




Speech By
Hon. Shannon Fentiman

MEMBER FOR WATERFORD

Record of Proceedings, 28 October 2022

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Public Trustee, Fees and Charges

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (9.58 am): Supporting vulnerable Queenslanders is a high priority for the Palaszczuk government. That is why last week I was pleased to table the report of the review of the Public Trustee's fees and charges. We all know that the cost of living is rising. In recognition of this I also announced some fee relief for Public Trustee customers, in particular for those whose assets are under financial management. This is the most significant review of the Public Trustee's fees and charges in two decades and has been underway since 2020, starting with the benchmarking of fees with other state public trustees and comparable private sector providers.

The review included consideration of the recommendations of the report of the Public Advocate and, specifically, the 13 recommendations made about Public Trustee fees and charges. PricewaterhouseCoopers was engaged by the Public Trustee to complete the review. The review found that the Public Trustee's fees and charges are reasonable and generally at or below those charged by public trustees in other states and comparable private service providers. From 1 November, there will be an ongoing moratorium on charging separate realty property fees and separate incidental outlays for financial management customers. We have also placed a 12-month freeze on annual increases to fees and charges from which all Public Trustee customers will benefit.

These changes will provide immediate fee relief for the Public Trustee's customers while we consider the longer term impacts of the report's findings. The Public Trustee is self-funded and the report confirms it has been working hard to keep its fees and charges as low as possible. The report acknowledges, however, that as a self-funded agency there are challenges for the Public Trustee when balancing the need for ongoing financial sustainability and community expectations. This review is the first step in a longer journey and more work and consultation will be done to ensure that the Public Trustee's fees and charges model is contemporary, efficient, sustainable and fair.