

CHILDCARE SERVICES

**620. Mr J.P.D. EDWARDS to the Minister for Community Development, Women's Interests, Seniors and Youth:**

I refer the minister to the WA independent planning advisory committee established to provide advice on childcare needs and to recent allegations about planning approvals for childcare centres.

- (1) Why has the minister not ensured that the WA independent planning advisory committee oversees the appropriate planning of childcare services?
- (2) Does the minister recognise that decisions about the location of childcare facilities are now effectively being left to local governments, rather than bodies with appropriate expertise?
- (3) Does the minister concede that this situation gives considerable scope for corruption in the planning process?

**Ms S.M. McHALE replied:**

Will the member repeat the terminology of the committee to which he is referring? What is he talking about?

Mr J.P.D. Edwards: It's one of yours.

Ms S.M. McHALE: The member talked about a planning advisory committee.

Mr J.P.D. Edwards: The Western Australian independent planning advisory committee that oversees the appropriate planning of childcare services.

Ms S.M. McHALE: I thank the member for repeating that. I do not think that is the correct title.

- (1)-(3) I can inform the House that I have been corresponding with the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure about the appropriateness of planning applications for the location of childcare centres. Historically, the location of childcare centres has been entirely a planning matter. The minister and I both agree that we need to firm up those planning guidelines. I am delighted that the minister and I are of similar minds and that her department and my department are working together to look at better planning guidelines for childcare centres.