

CITY OF PERTH — MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT'S COMMENTS

321. Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN to the Minister for Local Government:

My question is about the big issue of the day! I refer to the minister's comments in *The West Australian* today, in which he described the recent turmoil at the City of Perth as being a disgrace.

- (1) For how long will the minister allow this disgrace to continue before he will take action?
- (2) As the minister's government has intervened in other dysfunctional councils, why is the government not stepping in regarding this one?

Mr A.J. SIMPSON replied:

(1)–(2) I thank the member for Mandurah for his question about the City of Perth. I think my comments yesterday were with regard to a council meeting that had been held the night before at which a bitter dispute and an argument was debated in the chamber —

Mr D.A. Templeman interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Mandurah, just hold it for a minute.

Mr A.J. SIMPSON: — and a motion was moved that had no impact on the member at all. To sum it up, in the Premier's words, it was a storm in a teacup.

The City of Perth at the moment is going through the investigation, which we are very much well aware of. I have full confidence in the administration of the organisation delivering the services. But what is more important is I think yesterday my words were along the line of saying I am putting them on notice —

Mr D.A. Templeman interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Mandurah, I call you to order for the second time.

Mr A.J. SIMPSON: I do take it on board. It is not a good look for the City of Perth. I do agree with that.

Mr R.H. Cook interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Kwinana!

Mr A.J. SIMPSON: That is why my comments were made yesterday around the fact that, first, the councillors need to start acting like adults and come back to the table, not air their dirty laundry in public at the moment and get on with the job that they were elected to do. They are elected to do a job to make sure that they provide good governance to the people and the ratepayers of the City of Perth. I have put them on notice. I am watching over them right now. We need to get to the bottom of it —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: I am getting the wall of noise.

Mr A.J. SIMPSON: The most important thing to realise is that under the Local Government Act—the opposition member would know this process—there is a process to go through to dismiss a council. First, we kick off the actual inquiry, we serve it a 28-day notice, state the reasons why and then we go for a full dismissal from there. We have been through this process a number of times in my time as minister. The interesting part is that a couple of things are happening at the same time. I put them on notice yesterday. I will be watching them more closely now to make sure that we can get the good governance. But the reality, the most important thing, is that the ratepayers of the City of Perth are getting service for their money. The administration is running. I think the councillors need to wake up and make sure that they are doing the right thing by their ratepayers.