

LOCAL GOVERNMENT — DECLARATION OF GIFTS

346. Hon SALLY TALBOT to the minister representing the Minister for Local Government:

I refer to the government's advice to local councils about the declaration of gifts.

- (1) Is the Minister for Local Government aware of concerns about the operation of the new provisions?
- (2) Which elements of the government's advice have given rise to these concerns?
- (3) Will the minister now review the declaration of gift provisions; and, if so, who will carry out the review, when will it start, when will it conclude and will the review outcome be made public?

Hon DONNA FARAGHER replied:

I thank the member for some notice of the question.

- (1) The only changes that have been made to the gift provisions in the Local Government Act 1995 are that gifts are now required to be declared within 10 days of receipt, rather than annually, and that this register is to be published on the local government's official website.
- (2) No change has been made to what has to be declared, but the new timing of the disclosure has highlighted some misunderstanding within the local government sector of existing requirements.
- (3) A working group led by the Western Australian Local Government Association was established in 2014 to examine and advise on the various gift provisions within the legislation. I understand that this group is close to finalising a report for consideration by the Governance Round Table, whose membership comprises the Department of Local Government and Communities, the WA Local Government Association and Local Government Managers Australia, WA Division. This will then be provided to the Department of Local Government and Communities for formal consideration. If it is established that changes are needed to the current provisions, a discussion paper will be released for public comment.