

SHIRE OF EXMOUTH — CORRUPTION AND CRIME COMMISSION REPORT

Statement by Minister for Local Government

MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah — Minister for Local Government) [9.03 am]: I rise to inform the house of the current state of play in respect of the Shire of Exmouth. Members will be aware of the findings of the Corruption and Crime Commission's "Report on Matters of Serious Misconduct in the Shire of Exmouth" released on 2 May this year. The council of the shire was suspended following the hearings by the Corruption and Crime Commission into allegations of serious misconduct by a number of officers in the shire. The commission recommended that consideration be given to the prosecution of a senior officer of the shire, and identified a "stunning indifference" by the council to the ratepayers of Exmouth in failing to discipline senior officers. I travelled to Exmouth and met with all the suspended councillors on 29 May. I had a very productive meeting with the existing councillors in which I expressed my concerns about how they could go about restoring the community of Exmouth's confidence in local governance. On 30 and 31 May, all five remaining councillors resigned from their positions on the Shire of Exmouth, with one councillor having resigned in November 2016. The resignations are a positive step forward in ensuring that good governance is restored. The commissioner, Mr Ian Fletcher, has agreed to extend his tenure until the local government elections in October 2017. The local government elections are an important opportunity for the people of Exmouth to take advantage of the democratic process and have their say about their community's future. I thank all councillors for putting the community first and allowing the process to move forward. The undertaking by the McGowan government was to improve the relationship between local government authorities and the state, and this visit to Exmouth exemplifies that undertaking.