minister was quite strict, when he was in opposition, about providing questions and answers which are already in the public record, weren't you, minister?

The CHAIR: Order, member for Light!

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I provided previous answers in relation to policy discussion papers that are out there in the public that the member for Light seemed quite interested in. The Accredited Professionals Scheme framework is designed to lift the performance and improve the confidence of

professionals undertaking basic planning functions within the new system. Essentially, the idea is to get to better decision-making, better choice, for applicants and also improve management of complaints and investigations.

In my short six months in this portfolio, the planning system is one where there is a degree of subjectivity about the quality of decision-making. We have a whole series of decision-making bodies all over the state. Because of the passion with which people engage with the planning process, there are often people who take issue with decisions that are made. Essentially, what we are trying to undertake here is an improvement of part of the new scheme—again, an accredited professionals regime that the former government put in place, as in a reform process was put in place.

The Accredited Professionals Scheme proposes to apply to both building and planning professionals in areas such as building certifiers and inspectors, assessment managers, assessment panel members, planning, accredited professionals and land division accredited professionals. We are attempting to further professionalise and improve this industry, creating a level of rigour and discipline and an accredited scheme that will attempt to do that. This is a part of the reform process that I am genuinely looking forward to engaging with as it is put in place so that we can help drive the government's economic growth agenda.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I refer to Agency Statements, Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 197, Registrar-General and Surveyor-General. Is the Surveyor-General here today?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: No.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Can I ask why?

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, your question relates to the Surveyor-General?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Yes, it does.

The CHAIR: I will just determine from the minister whether he has an appropriate adviser. It is a bit unclear to me as to—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I checked with the table before I came, sir. Where is he?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The question is: why is the Surveyor-General not here?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Yes.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: There are 3½ thousand employees within DPTI.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I am not trying to be difficult.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I am not trying to be difficult either, but if you wanted the Surveyor-General to appear, you could have asked, but—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: No. The Surveyor-General—all the generals—need to attend estimates. Why has DPTI not brought him along? Did you forget?

The CHAIR: I will just wait until the minister responds to that.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I have been advised, member for West Torrens, that the Surveyor-General actually does not sit under this budget line.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I checked with the table before. I am happy to come back in another line, but I check with the table before I ask the questions.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I am appearing before you at the moment as the Minister for Planning. He sits underneath Transport and Infrastructure.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: That was my initial view, but I checked with the table just to be sure.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I do not want to create false hope, though.

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, my understanding is that the Surveyor-General does sit under Infrastructure.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Either way, I am happy to take the question, but—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: He is under Infrastructure? The minister has notice that we would like him here.

The CHAIR: We believe the Surveyor-General sits under Infrastructure. We have it in the budget lines.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I am happy to answer whatever questions the member for West Torrens has at the appropriate time.

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens. That will come up after morning tea, so that would be the appropriate time to ask that question. I invite other questions. Member for Light.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: My question is on Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, program 7, page 184, explanation of significant movements. I note that the last statement under subheading 'Explanation of significant movements' refers to a significant contribution to the department's income from the Planning and Development Fund as part of the reforms to the state's planning system. Minister, can you just outline the current balance of the Planning and Development Fund?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I am happy to take that on notice, member for Light. It is somewhere around \$13 million, but I am happy to take it on notice.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Minister, can you inform me of the forecast revenues into the Planning and Development Fund for 2018-19 and over the forward estimates?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: It is roughly \$25 million.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Minister, can you provide me with a council by council breakdown of the developer contributions made to the Planning and Development Fund for 2017-18 and 2018-19?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: In relation to past years, that information is actually in the public sphere. I am happy to take on notice—

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: So you are saying that, if it is in the public sphere, you do not provide an answer?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: That is historical information; in relation to what you are seeking, I am happy to take that on notice.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: So the 2018-19 you will take on notice?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I am happy to take that on notice.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Minister, can you provide me with a comprehensive list, including a council by council breakdown, of successful project applications from the Planning and Development Fund for 2018-19 to date?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The grant round has not opened yet, member for Light.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: It is not open yet?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: For 2018-19, no. I think you missed your omnibus questions.

The CHAIR: No, we have not. Sometime today is fine.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Sorry to disappoint you, minister. We have not.

The CHAIR: The member for Badcoe has a question.

Ms STINSON: Thank you very much, Mr Chair. I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 183, program 7, land use planning. The minister may recall me writing to him about this already. It is a matter of interest to my electorate of Badcoe.

The Hon. S.K. Knoll: The Glandore SOI.

Ms STINSON: That is the one. Thank you very much. I am seeking an update on what is happening with that. I am happy to explain the background of it, if you would like me to.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: We are currently considering West Torrens council's application for an SOI. When we land a decision on that, we are happy to tell the council.

Ms STINSON: It has been several months now and I concede that it was first raised with the previous government but, considering that you have been in government for six months now, is there any indication you can give about timing?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: We are pretty close.

Ms STINSON: Are there any particular issues that are still being explored or that are hindering the decision-making process?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Not really.

Ms STINSON: What is it that needs to be done or that is left to be done before a decision can be made?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Actually, I received the last piece of information that I asked for yesterday.

Ms STINSON: Excellent.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: And I will be considering it in coming days.

Ms STINSON: Will the minister undertake to let me know when he has made that decision?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Sure thing.

Ms STINSON: Thank you very much. I appreciate it.

The CHAIR: The member for Badcoe would be pleased with that answer, hopefully.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: It depends on the answer.

Ms STINSON: I will be pleased when a decision is made and I know what the decision is and I can inform my electorate of it. They are very interested in it.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: They are.

The CHAIR: The member knows there is a response not very far away. The member for Light.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: My question relates to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 184, the program summary—expenses and income and FTEs. Under the expenses, the depreciation and amortisation expenses have gone up significantly. Can the minister explain what they are?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Depreciation and amortisation on the e-planning system. Essentially we are building some software and it is depreciation on that asset.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: So it is the new system where people apply online or the decision is made online?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Yes.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Can you remind me what contribution local government will be making to that system?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: It depends on the council. The e-planning portal was considered as part of the new act and, essentially, the e-planning portal is designed to come online prior to the implementation of the code. A decision was taken by planning minister Rau at the time to defer councils' contribution for 2017-18 in relation to helping to pay for the e-planning portal. We have now taken the decision that it is appropriate for councils to make a contribution, given that over the course of this year they are going to become engaged with it.

Councils are grouped by development value, so in the 2018-19 year, for development value over \$100 million, councils will pay \$27,000; for development value between \$50 million and \$100 million, councils will pay \$8,000; for development value between \$10 million and \$50 million, councils will pay \$3,000; and for development value under \$10 million, the cost will be zero. Then,

for future years, the full-year contribution for those four groups will be \$58,000 for over \$100 million; \$18,000 for between \$50 million and \$100 million; \$6,000 for between \$10 million and \$50 million; and zero for under \$10 million.

I also say at this point that the evidence we have is that councils are going to save a lot more money than what they are being asked to contribute for the cost of the e-planning portal. We hope that this is a great way for us to help councils reduce their cost base.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: On the same point, what is the total budget amount for this year and over the forward estimates?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The figure for 2018-19 is \$1.233 million, but I would like to take the out years on notice because I want to double-check some of the information.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Just to clarify, the figure for this year, 2018-19, will be \$1.33 million?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: It will be \$1.233 million.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: It will be \$1.233 million. In which financial year will councils see the benefits start to accrue?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The e-planning portal is going to be turned on in three phases. In the first, we are going to start where there are no councils; essentially, the outback community areas and out-of-council areas.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: There are not many councils in that area.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: No, there are no councils in that area.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: I know; that is the point I was trying to make.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The beautiful thing for us is that, because responsibility for those sits within DPTI, it is an opportunity for us to turn on the portal in certain areas to see how it works. From there, we are then going to engage with regional councils and turn it on for them, and then for metropolitan councils at the end. It needs to be turned on completely by July 2020. The firm dates for turning that on and those three stages are still be worked through, but it could be that the first tranche is turned on in this financial year.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Your evidence to this committee, putting aside the outback ones that are your responsibility, is that in terms of the regional councils—I assume regional councils are all those outside the metropolitan area—the e-planning portal system will be operating for them and therefore they will be able to realise the benefits in the same year they are paying?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: No, there may be a little bit of a disconnect there. What I would say is that, once the scheme is up and running, the evidence is that they are going to save more than what it costs them. Currently, quite clearly, each of the council areas needs to have their own system for how they deal with things. The idea is that we move to a single platform. So there is an opportunity for councils to realise savings, depending on how their systems operate, by not continuing those systems and moving across to the single e-planning portal.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: So your evidence to this committee is that the benefits that they will accrue from not having to upgrade or modify the existing systems and the savings they make from that will be enough—I am not clear on this. What I am trying to find out—

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I understand the question. The question is—

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Well, if you answered the question then it would be easier.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The question that you want to ask is: are they going to pay up-front before they get all the benefits? The answer is that there is going to be some sort of disconnect, but it depends on when it is turned on, which council we are talking about, what legacy systems each individual council has, and the way they conduct their internal planning processes.

I am not going to try to suggest that they are going to get benefits up-front and pay for it later, but, quite clearly, the cost incurred to government of setting up the planning portal is in the front end,

as we are designing the system. We have already made the decision, and John Rau made the decision, to delay the start of councils needing to pay.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: You are the minister now; it is your decision. Do not blame John Rau.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: No, I understand, and I said before that I confirmed the decision that for 2018-19 the councils should start to pay. They are going to pay essentially for a half year instead of a full year. This is something, certainly from my discussions with councils, that they are quite excited to engage with, especially those that undertake higher levels of development. They see this as a real way to drive reform. Yes, they are going to have to help us pay for it, but they will get a lot of benefit from it when it is up and running.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: So in the short term, you will be cost shifting to local government.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: That is an insinuation that I reject completely.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Sorry, how is it insinuation? They are either incurring the cost before the benefits, which is cost shifting, or they are not. You indicated in your earlier answer, minister, that they will be paying before they get any benefits. So you are shifting the cost.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: If I take the counterfactual to be true, we are also not asking them to pay us the benefits when they get those benefits, either.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: So you are cost shifting.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: That is a ridiculous argument.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: No, it is not; you do not like it.

The CHAIR: Member for Light, the minister has the call.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: For councils, we are hoping to provide them the opportunity to have ongoing operational savings by having an e-planning portal that will be designed, kept and work for the new code. In fact, it is essential for the new system to go forward because we have one system, not 72. This is a fantastic part of the reform. It is a reform that was started by the former government. It is one that the current government takes responsibility for and is keen to engage with. It will deliver benefits for councils for years and years to come.

The CHAIR: The member for Morphet has a question.

Mr PATTERSON: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 183. Can the minister please identify the cost of planning reform implementation and the economic benefit to the state arising as a result of this reform?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: In February 2016, cabinet approved \$25.8 million over five years, out to 2021, in order to support the new planning reform system and the technology enablement required for the implementation of these reforms. The investment is planned to be offset by a proposed new council levy and increased development application fees timed to coincide largely with benefits.

As I said, the council levy commenced in July 2018. Application fees will occur in 2019 and 2020. Independent economic modelling that has been conducted shows an economic benefit of \$278.3 million per annum. It could be achieved if the new planning system successfully halved the length of current paper-based systems and manual processes—\$278.3 million per annum. The reforms will also help to unlock an estimated \$2.3 billion worth of development over the next 20 years.

The CHAIR: The member for Badcoe has the call.

Ms STINSON: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 183, Program 7: Land Use Planning. The minister may be aware of the former Le Cornu site—once again, in the illustrious electorate of Badcoe. That was purchased by Kaufland. They have put in some plans to build on half the site, but they intend to sell the other half. Will there need to be a reassessment of the planning rules for the remaining portion, or will the criteria set in place by the previous government about what

is to be built on that site—that is, a mixed-use site—just carry over despite the fact that the land will be split into two different purposes with two different owners?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I think the question you are asking is: does there need to be a second and subsequent development application in the event that Kaufland sells off a portion of that site?

Ms STINSON: I understand that there would need to be a separate development application, but the process that happened before involved some community consultation around maximum heights and other restrictions around how the land is to be used and what it is to be used for. I am wondering if that process needs to happen again, or whether it will just be as simple as putting in a development application.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The policy in place at this time, which I have not changed, is the policy that will be used to assess that application. It is the policy in place at the time the development application is lodged that is used to assess that application. The current act and the future act do not provide me the opportunity to change that policy halfway through a development application process. Essentially, the rules are already set. As I understand it, this is a decision that the SCAP is going to have to make: it is not a decision that I am going to have to make. It will be based on the policies that are in place at this time.

Ms STINSON: Just following up on that, initially when the decisions were made around what was allowable on that land—as in the decision was made for it to be mixed use and a certain height and setbacks and so forth—they were made on the basis of that one whole, large plot. Now that it is in two pieces, when SCAP goes to assess it will it also consider what is going on in the other portion when it considers the second portion?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: There is a presupposition in the question that suggests that Kaufland has sold a portion of the site; I am not sure that that is correct, but—

Ms STINSON: It is intending to sell it—it has a sign up—but it has not sold it yet, as far as I am aware.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: To explain what the process will be, it depends on the DA that is lodged. There is an existing policy that sits over the site. That has not changed. That is what any development application on that site will be assessed against.

If Kaufland goes for a development approval over the entire site, they are going to need to tell us what they want to do over that entire site. If they then subsequently sell off a portion of it, depending on who they sell it to and what that person wants to use it for, there would be an opportunity for them to use an existing development approval as long as they comply with that development approval. If they turn around and want to do something different, then—just one moment.

Yes, so Kaufland would have the opportunity to get a development approval over the entire site; if they subsequently sell part of the site, that development approval goes with the site they have sold off. The company or whoever buys the site can comply with that development approval and build in accordance with that development approval. If they want to do something different, they can seek a variation, but that will be assessed, presumably by SCAP, in the usual way. Again, it will be assessed on the policy that exists on the site at the moment.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: In Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, program 7, page 183, I refer to the reference to the community engagement charter under Highlights 2017-18. My question is: are you considering measures designed to expand the planning consultation processes to more neighbourhood landowners under the Community Engagement Charter?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I have to be careful how I answer this question. There is a Community Engagement Charter. It sets out some rules about how changes to our planning system are to operate, it is broad and it is not that prescriptive. The reason it is not prescriptive is that we do not want to limit councils' ability to engage in the consultation that they feel is appropriate. There is also a mechanism there whereby the State Planning Commission can step in if they feel that

engagement has not been appropriate and that councils' engagement processes have not been appropriate.

But what you are asking I think is a different question, and that is: are we going to see an increased ability for consultation as part of individual development application processes? There is a discussion paper that is out currently in relation to new assessment pathways. It is publicly available, and I would invite you to have a look at it. If you have a comment to make in relation to it, I would more than welcome your feedback.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: So you are saying there is an intention, or there is not?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: There is an intention to do what?

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: To broaden the scope. For example, one of the biggest criticisms you get as a local member, and I get as a local member, is that often things pop up before people know it. This is not to give people third-party rights as such, but is there scope for consultation at the neighbourhood level?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: There is scope for it—

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: But it is not mandatory.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Well, there is mandatory consultation envisaged as part of the new system, but again I think you are asking a broad question when again it is situational; it depends on each individual development application. That is why I would advise you to read the paper, and if you have got some feedback I would be more than willing to accept it.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: I will give you an example because I think this is a very important issue: if a development goes up next door, under the current provisions there is no need to consult with the adjoining landowners. The neighbour builds a three-level building and darkens out the person's solar system, so this person actually then cannot use their solar system. Under the new rules would a council or relevant planning authority be required to consult?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Again it is a hypothetical question and difficult to answer because each individual application is assessed on its merits, but if we are talking about category 1 development, which is where it is deemed to satisfy under the new system, then there is no consultation. That is because essentially the application is complying with the rules and the policies in place at that point in time. For a category 2 notification, it is envisaged under the new system that a sign will be placed on the property, which I understand is different from what happens currently.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Yes, which I think they do in Victoria and New South Wales already.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Progress.

The CHAIR: Member for Badcoe.

Ms STINSON: May I do the omnibus questions?

The CHAIR: You may. You have five minutes, member for Badcoe.

Ms STINSON: The omnibus questions are as follows:

1. Will the minister provide a detailed breakdown of expenditure on consultants and contractors with a total estimated cost above \$10,000, engaged between 17 March 2018 and 30 June 2018 by all departments and agencies reporting to the minister, listing the name of the consultant, contractor or service supplier, the estimated total cost of the work, the work undertaken and the method of appointment?

2. Will the minister provide a detailed breakdown of the forecast expenditure on consultants and contractors with a total estimated cost above \$10,000 for the 2018-19 financial year to be engaged by all departments and agencies reporting to the minister, listing the name of the consultant, contractor or service supplier, cost, work undertaken and method of appointment?

3. For each department and agency for which the minister has responsibility:

- (a) How many FTEs were employed to provide communication and promotion activities in the 2017-18 year and what was their employment expense?
 - (b) How many FTEs are budgeted to provide communication and promotion activities in 2018-19, 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-22, and what is their estimated employment expense?
 - (c) The total cost of government-paid advertising, including campaigns, across all mediums in 2017-18 and budgeted cost for 2018-19.
4. For each grant program or fund the minister is responsible for please provide the following information for the four forward estimate years:
 - (a) The name of the program or fund;
 - (b) The purpose of the program or fund;
 - (c) The balance of the grant program or fund;
 - (d) Budgeted (or actual) expenditure from the program or fund;
 - (e) Budgeted (or actual) payments into the program or fund;
 - (f) Carryovers into or from the program or fund;
 - (g) Details, including the value and beneficiary, of any commitments already made to be funded from the program or fund; and
 - (h) Whether the grant was subject to a grant agreement as required by Treasurer's Instructions 15.
5. For the period of 17 March 2018 and 30 June 2018, provide a breakdown of all grants paid by the department/agency that report to the minister, including when the payment was made to the recipient, and when the grant agreement was signed by both parties.
6. For each department and agency reporting to the minister:
 - (a) The total number of FTEs in that department or agency;
 - (b) The number of FTEs by division and/or business unit within the department or agency; and
 - (c) The number of FTEs by classification in each division and/or business unit within the department or agency.
7. For each department and agency reporting to the minister, could you detail:
 - (a) How much is allocated to be spent on targeted voluntary separation packages in this financial year?
 - (b) How many of the TVSPs are estimated to be funded?
 - (c) What is the budget for TVSPs for financial years included in the forward estimates (by year), and how are these packages to be funded?
8. For each department or agency reporting to the minister in 2018-19 please provide the number of public servants broken down into headcount and FTE's that are (1) tenured and (2) on contract and, for each category, provide a breakdown of the number of (1) executives and (2) non-executives.
9. Between 30 June 2017 and 17 March 2018, will the minister list the job title and total employment cost of SA executive positions—(1) which has been abolished and (2) which has been created?
10. Between 17 March 2018 and 30 June 2018, will the minister list the job title and total employment cost of SA executive positions—(1) which has been abolished and (2) which has been created?

11. For each year of the forward estimates, please provide the name and budget for each individual program administered by or on behalf of all departments and agencies reporting to the minister.

12. For each year of the forward estimates, please provide the name and budgeted expenditure across the forward estimates financial years for each individual investing expenditure project administered by or on behalf of the departments and agencies reporting to the minister.

13. For each department or agency reporting to the minister how many surplus employees are there at 30 June 2018 and for each surplus employee, what is the title or classification of employee and the total cost of the employee?

The CHAIR: Well read, member for Badcoe—and right on time. There being no further questions and having reached the allotted time, I declare the examination of the proposed payments for the portfolios of the Urban Renewal Authority and planning (DPTI) to be completed. In accordance with the agreed timetable, the committee stands suspended until 11.30am.

Sitting suspended from 11:14 to 11:32.

Departmental Advisers:

Ms J. TePohe, Acting Chief Executive, Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure.

Mr W. Buckerfield, Acting Chief Corporate Officer, Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure.

Ms A. Alford, Acting Chief Operating Officer, Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure.

Mr B. Cagialis, Director, Finance and Risk, Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure.

Mr A. Excell, Director, Portfolio Management Office, Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure.

The CHAIR: Welcome back, members, ministers and advisers, to Estimates Committee A. The portfolios we will be questioning from now until 4pm will be related to infrastructure, planning and management; public transport, SAPTA; roads and marine; Service SA; the Office of Local Government; the Outback Communities Authority; and the Local Government Grants Commission. The minister appearing is the Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Local Government. I declare the proposed payments open for examination and refer members to the Agency Statements in Volume 1. I call on the minister to make an opening statement, if he wishes, and introduce his advisers.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I would like to reintroduce Julianne TePohe, my Acting Chief Executive, who is on my right. To my left is Mr Wayne Buckerfield, the Acting Chief Corporate Officer. To his left is the Acting Chief Operating Officer, Anne Alford. Behind me and to my left is Andy Excell, who is the Director of the Portfolio Management Office. Behind me on my right is Bill Cagialis, who is the Director, Finance and Risk.

The CHAIR: Thank you, minister. Do you wish to make an opening statement?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: No, sir.

The CHAIR: Lead speaker for the opposition, do you wish to make an opening statement?

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: No, Mr Chairman, I will get straight into the questions.

The CHAIR: If not, I will call for questions. The member for Light has the call.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Thank you, Mr Chairman. Minister, I draw your attention to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 163, workforce summary. My question to the minister is: were any additional

severance payments made to the former CE, Mr Michael Deegan, as a result of his role as Rail Commissioner and Commissioner for Highways?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Member for Light, the budget certainly does sit within this budget line in relation to that payment. The decision was obviously taken by the Premier when he was the minister. He has made a public statement in relation to costs associated with that. To hand, I do not have further information in relation to that. I am happy to take on that notice and release what is appropriate for us to do so.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: What do you mean 'appropriate for us to do so'? The person's contract was terminated. You made that public by a statement. Just to clarify, you are saying that the funds do come from your budget line?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Yes.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: So you are in a position to answer what the cost was?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: And I will take that on notice.

The CHAIR: Member for Light, before you go on, I omitted to inform the committee that questions until midday at least will relate to infrastructure, planning and management, which is what I have on my agenda and no doubt you do as well.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: My question to the minister is: in relation to Mr Michael Deegan as the CE of the department and his role as Rail Commissioner, were those two contracts severed at the same time or at different times?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: There was a contract in relation to his CE appointment, but there is not a contract specifically in relation to his being the Rail Commissioner.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: There is not?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: No.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Well, perhaps the question should then be: in relation to his contract as CE of the department and his statutory role as Rail Commissioner, did those two terminations, or whatever you like to call them, occur at the same time?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: We will have to take that on notice, given that DPC undertook all the arrangements in relation to that. In understanding what the legal answer is to your question, we will need to take that on notice.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Just to clarify, you are his minister and he reported to you; is that correct?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: No.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: The CE did not report to you as the minister for the department?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: No, he was terminated before I got there.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Just to clarify, the question you will be looking at is whether his role as Rail Commissioner ceased at the same time as his role as the CE of the department; is that correct?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I am happy to take that on notice.

The CHAIR: The members for West Torrens has a question.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Yes, I refer to Budget Paper 3, page 39. I apologise for coming in late.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: That's alright, mate.

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, we are discussing infrastructure, planning and management.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Yes. I refer to Budget Paper 3, page 39.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Page 39 or 79?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Page 39, table 2.18. Have you got it there in front of you? I draw the minister's attention to 'General government capital investment by agency'. Can the minister explain why \$1.49 billion is budgeted for 2017-18 and just \$550.4 million is budgeted for 2020-21?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The question is: can I explain why?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I am not trying to be difficult, sir. The budget papers, in table 2.18, show the estimated result for 2017-18 at \$1.1 billion. It was budgeted for \$1.4 billion. It goes down to \$550 million. Can the minister explain the decrease?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I understand where this is heading but, to clarify, this is in relation to capital projects that DPTI itself is undertaking—sorry, to clarify that, where the budget lines are given to DPTI. If you look at the bottom of that table, it looks at it in relation to the whole of the government's general capital investment program.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: That is not my question.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I understand. I am trying to provide some context for the member. What that does show is the fact that there is quite a consistent capital spend across agencies when you aggregate that together.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Point of order, sir.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: What happens is that some budget lines—

The CHAIR: Minister, there is a point of order from the member for West Torrens.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I have not asked about general government capital investment, I have asked about DPTI's general government capital investment, and I have asked a specific question about why it is at record levels today and it decreases to record lows later. I would like an explanation as to why.

The CHAIR: We have found that particular budget line, member for West Torrens, and the minister—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: It is table 2.18.

The CHAIR: Yes, I have it, too. Thank you, member for West Torrens. Minister.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Quite clearly, what happens is that different agencies have different capital investment requirements. From a whole of government perspective, as we increase our investment in other portfolio areas in terms of capital investment it means the other areas go down. From a total spend, you can see that there is quite a good and strong consistent capital spend.

The budget capital program, as it is assigned to DPTI, obviously has fluctuating numbers there. I certainly reject the assertion that it is at record lows, but what I would say is that there is more work that we can and need to do. We are talking about 2021-22; axiomatically, that is three years away, and there is more work that the department is going to do in relation to pipeline development. One of the key things that we did upon coming to government was to take the existing capital program within the department and negotiate with the federal government on their co-funding arrangements in relation to that.

I think we have been extremely successful, and it has been very well publicised, the projects that we have been able to secure working constructively with the federal government. There is more work that is going to happen. As you can see there from the 2018-19 financial year, we are talking about close to a record spend in DPTI alone, but I would expect that, as we get closer to those out years becoming actual years, those numbers will adjust as we work more with the federal government about improving that pipeline.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Adjust up or down? You said they will adjust. Will they adjust up or down in the out years?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: It is our very strong expectation that they will be going up.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: What projects do you expect to go up? What is the capital expenditure going to be in 2020-21 that will see that figure of \$546 million increase to over \$1 billion?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: That is the subject of a future budget process, and at the appropriate estimates you can ask those questions, but I think we are very clearly on the record talking about the fact that we have decisions to make in relation to the north-south corridor. We are in the process of undertaking business case development activities to decide how it is that we deal with the remaining sections of the north-south corridor, which we have said consistently is our highest priority. These infrastructure projects have long lead times, so we are doing the work as quickly as we can now to put ourselves in the best position to negotiate future road infrastructure projects.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: So there is no explanation other than there are no projects currently scheduled for those out years?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Sorry; say that again.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: So there is no explanation other than you do not have projects assigned for those out years, yet they get you back up to over \$1 billion?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I reject the insinuation that, because the full four-year program is not committed, we are somehow derelict. We made sure very quickly on coming to government that we started to fill the pipeline. I think we have done a great job with what was to hand to be able to do that. There is still more work to do. There is a pesky little body called Infrastructure South Australia that the member for West Torrens was trying to butcher. He was unsuccessful in doing that, and it is now law. I look forward to that process being used to create a greater level of rigour in relation to the business case development project selection and, ultimately, project delivery and evaluation.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I refer the minister to Budget Paper 5, Budget Measures Statement, page 106. The minister and the cabinet are making more than \$170 million in savings from the department. Can the minister please break down for the committee where these savings are being made and how many job losses will result from that?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: If I take the member to a different part of the Budget Measures Statement, if he flicks a few pages forward, he will see on page 111 a budget line in relation to the Kangaroo Island commissioner. Which budget paper? You are looking at 106?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Yes.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Maybe look at 107, operating savings. There they are.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: What is the reduction in FTEs?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: That is still to be worked through.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: You do not know?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: That is still to be worked through.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: So the minister has received no briefings on an estimate of how many FTEs will be reduced by the time these savings are implemented?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: No. We are still working through the best way to implement these savings measures.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Is that because you are waiting for a new chief executive to implement them or because of works underway?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: No. Work is underway.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: But you just cannot tell the committee?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The member asked a question about what the estimate FTE count reduction is, and the answer is that we do not have that figure at the moment.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: What is the current headcount at DPTI?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: If we head to Budget Paper 4—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Not FTE, headcount.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: We are going to have to take that on notice. We have FTE figures but not headcount figures.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Thank you. Could you give me, also on notice, what the headcount will be once the savings measures are implemented in full?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I am happy to take that on notice, but I am not sure we are going to have an answer to that question.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Why? Obviously, the largest part of your expenses are salaries, and headcount is a large part of that. Will you be reducing that?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Member, I am not sure, but were you minister for infrastructure at some point?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Yes—a very good one, actually.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Then you would realise that—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I never saw reductions like this when I was minister.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The major cost in DPTI's program is capital expenditure.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: When you capitalise your FTEs within that capital infrastructure—

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: It supplies the services.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Yes, and you capitalise your FTEs within that infrastructure spend, and you have savings targets, and you go to record lows. What I would like to know is: given you have been unsuccessful in the cabinet in getting any resources for your agency, what will the headcount reduction be by the end of the forward estimates and by the end of you implementing these massive cuts to your agency?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Apart from—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: These are people, minister.

The CHAIR: Minister, you have the call.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: They have families to feed.

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, you have asked the question. The minister has the call.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: In relation to capital investment expenditure, this government is spending record levels on building infrastructure that South Australia needs.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: You are not. Yours is decreasing every year.

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, the minister has the call.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Again, I question whether the member remembers when he was minister because the Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure, whilst not necessarily having budget lines for capital programs, actually administers and delivers projects on behalf of other agencies. In that context, we are spending a record \$11.3 billion on a capital investment program across government over the next four years, which is more than we have seen in our history.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Really?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: In fact, this year we are spending \$500 million more than what was spent last year.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: You should look at the graph alongside that table.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: For every year over the forward estimates, we are spending roughly \$250 million more than was spent in 2017-18, and we have an extremely strong capital investment

program. It is something that I am very proud of and this government has worked very hard to put that in place. When we talk about jobs within this sector and this industry, quite clearly we are going to need a lot of people to build \$11.3 billion worth of infrastructure projects.

I look forward to providing that level of certainty in the pipeline for those workers in those industries. I also note the reaction we have had from the industry, the people who are going to build these projects for us. They are extremely excited about the level of civil construction work and commercial construction work that is going to be undertaken. In fact, a lot of their concerns relate to the fact that we need to develop more skills in order to be able to deliver this record infrastructure program.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I refer the minister to Agency Statements, Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 179. Can the minister explain why the Treasurer has taken over the management of the Port Adelaide office accommodation?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: He has not.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: He has not? That is your answer to the committee unequivocally?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Yes.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: You are not going to seek advice on it? It is a statement that he has not taken it over?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Taken over responsibility for the lease arrangements at Port Adelaide?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: No, the management of the Port Adelaide office accommodation.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I do not understand.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Have you seen the *Hansard* from the Treasurer's estimates?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: No.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Do you want to qualify your answer maybe?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I am not sure I understand what the member is getting to. Maybe I can explain it to you in this way. It was decided that Shared Services staff would go down to Port Adelaide. Those people work for the Treasurer. For the sake of making sure that those people were informed at an appropriate time about the fact that they were going to move down to Port Adelaide, and given the fact that those staff exist within DTF, the Treasurer is the one who handled that process because they are his staff. DPTI deals with across-government leasing arrangements and continues to do so. In relation to the leasing arrangements for Port Adelaide, as distinct from management, which I am not sure I understand what the member is referring to—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: No, I did not think you would.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: —DPTI retains control of that.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Why did the minister decided to reverse the decision of the previous government to relocate Renewal SA staff to Port Adelaide?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: There were two reasons. Firstly, under the machinery of government changes in the new government, we have moved Housing out of Renewal SA and it was envisaged that some of those staff would relocate to Port Adelaide. Given the fact that we have a new South Australian Housing Authority that needs to be constituted and settled down, it was felt that moving those staff was going to be difficult in those circumstances. The second reason is that defence companies at that time expressed clear interest in potentially accessing that site.

As a new government and one that is trying to incentivise private investment, especially around improving our ability to engage with these massive defence contracts that are coming to South Australia, very specifically around the future frigates but also the submarine program, it makes

a lot of sense, given that Techport is just up the road, to offer that space to defence companies. As it happened, things moved on and defence companies have chosen to take up residency at other locations. The decision was taken that we would then need to move public servants down there.

If the member's next question is around cost, it was always envisaged that no matter which staff were moved down to Port Adelaide there would be limited backfill opportunities to take up the space vacated by the people who were moving down to Port Adelaide. Right now, we are working through and dealing with that mess the former government left us. It did not matter which public servants we decided to send down there, we were going to have to deal with that issue. As it so happened, the Shared Services staff moving down there provided an opportunity for us to limit the impact to government of vacant office accommodation space.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: What has been the impact of this decision of vacant office accommodation space in terms of cost?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: We will have to take that on notice.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I refer you to Budget Paper 5, page 114, GlobeLink. How committed is the government to GlobeLink, given that you have allocated only \$20 million for the master plan and that almost 90 per cent of that money is planned to be expended in 2021-22, at the end of the forward estimates?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: We are extremely committed. That \$20 million is exactly what we took to the election and it is here in the budget and it is inside the forward estimates. Quite clearly—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Why are you waiting four years to start on the planning?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: We are not.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Why spend all the money at the end?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: We are not.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Sorry, your budget line—

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Hang on, allow me to answer, member for West Torrens.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: —has all the money being spent—

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Okay, I can read the budget, too.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Good, then explain it to me. Why?

The CHAIR: The minister has the call.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: We have gone out to tender for stage 1 and stage 2 of the business case development.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: That will take four years, will it?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: No, but quite clearly it is best for us to wait to see what stage 1 and stage 2 of the business case development tell us, and that will inform where stage 3 and stage 4 need to go. We have complied with our election commitment. There is \$20 million sitting inside the forward estimates, but we need to have completed the stage 1 and stage 2 business case development process before decisions can be made about what money needs to be expended on stage 3 and stage 4. We will make those decisions when stage 1 and stage 2 are complete.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Anyone reading the budget would assume that stages 1 and 2 are going to take four years to develop, before you get to stages 3 and 4, because you have allocated the money to be spent in the last year of the forward estimates, which is the only time you have the legal authority to spend that money. Can you assure the committee that the business case will be completed in this term of government?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I can confirm that stage 1 and stage 2 are going to be completed—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: That is not what I asked you.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I understand.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I am not trying to be difficult.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Well, you cut me off. Let me finish answering the question.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Well then just give me a straight answer.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The straight answer is: stage 1 and stage 2 get completed. At that point in time, it will tell us what direction we then need to head and what money needs to be spent doing what. But we need to finish stage 1 and stage 2 first, and that will tell us where stages 3 and 4 are going to go. The money is inside the forward estimates. No South Australian should be under any illusion that we are doing anything other than getting on and looking at what is a visionary idea to change the way that things get moved around our state and our city.

We are extremely committed to the project. The money is in there, inside the forward estimates, but what we are very clear on is to make sure that we use the evidence that is provided to us and the best evidence that is provided to us at the time it is provided to us. What we are saying here is not that we are not committed to GlobeLink; what we are actually saying is that we are going to do what the experts tell us to do in relation to GlobeLink, as we do with all our infrastructure projects.

Instead of presupposing an outcome, which is what potentially happened before the 17 March election, we are going to wait and see what the experts tell us to do, and that will tell us the best way going forward. That money is inside the forward estimates. It is committed in this budget, and we will be delivering on the election commitment, but we also have an Infrastructure South Australia process that this is going to get wrapped up into.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: What I take from that answer is that the remaining \$18.2 million will be spent on the GlobeLink development only if the initial master plan work you put out to tender comes back and shows favourable consideration to move forward; otherwise, you are reserving your options not to spend that money and shelve this program.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I think you are trying to create an insinuation there about our lack of commitment to GlobeLink. If that were the case, you would see—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: If the initial report comes back and says, 'No go. This doesn't fly,' you are going to press ahead anyway?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: No, stage 1 and stage 2 will tell us what the best options are for the next steps.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: And that will take four years.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: No.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Just to reassure the committee that I am trying to be helpful, if the money for stages 3 and 4 is allocated in the last year of the forward estimates and stages 1 and 2 are completed earlier, that means nothing is done, no money is spent, no tenders are put out and work on stages 3 and 4 cannot begin unless the Treasurer allows you to bring that money forward; is that correct?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: If I can take you to the third paragraph, it says that an initial business case will be undertaken in 2018-19, which is the first time line, and will identify timing and delivery of further stages in the planning process. We have put the money in the budget, but we want to wait until stage 2 tells us when we should be spending the next lot of money.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Why would you not put that money when you expect stages 1 and 2 to be complete, rather than at the end of the forward estimates?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I do not see any issue with our doing that if stage 1 and stage 2 tell us to move immediately to stages 3 and 4.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: So you have a letter from the Treasurer saying that he is happy for you to bring that money forward?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: It is subject to a future budget process, but it is there inside the forward estimates.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: So, subject to future budget processes, the minister can give no assurance to the committee that the business case for GlobeLink will be completed within this term of the parliament.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I can give every assurance.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Thank you very much. That is the part I was after.

The CHAIR: My agenda says that at 12 noon we are to move to the South Australian Public Transport Association between 12pm and 1pm. I would like to stick to the agenda.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: That is unfortunate, sir.

The CHAIR: That is the agenda and it was agreed to. Minister, we will call for questions. Member for West Torrens.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Thank you. I refer to Budget Paper 5, page 107. What bus routes will be cut as a result of the government's \$46.6 million cut to public transport services?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: That decision is being worked through at the moment. We are having discussions with the bus contractors in relation to how we make those changes. When those discussions and that consultation are finished, we will then run through a communications strategy with South Australia about how we implement that.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Why will the minister not reveal which routes are being cut?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Because we are negotiating with the bus contractors around it.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: It sounds like you have decided which routes are to be cut but you just will not make that public.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: No, what I am saying is that we are currently in consultation with the people who operate the services about the best way to do it.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: But you pay for the service?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: We do—well, when you say 'you', you mean taxpayers.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Taxpayers, yes. You have entered into discussions with the providers of the service. Have you provided a short list of routes you think should be cut?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: A list of options is currently being worked through and consulted on.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Can you table that for the committee in the interests of openness and transparency that the government is apparently so famous for?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I will take on notice whether it is appropriate for us to do so.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: They are the public's routes; we are the ones who pay for them. Surely the public has a right to know which ones are being considered to be cut. People have to make plans with their lives to get to and from work. Surely it is reasonable.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: There is also a degree of commercial confidentiality around that and the fact that we are talking to private operators about how we deliver this. What I am seeking not to do is jeopardise any of those discussions or jeopardise any of their commercial confidentiality. I agree with you, member for West Torrens, that South Australians deserve to know what changes to public transport timetables are going to happen. That is why there is going to be a very strong community engagement program when the decisions are made.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Are you going to consult with the public about these routes, or is it just with the private contractors?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I think that we have been pretty clear about the principles we are using around this; that is, we are looking at low patronage and duplicative services. They are the

ones that we are looking at. The department is in contact with and gets feedback from South Australians about public transport services all the time. It is a fantastic system. There are ongoing systems in place.

The reason I say this is that public transport provision is not a static thing. Patronage moves and changes as parts of our city are developed and also as patterns change. For instance, levels of workforce at large worksites fluctuate up and down, and there is the closure of Holden and the increase out at Techport that are to be provisioned. The nature of our road network also changes. For instance, if you build a park-and-ride at Paradise that people have been calling for for a long time, that is going to change the way that public transport services are patronised by locals. I have been quite impressed by how the continuous feedback mechanism works within the department.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: With all due respect, minister, that is not what I asked you. I understand that the department is in regular contact with its commuters, fielding complaints and seeking feedback. That is not what I am asking you. You are consulting with the private operators on routes that you say are going to be cut because of your government's withdrawal of \$46.6 million in funding for these routes. What I am asking you is: will you consult with the public about those routes? Will you consult with the public about the process that you are going through, or is it just a process between the government and the contractors? Is the public shut out of this decision-making process?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: At the moment, we are undertaking consultation with the bus companies, but, at a later stage, there will be a strong engagement process with the public.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Minister, my concern is that the engagement process is you telling the public what routes you have cut rather than having a discussion with the public about what routes you are going to cut. I think it is important that you get feedback because people who lose a public transport route might not have alternative means to get to and from where they need to be. So are you going to consult with people before you make the decision?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: We are constantly consulting with people around that but, quite clearly, we need to come to a landing on the changes to services before we can announce what they are. At that point in time, through a very strong engagement program, I have no doubt that the public of South Australia are going to be talking to us about how these changes affect them.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: You gave an exclusive story to News Limited about certain routes costing very large subsidies to DPTI to operate. Which routes were they?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: That is currently the subject of the consultation with the bus operators.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: You gave financial information about routes to a news outlet, which they ran prominently, saying that there were very heavy subsidies. What the committee is asking you is: which routes were you talking about in that news article?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: We do not have those on us at the moment.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: You do not know which routes you gave to News Limited?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: What we made was a broad statement in relation to the fact that there are over 10 services that cost on average over \$100 per person.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Which services are they?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: There are also, as I understand it, over 100 services that cost over \$50 per person.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: What are the 10 services that you talked about?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I do not have that information here.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Can you get that for the house and get back to us?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I am happy to take that on notice and provide what is appropriate.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: No, that is not what I am asking you. You have made public statements to News Limited about these routes, and you use them as an argument for making a

\$46 million cut to public transport. Do you not think that the public at the very least deserve to know which routes you are talking about? How is this unreasonable?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Again, we are in consultation at the moment with the bus operators in relation to that.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Minister, I am trying very desperately to be as reasonable as I possibly can.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I do not think that is true.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: You have made public statements about 10 routes. All I am saying is that the committee deserves to know which routes you are talking about. If there are 10 routes that cost you more than \$100 per passenger and you are happy to talk about that publicly, why do the people who use those routes not have a right to know which ones you are talking about?

The CHAIR: You have made your question clear, member for West Torrens. The minister has the call.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: At the moment we are in consultation with bus operators. Once those decisions are made we are going to be engaging very strongly with the public in relation to those changes.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Why are the contractors more important than the public who use those routes?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: There is a degree of commercial confidentiality that we need to maintain, and we need to make sure that we work that process through. Very clearly they are the ones that provide the services. I know that the opposition is attempting to scare South Australians about what these changes potentially mean.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: No, you are. You gave it to the paper, not me.

The CHAIR: Minister.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I think that was a statement rather than a question.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Mr Chairman, the minister just said I am attempting to scare South Australians. I am not the one who went to News Limited and said there are 10 bus routes that cost more than \$100 per passenger to operate. All I am asking is: which are those routes? If you do not have it here, can you give a commitment to the committee that you will give it to us on notice?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I am happy to take on notice and provide what is appropriate.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Do any of your advisers know which routes they are?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I have already said I am going—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Could you please ask your advisers if they know which routes they are?

The CHAIR: No, member for West Torrens—

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I am not sure—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I am asking the minister, not the advisers, sir.

The CHAIR: Yes, but you are suggesting to the minister what he might do.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Can you ask your advisers, sitting next to you—

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: And I have already committed—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: —if they know which routes you are talking about.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I have committed to taking that on notice.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: And you will give us—the committee—the 10 routes that cost more than \$100 per passenger to operate?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I have already taken it on notice.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I do not know why the minister is being so opaque here. It is not his style. Today he is acting out of character.

The CHAIR: The member for West Torrens has the call. Next question.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: At what point during the election campaign did the Liberal Party announce they were cutting public transport services?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I think that relates to a time before we came to government. What I am happy to talk about is what is in the budget.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: The Treasurer in his speech made statements about this budget delivering on all their election commitments.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: That is true.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: So I refer you to the budget speech. I ask you again: at what point did you, or the former shadow minister whom you replaced, or any of your candidates, make public statements before the election that you would be cutting bus routes by \$46 million?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: In our election costing document, which does not form part of the budget, I might add, we talked about needing to deliver an efficiency dividend as part of how we would pay for our election commitments. Quite clearly, that savings measure exists across agencies. We made specific commitments in relation to front-line workers. But I would also say—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Public transport is front line, is it not?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: But what I would also say, member for West Torrens, is that we are also dealing with budget savings measures that were put in place as part of the Mid-Year Budget Review and previous savings measures of former governments, including when you were the treasurer, that we also need to deal with. In fact, there are parts of this budget that show that the decisions taken by the former government have created in large part the financial task that we have had to clean up since coming to government.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: In consideration of the cuts, has the minister made a decision on which train services will be cut, given they are operated exclusively by DPTI and not contractors?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: We are not talking about train services in relation to this measure.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: So no train services will be cut as a result of the \$46 million efficiency?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Not at this point.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Not at this point. So it is all bus routes?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: What we have said publicly in relation to this measure is that, again, we are looking at duplicate services where there are, for instance, tram and buses running in parallel or buses and trains that run in parallel. Yes, that is essentially what we are going to achieve in relation to that.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I refer you to Agency Statements, Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 175, performance indicators. Can the minister please explain to the committee how he plans to meet his target to increase total boardings for public transport services from 65.2 million in 2017-18 to 66.6 million in 2018-19 when he is cutting \$46.6 million from public transport?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Quite clearly, what we are talking about here is making savings in relation to low-patronage services and duplicative services. By their very nature, the services we are talking about do not contribute to the 60 million-trip target. Since coming into government, we have reaffirmed the decision taken by the former government to improve timetables in relation to train services, and we expect that will drive patronage. We are also in the process of expending more money in other parts of the network. I would expect that when the Gawler train electrification, for instance, comes onstream, that will be a driver for patronage.

This is obviously where the opposition likes to focus on the savings measures side of the equation, especially on stage 2 of the Gawler line electrification. I might add that you need to do both stages to get an electric train to run on the line; by doing stage 1 to Salisbury, you can get the train to the depot. Everybody on the Gawler line at peak hour is currently experiencing capacity issues. Electrification of the entire line needs to be undertaken, and that is what we negotiated with the federal government. That is why I was extremely excited to sign off on stage 2 of the Gawler electrification, which is being undertaken by Lendlease.

We are here to drive better patronage within the public transport network. We have also reduced the cost for some fare types in relation to public transport usage. We believe that cost driver will also be a way for us to drive patronage growth.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: When you talk about the \$46.6 million efficiency from public transport services, what do you expect the FTE reduction to be?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Given that the bus services are franchised, any changes to those services will be a matter for those companies, and that is why we are talking to them at the moment. Again, that is something we are currently in consultation on.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: So you are not going to give the committee an FTE estimate on the cut?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The FTEs that exist within the budget are public servants. The bus drivers are not captured as part of the budget because we do not employ them.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: You do not have an estimate from the companies in your consultation with them about what this reduction in numbers will mean for them?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: We are currently in negotiation with them.

The CHAIR: The member for Davenport has a question.

Mr MURRAY: I refer to the same table the member for West Torrens referred to, which is Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 175, and I have two related questions. The 2017-18 budget had 54.1 million boardings, excluding free travel, as a budget target; the estimated result came in at roughly 1.5 million trips lower than that. At the same time, I note that the number of free trips, 'Boarding—free travel', increased from 8.8 million budgeted to 9.8 million actual. I wonder whether the minister has any insight into how it is possible to plan to have 1.5 million extra trips taken and at the same time there is a blowout of one million free trips? It seems to be a considerable number.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Over the past year, we see that the reduction in the number of boardings for public transport services from that 2016-17 figure to the 2017-18 figure was down, and it was also down on the target. The reason for that is that the Torrens rail junction works were undertaken. That necessitated the closure of the Gawler line and the Outer Harbor line at various times. The Gawler line is the most highly patronised service within our train network, and that meant there was a reduction in the number of passengers.

I am advised that the increase in free travel is due in large part to the patronage of the Footy Express and other subsidised services. Essentially, people are using the Footy Express and other ostensibly free transport services provided by the government and cost recovered through the events.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: On Budget Paper 5—

The CHAIR: Minister, have you finished your response?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The only other part of it that I will say that explains the increase in free travel is the fact that, where we provide bus substitutes for rail closures, that also constitutes increased free travel. So the fact that one has gone up and the other has gone down actually goes together.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I refer to Budget Paper 5, page 120. Why did the government cut the Tea Tree Plaza O-Bahn projects?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: We did not.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I remind you that you are in the parliament.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Sorry, the question was: why did we cut TTP?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Yes.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: We did not.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: What is the new word for cut?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I do not understand what the member for West Torrens is getting at. If I explain this—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: You know exactly what I mean. I am giving you the budget reference. It is a very clear project that was scheduled to be constructed and the minister is not proceeding with it. Why?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: That is not it at all. I have given an answer previously to the house on this. I have also made many public statements on this. The fact is that there is \$15 million that was provided in the last budget for park-and-rides. We added to that with \$18½ million. What we have said is that we believe that the Paradise park-and-ride is the highest priority.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: That is not what I asked.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Hold on a second. We believe that the second priority is in relation to the Golden Grove park-and-ride. What the budget quite clearly says here is that Klemzig and Tea Tree Plaza park-and-rides, which we still believe to be a priority but quite clearly a lower priority than those of Paradise and Golden Grove, will be done subsequent to that.

What I would also say is that the Golden Grove park-and-ride will actually also help to benefit those people who park at Tea Tree Plaza because, given the proximity, there would be a number of people who come from in and around that Golden Grove area who are utilising the current Tea Tree Plaza park-and-ride. Our ability to provide a park-and-ride out at Golden Grove will help, in some way, to relieve some of that pressure. But we are keen to deliver all of them.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Okay, so you say you have not cut it. A contract was awarded in February to the Public Transport Projects Alliance.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Now you should be very careful here what you say.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: What happened to that contract? If you have not cut them, when does construction start?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Sorry, can you ask that question again?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Sure. The contract was awarded in February to Public Transport Projects Alliance. What happened to that contract? If you have not cut the project, when do they begin construction?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: This is where the member for West Torrens is attempting, I think, to be quite cheeky. There was a contract that was awarded in February to PTP in relation to having a look at the concept planning for a park-and-ride. That work is continuing on.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Did you consult with the member for King and the member for Newland before you decided not to proceed with Tea Tree Plaza O-Bahn projects?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I talk to my colleagues all the time, I think—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: And they are supportive of the delay?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: —that the member for King is extremely excited, given that the Golden Grove park-and-ride was one of the central platforms of her election campaign.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Was the member for Newland equally as excited?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The member for Newland is extremely excited to have a government that is investing a whole heap more in the north-east. Those investments exist both inside and outside

the budget line we are talking about now, but this is a fantastic budget that delivers for the people of the north-east.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: You have cut O-Bahn projects, you are cutting bus routes, you are closing Service SA centres and you are privatising health services. Do you have anything personally against the north-eastern suburbs?

The CHAIR: That is probably out of order, member for West Torrens. Well, it is out of order.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Can I move to Budget Paper 5, page 119. Given that the minister has, I think, handled the right-hand turn of the tram appallingly and shown his inexperience, can you please tell us now when the tram will turn right?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I am eagerly awaiting an engineering report that is due to come to me very soon, and that will tell us what the next steps are in relation to this project. I point out that the money is there in the budget as we promised at the election.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: When you were sworn in as minister, did your colleague, the former shadow minister for transport and infrastructure, the Hon. David Pisoni, the current Minister for Industry and Skills, inform you of the complexities of installing a right-hand turn given that he signed off on a Public Works Committee report that went into extensive details about the issues of such a project?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I do not necessarily think that I am responsible to the parliament for discussions that were had before I became minister, but this is a commitment that we took to the election. It is here in the budget papers. We are awaiting an engineering report, and that will tell us what the next steps are.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: The opposition has a series of FOIs, and the government has obstructed the release of these FOIs about the right-hand turn and the subsequent internal review. Why are you delaying the release of these FOIs?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I am not delaying the release—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: You are an FOI accredited officer?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I am not the accredited officer within our office that handles FOIs.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Has anyone in your office prevented the department from releasing these FOI determinations?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: With respect to the term 'preventing the release of', there is a normal process that is undertaken for FOIs that is ongoing, and my office will comply with the processes it has undertaken.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Has the department advised you to release the FOIs to the opposition?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I will have to take that question on notice.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Thank you, I would appreciate it if you would. Is the minister aware that the Ombudsman's office wrote to the Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure on Tuesday last week ordering that the department release FOI determinations by 2 October?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I must admit I have not seen that correspondence.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Well, given that you have not, do you want to release it today and show us that you are open and transparent?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I will need to take advice in relation to whatever the Ombudsman letter you say exists says.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Can the minister assure the committee that he will ensure that his office and the department release that FOI and the direction of the Ombudsman by 2 October?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Taking away the presupposition that exists within that question, my office will comply with all provisions of the FOI Act.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I want to go to ministerial office resources.

Ms Bedford interjecting:

The CHAIR: Member for Florey, you have a question? You have the call.

Ms BEDFORD: Yes, I do. I just want to get back to the Tea Tree Plaza O-Bahn, if I could, which is Budget Paper 5, page 120. What is the current number of commuters on the O-Bahn from, say, Golden Grove to the city?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: We will have to take that on notice, member for Florey.

Ms BEDFORD: Are there any projections for growth in the O-Bahn passenger load at peak?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Yes, there are.

Ms BEDFORD: What are they?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: We will have to take that on notice.

Ms BEDFORD: My information is that roughly a quarter of the O-Bahn load gets on at Tea Tree Plaza. I know you have said that the scoping work is still happening and that the reprioritisation is somewhere into the future. Are there any plans to upgrade some of the works on the concourse, like better signage, better access? I do not know whether you have ever been there, but if you walk across there on a wet and windy day there is nothing left of you by the time you get there.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Member for Florey, a north-east public transport study is currently being undertaken, and that is work that is continuing and I look forward to receiving that in due course. We are also, as one of our 10 priorities for Infrastructure South Australia, looking at extending the O-Bahn out to Golden Grove. We also are in the early stages of development of our new South Australia Public Transport Authority.

I think it is fair to say that we are looking at creating a strong degree of change within the way that we deliver public transport services to make sure that they are better and more appropriately delivered. The idea that we have is that we want to move to a system that moves more people more efficiently, and that it provides a better level of customer service. I think it is fair to say that we are delivering public transport services the same way that we have done for decades, and that the ability to provide public transport (PT) in a new and better way is evolving every day.

There is a whole heap of new and different ways from mobility to service, on-demand trials and all sorts of things that are happening around the globe that we need to look at to see whether they will work for South Australia. When it comes to PT services in the north-east there are plans on the table. There is a whole heap of things that we are investigating. I look forward to being able to announce improved public transport services for the north-east.

Ms BEDFORD: Surely better signage does not require a big study and, whoever's idea it was to make the writing on bus stops smaller, I do not know why they thought it was a good idea because the majority of the population is getting older. Signage is not a big deal I would not have thought.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I assume, member for Florey, that you are talking about a specific area.

Ms BEDFORD: The O-Bahn platform at Tea Tree Plaza is very hard to work out where you are standing.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I am more than happy to take that on notice and have a look at it.

Ms BEDFORD: I have not done an in-depth study at the other ones, but I might do that, too. Your signage is not really good. If you go to places overseas, dare I say it the signage is much better.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I am more than happy to look at it.

Ms BEDFORD: There are old reps in there somewhere buried, but I will write you a new one.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I refer to Budget Paper 5, page 106. Will the government provide a funding package to Great Southern Rail to ensure the continued operation of the *Overland* train service between Adelaide and Melbourne from 2019 onwards?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I am actually due to catch up with GSR in the coming weeks. Those negotiations are still ongoing and I look forward to a good resolution.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Do you have money in contingency in the budget?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: We will have to take that on notice.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Is the minister aware this affects 30,000 people?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: As I understand it, there are about 10,000 people a year who use the service from Adelaide to Melbourne.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: The advice I have is 30,000. It is 10,000?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: My advice is 10,000.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: What would the cost of the funding package be?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I think that is a hypothetical question and, quite clearly, I need to sit down with GSR and have a discussion with them about their plans for their business and how the government can best support that. Quite clearly, I need to have those discussions first.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: You realise, of course, this does service people between Murray Bridge and Bordertown as well?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: We would have to take that on notice.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: If I can move on to page 109 of the same budget paper, why does the state budget include \$600,000 for an Adelaide tram business case for the extension of tram services in the CBD when the Premier has ruled out extending the tram network?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The Premier has made no such statement. In fact, that \$600,000 relates to one of our 10 priorities that we want to send to Infrastructure South Australia in relation to a potential city loop service.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: You are telling the committee and the parliament that the Premier made no such public statements?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: He made specific statements in relation to The Parade tram service, but I think we have been very clear in saying that we are open to exploring tram extensions out to North Adelaide, and—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: You do not want to nuance your answer at all?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: —also one of our 10 priorities is to have a look at a city loop tram service and the viability of that, which is why, in line with our election commitment, there is \$600,000 in the budget.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Did the government reject \$185 million from the commonwealth government to undertake a tram extension?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: To correct the member, it was not \$185 million, as was reported publicly; I think it was \$120 million. It is fair to say that we do not have any current plans besides the right-hand turn for tram extension. We are exploring the city loop. We would also have an open mind in relation to the extension of the tram out to North Adelaide.

We have constant discussions and negotiations with the federal government about jointly funded infrastructure priorities. I think those discussions have yielded some very good results in relation to Port Wakefield duplication, Gawler line electrification stage 2, Joy Baluch, Regency to Pym and also the money that is there in the out years for the next stages of the north-south corridor.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: So Regency to Pym is in the budget, is it?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Yes, mate.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Which year?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: What is it called here?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Regency to Pym it is called.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 165, north-south corridor, Regency Road to Pym Street, \$354,000 million, total project cost, of which \$40 million is in the 2018-19 financial year.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: So \$40 million?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: In the 2018-19 financial year.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: And 2019-20?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I am happy to take that on notice. We expect the construction of that project to start in late 2019, which is what we said on 9 May, when we announced the project.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: And the money is allocated in the budget across the forward estimates for that project?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Yes.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Budget Paper 5 or Agency Statements—

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Can I also point out that this is now—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: You raised it. I did not raise it. You raised Regency to Pym, not me. You raised it in an answer.

The CHAIR: In fact, member for West Torrens, the minister was responding to a question I think three questions ago and you interjected with another question, which the minister took.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: And he answered.

The CHAIR: And I appreciate that.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: What was the reference again?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Page 165.

The CHAIR: Just where we are at now, member for West Torrens, I will give the minister the call.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Of which budget paper?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Budget Paper 4, Volume 3.

The CHAIR: I will give the minister the call.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: It is \$354 million, June 2022 completion, \$40 million in this year.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Yes, you have \$40 million in the budget.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: In 2018-19.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: So the question I ask you is: do you have any money allocated in the budget in 2019-20, 2020-21—

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Yes.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: What is the profile?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I am happy to get you that.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: You will come back to the committee with that answer?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I am happy to provide it, take it on notice.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Thank you very much. I refer you now to Budget Paper 5, page 118. Can you explain to the committee why it is costing \$100,000 to install 10 mobile phone charging stations?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: That is the figure that was part of our election costing document.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: It is \$10,000 per charging station?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: That is the money that was allocated as part of the election costing document.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Is it able to withstand a nuclear strike, is it?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: We are currently investigating that cost to further refine it.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: But you have budgeted for it; you have had six months.

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, you have asked the question. The minister is answering it and the minister has the call.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Once again, we took to the election a commitment. It is being delivered in this budget. We are providing enough funds to make sure that it occurs. I think the people who will benefit from that at the point at which it happens will be really grateful.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Just for context, what does a bus stop cost on average without a charging station? Would not have a clue? The public transport agency does not know what a bus stop costs?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I think it depends on what you mean.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: A bus stop? Well, it is a place where buses stop and pick people up.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: This is the former minister, Chair. Are we talking about a pole in the ground? Are we talking about a shelter? Are we talking about us needing to do form work and change in relation to road infrastructure to allow a slip lane for a bus?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: That is why I said the word 'average'.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: An average is meaningless unless we understand what exactly is—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Well, I have to say that \$10,000 per mobile phone charging station sounds excessive. I think if you speak to any South Australian, and tell them that the government is spending \$10,000 to install mobile phone charging stations at bus stops, they would like to know what it is that is unique about this mobile phone charging station that makes it cost \$10,000. Are you using gold-plated screws? Why are they so expensive?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Well, member, I would ask you to read it. We are talking about train stations rather than bus stops.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Okay, then: why are train stations costing \$10,000 to put charging stations in?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: We are currently investigating and refining that cost.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Then why have you budgeted \$100,000 for 10?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Because that is the money we said we would provide for it at the election, and we deliver on our election commitments.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: How did you base the cost of 10 at \$100,000? What work did you do to establish that?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I will have to take that on notice. That would have been work done—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Has the agency given you any advice that it could be done cheaper and more efficiently another way?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The agency is currently working through proving up that cost.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: So for the six months you have been in office and the entire budget process, the best you can do is pull out a Liberal Party costing on 10 mobile phone charging stations at \$100,000.

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, that is actually a statement, rather than a question. I will go to—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Sir, I bet the people of Port Lincoln would be outraged to know that a mobile phone charging station costs \$10,000. I bet you regional South Australia could find a lot of uses for that money.

The CHAIR: But when you previously had the call—

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I think the people of Port Lincoln are really excited by the \$11½ million we are spending on the Lincoln Highway, Birdseye Highway and Tod Highway over the 2018-19 budget.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: What do you think they think about you spending \$10,000 for a plug in the wall?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Member for West Torrens, you would have to ask them, but I think—

The CHAIR: I am going to go to the member for Davenport for a question.

Mr MURRAY: Speaking of reasonable, minister, I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 165. I want a little bit of clarity. Again, referring back to the 2017-18 budget for the city tram extension, there was \$46 million—

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Point of order: the member mentioned 2017-18. The minister has on numerous occasions today made it quite clear that he will not refer to 2017-18 because it is not in the budget.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: No, I have not.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: I am just letting you know that, if you do talk about 2017-18, I will ask for a ruling.

Mr MURRAY: We are here to ask questions on the budget papers—

The CHAIR: The reference to 2017-18—

Mr MURRAY: We are here to ask questions on the budget papers. There is \$46 million in the 2017-18 budget, which is on page 165.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: No, the minister said that, when it comes to 2017-18, he would not comment. He will actually only look at his budget.

The CHAIR: Order!

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: I am just asking that the same rules be applied.

Mr MURRAY: So we only get to ask specific questions about specific budgets, not what is in the budget papers; is that what you are saying?

The CHAIR: I agree that it is becoming disorderly. Member for Davenport, if you will just hold, I will deal with the point of order that the member for Light has raised. My recollection of the minister's reference to the period prior to his becoming the minister and the Liberal government being elected was in relation to election promises.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: No, Mr Chairman. I recall that in an earlier session under planning I asked specific questions regarding some matters and the minister said that he would not be providing those answers because it was 2017-18 but that he would be happy to take on notice the 2018-19 ones. I expect the minister to be consistent.

The CHAIR: Let's see how the minister responds. Member for Davenport.

Mr MURRAY: As I said, by way of context, we had \$46 million allocated. We now have a 2017-18 estimated result of \$71 million. The budget paper provides for a total project cost now of some \$80 million. I note that a press release refers to an even higher cost. Can the minister update us on where we are at in terms of expenditure of funds and where the increase in projected budget costs has come from?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I think it is quite timely for this committee to be updated in relation to the city tram extension project and the difficulties in relation to the said project. You are right that \$80 million was due to be expended on this project, but this is a problem-plagued project. Over the last couple of months, the department and I, together with the contractor, have been seeking to fix a series of signalling faults that have occurred. This project was largely constructed between July last year and February this year and, quite clearly, the pinnacle of that was in relation to the shutdown works undertaken in January.

On coming to government, I inherited a project that still had some way to run to actually get operational, especially as, having gone through the testing processes, we found a series of signalling and other faults that related to works conducted when the tram extension was constructed over the summer of this year. We have had to work in a very methodical way, and we are actually taking quite a cautious approach in relation to the testing regime we have put in place to make sure that the tram extension project works properly. I think it is fair to say that the number of faults that have been identified has been extremely frustrating in relation to that work.

What I have also said is that governments and ministers need to take responsibility ultimately for what happens on their watch. It is the way our Westminster system is supposed to work. We have been open and clear with South Australians about where this project is up to at every step along the way. The situation now is that we have a potential blowout of \$44 million on top of the \$80 million to deliver this project. The vast bulk of the overexpenditure that we have had to deal with relates to when the line was constructed. We have had to work our way through that. I am not an engineer—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Then release the reports you have.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I am not an engineer, but when you have a signalling fault, the origin of that fault normally happens when that signalling work is installed. Those signal works were installed when the track was laid and the track was laid during that January shutdown.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Referring to Budget Paper 5, page 119, will the minister give an assurance to this committee that he will table to the parliament all the engineering reports he has received that have led to his assertions today?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I am happy to take that on notice and provide what is reasonable and appropriate. Whether there is an engineering report that concisely talks about that—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: On what basis have you made your accusations?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: These are not accusations, these are the facts.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: On what basis have you made these assertions?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: On the advice and the understanding from the department.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Will you release that advice?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I am more than happy to have a discussion about what is appropriate to release.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Again, this is the point: the minister makes an assertion that something has occurred under Labor's watch, and therefore has led to this delay in extending the tram, but then will not release the advice he has relied upon. I invite the minister—I see all the advisers agreeing the advice should be received. That is excellent. He should provide that. I also ask the minister: how long until the work on the right-hand turn begins?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: In relation to the first question, and again I think it is common sense, the point at which a signalling system is installed is the point at which, if there are subsequent problems, the problem occurs. Unless the member makes an assertion that it is after something has been installed—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I do not have access to your officials; I do not have access to the reports—you do.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Member for West Torrens—

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, you have asked—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: All I know is that you have made statements about things being set in stone and they are not, and now you are making assertions again. What I am saying is: release the advice.

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, we seem to have been here already today. You have asked the question and the minister is answering.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I have been very reasonable, sir.

The CHAIR: The minister has the call.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: In relation to this—I am relying on the benefit of advice and the DPTI officers who are overseeing this construction work—it is fundamental that the point at which something is installed is the point at which, if there is a problem subsequently found, that problem originated. It cannot have happened before then because the signalling system was not there and afterwards it is there, but it relates back to when the signalling system was installed.

The second part of the member's question was in relation to the right-hand turn. I will repeat again for the member that there is money in this budget—page 119—\$9 million in this financial year and \$28 million in the 2019-20 financial year. We have said very clearly that we believe that these two projects need to be looked at separately. The reason for that is that there are some complicated shutdown works that will need to occur for the right-hand turn and we need to make sure that that is done at the most appropriate time of the year. We are waiting for the benefit of engineering advice and I look forward to that in the coming weeks and months.

It is also true to say that the delay in getting the city tram extension project to begin is a contributing factor in being able to move on to this next project.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Was the tram extension managed in accordance with the general conditions of contract GC21?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Yes.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: It was, good. Regarding DPTI's GC21, does that not require contractors to promptly make good all defects so that works comply with the contract?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: You are reading from a document we do not have the benefit of having in front of us.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I am sure your very talented and well-respected advisers, who are sitting alongside you, know exactly what I am talking about. I know he will advise you appropriately.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: It is usual, yes.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Why then were those works not promptly made good?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I think that is what we have been attempting to do over the past number of months.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: No, you have made four statements now about the opening of the tram and today was your fifth. One was set in stone, apparently. I am not sure what kind of stone you use, but the stone I use generally does not break; yours is a little more pliable or flexible. Given the assertions you have made today, why have the contract and the contractor not made good as the project has been going along? Has there been any delay because of the termination of the chief executive who was personally overseeing this contract, Mr Deegan?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Again, to step the member through this, there has been constant discussion and negotiation with the contractor in relation to making good on the works. As has been

publicly stated, there is a list of defects, as there is with any infrastructure project, that we asked the contractor to make good on and we are working through that process.

There are a couple of points that I want to make. The former chief executive was the one actually overseeing the project at the point at which the signalling systems were installed. They were installed on his watch, so the underlying assertion here is that somehow, once he left, the project fell off the rails.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: It looks like it.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I would contend that he was in charge when these issues first appeared.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: That is just an appalling smear on a good man.

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens!

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The second point in relation to this is that we have had to deal with the signalling faults as and when they become apparent through the testing process. You actually need to test to find the faults. The point at which you find the faults is the point at which you can rectify those faults. Your assertion here that somehow the contractor sat on their hands—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: No.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: It is pretty hard to rectify a fault until you find the fault.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: The minister is the one who went out publicly today and said there was a \$44 million cost to taxpayers.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Potentially, yes.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I have just told you that the contract worked under certain provisions that meant if the contractor did something inappropriate, it is their cost. How is there a burden on the taxpayer?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: We are working at the moment to do our best to limit the exposure of taxpayers in relation to those costs.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: But there is no exposure to the taxpayer, is there?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I think the member is getting confused about what is what. This project has become more expensive to deliver, largely because of the issues in relation to when the project was in the installation and construction phase. What we have said today is that there is up to \$44 million worth of blowout attached to this project. At the moment, we are working to try to limit the exposure of taxpayers to that, but I am advised that \$44 million is the upper limit of the exposure that South Australian taxpayers are potentially exposed to.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Even though the contract operated under certain criteria, where the contractor is responsible for faults, you are volunteering that the taxpayer may have been at fault and, therefore, we are liable for remedy works that the contractor installed incorrectly?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I am just being quite careful here, member for West Torrens, because we are still in the process—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Well, you were not very careful at the press conference where you said we were exposed to \$44 million of risk. Why are you careful in here?

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, you have asked your question. The minister has the call.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: We are able to say that the upper limit of the exposure we have is \$44 million, but the details of that are still being worked through a normal claims process. We need to make sure that we preserve the commercial confidentiality of the contractor in relation to this and work through without prejudicing the government's position in relation to these matters.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: How does your press conference assist in that?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: My press conference today outlined to the South Australian taxpayer what they could be on the hook for because of your mess.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I put to you that you used a commercial-in-confidence negotiation for political purposes. I put to you that you have put the taxpayer at risk. I put to you that the contractor is liable for remedies, but you have gone out publicly and stated that the government may be liable for remedy works when the contractor is at fault. This is a grave dereliction of your duty—

Mr CREGAN: Point of order.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: —when you should have been defending the taxpayer. To make a political point, you went out there and tried to make the taxpayer liable, and I think that is disgraceful.

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, there is a point of order.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: The Treasurer should sack you for this.

The CHAIR: Member for Kavel.

Mr CREGAN: It would assist all members of the committee greatly if the member for West Torrens proceeded with the budget item, but also I refer to 97.

The CHAIR: I uphold the point of order. Member for West Torrens, we have had this discussion already today. Your opportunity is to ask questions, rather than make comments or statements.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I am happy to tease out the question in that diatribe.

The CHAIR: Is there anything further you wish to add, minister?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Certainly. Nothing we have done or said has prejudiced our negotiating position with the contractor.

The Hon. A. Piccolo interjecting:

The CHAIR: Member for Light!

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: This is the interesting juxtaposition. I think that we have taken a position as a new government to be as open and transparent as we can be—

Members interjecting:

The CHAIR: Order!

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: —but also to be responsible. I think that it is very responsible of us to have an honest discussion with the South Australian taxpayer about what they could be on the hook for here. I have been asked this question by journalists numerous times over previous months. It is quite clearly something the public want to know about. As we come now to the conclusion of this project, we are in a position to be able to make those figures known. What is interesting, if I explore a counterfactual, is that if we chose not to release this information there would be calls from members of the opposition to release that information and questions about what we are hiding.

As a responsible government, we are as open and transparent as we can be without prejudicing the government's position. We have done everything that we can, and we will continue to do so, to protect South Australian taxpayers in relation to this project and any other project we are undertaking. The only one here who is creating assertions is the member of the opposition.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I have put out no press release regarding this matter. The minister put out a press release and held a press conference.

The CHAIR: Do you have a question, member for West Torrens?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I do, on Budget Paper 5, page 119. The minister has told the committee that the contract operates under a certain standard that leaves the contractor liable

for any remedies. He has then also told the committee that the taxpayer may be liable. Under what circumstance is the taxpayer liable, given the contract conditions?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Quite clearly, there are variations and a claims negotiation process is gone through, and that has a number of steps to run. I would have thought that a former minister would understand that this is something that is usual and that happens on infrastructure projects. It is fair to say that the delays in delivering this infrastructure project have led to increased costs for both the department and the contractor, and we are working through a claims variation process in the usual way. Alerting South Australian taxpayers to where their hard-earned money is potentially going to end up is, I think, responsible. As we are nearing the completion of this project, now is an appropriate time for us to have a discussion with the taxpayers about that.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Have you exercised any options within the contract with the contractors?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I think you will have to be more specific.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Have you used any options that the state has within the contract to minimise the legal risk to the state?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Yes, we have administered the contract in accordance with the terms of the contract.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Have you waived any legal rights? Have you waived any financial settlement?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I am advised no.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: You have made no variations to the contract since 17 March?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I think I need to take that on notice.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Could you also take on notice what those variations to the contract are, if those variations can be made public to the committee or to the parliament and also the cost to the taxpayer of the variations made by the government since 17 March.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I will take on notice what is appropriate to bring back to the house. I note that all infrastructure projects go through a Public Works Committee process as well.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Has the government sought an external legal opinion on its rights under the contract?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Certainly, legal advice has been provided by the Crown Solicitor's Office. There is an opportunity for the CSO to get some of that advice externally, too.

The CHAIR: I can advise the committee that, having reached the appointed time of 1pm, and in accordance with the agreed timetable, the committee stands suspended until 2pm.

Sitting suspended from 13:00 to 14:00.

The CHAIR: Welcome back to the sitting of Estimates Committee A. From 2.00pm until 2.30pm we will be taking questions on roads and marine. Minister, do you have any new faces there that you need to introduce?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: No, mate. The A-team is all here.

The CHAIR: In that case, I invite questions.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 165, investing expenditure summary. Has the minister cut \$1.3 million from the upgrade of the South Para Road and North East Road at Chain of Ponds, as announced by the former Labor government?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Are you talking about the turnout lane at the corner of—what is it? Chain of Ponds and the road that leads to Kersbrook, South Para?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I think so, yes.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: No, that money is still there. It is \$320,000 in this financial year, and then there is some additional money in the next financial year. That upgrade is continuing to go ahead.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: The former Labor government had it budgeted at \$1.3 million.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Yes, but it is split over two financial years.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: So \$300,000 this year and \$1 million next year.

The CHAIR: Is that a yes, minister?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I note that the minister indicated a thumbs up.

The CHAIR: Is that a yes, minister?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The minister has indicated a thumbs up.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Is that a *Yes Minister* answer; is that what you are saying there?

The CHAIR: Very good, member for Light.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: On Budget Paper 5, page 112, will the upgrade of Fosters Road include traffic signals at the Fosters Road-North East Road intersection, as promised by the Liberal Party during the election campaign?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Sorry, your question is: are we going to deliver on the election commitment?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: No, I am asking: will it be a signalised intersection?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I think the member might be confused. We are actually talking about two different spots. We are talking about a roundabout and associated upgrades on Fosters Road. I think you might be referring to an intersection upgrade at the end of Fosters Road and North East Road—two different things.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Are you signalling that intersection at North East Road?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: No.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Therese Kenny, your candidate in that election, committed to fixing that intersection.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I think what you could be referring to is the election commitment that we have in the budget papers here, which is about helping to fix Fosters Road, but we are talking about a different part of Fosters Road.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: The website of the Liberal candidate for Torrens, Therese Kenny, which is still publicly available now—one of the few that still is—says, and I quote, that the Liberals, if they are elected, will fix 'the troublesome and dangerous Fosters Rd/North East Rd intersection'. In an online Messenger article on 28 February 2018, regarding the Labor government's \$7.3 million commitment to upgrade of that intersection with a signalised right turn, the former shadow minister, Mr Pisoni, the member for Unley, is quoted as saying that the state government was 'playing catch-up' on the announcement following sustained advocacy from the Liberal Party and their candidate Therese Kenny.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: There are some traffic management and upgrade works to happen at that intersection, but it does not come in the form of—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Why are you not delivering on your election commitment?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Well, I think we are.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Not according to Therese Kenny and the former shadow minister.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I can only tell you what it is that the department has been working on.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: The Treasurer in his budget speech made it very clear that you are delivering on all your election commitments.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: That is true.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: So when are the signalised intersection works beginning?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Well, we are doing a whole series of treatments around Fosters Road.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: No—the Fosters Road/North East Road intersection.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: There are works to upgrade around that area, yes.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: What are the upgrade works in that area?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: What we are talking about here is essentially as it is outlined in the budget where it says, 'painted median strips, upgraded lighting, bike lanes and modifications to the existing roundabout' down the road. That is the election commitment, and that is what is in the budget to be delivered.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: So Therese Kenny was wrong to inform—

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: You have said some things I cannot establish—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I have not said anything. It is Therese Kenny who said them, and the member for Unley has said them.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Well, Therese Kenny is not sitting in this estimates committee. We are doing significant works to help upgrade traffic management in and around Fosters Road, including in and around the intersection. We are delivering on our election commitment, and I am looking forward to that work getting underway as soon as possible.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Before I go on to further road questions, I refer the minister to ministerial responsibilities and ministerial resources on page 163 of Agency Statements Budget Paper 4, Volume 3. Does the minister own or operate a private email account?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I have my ministerial email account, I have a parliamentary email account and I have a legacy account that exists from my former life.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: There is nothing wrong with that at all.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: That is right. Yes, I have an email address that still exists.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: How many private email account addresses do you have that still exist?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: That is it.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: One? Again, I am not implying any wrongdoing by the minister, so I do not want to—

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: No, I am just trying to be quite clear, that is all.

Mr PATTERSON: Point of order.

The CHAIR: Point of order, member for Morphett.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I refer to ministerial office resources, page 163, Budget Paper 4, Volume 3.

The CHAIR: Ministerial responsibilities: this question has been asked of previous ministers in previous committee hearings, so that question was fair and reasonable under ministerial responsibilities.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: There are. To be extremely clear, there are probably some legacy candidate Liberal email accounts that may still float around, but not that are active or that I have actually used.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: The next question is very important. Since being sworn in as minister, has the minister used any private email account to send or receive email messages?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: To send or receive messages? Maybe to help the member here, who is obviously leading towards a certain outcome—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: No, I am not. I am implying no wrongdoing of this minister at all.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I understand, and I am about to stipulate the fact that I have undertaken no wrongdoing. There are occasions where for various reasons, and almost exclusively except for maybe a response—and I would need to check that, so I qualify that statement—from time to time, certainly in the early days, my parliamentary account was used quite a lot and we had to forward everything to the ministerial email address. I have had to do that a number of times in relation to the Barossa Fine Foods email address, but I am confident that everything I have done to date sits within the guidelines in relation to the State Records Act, making sure that everything is accounted for properly.

I need to make a determination about what is private, what is electorate and what is ministerial, and the people who are writing emails to me do not. I have assessed every email on its merits and dealt with it, as I believed was appropriate.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I take the minister's word for it.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Thanks.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I think it is important because we assume every bit of information the parliament gets is accurate. The minister has said to the parliament that he uses his ministerial account for ministerial business, whether it is his ministerial email or his personal email within government. There is a legacy private email account that often was used because you had made a judgement about whether or not those emails you received were government business and have made them available for the purposes of not only the State Records Act but the FOI Act. These are the two acts relevant to emails. The other point I want to make very clearly is that, if the minister has used a private email for government business, there is nothing wrong with that, if that email is made available for the purposes of the State Records Act and the FOI Act.

The CHAIR: Except, minister for West Torrens—

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: He is coming to a question, I am sure, Chairman.

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, you are not here to make a point; you are here to ask a question.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: What I am asking is: has he sent any emails using any legacy private email accounts conducting government business?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I believe I have done everything in accordance with the FOI Act and the State Records Act.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Thank you very much. I refer to Agency Statements, Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 164. When will construction begin on the Joy Baluch Bridge?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: As the member would appreciate, this is a project that existed in the budget last year.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Yes, thank you very much. That is a lovely acknowledgement.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Hang on. Sorry; no, it is actually listed in here as new projects. To make it clear, there was a state contribution in here last year. What was missing was the \$160 million contribution from the federal government. That is now in this budget.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: That is not what I asked you.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: No, I am getting there. There is a context in which these answers need to be given. The reason that I say that is that the member is asking me for specifics around a time line that we are unable to give at this point because, even though a state contribution and an assumed federal contribution was in last year's budget, we are actually still going through very early stage planning in relation to this project. We are still going through the very early stage business case development concept planning and we still need to go through a tender process. Until we get closer to that, giving a firm date on a time line is difficult.

A budget profile exists for this project that sees it completed within this term of the parliament, but we are still working through the specifics around it, given that you stuck the money in and had not done any work. You did not even have any federal money, but you now sit here asking me whether I have all the answers. We are working on it. We have done some very good work to date to make sure that the project will actually go ahead with a federal contribution.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Will the project be completed before June 2021?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I have said that it will be completed in this term of parliament.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Is not June 2021 the deadline that the minister set?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Until we go further down a business case development and tender process, I cannot give a firmer answer than that.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: So you cannot give us a date on when construction will start, how long it will take and when it will be complete?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I suppose in this job you have to be able to hide the hypocrisy in your back pocket, but not at this stage.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I am not sure what is hypocritical about asking when construction will begin, how long it will take and when it will end. Perhaps the minister can explain to the committee why the opposition's questions about when the construction will begin on the duplication of the Joy Baluch Bridge, how long it will take and when will it finish—why that is hypocritical.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Because if the former government had done its homework I would actually be able to answer that question.

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, we have had this conversation a number of times. You are not able to provide comment or commentary or opinion or make a speech. It is for you to ask a question and for the minister to answer.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Yes, sir, yet I do eloquently, continuously, through the estimates process, and I will continue to do so. Thank you, minister, for letting us know that you cannot give us a start date, construction time and finish date. I am sure the people of Flinders and the people of Stuart will be very pleased to know that their minister has no idea. If we can go now to Agency Statements, Budget Paper 4. Volume 3, page 170—you there, mate?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Yes, mate.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Good. By how much is the government reducing its road maintenance program?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I am advised that the answer is fairly nominal and somewhere south of \$1 million.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: On page 170, under 'Explanation of significant movements', the \$68.1 million increase in expenses is, I quote:

partially offset by:

- budget savings allocations including reductions in the road maintenance program...

The CHAIR: And the question is?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: The question is: the reductions in road maintenance programs are set out in the budget. Why is there no figure allocated alongside it?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Because that figure includes more than just the road maintenance budget.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Did the Liberal Party go to the election promising an increase in regional road maintenance funding?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The Liberal Party went to the election with a commitment to quarantine 30 per cent of royalty revenue to go towards—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: That is not what I asked you.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: It was 30 per cent of royalty revenue—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: That is not what I asked you. I am doing my very best, sir.

The CHAIR: You are, member for West Torrens, but as we have discussed before—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Alright, then, point of order—

The CHAIR: —you are able to ask questions and the minister is able to respond in the manner he sees fit—

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: It is difficult when I am interrupted before I can provide a fulsome response.

The CHAIR: —and the committee then will make of the minister's answer what it will. The member for West Torrens now has the call.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: After 16 long years, regional members have been waiting for a Liberal transport minister to dramatically increase regional road maintenance. Why are you cutting it?

The CHAIR: Member for Torrens, there is point of order.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: West Torrens, sir. My community deserves that at the very least.

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, can you desist for a moment?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Yes.

Mr CREGAN: It is 97, sir.

The CHAIR: You said 96?

Mr CREGAN: It is 97, sir.

The CHAIR: Which is?

Mr CREGAN: Argument and opinion.

The CHAIR: Could you repeat the question, please.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I do not need the question repeated. The answer is that we are not cutting regional road funding.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: You just said that you were cutting it by a million dollars.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: That south of a million dollars is in relation to road maintenance, and that is statewide road maintenance. The question you subsequently asked was actually in relation to regional road funding, which includes more than road maintenance.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: If I can now turn your attention to Budget Paper 5, page 123, can the minister guarantee, and I quote, that the 'review of regional officers and service delivery models in DPTI will not result in the loss of regional jobs or officers'. This is the new regional-focused government.

The CHAIR: While the minister is considering that answer I am going to go back to the point of order raised by the member for Kavel, who quoted standing order 96. I think it is actually standing order 97 that he was probably looking to—

Mr CREGAN: It is 97, sir.

The CHAIR: You did say 97. My apologies, I misheard. I uphold the point the order, and I am going to read the standing order. All members could do well to listen to this. Standing order number 97 states:

In putting any such question, a Member may not offer argument or opinion, nor may a Member offer any facts except by leave of the House and only so far as is necessary to explain the question.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I think the member should know that there is \$500,000 in three years' time. What we are attempting to do is essentially change the service delivery model of how we deliver regional road maintenance contracts. This may, by its nature, change the way some of those road maintenance programs are delivered. In the event that there are likely to be changes to staffing arrangements, there is a range of opportunities for us to be able to explore. I think it is fair to say that staffing within this area is sometimes difficult to procure. In fact, there are times where we do have vacancies within these areas.

To the extent that we are looking to get some operational efficiencies and, to expand this even a little bit further, we are really keen to work with regional local councils around combining DPTI's road maintenance budget with their road maintenance budgets to be able to procure contracts that deliver better bang for buck. To the extent that we do that, there may need to be a change to the way staffing arrangements happen for the internal work that DPTI does and the internal staff who currently undertake some road maintenance programs in the regions.

Going forward, to the extent that we are going to look at changes to the way those arrangements work, there are a number of options in relation to existing DPTI staff, whether that be repurposing within other areas of the department—again, there are vacancies in areas around road maintenance that we could potentially put these people into. There could also be an opportunity for workers to transition to the holders of the new contracts in relation to regional road maintenance.

Overall, our desire is actually not to reduce road maintenance outcomes; it is about driving the dollar further and working with councils to be able to get better economies of scales and efficiencies, and essentially be able to deliver a better service that also saves taxpayers money.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: That is lovely, but I was asking you about regional offices. The question was, again: can the minister guarantee that the review of regional offices and service delivery models will not result in the loss of regional jobs or regional offices?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I think there is a distinction between a regional office and regional jobs. One is a building and—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Are you closing any regional offices? Do I have to really spell it out to you? Are you closing any regional offices as a result of this review? It is a pretty simple answer: yes or no?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: That does form part of this review that we are looking at.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: So you are closing regional offices. How many?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: That is not a decision that has been taken at this point.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: How many are you considering closing?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: That is not a position that we are able to answer—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: How many regional offices are you reviewing?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: All of them.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: So you could close all of them or none of them?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Again, I think I have answered that question.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Mr Chair, given that you are a regional member, are you satisfied that the answer we are getting is, 'I am not going to tell you whether we are closing regional offices or not'? It is a very simple question: are you closing regional offices or aren't you?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: To answer that question—

The CHAIR: Just a moment. The member for West Torrens has addressed the Chair, but in fact the minister's answer does not need to satisfy me—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: It should, sir.

The CHAIR: —it needs to satisfy the member asking the question and the committee generally. Minister.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: To answer the question, member for West Torrens, I think that the member for Flinders is really excited by the fact that we are putting \$11½ million into road upgrades in his electorate over this coming year. That is more money than Eyre Peninsula has seen on road maintenance for a while. I do not think that there is any concern from the people of the EP that we are not going to invest in country roads. More than that, what your question presupposes is that there is only one way to deliver road maintenance contracts, and that is quite clearly not the case.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: No, that is not my question. My question was very clear.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: And the question contains a presupposition.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: On a point of order of relevance, my question was: 'Budget Paper 5, page 123: can the minister guarantee that his review of regional offices and service delivery models will not result in the closure of regional offices?' He said, no, he cannot. Then I am asking: how many regional offices does he think may close as a result of this review: all, half, none?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I think we need to undertake the review before I can answer that question. I understand where the opposition is trying to go, and that is they think we are going to be cutting regional road maintenance funding. That is not—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: No; I am asking you about regional offices.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: If I am allowed to finish the question.

The CHAIR: The minister has the call.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: There are many ways to deliver regional road maintenance contracts. The existing way that we deliver those services is probably not optimal. There are some examples across the West Coast of us being able to achieve these outcomes. If we are able to deliver operational efficiencies that allow us to drive our road maintenance dollar further, so we can clean up more road using the bucket of money we have been given, then I think that is a fantastic outcome. It underscores the fundamental flaw in the way the Labor Party looks at the way we spend taxpayers' dollars. We prefer to measure by outcomes as opposed to measure by inputs. It is not necessarily about how much money we can throw at a problem: it is about what outcomes we get.

It is why we are looking to invest as much as we can in what is going to deliver the best outcomes for regional roads. It may not be the most exciting of projects. It may be simple, boring things like shoulder sealing, which can work to reduce the level of fatality and serious injury by 40 per cent. If I can find ways to optimise road maintenance contracts to be able to make sure there is more money for those things or to make sure the roads are safer so that we can start to reduce further the regional road toll, then those are things we will undertake.

In terms of the idea that we cannot change anything within the way the Public Service delivers projects simply because the status quo is comfortable for those who have a fundamental misunderstanding of the way the world is currently operating, everybody needs to take a deep breath and move on.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: That will send a shiver up the spine of your regional members. Nevertheless, we can move on to Budget Paper 5, page 107. The Regional Roads and Infrastructure Fund will spend \$315 million over the forward estimates compared with \$341 million over the four years that was being invested in country road maintenance and safety projects under

the former Labor government. Why has the minister slashed regional roads funding by \$26 million? I thought hashtag #RegionsMatter.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: This is a furphy that the opposition has been spreading around for a long time, so I want to clear up some facts in relation to the Regional Roads and Infrastructure Fund. You have actually provided the wrong page reference. We are not on 109, Budget Paper 5. It has nothing in there, but I am sure we will find the appropriate one. The figure that is in there actually complies with our election commitment, which is 30 per cent—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: A cut.

The CHAIR: The minister has the call, member for West Torrens. You have asked your question.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: C-u-t—cut.

The CHAIR: The member for West Torrens will refrain from interjecting.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I fundamentally reject that, Chair.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Well, I have here a press release, dated July—

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, order!

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: —dated January—

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, order, please!

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Dated 20 February, sir.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: If the member for West Torrens would actually like an answer—

The CHAIR: We have two minutes left in this session. Minister, continue your answer.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: This is where you can use figures to shuffle around and make things seem bigger than they really are. What is in the budget papers under that budget measure is the amount that equates to 30 per cent of the estimated mineral and petroleum royalty revenue over the next four years. That money there and the money that that is going to be expended on only includes regional road funding. It does not include any federal funding. It does not include any funding money that we expend on marine assets. It also does not include the about 11 point something million dollars that we are spending on the APY lands, which forms part of a separate budget line.

We have complied with our election commitment, and that is to make sure that we put in the budget papers numbers that reflect what the election commitment was. Whatever figures the opposition has been using—this \$94.1 million, or whatever million dollar figure that you have been throwing around for the past number of weeks—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: It is a DPTI press release from 20 February, saying \$341 million is to be spent on regional areas.

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, you are called to order.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: It is your own agency's press release.

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, you are called to order.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I am explaining why those two figures are not an apples with apples comparison.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: That is extraordinary.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: It is the truth.

The CHAIR: Have you concluded your—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: No, sir.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Actually, sir, there is more that I want to put on the record to answer that question. Regional members—and I speak specifically about the members for Frome, Goyder

and Narungga—are finally getting an answer on the overpass and duplication in relation to Port Wakefield. I think about the member for Port Augusta, who is finally going to see some works done around the Joy Baluch Bridge. I think about the member for Mount Gambier and the member for MacKillop, who are actually going to see a Penola bypass delivered in their lifetime—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: A Labor commitment.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: No, it is not.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: It is.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: In fact, the former Labor government refused the handout that the federal government gave it—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: No, that is not true.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: They refused to accept the federal money that was on offer. We made sure post election that that money was still available and ready to be secured.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Like your tram at \$185 million.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: These are—

The CHAIR: The member for West Torrens will desist with these interjections.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: These are projects that I am extremely proud, as a regional member of this parliament, to deliver for the people of regional South Australia and any suggestion from any member of the opposition that we are somehow cutting regional road funding is false. We have a bias towards spending and putting more money back into the regions in a way that the Labor Party will never understand because when they go into the regions they think it is as simple as putting on an Akubra and a pair of chinos and having a country cabinet, which was just a circus and an exercise in futility. We now have a government where almost half of the members on our side of the chamber come from regional areas. We live in these communities and we deliver for these regional communities.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Why are they voting for a cut?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I think that the next time—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: It shows you how powerless they are.

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens!

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The next time the Labor Party wants to go into country South Australia and spruik anything, they need to take a good hard long look at the neglect that the people of my community and other regional communities have had to wear over the past 16 years.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Budget Paper 5, page—

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, the time has come, according to my agenda.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: That is a shame, sir. I have two press releases, by the way, showing regional road funding of \$341 million.

The CHAIR: In fact, member for West Torrens, time has expired, as they say. We are moving now to questions relating to Service SA, between now and 3pm. Minister, do you have an opening statement or any change in advisers?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: No, sir.

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I refer to Budget Paper 5, page 124. Why was Tanya Lancaster sacked?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Service SA is a part of government that was given back to DPTI as part of the machinery of government changes on 1 July. I have given information to the committee previously about the over \$11 million worth of savings target the former government had for

Service SA and certainly the \$4 million plus that the current government has also added to that, delivering about a \$16 million plus saving over the forward estimates that we are going to need to deliver. To deliver a kind of change to a business like Service SA, which is seeing fundamental technological change and changing patterns and behaviours in the way that people engage with the department, given the fact that—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Point of order: I did not ask about the operations of Service SA. I asked why Ms Tanya Lancaster was terminated.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The answer to that question is entirely relevant in the answer that I am giving, and providing context is important when we are talking about somebody's career.

The CHAIR: The minister is coming to—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Why did you sack her?

The CHAIR: Order, both of you! The minister is coming to his answer and the minister has the call.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Mr Chairman, I did not sack Ms Lancaster.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: The person sitting next to you did. Can they tell us why?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Pardon?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: The person sitting next to you did. Can you tell us why?

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens and minister, can I remind you that all questions and answers actually come through the Chair. I would rather you did not have conversations across the floor.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: The person who did terminate Ms Lancaster is sitting alongside the minister. Could he please ask the public servant why Ms Lancaster was terminated and the reasons for which she was terminated.

The CHAIR: I do not know that that is quite how it works, member for West Torrens.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Yes, it is, sir.

The CHAIR: You can ask the minister a question.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I thought I had to go through you. Which one is it?

The CHAIR: You ask the minister a question through me.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Could the minister please ask his acting chief executive why she terminated the services of Ms Tanya Lancaster?

The CHAIR: And the minister may or may not choose to do that.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I think I did, and that is why I was attempting to answer.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Well, tell us.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: And I was.

The CHAIR: Let's cut the conversation.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: We have an organisation that is changing, that needs to change. There are existing budget pressures and a new savings task that this business unit is going to have to deal with, and we will need somebody who will deliver strong change within that organisation.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Skill set.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: And we require a different skill set.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Did Ms Lancaster ever speak to the minister about her opposition to the closure of any Service SA centres?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I have never had any conversation and I have never met Ms Lancaster, at least not that I am aware of.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I take your word for it. Did Ms Lancaster ever provide any advice to DPTI or the minister arguing against the selected closures of Service SA centres?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Certainly I have had no contact with Ms Lancaster. I am not sure whether my officers have, but certainly they have not brought anything to my attention. In relation to conversations that were had inside the department between various managers and reporting lines through the chief executive, I do not think that is appropriate to traverse in this committee. I am also very keen to make sure that we do not use this chamber to smear anybody's reputation.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: No, I agree. Did Ms Lancaster—I will rephrase this question.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Because he was about to smear her.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: No. Did the minister ever intervene to stop the Gawler Service SA centre from closing?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: No.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Did the minister ever mention to anyone in DPTI that the Gawler Service SA centre is frequented by constituents from Schubert and therefore must be left open?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: No.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Never. Would it surprise the minister to know that the Modbury Service SA centre has more traffic than the Gawler Service SA centre?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: It would not surprise me, but then, member, that is not the basis on which the decision was made.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: So with bus routes, you are looking at the ones that are least patronised. With Service SA centres, the ones that are most frequented and the ones that are least frequented are not options as to which ones are being closed. Is that the logic you bring to the two very different forms of cuts you are making?

The CHAIR: You have asked your question, member for West Torrens.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: In the question also lies the answer. They are two very different sorts of organisational reforms that are being undertaken. In relation to the Service SA centres, we needed to make a decision based on a degree of level of equity of access around the state. It is why the decisions were based predominantly around proximity to other Service SA centres, rather than based on patronage. A lot of other work is to be going on over the next few months in relation to Service SA and the reason is this: I am not sure that there are many people out there who enjoy going to a Service SA centre.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: It is going to get a whole lot worse because of you.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: It is a function and a task that people need to perform to comply with government regulation.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: That is right—and you are closing them, making more long lines.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Providing more opportunity for people to be able to access these services online, in the comfort of their own home, without having to go to the trouble and expense of either driving or catching public transport to a centre, or, for instance, being able to go to a post office, which is likely to be closer to where they live than a Service SA centre, seems to me to be a worthy cause for us to engage in. There is also a reform piece that we will be undertaking in relation to looking at why people have to go to a Service SA centre in the first place.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Why did you not do that first before you closed them?

The CHAIR: The member for West Torrens will cease his interjections. The minister is answering. The minister has the call.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Well, actually he is not, sir. I asked a question about the difference between the logic of closing Service SA centres that have lower traffic rather than the ones that have higher traffic. He has chosen to close the ones that are patronised more frequently by members. He is talking about something completely different.

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, I appreciate the point you are making and the question you asked. As far as I can tell, the minister was developing his answer to your question.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I think that if we can use this reform process—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Reform? It is a cost-saving measure; it is not a reform.

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, will you cease interjecting?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: But it is not a reform, sir. He is making cuts.

The CHAIR: You have asked a question; he answers. The minister has the call and the member for West Torrens will cease interjections after he has had the opportunity to ask many questions. Minister—and he will be heard in silence.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: If we have the opportunity to give people alternatives to having to drive and line up at a Service SA centre, I think that is a fantastic outcome. If we give greater opportunity for people to undertake transactions online, if we give people greater opportunity to undertake transactions at either third-party service delivery agencies or at Australia Post, if we remove the need for somebody to actually have to go to a Service SA centre in the first place, then that is the direction we should be heading in. That is how you cut red tape and that is part of the reform project we are going to be undertaking.

There are also some fundamental cost drivers not only for government but for individuals in going to a Service SA centre. A digital report undertaken by the former government—I think it is a Deloitte report from 2015—outlines the difference in cost between somebody undertaking a transaction online versus somebody doing a transaction in a Service SA centre. Very interestingly, it was a goal of the former government to get 95 per cent of transactions that people have to undertake with government available to be done online.

Off the top of my head, the former government got to about 75 per cent by 2016, 2017 or thereabouts. The reason we need to head that way is, quite simply, because it is cheaper for people and it is cheaper for government. If we are not spending money on regulatory processes, we have more money in our pocket to do other things. It costs—and again, this is a former government report—approximately \$17 to complete a face-to-face transaction and, by comparison, just 40¢ for an online transaction, \$12.90 for a postal transaction and \$6.60 for a telephone transaction. That is a Deloitte Access Economics report from 2015.

If we give people better opportunity to transact online, better opportunity to transact at their local post office, better opportunity to transact on a telephone or better opportunity not to have to travel to a Service SA centre in the first place, that is going to save not only the government money but people their own time as well. That is the reform process that we are currently undertaking.

It is going to be difficult; we are not pretending otherwise. Given the fact that we need to provide services across all South Australia, some decisions are going to have to be made. I know that there are many members over there who are really trying to paint this as simply a savings measure. The answer is that it is not, and the answer to your subsequent question, member for West Torrens, about why this is the order in which we are going about the process, is that we want to be open and straight with the South Australian people.

These centres are going to close and we have made the decision to be straight with the South Australian people about what is going to happen. I give my assurance to South Australians that we are not going to be shutting these centres without making sure that we have alternatives in place. In relation to an election commitment we made to the member for Kavel's electorate—one that I know he fought extremely strongly for and has bugged my office about for the past six months—it

is also being done on an access and spatial basis. The people who live in the Hills, the community out there that is growing rapidly, with 300 to 400 new houses being developed a year—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Listen to yourself.

The CHAIR: Order! The minister is still answering the question.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Yes, sir—15 minutes later.

The CHAIR: It is a very fulsome answer and it is valuable information, member for West Torrens.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: All the questions, I imagine, are going to be a variation on this theme. Here is the other point: in the case of the Prospect, Regency Park and CBD Service SA centre locations, where it is being said that I am making a decision based not on the number of transactions at each of those centres—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: On volume, yes.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: —but on a spatial basis, it is quite clear that if you have two centres in close proximity to each other one of those centres may have a higher level of transaction than the other. There is an opportunity for us to make sure that the highest transacting centres over a period of time can be maintained, especially as we encourage people to use the centres that are there. In relation to—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: That is not what you just said. You have given contradictory evidence to the committee. One minute you say that you want more online transactions, and then you say that people can use centres that you are reopening.

Mr CREGAN: Point of order, sir.

The CHAIR: Point of order, member for Kavel.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: This is ridiculous. Why are you opening one in Mount Barker and closing one in Modbury? Why?

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, I have a point of order from the member for Kavel.

Mr CREGAN: Constant interruption—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: One is in a safe Liberal seat, and one is in a Labor seat.

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, you are called to order. We are nearly there, member for West Torrens.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Do you want to make that argument?

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: That is the argument you are making.

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens!

Mr CREGAN: Standing order 131, sir: constant interruption.

The CHAIR: I uphold the point of order. The minister is providing valuable information.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Again, this is what happens in government when answers need to be nuanced because they are complex and difficult rather than simplistic. The answer is that there are still some transactions that can only be transacted at a Service SA centre. The interesting thing is that, by giving greater options to the people of Mount Barker, probably the same people who are having to drive down to the Mitcham Service SA centre to undertake transactions—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: So it is okay to drive from Modbury to Gawler, but not from Mount Barker?

Mr CREGAN: There is South Australia past the tollgate.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Is that right?

Mr Cregan interjecting:

The CHAIR: Enough of the cross-chamber banter.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: After all the points of order he has moved, sir, look at him now.

The CHAIR: We will cease the cross-chamber banter.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Look at him now. I have taught you well, haven't I? Here endeth the lesson.

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, that is enough. Member for Florey, do you have a question?

Ms BEDFORD: I certainly do.

The CHAIR: The minister is winding up.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The closest Service SA centre to Modbury is not Gawler: it is either Elizabeth or Tranmere.

The CHAIR: Member for Florey.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Is the minister aware—

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, I am going to give the member for Florey—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I have a question, sir. Is the minister—

The CHAIR: No, member for West Torrens. I am giving the member for Florey the call.

Ms BEDFORD: It is my service centre. It is across the road from me; it is actually in Newland.

The CHAIR: Just so I am clear, you have forwarded your question to the member for West Torrens. Is that what has happened?

Ms BEDFORD: Yes.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Is the minister aware that the council area in Mount Barker is three times smaller than the council area in Modbury?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Is the member aware that council area boundaries—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: The population of Mount Barker is 34,000. Tea Tree Gully council has 99,000. You are opening one in Mount Barker and closing one in Tea Tree Gully.

The CHAIR: Thank you for that information, member for West Torrens.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: To cite an individual council area is a nonsense argument.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Population and facts do not make any sense to you, do they?

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens! The member for Florey has the call.

Ms BEDFORD: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 164. The program net cost of services summary indicates a reduction in the cost of Service SA of \$6.2 million, from \$35.6 million in 2017-18 to \$29.4 million in 2018-19. How is this \$6.2 million going to be arrived at? I know that there is a lot in that, but I asked earlier in question time about the cost of running the Modbury Service SA office. You must have the figure for running that office. What is that figure and the figures for Prospect and Mitcham last year?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I am more than happy to take it on notice in relation to the cost of the specific centres. In relation to how the \$6.2 million figure is arrived at, I will take some advice.

Ms BEDFORD: But you took it on notice in question time.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Essentially, that \$6.2 million out-year figure, which is the 2021-22—

Ms BEDFORD: No. It is at the top of page 164, number 5, under program net cost of services summary.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Again the confusion here, member for Florey, lies in the fact that the Budget Measures Statement talks about a different quantification of the task, given the fact that there were, as I said earlier in question time, over \$11 million worth of a pre-existing savings task that needed to be achieved by the agency. The reduction is more about the savings task that has been applied to that business unit.

Ms BEDFORD: Do you want to ask a question next, member for Torrens? My next question actually refers to page 180, which is around the term 'review of the branch network'. What does that entail as well as or on top of the three branches that you have targeted to close? Just while you are looking, you would be interested to know the number of postcodes on my petition. I will get a summary of that for you so that you know where the people are coming to Modbury from. It is always helpful.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The review process encompasses the three centres; it is not two separate things. It is one—

Ms BEDFORD: So it is only three branches, not the whole network. So the thing that is—

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Sorry; the review is undertaken of the entire network, but the entire network includes those three branches.

Ms BEDFORD: So there could be more, or there could be less? What does it entail?

Members interjecting:

The CHAIR: The minister has the call.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The review is obviously the all-encompassing review. The three centres are the ones we have identified as part of the budget—well, it is not in the budget actually but through the communication of the budget—that we have slated for closure. There is a broader reform piece in relation to working with third-party service-delivery partners but also, as I said, undertaking regulatory reform, providing better opportunities for online transacting. It is all part of the one reform piece.

Ms BEDFORD: So there is a piece of work somewhere that has all the branches listed in something that they are all being gauged by? Or how did those three particularly get the nod?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Because of where they—

Ms BEDFORD: If you have done that work across the network—

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Sure, but it was really about the proximity of centres to other Service SA centres.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Have you increased funding to other Service SA centres to meet the increased demand in those areas?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: That is something that is still currently being worked through as part of the reform process.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: If the minister is committed to third-party delivery service, why is Mount Barker being opened and not a third-party service-delivery model being adopted?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The final model about what the Service SA centre is going to look like in Mount Barker is still being currently work through.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Okay, so for Mount Barker, because you are still looking at it, it is okay to open the Mount Barker centre, because you have not decided on what the third-party service-delivery model looks like, but you are happy to close the other three Service SA areas. Is that how it works?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I think we have been extremely clear about the fact that there are three centres that are closing and that there is a centre at Mount Barker that we are working to provide the service at.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: I do not begrudge people in Mount Barker getting a Service SA area. I am sure they deserve it, and their local MP has done a very fine job advocating for them. The question is why the minister is not implementing his preferred delivery model of a third-party service-delivery model for these services. He is opening up the exact same service he is closing down in other areas that are busier than the one he is opening in Mount Barker.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Given the fact that this service has not opened, it is transacting zero transactions. The answer is that the presence that is going to be opened in Mount Barker and the three service centres that are—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: It will not be as busy as the one in Modbury.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: —now being closed is part of—

Members interjecting:

The CHAIR: The minister has the call.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: —and fits within the broader reform piece that is being undertaken.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: So let us be clear about this for the committee's benefit. I am not criticising the government for opening a new Service SA centre. What I am asking the minister is: what is the logic internally within the agency to open up a new model, a new building, a new Service SA centre, offering the same service the minister has just told the committee is outdated and better offered by a third-party delivery model, yet he is closing the very same models he has said are inefficient and expensive in Modbury, Regency and Prospect?

Ms BEDFORD: Mitcham.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Mitcham.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The answer remains the same; that is, we needed to look at distance between the centres and the opportunity to provide centres that are spread out right across metropolitan Adelaide.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Can the minister guarantee that he will close no other Service SA centres?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: There is still a broader reform piece that needs to be undertaken. At this stage, there is still some more work we need to do, and I want to wait to see that final work and then I will be able to communicate what that looks like.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: So the minister is not ruling out further closures?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: There is a broader piece of work that is still being undertaken, and I want to wait for that to finish.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: When was the last time the minister used—

The CHAIR: Just a moment, member for West Torrens. Did the member for Florey have a further question?

Ms BEDFORD: I am too upset to ask another question, sir.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: She has been devastated by the answer she has received.

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: When was the last time the minister used a Service SA centre?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: In 2011.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: You have closed a service you have not used for seven years?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Well, no—I actually went to the Elizabeth Service SA centre, but I think your question disproves your point.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: No, it does not.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: That is quite an arrogant answer. For people who cannot use computer technology, what are they supposed to do?

The CHAIR: Can I remind—

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Can I say that the transaction that I undertook I can actually undertake at many post offices around South Australia.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: No, you do not care about other people.

The CHAIR: Can I remind the committee that we have just four minutes left on this particular topic.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Can the minister provide to the committee, perhaps on notice, the number of daily transactions for Modbury, Mitcham and Prospect Service SA centres and compare them with Gawler?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I am more than happy to take that on notice and try to provide to the committee an appropriate answer.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Can the minister assure the committee that he has received no advice from anyone in his agency arguing that the Modbury Service SA should remain open and that another one should have been closed in its stead?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The advice I have received is that these three centres are the ones that should close.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: That is not what I am asking you. What I am asking is: was this the original list of Service SA centres that the agency recommended you close? This stinks. Shall I read out the omnibus questions while the minister is considering?

The CHAIR: We have already done them once today, so we do not need to do them again.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: To clarify, I have not received any advice. The advice I have received and acted upon is the advice my senior chief's team has provided to me. Your question: is there somebody within the agency who disagreed with closing Service SA centres? There may well be, but there is a savings task and a reform process that we need to undertake.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Well, I will be clearer—

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: It is difficult—

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: —did the minister at any stage—

The CHAIR: Member for West Torrens, the minister is still answering, and I will allow him to continue.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Sir, we only have a minute left.

The CHAIR: I know, but you have asked a question and the minister is answering it.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Well, he has answered it. Did the minister ever at any time, verbally or written, tell anyone in his agency not to close the Gawler Service SA?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: No. I do not understand this line of questioning. Can I say that for the people of Schubert we do not have a Service SA centre.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: No, they use the Gawler one.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I live approximately 50 kilometres from the Service SA centre at Gawler. The people of my community are used to having to drive a long distance to have a look at this service.

The Hon. A. Piccolo interjecting:

The CHAIR: Member for Light, in order! We have time for one more question. The member for West Torrens has the call.

The Hon. A. KOUTSANTONIS: Thank you very much, Mr Chairman. Can the minister give a commitment to the house that within the next few days he will give an answer to the committee detailing the process the agency went through in recommending the Service SA centres slated for closure, the rationale behind the closure of those Service SA centres and any alternatives that were considered?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Member for West Torrens, can I say that the exact answers that I have been giving in this house, that I have given publicly, that I have given in question time, are the advice that has been provided to me, and the rationale behind it is the rationale that I have provided today, in question time and publicly and in the media since the decision was taken. There is no secret agenda here. There is no smoking gun here.

We made a decision based upon the distance between various Service SA centres, making sure that there is a degree of equity of access, which is why the centre far down south—it is either Aldinga or Seaford—remains. There is still one at Marion and there is still one at Tranmere. The reason, for instance, that the Prospect centre was slated for closure was that there is opportunity to get either to the CBD or the Regency Park Centre. In relation to Modbury, it is still giving people access to either the Tranmere centre or the Elizabeth centre. In relation to Mitcham, people are still able to use either the Tranmere or the Marion centres.

It was done on the basis of people who were in their car having to drive somewhere still having a Service SA centre that is within a reasonable distance of them. That equity of access was before and still remains different for people because there are some people who live close to a Service SA centre and there are others who do live further away. We wanted to make sure that the decision we made was around trying, to the best of our ability, to preserve equity of access.

The CHAIR: Can I remind the committee that if a minister—any minister—undertakes to supply information at a later date it must be submitted to the committee secretary by no later than Friday 26 October. It is not necessarily in the next few days or any time in between.

Departmental Advisers:

Ms A. Alford, Acting Chief Operating Officer, Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure.

Mr B. Cagialis, Director, Finance and Risk, Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure.

Mr A. Excell, Director, Portfolio Management Office, Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure.

Ms A. Hart, Manager, Office of Local Government, Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure.

The CHAIR: This particular hour of questioning will conclude at 4pm. It is the final hour of estimate committee's sitting.

The Hon. A. Piccolo interjecting:

The CHAIR: Indeed, member for Light. The questions will relate to the Office of Local Government, the Outback Communities Authority and the Local Government Grants Commission. Minister, if you have an opening statement, please make that; otherwise, introduce your new advisers.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Wayne and Anne have chosen to depart. Sitting next to me on my left is Alex Hart, who is Manager, Office of Local Government.

The Hon. A. Piccolo interjecting:

The CHAIR: Member for Light, please do not start your time in question time on the wrong foot. The minister is simply introducing his advisers. There is no need to interject.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Do I have an opening statement? No.

The CHAIR: I am going to call for questions. The member for Light has the call.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: My question is on Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, program 6, page 182, targets 2018-19. I refer to targets 2018-19 because they are within his purview rather than that of previous government. I refer to second dot point under targets 2018-19. Minister, if the revised rate-setting process is supposed to be operational in the 2019-20 financial year, as you have previously indicated and also in the budget papers, when will the government bring the Local Government (Rate Oversight) Amendment Bill to the vote in the Legislative Council?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: This is a bill that is currently before the house, and I know that during question time, at least, questions on a piece of legislation that is currently before the house are ruled out of order. Could I ask you, Mr Chairman, to rule?

The CHAIR: Thank you, minister. I might just need to take advice on that, so bear with me.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Mr Chairman, this is not a reflection on the bill at all. This is a simple question of process, not about the actual contents of the bill, which is very different.

The CHAIR: Member for Light, could you repeat your question, please?

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: My question, Mr Chairman, through you is: minister, if the revised rate-setting process is supposed to be operational in the 2019-20 financial year, as the minister has publicly said and as is in the budget papers, when will the government bring the Local Government (Rate Oversight) Amendment Bill to a vote in the Legislative Council? I am not reflecting on the bill.

The CHAIR: I understand that.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: That is very clearly—

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: That is the Chairman's decision, not yours.

The CHAIR: Member for Light, I will make a ruling. This question does not relate to the content of the bill; it merely relates to the process of it. I will allow the question.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Considering, Mr Chairman, that I do not control the Legislative Council, that is quite clearly a matter for the Legislative Council.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Mr Chairman, the question is quite clear. The government can actually bring the bill on. The convention in the upper house—and the minister either knows this and is being deliberately misleading or the minister is avoiding the question—is that his party has the capacity to bring the bill on. It is up to the other parties what happens to it, but when is he going to bring the bill on for a vote, which is their right to do so.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Mr Chairman, I am not a member of the Legislative Council, but I do understand basic mathematics. There are 22 members of the Legislative Council, one of those members from the Liberal Party sits in the chair. That leaves 21 members on the floor of the house. Therefore, 11 members on the floor of the house need to vote in order for anything to go forward in the Legislative Council.

The Liberal Party currently has only eight members who sit on the floor of the house of that chamber, requiring us to have 11 members in order to be able to progress any business in the other house. This is a matter for the Legislative Council, and I am unable to answer that question because I am not a member of the Legislative Council.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Mr Chairman, through you, again, I will ask the question because the bill is in its second reading stage, and whether or not it goes to another stage is up to the Legislative Council. What I am asking is: will the minister bring a vote on with respect to the second reading stage, which is in his domain?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I reject the premise of the question.

The CHAIR: In fact, member for Light, it is in the Legislative Council. The minister makes the point that he sits in the House of Assembly, so it is very difficult, I would think, for him to extend his authority to the Legislative Council, which sits separately from the House of Assembly.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: So what he is actually suggesting is that his colleague in the upper house will not bring the shop trading hour bill to a vote either, using the minister's logic?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: It is a ridiculous question.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: No, it is not. You are avoiding the question.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: If the member is suggesting that I have the ability to exert undue influence on the Legislative Council, then he obviously has never met anyone who has sat in the Legislative Council.

The CHAIR: Member for Light, what I have done during this week previously is to determine that members of the committee can ask a question of the minister, the minister can answer in whatever way he or she sees fit and then the committee and the member asking the question makes what they will of the answer. You have asked the question twice now and the minister has answered that same question twice, so it is probably time to move on.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Okay. Mr Chairman, the question then, under the same dot point is: does the minister still anticipate that the rate oversight process will be in place for 2019-20?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: It is entirely dependent on the conduct of the upper house in relation to the potential progression of the bill.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: I refer to Budget Paper 5, the Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure, page 117. I refer to the budget measure that makes reference to the government's proposed new council rate oversight process. Minister, of the \$197,000 allocated to ESCOSA to prepare advice on the development of the government's proposed rate setting process, how much of this taxpayers' moneys has been spent to date?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Quite clearly, that is a question that you needed to ask when the budget line in relation to ESCOSA was open. We have provided, as part of our budget, the funding for that, but ESCOSA is the one that is undertaking that work. I understand that ESCOSA reports to the Treasurer and I believe that you could have availed yourself of the opportunity—

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Sorry, to clarify, the minister's evidence is that his department has provided ESCOSA with the funds to undertake—

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Yes.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: —and you are not actually making them accountable for it?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: If you want to understand—

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: No, you are not making them accountable for it. You said you do not know.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: If the member wants to understand how ESCOSA has expended their money then that is quite clearly a matter for ESCOSA, to be asked via the Treasurer.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: No, actually, you are responsible for your expenditure in your portfolio areas. You are responsible to the taxpayers of South Australia. You have just indicated that you do not really care where the bill is in the upper house. You have indicated that it is unlikely to come through in the financial year and you have wasted \$200,000 on what? You do not seem to care.

Mr MURRAY: What is your question?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: That is the question: he does not seem to care.

The CHAIR: That is a statement, member for Light. The question is?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I reject the premise of the question that suggests that the money is wasted. I reject the premise of the question that I do not care. We have provided money to ESCOSA to undertake a body of work. ESCOSA does not report to me; they report to the Treasurer. There was an opportunity when that budget line was open last week to ask that question, and I would ask you to have directed it there.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: So what you are saying is that you have handed over almost \$200,000 to ESCOSA and you are not asking them to provide any reports to you on the amounts that you have provided?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: That is not what I said.

The CHAIR: That is not what he said.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: What did he say then? You tell me.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: In fact, ESCOSA has provided to me and publicly a discussion paper on some of the issues that they would like ventilated in relation to the setting of a rate cap.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: So for \$200,000 you have a discussion paper? That is all you have?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: That is the first step of the process. The consultation period for that discussion paper closes on 28 September. ESCOSA continues to undertake further work based on the feedback of that, and I look forward to receiving further updates from them about it.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: On the same dot point, if my understanding is correct, the evidence of this minister to this committee is that he is quite happy for ESCOSA to go and spend \$200,000 of taxpayers' money with no legislative basis or purpose, given that the bill has not been passed.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I do not think the money is wasted.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Why is that?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Because this is good work to help the government to progress its election commitment in relation to putting a rate cap in place.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Even if it does not go ahead?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The Legislative Council has not voted on the bill yet.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: You just told the committee that you can add up. You are a mathematician and the numbers are not there to support it.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: What the member was asserting was that I had the power to be able to force the Legislative Council to do anything, and I do not. I think it is disrespectful to assume the Legislative Council's position on anything until the bill is voted on, until they actually vote on something. We do not. We continue to progress the work as we do and, at the point in time when the Legislative Council makes a determination on their thoughts on the bill, we will proceed on that basis.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: On the same dot point, dot point 4, targets 2018-19, refers to the government's consideration of legislative reforms to strengthen local government transparency and accountability. Minister, will these considerations include measures designed to limit the items that can be included in the remuneration packages of council chief executives?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: What we are seeking to undertake later this year or early next year—I have to be a little bit careful here because Alex gets a bit worried about the workload that we are going to put the Office of Local Government—under—is a very broad consultation process about potential reforms for local government. I have said publicly and often that we are prepared to look at any and all measures to help improve the way that local government and councils undertake their work, including partnering with them to help provide mutual cost savings between state and local government, ways to improve measures around transparency and ways to improve the conduct and participation of elected members as well as staff.

All ideas are on the table to help improve the local government sector. I have had discussions with individual elected members, councillors, CEOs, mayors, the Local Government Association, the Office of Local Government, as well as interested individuals from right across the state who write to me on a very regular basis about potential ideas for reform. Under the former government, I think we had a wasted opportunity to improve the way that councils undertake their operations. What the new government has said publicly is that we are an active—

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Mr Chairman, I think my question was quite specific. Relevance is—

The CHAIR: The minister is framing his answer.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The question was: what is involved in the reform process? I am basically answering every idea—

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: I asked about one measure, one specific measure.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: And the measure was: are we going to cap CEO pay?

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: No, I did not say that at all. That is not the question.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Are we going to forcibly increase CEO pay?

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: No, I did not say that either. Perhaps if you had listened to the question you could answer the question, minister.

The CHAIR: Member for Light, could you repeat the question for the benefit of the minister and the Chair?

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Given that he was answering the question, according to you, sir—

The CHAIR: You seem to be disputing that, so repeat the question for the benefit of the committee.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Minister, dot point 4 under targets 2018-19 refers to the government's legislative reforms to strengthen local government transparency and accountability. My question is quite specific: will these considerations include measures designed to limit the items which will be included in the remuneration packages of council chief executives? It is quite clear. You can say that you are looking at everything, if you want to say that. He does not need 10 minutes to say that.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: All ideas are on the table.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: See—that was quite easily done.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: It is actually what I said.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Well, it took you 10 minutes to say it.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: We are politicians, mate; what do you want?

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: You are, yes. I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, program 6, page 182, the same dot point. The minister previously indicated that the broader reform process would start, in his view, once rate capping is put in place. Is he still of that view?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Sorry, can you repeat that last part? Do I still consider—

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: You indicated in parliament and also publicly that you would consider a whole range of reform measures for local government once rate capping was put in place. Do you still hold that view?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Yes.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: So the reform process will not start until rate capping is passed?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: No—sorry—

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: You just said yes and now you are saying no.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Hang on; when I say no I mean, no, the reform process is not contingent on the passage of the bill.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: So you have changed your position on that, then?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: No.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: No, you have not?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: We have always said that rate capping comes first.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: You would say, if I went through the records of the house, that you have never said that?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: What I said was that rate capping is a piece of legislation that we wanted to consider first in isolation from other reform measures. Once the parliament has made a decision on rate capping, we can then move on to the other stages of reform. What I have said is that this one comes first, this one comes second, but this one is not contingent upon this one passing.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: It does actually. It sounds exactly like that but, anyway, it does not matter. Minister, will the reform considerations include measures designed to improve community consultation processes involved in annual business plans and budgets?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Will the reform process consider increased consultation?

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Yes.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Yes.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Will the reform process also have measures designed to better inform ratepayers of the rate impact of new council services and projects?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: If the member is going to list every potential change that he has outlined as a draft bill that he and crossbenchers in the other place have released publicly, he can go through and use this time to go through a shopping list. We have said that we are going to undertake a broad-based consultation process on a broad reform piece later this year, early next year. To the extent that members of the opposition would like to submit ideas for that process, we are more than happy to look at them at that time.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: I think we have already done that by issuing a draft bill, and I am glad that you are aware of it. One of the things that has been raised with me is whether the reform process will extend to consideration of independent council audit committees?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Yes.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Fully audited?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Yes.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Will the considerations include measures designed to improve the public disclosure of council documentation that does not breach commercial-in-confidence considerations but does serve the public interest?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Yes.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: What do you have in mind there?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I do not know yet.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: You do not know yet?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: A broad-based reform process saying yes to looking at every idea that people from the public, elected member bodies, Local Government Association and anybody else who cares to get involved with the process seek to put on the table.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: I draw the minister's attention to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, program 6, page 182, highlights 2017, targets 2018-19. I note the second highlight, which makes reference to continued progress on a new approach to the management of council member conduct matters. I also note that the target for 2018-19 is to progress regulations for a revised council member code of conduct. Minister, which reforms will you introduce to the member code of conduct? What are you proposing?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: We are not proposing anything specific at this stage. This is wrapped up as part of the broader reform piece. I do know that there does need to be reform to the way that the code of conduct works. I think that it is too often used as a weapon by elected members against other elected members and in the end it is only the lawyers getting professional fees who

win. I think that we need to look at reforming the code of conduct process, but again it is going to be wrapped up as part of the broader reform piece.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Would you agree that your reform will include changes or proposals to somehow deal with vexatious and frivolous complaints made against a council member through the code of conduct? I am going to provide an example.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The answer is yes.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Let me finish. Can I finish my answer?

The CHAIR: You have asked the question. You are providing extra information, so it really needs to be done with the concurrence of the committee. Is everyone agreed? Yes, thank you. Member for Light, provide that information.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: I will give you an example. I am aware that a particular former member of council decided to lodge a code of conduct against another fellow councillor because that councillor did not return their phone call within a few days. That process cost the ratepayers of that council just under \$1,000. Would you consider that a huge waste of money, minister, and something you would like to outlaw?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I think that we need to reform the way the code of conduct operates.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: So you would agree with that statement?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I think that we need to reform the way that the code of conduct operates.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: So you do not agree with that statement?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I have provided my answer, member for Light.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: It is quite simple. If you think that is an example of the sort of thing you would like to outlaw, you could just answer the question.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: It is pretty difficult to make comment when I am provided with 10 seconds of commentary.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: This example has been in the public domain. I am sure you are aware of the actual example.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I must admit that I am not, but that is fine.

The CHAIR: Member for Light, the minister has provided his response to that question.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Perhaps he could just ask the member for King because it was her. I draw the minister's attention to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, program 6, page 182, FTEs. I note that the number of FTEs in the Office of Local Government in 2018-19 will be maintained at seven, the same estimated for 2017-18. Minister, is this number sufficient to undertake serious reform of the local government sector and undertake the type of broad reform that you have indicated and is alluded to in dot point four under Targets 2018-19 relating to the strengthening of local government transparency and accountability?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Yes.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: So the Office of Local Government can take on all this reform with the existing staff?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I do not know if you have ever met Alex Hart, but she is fantastically capable.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: I am not disputing that, but given all this additional work they will be performing, I assume, under this broad reform package, what are the staff doing at the moment that they can take on this extra workload?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Obviously they have been looking at rate capping prior to that. They have been looking at the new boundaries legislation process. I cannot tell you how impressed I am by the work of the Office of Local Government.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: You have raised the boundary reform process.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I have.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: You have, thank you, and I assume by your answer that all the practices and procedures will be ready to operate from 1 January?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Yes.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Is that a definite or a 'plan to'?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: It is a legislative requirement.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Yes, but your government does not always honour legislative requirements.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I am not going to take the bait on that.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: It is true though.

The CHAIR: Member for Light, I do not think that is an appropriate comment.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Labor hire legislation made it clear it had to start on 1 September. Your government has chosen to ignore that.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Mr Chairman, I would ask you to rule that question out of order on the basis that it is not part of this budget item.

The CHAIR: I have indicated that I do not feel it is an appropriate question. Member, move to the next question, please.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: To what extent will councils and ratepayers have to fund the council boundary reform process?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: It depends on who puts in the application. As minister, if I initiate a boundary change, we pay. If a council initiates a boundary change, they pay. Where an individual initiates a boundary change, BPAY. By 'we' I mean the government and the taxpayers of South Australia.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: The minister has just indicated that he has the power to initiate a review of council boundaries. Is the minister intending to initiate any boundary changes in this financial year or has the minister received any advice?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Not at this stage, no.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: The minister has not received advice that he should either?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: No.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: In this term of government?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I cannot speak for a future decision that we might take. I am quite excited and looking forward to how this boundary changing legislation works in practice. I understand that there are going to be numerous, potentially over a dozen, applications put in by various councils very quickly. I think they will be great test cases for us to be able to understand how this legislation works.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: So you are not ruling out initiating any requests for review in the life of this government?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: No.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Referring to Budget Paper 3, page 160, appendix C, Consolidated Account, table C.2, estimates of payments, payments from Appropriation Act for the Local Government Grants Commission, can you explain why payments to the Local Government Grants

Commission have moved from \$407,000 in the 2017-18 budget to no payment in both the 2017-18 estimated result and the 2018-19 budget. I could not find an explanation in the budget papers, so I am asking you.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I am going to have to take that on notice, member for Light. If the member would like to look at Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 197, it does outline there the statement of cash flows in relation to the Local Government Grants Commission, but I am still happy to investigate why those other dashes are there.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 198, Outback Communities Authority. Can the minister advise whether the Outback Communities Authority is still in charge of running Leigh Creek?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: They are still providing municipal services to Leigh Creek, yes.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Following from that answer, the next question is: given that the Outback Communities Authority is still in charge of those services, are the minister and his government still committed to making Leigh Creek an open and viable town, and does that include continuing these services across the forward estimates?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: There will obviously need to be discussions about the level of service provision once the population is stabilised. There are also some ongoing discussions in relation to Leigh Creek Energy, the coal gasification work that is going to go on up there and whether or not that company has need for houses and other municipal services, but the idea is yes.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Thank you for your answer, minister. You mentioned houses. Are houses in Leigh Creek now available for purchase or rent by non-residents?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: We are able to rent them out, but we are not able to sell them yet because they are not individually titled.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: The Leigh Creek Futures report recommended that the transition process, town governance and all unsolicited bid proposals be reviewed no later than July 2018. Did this review occur?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: That report was provided by Jane Lomax-Smith to the government back in 2016.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: I understand that, but that was not my question. My question was in relation to one of the recommendations in that report that said that the transition process, town governance and all unsolicited bid proposals be reviewed no later than July 2018. Has the review recommended in that report been undertaken?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Obviously, there have been a number of decisions taken to date. Taking at face value what you have said, not understanding the source document, if unsolicited bids come to government and have come to government in the past couple of months or will come to government in the future, we are going to continue to assess those. Given that there still is a level of flux around what is going to happen with Leigh Creek Energy, I think the government is going to continue to keep its options open in relation to the future of the township.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: So what you are saying is that the review that was recommended has not been undertaken yet.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Well, it may have been undertaken but it would be operating under a different budget line than the Office for Local Government.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: It is an Outback—

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: OCA provides municipal services but it is only one of the service providers that provides services in the township.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Who would undertake it if not your department?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: It is for parts of it, but there certainly has been some cross-agency response in relation to that.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: You would be the lead agent, though, would you not?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Under the previous government, I think the responsibility as lead agency was given to DSD. Since that time, we believe that Energy and Mining has had a degree of responsibility over it. It is fair to say that there are some more complicated relationships about who owns it, who runs it and what services different agencies run.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Minister, your response leads me to this question. As you indicated earlier, a report was handed down back in 2016. Who has carriage of implementing the recommendations of the report, or has the report just been disregarded now?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I do not have the recommendations in front of me, but I think my answer still stands in that different agencies have provided various levels of service and support to the town depending on the nature and function of those agencies. Certainly, DPTI has a role to play in relation to maintenance of the assets. We are undertaking some work at the moment around getting rid of some of the houses, especially the ones that have some asbestos in them. The OCA has some responsibility around providing some municipal services to the town. They are only two parts of what is a more complex picture.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Which minister has overall responsibility for Leigh Creek in terms of making sure that it is still a viable town?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The government of South Australia.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: The buck stops nowhere, then?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: As I said, different departments and different agencies have different responsibilities. There is no one minister who has responsibility for every agency.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Minister, perhaps through your adviser, could you advise what is the current population of the town?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The best answer I can give at this stage, and this is qualified based on what we understand because it does fluctuate, is somewhere around 150, but I want to qualify that answer.

The CHAIR: Minister, can you repeat that for me, please? What is the population?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The advice I have at this moment is that it is roughly 150, but that figure is subject to change because it fluctuates, and also we do not have the figures in front of us.

The CHAIR: Thank you. I did not quite hear you.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Is the government committed to keeping the Leigh Creek pool open?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: At this stage, there are no plans to close it, but I would say that it is an expensive asset to maintain. At the moment, only a few people use it. It will be subject to the broader future of the town.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Who currently operates it?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: OCA and DPTI.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: What is the cost of operating the pool at the moment?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I will have to take that on notice.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Minister, what is your government doing to ensure that the Leigh Creek supermarket remains open?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: This question strays outside of where I think my responsibility lies. It is really a matter for the private operator who leases the site from us.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Can I conclude from that answer that you do not believe that your government has any role to play at all in keeping the supermarket open for the town?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I understand that we provide a peppercorn lease in relation to the site and we maintain the building.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: I will ask the question again because I did not get an answer to the question that I asked; I got an answer to another question that I did not ask. Is the government committed to keeping the Leigh Creek supermarket open?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: We are committed to keeping the building available for an operator to operate the supermarket.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: So the answer is no. Is the government committed to keeping the Leigh Creek Caravan Park open?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The lease for the caravan park is leased to a private operator; that happened sometime last year. That lease has a couple of years to run.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: So the answer is no there as well.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Can I say that this all could have been avoided if the former government just parted with about five million bucks or something to Port Augusta power station.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Minister, it would actually help if you actually took responsibility now that you are in government. At some time, you have to stop playing Pontius Pilate and actually be responsible for your decisions.

Mr CREGAN: Point of order, sir: 97.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: What point of order is that?

Mr CREGAN: Opinion and argument: 97.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: It is okay for him to refer to the previous government, which is argument as well—

Mr CREGAN: Just get on with questions.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: You did not pull him up on that.

The CHAIR: Member for Light! Perhaps I will conclude that the point of order would be interjection, which of course is out of order. Member for Light, are you going to run through all the enterprises in the town and simply ask the minister—

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: No, but I am going to run through those that I think are critical to the survival of the town because without them there is no town.

The CHAIR: There are still a number to go?

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: There are still a number to go, and I think you would agree, being a member who represents rural communities, that if you lose certain services you do not lose a service; you lose a whole town.

The CHAIR: Yes, I was just clarifying in my own mind.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: And I am just putting the reason behind my asking these questions.

The CHAIR: Thank you, member for Light. Your call.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Can the minister please advise what is the current condition of the Leigh Creek oval, and are OCA still responsible for its maintenance?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: OCA continue to maintain the oval to the same standard as has been provided for some time.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: And that will continue? And that will include continuing to water the oval?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Yes.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: It is easier just not to do it. I would have thought members of rural areas would appreciate how important it is to maintain those services.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: What was that? I was not listening to him.

The CHAIR: Take no notice of interjections, member for Light. Ask your question.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: You can interject. I am happy to receive your interjections, Mr Chairman.

The CHAIR: Well I am the Chair. Continue.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Your interjections are at least filled with wisdom.

The CHAIR: I am blushing, member for Light.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Can the minister please advise whether Leigh Creek hospital and ambulance service are still operating?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: That is not the responsibility of this budget line.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: The sad part, as I have explained, is that it is a bit like a three thimble trick: whichever thimble you pick, you miss out because it is somebody else's responsibility. That was the point I was making. You said that the government is responsible for this; you are not a member of the government?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I am.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: If you are a member of the government, and the government is responsible, then you should know about this because, without this sort of basic service, you do not have a town.

Mr MURRAY: Point of order: 97.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: And you said the government has a commitment to keep this town alive.

The CHAIR: Member for Light!

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Clearly you have not. You do not have an interest.

The CHAIR: Member for Light, order! There is a point of order raised by the member for Davenport. And that is?

Mr MURRAY: It is 97, argument—endless argument; repetitive, dull, endless argument; not even good argument.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Chairman, my question then would be—

The CHAIR: Member for Light, I will make a ruling on the point of order, first. I uphold that. It is your job to ask questions. You have the call to do that.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Just on that, Mr Chairman, how can the minister in an earlier answer give a commitment that the government will maintain this town, when I would have thought that a key element of the health and wellbeing of the town is a hospital and an ambulance. He says he does not know, which means he does not care?

The CHAIR: Member for Light, I think you have actually asked me that question, but it is to the minister through me.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Sorry, through you. I will ask it again. I am happy to ask again through you, Mr Chairman—

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Member for Light, I got the question.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: No. No, I did not ask it, according to the Chair. I will ask it again, just in case you missed it.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: He has another 17 minutes. He has to—

The CHAIR: It is your time, member for Light. You may ask.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: The question, through you, Mr Chairman, is this: earlier in his evidence to this committee the minister indicated that the government was committed to keeping this town viable and healthy, etc. My question is—

Members interjecting:

The CHAIR: Order!

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: I seek your protection—

Mr Cregan interjecting:

The CHAIR: The member for Kavel is called to order.

Mr Cregan interjecting:

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: I seek your protection.

The CHAIR: The member for Kavel is called to order. Continue, member for Light.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: I am sorry, I will have to ask that again. Can I ask it without interruption this time?

The CHAIR: It is your time, member for Light; yes, you are welcome to.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: No, can I ask the question without interruption?

The CHAIR: Yes, of course because it is against standing orders to interject. We all know that.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: My question is as follows through you, Mr Chairman: given that the minister earlier in his evidence to this committee indicated that the government is committed to maintaining Leigh Creek as a viable town and that I have now asked a question about the Leigh Creek hospital and ambulance service, which he says he knows nothing about, how can he give the assurance to this committee of the earlier comments?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The member for Light clearly does not understand the way that the estimates process works.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Yes, I do actually.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Over the course of this week, the entirety of the budget and every single agency and every single minister has the opportunity to be questioned. We provide blocks of time to individual parts of the budget to make sure that they are all scrutinised in an appropriate fashion. The member is asking me to give assurances about something that does not come from this budget item nor from this agency. If he wants to seek that assurance, the best way to seek that assurance through an estimates process is to ask that question to the right minister.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: I thank the minister for his lecture, but perhaps he can answer the question. The question is: given you have made the comment that your government is committed to this town, clearly you have not informed yourself about this town, so how can you then lecture me on that? I will go to the next point, Mr Chairman.

The CHAIR: Please do.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Because I can.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Can I clarify the question I asked earlier just to get some clarity?

Mr CREGAN: Have you run out of new questions?

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: No, not at all. I have heaps of questions.

Members interjecting:

The CHAIR: Order! The member for Light has the call.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: In answer to an earlier question, the minister indicated that municipal services are being maintained—the Outback Communities Authority is maintaining services—so is there evidence to this committee that none of the services have been downgraded or discontinued, including bin collection, rubbish dump, parks and gardens, barbecues, public toilets, street lighting, gymnasium or sports stadium, which I understand the OCA are responsible for?

The CHAIR: Just for clarity, this relates—

Mr CREGAN: Have you not just answered your own question?

The CHAIR: Member for Kavel!

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: What is the question?

Mr MURRAY: Point of order: repetition.

The CHAIR: I am going to ask for clarity first. Does this relate to Leigh Creek?

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Yes, of course.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The answer to that question is that the OCA continues to provide municipal services to the same standard as was provided by the former government.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Where is the member for West Torrens to help you now?

The CHAIR: Member for Light!

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Thank you, Mr Chairman. My question to the minister is—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Can I say in relation to the oval that the real difficulty with keeping the grass up is the fact that during the drought the kangaroos continue to eat the grass.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Thank you. I am glad you provided that information, minister. I did not have that on my list but I am happy to add it now.

The CHAIR: Provide the answer, then ask the question.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Are there any other questions you would like me to ask for you, which makes it easier for you? I come back to the Leigh Creek Futures report. Can the minister update this committee of progress against all the recommendations made in that report: which have been fulfilled, which have partially been fulfilled and which have not been fulfilled at all?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I am happy to take that on notice.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: What? You do not know any of those?

Mr CREGAN: It is on notice. What is your next question?

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Mr Chairman—

The CHAIR: Member for Kavel, you are out of order.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: I would have thought that was actually quite an important recommendation. For some reason—

Mr Cregan interjecting:

The CHAIR: The member for Kavel will cease interjecting.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: —you do not seem to care about Leigh Creek, but we do.

Mr CREGAN: That is hardly the point.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: It is exactly the point.

Members interjecting:

The CHAIR: Members will cease interjecting. Member for Light, in response to your previous question, the minister has taken that on notice so he will be obliged to come back to you with an answer.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: I am not sure he is actually aware the report exists.

Mr CREGAN: You have 10 minutes. Bring your questions.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: I do not need you to remind me. The Chairman is there. He is doing a better job than you are, and he has shown much more wisdom than you have shown.

The CHAIR: Thank you. Member for Light, your call.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Do ATLA have access to the houses and building that was allocated?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Yes.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: And there are no plans to change?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: No.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Can the minister actually advise what funding has been allocated to keep the town open over the forward estimates?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: In providing this answer, I do note that it is outside the scope of this, but back in 2016 there was about \$18.5 million that was provided over a five-year period. Not all of it was provided to DPTI. It was provided to multiple agencies to undertake multiple services.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: I suppose the next question would be: is that \$18 million over five years still—

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: There has not been any other decision in relation to that.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: So that is still the extent of funding available to keep the town open from 2016 to 2021?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Yes.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Mr Chairman, perhaps I might need to ask for your ruling on this one, if I ask it.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Nine minutes.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: That is fine. I refer to Budget Paper 5, under Green Industries, page 71. This relates to local government, though. The budget measure 'Recycling industry support package' provides a \$12.4 million support package for the recycling industry and local government in response to China's National Sword policy. I note the breakdown in funding provided through Green Industries SA on page 71. To what extent will this funding shield ratepayers from increased costs that have resulted from China's National Sword policy?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: That is a matter for the Minister for Environment.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Of that funding, how much has been available to local government?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: To my best recollection, it is zero. Sorry, no, there is some money that is being provided. Again, this is not my budget line in relation to transport subsidies for regional councils in relation to this proposal, but off the top of my head, I think that is the only money that has been provided as part of that package. Again, you have to ask minister Speirs.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Perhaps the question would be: what support have local governments sought?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I think that is a question for minister Speirs.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: No, through you. You are saying that you have received no correspondence from local government regarding this matter?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I think that I would have received some.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Given that correspondence, what support have they sought through you or your support for? Or do you wash your hands of local government as well?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: No, for instance, the Local Government Association pre-budget submission asks for a laundry list of things. Each individual minister that has responsibility for those things has the opportunity to take heed of and respond to that. But in relation to the decision made in regard to council support as a result of China's National Sword policy, that was a decision taken by cabinet, initiated and administered by the Minister for Environment.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Mr Chairman—

The Hon. S.K. Knoll interjecting:

The CHAIR: The member for Light has the call.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Thank you. It would be good to be able to ask questions without interruptions.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: You need the interruptions.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, Office of Local Government, the net cost of providing services. My question to the minister is: why is there a decrease of \$60,000 in the net cost of providing service compared with the 2017-18 estimated result?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The figure of \$62,000 is too immaterial for us to provide an answer on right now.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: I thought it was just below you to answer it. I thought you were trying to say that.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: No, not at all. It is just that there may be a number of very minor factors that—

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: That add up to this amount?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Yes.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: So that is a question on notice?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Sure.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Well, it is either a question on notice or—

The CHAIR: Sorry, I missed that, member for Light.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: He is just saying that he is going to provide that answer as a question on notice. My next question refers to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, the Office of Local Government under 'objective' and providing advice to the minister. Through you, Mr Chairman: minister, what advice has your agency provided regarding Bird Lake rehabilitation?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Nothing.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Nothing, no advice at all?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Not from OLG, no. It is a matter for the Minister for Environment, chiefly.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Mr Chairman, when the minister talked about Leigh Creek he mentioned that a number of agencies are responsible for the future of Leigh Creek. He mentioned the department of mines and energy, or whatever the department is called these days. He also mentioned other agencies. Can the minister perhaps advise this committee what discussions he has had with those relevant ministers to make sure that the town is viable in the future? What discussions have you had?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Well, if the member is asking me for discussions I have had with my ministerial colleagues, I would say that I have regular discussions with my ministerial colleagues around all matters. I have had some discussion with the Minister for Energy and Mining around Leigh Creek.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: To the extent that what other ministers do could impact on your portfolio, you have not asked about that? I would assume that what other ministers do would impact on the operations of the OCA. Your advice and your evidence to this committee are that you have not engaged those ministers to find out how their operations may impact on your areas of responsibility?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: It is fair to say that the Minister for Energy and Mining and I work together on making sure that Leigh Creek remains open and that we comply with the commitments have been given in relation to the town, and also to make sure that we are able to facilitate any future opportunities that are afforded to the town.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: I will put the question another way: what representations have you made to those ministers on behalf of your agency to ensure that the town is maintained?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: I think that my agency has very strong links into the other agencies that are involved in the provision of services in Leigh Creek to make sure—

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: That is not an answer at all. What are the matters you have raised with your colleagues to ensure that the services your agency provides—

The CHAIR: Point of order, member for Davenport.

Mr MURRAY: Repetition. Find another question, please, we beg you.

The CHAIR: The member for Light has asked the question. The minister has—

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: My answer is the fact that I have many conversations with my ministerial colleagues, and I do not think that this is the forum for me to give a running account of every conversation I have had with every minister in relation to any topic. I think that I have provided an appropriate answer.

The CHAIR: What I am going to say now, member for Light, is that you have the opportunity for one last question before this committee concludes. I have a bit of housekeeping to do. The opportunity is yours. You have the call.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Given that the minister has, to use jargon, banged on about how transparent and accountable his government is about informing people, why is he not telling this committee, and therefore the people of Leigh Creek, the discussions they are having at a government level to make sure that they are informed of what their future is? He has totally ignored that. He just says that these discussions are private. What consultation is taking place with Leigh Creek people to make sure that they are not fearful for their future?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Constant and ongoing.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Give me an example. Provide us with one example, minister.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: There has been a series of communications in relation to ATLA and the role they wish to participate in in Leigh Creek. There has been a series of discussions that have also continued on with Leigh Creek Energy in relation to what role they would like to play out in Leigh Creek.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: And the residents of Leigh Creek? You just ignore them.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The residents would also be having discussions with the OCA in relation to municipal services that are provided.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: They would be, or you know that for a fact?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: Yes.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: You do know that for a fact?

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: That the local residents talk to the OCA, yes.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: No, your OCA engages with them.

The Hon. S.K. KNOLL: The OCA board actually includes a Leigh Creek resident.

The CHAIR: Thank you, minister, and thank you, member for Light. Having reached the allotted time, I declare the examination of the proposed payments for the portfolios of infrastructure, planning and management, public transport, roads and marine, Service SA, the Office of Local Government, the Outback Communities Authority and the Local Government Grants Commission; the estimate of payments for the Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure; the Administered Items for the Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure; and equity contributions for the Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure to be completed.

I lay before the committee a draft report for committee A. This report itemises the appropriation estimates in the budget for 2018-19 that have been considered by committee A.

Mr MURRAY: I move:

That the draft report be the report of the committee.

Motion carried.

The CHAIR: Before I close the committee, I would like to thank the minister, his advisers, the committee members and the secretarial staff for all their work and efforts through this past week.

At 16:02 the committee concluded.