

CITY OF PERTH — INQUIRY PANEL

958. Mr A. KRSTICEVIC to the Minister for Local Government:

I refer to the highly complex inquiry panel into the City of Perth and its operations between 2015 and 2018, which outlined the extent of the inquiry earlier today.

- (1) Can the minister confirm that the panel chair has requested additional time to complete this inquiry, given the complexity, volume of information and lack of significant prior work done by the department?
- (2) Can he also confirm that he has refused a request to extend the reporting date of the inquiry; and, if so, why?

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN replied:

- (1) It is very important that today the panel inquirer held the first hearing regarding the very important panel inquiry into the issues surrounding the City of Perth—a decision made by me, and by this government, because, of course —

Mr A. Krsticevic: With a bit of encouragement.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: You, sunshine, did nothing. You cavalcaded local government ministers —

The SPEAKER: Minister! Through the Chair.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Your cavalcade of local government ministers did nothing.

Mr A. Krsticevic interjected.

The SPEAKER: Hold on.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Your cavalcade of local government ministers did nothing —

The SPEAKER: Excuse me! Member for Carine, I was on my feet. I call you to order for the first time.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: We have taken action and the inquiry panel has commenced. As I said when the panel inquiry was announced and established, if, indeed, there is a formal request, it will be considered by government. That will include, of course, consideration to extending the time. If that is formally made, that will be considered by government. It is out there.

- (2) On the second question about any refusal, as I have just said, the answer to that is no because if a formal request is made, that will be considered. A request will be made and cabinet and government will consider that. Of course, we recognise very clearly that the issues surrounding the City of Perth are complex matters. I quote from the media report on the panel inquirer's report today —

What is clear from the investigations to date is that there are a large number of very serious matters which have arisen for investigation.

I think that in itself highlights why we have taken this course of action. He also says —

It is important for the public to hear about these issues, to understand them and to know what can be done to address these issues now, so they do not arise in the future.

Of course, he has also highlighted that the inquiry has also made use of its coercive powers, issuing 35 notices to require people to produce documents and information. We will support the inquirer and, of course, if any formal request is made, we will indeed consider that.