

KEVIN O'REILLY—MLA FRAME LAKE

Energy Conservation in Public Housing

Committee of the Whole—2016-2017 Operating Budget Review

NWT Housing Corporation—June 15, 2016

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Just a follow-up on my colleague's questions: I think one of the best ways to promote energy conservation is to share some of those savings with people that are in public housing. Is there a plan or a way that that can be done to help encourage people in public housing to save energy? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, we did commit within the business planning process that we would consider that. At this point, no one is paying their utilities, so once people, once we give our -- limited payment of utilities. So, once people have more ownership of their own, then we will look at initiatives to actually support that so that we can promote conservation, because that is the most efficient way to conserve energy. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair, and I appreciate the commitment from the Minister. So I'm just trying to figure out the timing of this. Is the Housing Corporation going to look at some way of sharing the cost savings with its tenants through energy conservation? Is that going to happen this year or next year or at some future point? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Cochrane.

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So we'll be doing some research, not only nationally but also internationally, to kind of see what initiatives are out there for energy conservation, so we will commit to that.

We also really have to be careful that we're not going to give it all out because part of the savings that we will be taking from the transferring the cost of the power over will actually be used to address our declining CMHC funding because we need to make sure that we have revenues to deal with the operating and maintenance costs that will be coming up, which are declining every year. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I appreciate that there's going to be some research done on this, but could the Minister commit to get back to the standing committee later in 2016-17 with a plan to do this?

HON. CAROLINE COCHRANE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. To the Member's comment, yes we can commit to actually providing a report back to committee on that within this fiscal year. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. And I appreciate that commitment, and I'll look forward to seeing that report. Thanks, Mr. Chair.