

LOCAL GOVERNMENT — CITY OF MELVILLE INQUIRY — COMPLAINTS

3089. Mr A. Krsticevic to the Minister for Local Government; Heritage; Culture and the Arts:

I refer to the Minister's answer to part (f) of Question on Notice 2467, and ask:

- (a) given that you were able to provide the Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs details of the number of informal complaints received by the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (more than 200 since 2013), can you please provide a breakdown of how many informal complaints were received by the Department in each year since 2013; and
- (b) how many formal complaints were received by the Department in each year since 2013?

**Mr D.A. Templeman replied:**

As the member is aware the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (the Department) has initiated and is undertaking an Authorised Inquiry into the City of Melville (the City).

The Department had been monitoring the City for more than twelve months, prior to commencing the Inquiry, due to a number of concerns. Concerns of the Department were based on attendance and behaviour at council meetings, complaints, working with City staff and meetings with ratepayers.

I support the Director General's decision to undertake the Authorised Inquiry into the City, as part of the Department's normal duties. The City's Chief Executive Office has also welcomed by the Inquiry.

The number of complaints form part of the story with regard to the function of a local government. I stated in a media statement that nearly 300 complaints had been made against the City since 2014. In a letter to the Standing Committee of the Environment and Public Affairs, I advised the since 2013 the Department has received more than 200 informal complaints regarding the City. These statements are not inconsistent or contradictory.

My Office and the Department have received a large number of formal complaints, informal complaints and correspondence regarding the City, since 10 March 2017. These include, but not limited to, complaints regarding the wave park, purchasing of property by the City, conduct of the Mayor and CEO and other elected representatives and employees, enforcement of legislation such as the Building Act 2011 and social media posts.

I attended a council meeting on 18 July 2017 and it was clear there was a lack of respect and a breakdown in relationships was evident.

Also three petitions have been tabled in Parliament within the past twelve months raising concerns about the City, with signatures totalling over 5,000.

The State Government has a responsibility to ensure that local governments are meeting the needs of their communities and obligations under the *Local Government Act 1995*. I trust that this Inquiry will lead to improved outcomes and improved relationships between the City and its residents.