

LOCAL GOVERNMENT — RESPONSIBILITIES

591. Mr W.R. MARMION to the Minister for Local Government:

I have a supplementary question. Given that the Minister for Local Government, through his answer, is encouraging an expansion of the responsibilities of local government, how much additional funding will he provide local governments to deliver those services and does he expect Western Australians to simply pay more rates to fund those extra programs.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN replied:

We know, of course, that the Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party is the protector, because he told us so. He said, “My role is to protect Liza”—the Leader of the Opposition. He said, “My job is to protect her.” Then he went on to divulge, very interestingly, the way that he operated as minister. I will quote from *The West Australian* of 21 June, just after he became Deputy Leader of the Opposition, under the headline, “Marmion’s bizarre claims on his job, his staff and ‘fire insurance’”, he said —

“When I was a minister I was telling all my staff—your job is to make me look good. You are the ones that do all the work and you have to make the call on what you think is the best thing that will make me look good.”

If he is protecting the Leader of the Opposition, who is protecting him?

Point of Order

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: I draw your attention to the answer. It needs to be relevant to the supplementary question.

The SPEAKER: You will get to the point, minister.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: We are conducting a very important generational review of the Local Government Act. It is the responsibility of the member for Nedlands, as a member of this Parliament and indeed as a person who should take a deep interest in that review, to make appropriate and critical comments based upon facts and appropriate thinking, not just make glib, off-the-cuff comments. That is the problem that the member for Nedlands has fallen into.

The government will keep working with the sector and the community because it recognises that many of the communities that local governments serve are feeling pressures, be they economic pressure or budgetary constraints and concerns. The key is engagement and, of course, to make sure that they remain focused on doing the good things that they do and to create jobs in their communities. Why would we not want a local government to actively engage with state and federal governments in job creation? I am talking about creating opportunities for people, and that is what I will keep talking about. The government is focused on reform. Do not forget that when the Liberal Party was in government, it did nothing in the local government sector. This government has already passed legislation and it is developing a new local government act for Western Australia. The member should get on board, rather than making glib and cheap shots at everyone because the opposition does not have a policy and is not doing its homework and research.