

LOCAL GOVERNMENT — AMALGAMATIONS — COST

14. Mr D.J. KELLY to the Minister for Local Government:

I have a supplementary question. The minister made them participate in this process and they spent \$3.5 million —

The SPEAKER: Member for Bassendean, please ask your supplementary question.

Mr D.J. KELLY: They spent \$3.5 million on the process—money they could have spent on roads and social services. Why will the minister not reimburse them for that?

Mr A.J. SIMPSON replied:

I did not tell them to spend \$3.5 million; I did not tell them that.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Mandurah! I want an answer through the Chair so we can move on.

Mr A.J. SIMPSON: The process we have been through is what the local government sector wanted. They asked for it. One of the key things they said to me when I became the minister was, “Make a decision.” I made the decision.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mr A.J. SIMPSON: It is their decision; they had the process. I did not force them to put it to the advisory board; they put their own proposals in. To stand here and say that I should apologise for the process is ludicrous. It is their proposal that was put to the Local Government Advisory Board, there were 30 000 submissions, and the outcome is what they wanted.