

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT — REVIEW

Statement by Minister for Local Government

MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah — Minister for Local Government) [2.07 pm]: Mr Speaker, before I begin my statement, I acknowledge my lunch guests from the Mandurah Volunteer Marine Rescue group, who are in the Speaker's gallery. They are a wonderful group of people from Mandurah.

I am excited to share with the house today a summary of the community engagement held during the public submission period of the Local Government Act 1995 review. At the close of the public submission period, 3 145 responses had been received, including more than 1 700 from community members. This tremendous response reflects the interest in local government and the support from within the community for local government reform. In the six months of the public submission period, the McGowan Labor government has demonstrated a commitment to engaging with the public, councillors and stakeholders to hear the varied viewpoints on the future of local government.

Since the release of discussion papers last year, over 100 workshops, forums and meetings were held with community, local governments and stakeholders. This consultation included 28 community workshops across Western Australia and pop-up stalls in shopping centres and community halls. To ensure that all Western Australians had an opportunity to have their say, multiple workshops were held in all Western Australian regions. The community engagement conducted in this part of the review is in addition to the 28 forums held in 2017. In the course of the engagement, we heard passionate views about the future of local government, including the importance of local democracy and the voice that local government can provide to and for communities. We also heard about the importance of strengthening transparency and accountability across all local governments. Although there are divergent views on the ways to achieve a better local government sector, there is a clear community expectation that local government must be reformed. Our task now turns to considering the 3 145 responses received. The submissions received will be published as soon as possible on the review's webpage, along with the details of each of the workshops and forums held. But, this is not the end; it is the beginning. Policy will be developed and further consultation will be undertaken.

I thank all those who have contributed by providing a response to the review. The community, councillors, local government staff and stakeholders can look forward to sharing more information about the viewpoints on the future of local government.