

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT AMALGAMATIONS

### *Motion*

**MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah)** [4.01 pm]: I move —

That this house condemns the Barnett government for its plan to force local government amalgamations, and supports the outcome of the City of Vincent referendum in which 77 per cent of people voted against forced amalgamations.

It is very interesting that this issue of local government reform is before us. This government has been steamrolling this issue through the local government sector like a wild wagon losing its wheels. Ever since the former minister announced some five years ago that there would be widespread change to local government, the wagon has been wobbling wildly. We know that in August this year, the government announced the proposed new boundaries for the City of Perth, which would result in collapsing the current 30 local governments in the metropolitan area down to 14. Included in that was the interesting proposal for the City of Vincent. That is the predominant focus of the motion before this house this afternoon. The City of Vincent was created as a result of the disassembling of the former City of Perth, as it was known, into the City of Vincent, the Town of Victoria Park, the City of Cambridge and the City of Perth some years ago.

The government's proposal to collapse the 30 existing councils to 14 has, as we know now, been very rocky. On 4 October, the Local Government Advisory Board received submissions from a number of councils and some private submissions on its proposal. Since the state election, the opposition's view has been that the Barnett government has reneged on a promise that was made before the election that there would be no forced amalgamations. We know that in the lead-up to the release and post the release of the new boundaries, which will now be considered, along with submissions by the Local Government Advisory Board, the minister said quite clearly that the government will only be tinkering with the edges a little. In many respects, he directed local governments to broadly adhere to the government's proposal. We know now from the submissions—I have read all the submissions from local governments—that a number of local governments have been very, very strong in their views on the government's process and on the new map boundaries that the government has proposed. There has been no more stronger public campaign than in the City of Vincent.

The now federal member for Perth, Alannah MacTiernan, the former Mayor of Vincent, along with her council, led a very strong campaign—this campaign continues—for the City of Vincent to determine its own future. I will come to the results of the local government elections shortly, particularly with regard to Vincent. It is certainly true that in the lead-up to even the ordinary election last weekend, the City of Vincent's campaign has been very much all in—the all-in campaign—which is counter to the government's proposal to effectively split the City of Vincent, with a portion going into the City of Stirling and the rest going into the City of Perth. That campaign was very strong. Indeed, that campaign was epitomised with a petition that was presented to this place by the member for Perth on Wednesday, 25 September this year. The member for Perth presented a petition to this chamber signed by 5 470 people—assuming that these were mainly representatives of the City of Vincent. The petition read —

**We, the undersigned, strongly oppose the WA Government's plan to split the City of Vincent and place North Perth, Mt Hawthorn, parts of Leederville and Mt Lawley/Beaufort Street in the City of Stirling.**

An explanation was given in the petition about why the citizens who signed the petition were opposed to the government's plans to have only a section of the City of Vincent amalgamated with the City of Perth, with the rest going into the City of Stirling. The reasons they gave in that petition included the issues of the vibrancy of the inner-city communities, which are built around urban villages, the interconnectedness, and the sharing of a common sense of identity, and that the inclusion with a sprawling suburban Stirling council does not fit with that focus. The second dot point in that petition stated —

The current plan divides communities of interest for example splitting Leederville residents from their town centre and splitting Beaufort Street;

The third dot point stated —

It completely ignores the Government's Robson report which recommended all of the City of Vincent be included in the City of Perth boundaries; and

The final point stated —

It is an expensive and time consuming option.

Those petitioners asked the Legislative Assembly to reject the proposed amalgamation.

A rally took place in the City of Vincent in August. It was very well attended; 1 400 to 1 500 people attended the rally, again strongly proposing that if the government is to impose an amalgamation that affects the City of Vincent, the strong option was for an all-in to the City of Perth, not the government's proposal, the minister's proposal or the Premier's proposal to split that. The member for Perth also advised the house on that day, Wednesday, 25 September, that she had a further 1 320 signatures on a petition with the same flavour but it unfortunately did not comply. She highlighted to the house that, therefore, there was in total 6 790 signatures if we put the nonconforming petition along with the one which did conform and which was presented on that day.

We can see the story building. The community of the City of Vincent has been putting the case very strongly that if it is to be amalgamated, it wants an all-in option. The reasons that it has given have been highlighted in rallies, in letters to the local press and in emails that the member for Perth read out in this place during a debate we had on 14 August this year, when the member very eloquently highlighted the issues. At that stage, we had a motion during private members' business that referred to the local government amalgamation issue, and a number of members spoke about how the proposed government maps, if you like—the new boundaries—would affect their communities. The member for Perth's comments were interesting. She made a very interesting and telling comment in her speech to this place on Wednesday, 14 August when she said —

From the onset of this amalgamation announcement I have informed my constituents that it is just a proposal.

It is very clear that now is the time for the member to stand up for the people of Vincent. She has been very vocal. I have watched closely press articles in which she has been quoted and also her comments on radio. I recall the member's comments in late August along the lines that she recognised the need to represent her constituency, to listen to their concerns and to make sure that she put those concerns strongly. The call that we have always had is that the member needs to put those concerns very strongly in the party room—only she knows whether she has done that; I do not—and that, indeed, the issue of what happens to Vincent in the future is one that needs to be pursued. But the test of the pudding, of course, will come with regard to how the member for Perth may vote on this motion that is before the house.

Let us fast-forward now. With all the discussions, the letters and the all, in all in campaign, in the ordinary election last weekend, on 19 October, the City of Vincent posed two interesting questions. First of all, I congratulate, by the way, the new mayor, John Carey, who certainly was overwhelmingly elected as the mayor of the municipality of Vincent with 87 per cent of the vote. The City of Vincent posed two very interesting and specific questions to the electors there. I will deal with the first question that was posed to those people who voted, and I will come to the issue of how many voted in a minute. The first question was —

**If the City of Vincent is to be abolished, what is your preferred option?**

There were two sub-parts to that. The question was as follows: if the city is to be abolished—in other words, if the government forces the city, which it has been arguing the government is going to do, and has been going to do all the way along—what are the options? The residents were asked whether they would prefer that all of the City of Vincent go into the City of Perth—the first option, if you like—or the City of Vincent be divided between the City of Perth and the City of Stirling. To that question, it was an overwhelming response—a nearly 90 per cent response—to support the current campaign of the City of Vincent; that is, 89.89 per cent strongly supported or supported the City of Vincent merging with the City of Perth in total; all of it. Just over 10 per cent preferred the option that if the City of Vincent were abolished, it be divided between the City of Perth and the City of Stirling. Then the city asked the other interesting question, which is really the crux of our motion today. That question is —

**Do you agree the City of Vincent should be abolished?**

This goes to the central question of whether or not the people of the City of Vincent believe that the government should impose on the city that it be abolished in total. It is an interesting response. Just over 22 per cent—22.89 per cent—responded, yes, they agree it should be abolished, and 77.11 per cent said no. This was a question posed by the City of Vincent, and the strong result from that shows that people were against in total any forced amalgamation by this government.

I think the good thing about how the City of Vincent has placed this is that it has not necessarily argued simply that it does not want to be part of any reform process. It is one of a number of councils that have recognised that there is a need for reforms and for looking at how local governments function now and into the future. I think the city took a very pragmatic approach to this whole issue and said that if it was going to be forced, it would do the merge, but it wanted it to be a full merge because of all the issues and the reasons I highlighted previously.

This government, having set upon an amalgamation reform process, has now had consistent kickback, if you like, by various local governments and various individuals, including the Premier being almost debated on radio back in September when Bill Hassell, a former member of this place—a former Liberal Party Leader of the

Opposition, from memory—basically said that the Premier was misleading the people of Western Australia, because he promised previously that there would be no forced amalgamations, but that was exactly what he was doing with his proposals for the new metropolitan boundaries. It was very interesting to listen to someone like Bill Hassell, who is now, of course, a councillor in the City of Nedlands, saying that about someone who—I am not sure, member for Midland, whether he served in the Parliament when —

**Mrs M.H. Roberts** interjected.

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** No, he was not. The member for Cottesloe was probably a young man then.

**Mrs M.H. Roberts** interjected.

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** No, no—not the member for Midland; I am talking about the member for Cottesloe. Was he in Parliament when Bill Hassell was here?

**Mrs M.H. Roberts:** He replaced him, didn't he?

Several members interjected.

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** I thought Bill Hassell was the member for Nedlands, not Cottesloe. There we are. It shows that my knowledge of the history of the Parliamentary Liberal Party is very sparse.

I am not going to speak for much longer, because the contribution by the member for Perth will be very interesting. We will listen intently to her response because, on the one hand, she has been arguing that she will listen, and has been listening, to the people of Vincent and that she has been emailing. In fact, in the speech that she made to this place in August during the debate on amalgamations, she highlighted a number of emails that she had received. From memory, she said that 99 per cent of them were in support of an all-in option. The people have now spoken in a formal vote and are telling the member for Perth, as their local member, and their council that their first preference is for no abolition of the City of Vincent at all. That was said in response to the second question that was asked on 19 October. But if the government forces the City of Vincent to be no more—that is what it is looking like—those people from that community have strongly indicated they want to be totally part of a new City of Perth. It is interesting that the now Mayor of Vincent, the then acting mayor, put out a press release when the City of Perth's representatives were making ongoing comments about the boundary issue in late September. He highlighted that the City of Vincent saw that the City of Perth was simply appearing to support a proposed split of the Vincent community that would see Perth stay as a small CBD area. The City of Perth was proposing to simply cherry-pick significant assets in nearby Vincent, Nedlands and Victoria Park. Of course, both the member for Victoria Park and the member for South Perth indicated their strong concerns about what is proposed with the City of Perth and the Burswood peninsula on the southern part of the City of South Perth and the Town of Victoria Park. That is another issue.

However, when we vote on this motion later on this evening, the member for Perth will have her opportunity to genuinely stand up to the Premier and to the Minister for Local Government in support of her community. The opposition strongly supports the will of the people of Vincent through this motion. The member for Perth's vote, particularly, will be watched carefully given her series of statements, not only in this place, publicly and on radio, but also in her own local newspapers. The member for Perth has said that she has been listening to the people, that she strongly supports the all-in proposal and that she has said that she will fight as hard as she can and make sure she will tell the government. There is one other thing she must do—that is, when we come to a vote on this motion, she should, holding her head high, walk across to the opposition side to simply demonstrate the rhetoric that she has been articulating for a number of months. If the member for Perth does not do that, it will not only send an interesting but clear message to the people of Vincent, whom last Saturday made their decisions on those two council questions, but also demonstrate to her colleagues that she may say one thing, but when it comes to the crunch, she is not prepared to take action.

**Mr J.E. McGrath** interjected.

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** The member for South Perth should support the motion, too. We know his views on what has been proposed for Victoria Park and South Perth. Of course, his problem is that he does not support what the Premier is proposing in the peninsula being absorbed into the City of Perth. The telling question will be where his vote will be placed at the end of the day. If he genuinely believes in supporting his electorate, he should come across to the opposition side of the house to support the people. That is the challenge. Having been a former councillor, I know the member for Midland wishes to make a contribution, as well as others. I hope the member for Perth will be the next speaker because we will be watching and listening carefully to her views, and, indeed, what ultimate actions she will take when this matter comes to a vote in the next hour or so.

**MS E. EVANGEL (Perth)** [4.24 pm]: I rise to speak against the member for Mandurah's motion before the house. I register my objection to the term "forced amalgamations", which do not exist, and the motion's misleading wording with the term "people" carefully selected instead of the phrase "the people who voted" when referring to the 77 per cent figure. Additionally, I would like to thank the opposition for its interest in my

electorate. On a number of occasions in this place, I have had the pleasure of hearing members raise their concerns with issues relating to my electorate. It is indeed a compliment that reinforces my view that I represent in this place a remarkable electorate, which is due largely to the investment in this capital city by this Liberal–National government. The City Link, Elizabeth Quay and the new Museum are just a few examples of how we are transforming this state’s capital city.

**Ms M.M. Quirk** interjected.

**THE ACTING SPEAKER (Mr I.C. Blayney):** Member for Girrawheen, you are on three calls. Okay?

**Ms M.M. Quirk:** Yes, I am aware of that.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Good.

**Ms E. EVANGEL:** I am quite amazed and intrigued by the attention I have received from the member for Mandurah. He may have a really boring and quiet electorate—he does not. I was actually there last Sunday for the first time in about 12 months, and I was amazed at its vibrancy and activities. The foreshore was alive with festivities. I saw children, camels and horses—wow! It is an amazing and exciting electorate. I would have assumed that the member for Mandurah had a few more things to do than to sit there following every single word I have said in this place. Imitation is the greatest form of compliment, so I thank him for that. It is wonderful—really lovely. However, back to the motion; I am sorry for diverting.

Several members interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Members!

**Ms E. EVANGEL:** I will address this motion, which I do not support, in two parts. The first part will address the misleading reference of forced amalgamation and the second part is the plebiscite result in Vincent. Firstly, there is no forced amalgamation. I think it is getting a little tiresome and cumbersome to consistently hear these terms being used, when, in fact, all that is happening at the moment is a proposed boundary change. It is local government reform, in fact. Local government authorities have expressed their preferred boundaries through submissions to the Local Government Advisory Board. It is very impressive that 21 submissions have already been put forward to the Local Government Advisory Board; it is fantastic. It shows extensive community involvement in the local government reform process, which is occurring at the moment. It is a wonderful thing. It is a democratic process. There is much conversation and debate relating to where the boundaries will be and what the final outcome in the future may be. This is a conversation and debate that has been around for many years—in fact, by members opposite.

Local government reform is a difficult process. It is not easy; it is complex. We are dealing with people’s livelihoods, people’s homes and people’s community. Often emotions run high. I, too, get emotional when discussing the proposed split of my Vincent community, as do many other people in my electorate. Local government is the people’s government; it is a creator of communities. It advocates for people who have issues that directly impact upon them. Before I proceed further, I congratulate all the newly elected mayors and councillors statewide—in particular, the newly elected local government representatives in my electorate of Perth. I refer to the City of Perth councillors Judy McEvoy, James Limnios, Keith Yong and Reece Harley, as well as the City of Vincent’s John Carey, Josh Topelberg, Matt Buckels, Laine McDonald and Emma Cole. Congratulations to them all. Additionally, I acknowledge the retirement of Dudley Maier, who served the Vincent community with distinction for two terms. Congratulations to them all.

Prior to entering this place as the member for Perth, I was a councillor for the City of Perth for eight years. I have the utmost respect for local government. During that time, I developed strong friendships in and ties with my local community. The issue of local government reform was raised on many occasions during this time. In fact, it was a recurring issue throughout my term as councillor. It was at this time that I developed the view that local government reform was necessary.

To have 30 local governments servicing our state is far too many, and the need to streamline our service delivery is evident in terms of economic savings, economies of scale and service delivery. The Minister for Local Government’s announcement in late July 2013 that proposed to reduce the current 30 local government authorities to around 14 has stimulated much discussion. I must admit that I have received hundreds of emails and phone calls from constituents sharing their views. The member for Mandurah correctly stated this in his speech just moments ago. The major concern in my electorate is the state government’s proposed new boundaries. It is proposed that the City of Vincent be split, with the sections south of Vincent Street to go to the City for Perth and the sections north of Vincent Street to go to the City of Stirling. The division of the Vincent community, particularly the proposal to send the majority of Vincent to Stirling, is an insult to Vincent residents. With all due respect, the City of Stirling is a very successful, large suburban council with over 200 000 residents. To put this in perspective, the City of Stirling has more residents than the Northern Territory; whereas the City

of Vincent is an inner-city council with the suburbs of Highgate, North Perth, Leederville and Mt Hawthorn, and parts of Mt Lawley and Northbridge. Choosing to live in Vincent is choosing an inner-city lifestyle. It is a vibrant, urban inner-city centre, with rich cafe, retail and entertainment hubs.

The City of Perth has the smallest footprint in the nation of just 8.1 square kilometres. Although it has a rapidly growing inner-city residential population, it has only 20 000 residents. If members look at the City of Vincent, with its four and a half suburbs —

*Point of Order*

**Mrs M.H. ROBERTS:** Page 17 of the standing orders states —

Reading of speeches is not allowed, except when Minister is introducing a Bill: ...

I note that the member for Perth is wearing her glasses and reading a speech. I ask you, Mr Acting Speaker, to draw the member's attention to that standing order.

**Mr J.E. McGrath:** Give her a break; she's new.

**Mrs M.H. ROBERTS:** It is not in order.

Several members interjected.

**Mrs M.H. ROBERTS:** They are the rules. They are the standing orders.

Several members interjected.

**Mrs M.H. ROBERTS:** Members opposite may think that it is okay, but the standing orders are the standing orders, and it is up to the Chair to adjudicate.

**Mr P.T. MILES:** I have two things. Just because a member of this place wears glasses does not mean that they are reading a speech. I have been sitting here and I noticed that the member has actually been glancing down, looking at the notes that she has prepared for her speech today.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr I.C. Blayney):** I have no objection to the member for Perth making use of her notes to read her speech.

**Mrs M.H. Roberts:** To read her speech.

**Mr A.P. Jacob:** To make her speech.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** I remind the member that it is best not to make too extensive use of her notes, but speaking as someone who has to use notes, I think the member is just within the boundaries.

*Debate Resumed*

**Ms E. EVANGEL:** I thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

I mentioned that the City of Perth has one of the smallest residential footprints in the whole of the nation. It has only about 20 000 residents. The City of Vincent has four and a half suburbs and around 31 000 residents. I make the point that if the two were to be fully amalgamated, the result would be a capital city local government authority with just above 50 000 residents, which is by all means comparatively small.

Much like the inner-city communities of the City of Melbourne and the City of Sydney, the City of Vincent is a perfect fit for an expanding inner-city local government. It provides the inner-city residential community with a homegrown residential powerbase that supports inner-city retail and entertainment precincts. By comparison, the City of Melbourne has 100 611 residents and 15 inner-city suburbs, and the City of Sydney has just over 183 000 residents and 33 suburbs. Both are very successful cities that are acknowledged around the world as outstanding places to live. Vincent residents identify as inner-city people. They walk, ride or take the bus into the city, and the majority of these residents work in the city. People make a conscious choice when deciding to live in Vincent; they are choosing to be an inner-city resident and elect to live an inner-city lifestyle by moving to these areas.

I stress that the last few months have not been about forced amalgamation. We have seen a proposal from the Minister for Local Government with proposed boundaries, and now is the time to be discussing the issues relating to those boundaries because they will affect all of us for years to come. Local government amalgamations do not happen every day and these boundaries will affect all of us, so we need to do it correctly.

**Ms R. Saffioti:** Will the member take an interjection? What about the 77 per cent that voted for no change?

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** It is up to the member whether she wants to take an interjection.

**Ms E. EVANGEL:** Mr Acting Speaker, I am getting to that right now if the member would like to be patient.

I would like to address the second part of this misleading motion and put it into perspective. I refer to the reference to the 77 per cent of Vincent people who do not support local government reform. I have some figures to quote that will set the scene, but before doing so, I would like to explain the psychology of the Vincent community. These are people whom I live, work and engage with 95 per cent of my time. When the minister's new boundaries were first announced a few months back, the initial response of the Vincent residents was overwhelmingly that they did not want to, and should not have to, accept their community being split. The overwhelming response was one in, all in. The Vincent local government campaign centred on this over the last few months. When the boundaries were first proposed, the Vincent council was led by the then mayor, Hon Alannah MacTiernan, who has since been elected as the federal Labor member for Perth; I congratulate her on her recent election. Under her sturdy leadership, a campaign was designed called "One in, all in", which was promoted at the two rallies held in Angove Street recently. This was mentioned by the member for Mandurah. The rallies were attended by about 1 200 people on each occasion to voice their concerns about the proposed boundaries. A "One in, all in" campaign committee was established, and the City of Vincent council approved, and has spent, as at 20 September, \$48 765 on the campaign. What does this tell us? It tells us how important a full merger of the City of Vincent with the City of Perth is to the Vincent community. This is something that I have supported since day one and will continue to support. The dedication to and passion for the merger of the City of Vincent with the City of Perth is demonstrated by the City of Vincent ratepayers' investment of these funds towards this cause. I applaud the council for taking such a strong stand in representing its community.

Unfortunately, since then, submissions have been made to the Local Government Advisory Board, and the City of Perth in its submission did not include all of Vincent and pulled back the state government's proposed boundaries to Bulwer Street. This is very disappointing to say the least. The flow-on effect to this is that the City of Vincent community has become quite disillusioned. I am often approached by constituents asking point-blank, "Why does the City of Perth not want us? Why has the city rejected us? We are an inner city community."

**Ms S.F. McGurk:** Then they ask, "Why is the government forcing amalgamations?"

**Ms E. EVANGEL:** No, they do not actually.

*Point of Order*

**Mr P.T. MILES:** Mr Acting Speaker, members on this side of the house listened intently to the member for Mandurah when he gave his speech earlier. We have been listening and would like our member to be heard in silence. Members opposite have continually interjected on the member and I ask you to call them to order.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr I.C. Blayney):** I think members on the other side have not been too bad today so I will ask the member to continue.

*Debate Resumed*

**Ms E. EVANGEL:** As I said, I am in my electorate the majority of the time and I get asked this question on a regular basis: why has the City of Perth not included us in its submission to the Local Government Advisory Board? I cannot answer that. I believe it is short-sighted and that the city is doing —

**Ms R. Saffioti** interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Order, member!

**Ms E. EVANGEL:** The city is short-changing itself because it is ignoring the value of residents and it is the people who make a city. I will run through and put into perspective the 77 per cent figure that has been highlighted by members opposite. There are 21 102 eligible voters in the City of Vincent.

**Mr P. Papalia:** A small electorate.

**Ms E. EVANGEL:** Exactly. Of those eligible voters, 29.2 per cent voted, and 77.11 per cent of those, which equates to 4 564 votes, voted against the City of Vincent being abolished.

**Ms R. Saffioti** interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for West Swan!

**Ms E. EVANGEL:** To put it in perspective again, that is 4 564 voters.

**Mr A.J. Simpson:** Which is 22 per cent.

**Ms E. EVANGEL:** Exactly. Thank you, minister.

**Ms R. Saffioti** interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for West Swan!

**Ms R. Saffioti:** What the member is saying is absolutely ridiculous.

**Ms E. EVANGEL:** It has come from the WA Electoral Commission.

**Ms R. Saffioti:** She cannot say that —

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for West Swan, I would appreciate it if the member was heard in silence, thanks.

Several members interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** We are currently listening to the member Perth, and I would appreciate it if we heard the rest of her speech in silence.

**Ms E. EVANGEL:** These figures have been taken from the WA —

**Ms R. Saffioti** interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for West Swan, I am calling you for the first time. Carry on, member.

**Ms E. EVANGEL:** The point is that around 4 000 people voted against the amalgamation and, as we heard, 90 per cent of the voters were in favour of a full City of Vincent to City of Perth merger, and that is exactly what I have been supporting.

**Mrs M.H. Roberts:** Did you say 90 per cent?

**Ms E. EVANGEL:** To be quite specific, 89.89 per cent voted for a City of Vincent to City of Perth merger.

[Member's time extended.]

**Ms E. EVANGEL:** The point I am trying to make is that it has been evident from day one that the preference of City of Vincent members is a full merger with the City of Perth, and that is exactly what I have been advocating for on their behalf. The proposal before us is not set in stone. Now is the time for us to speak out. Now is the time for me, as a member, to represent my electorate and to advocate a full City of Vincent merger with the City of Perth, which is exactly what I have been doing. I have been doing it in this house and at the rallies.

A couple of days ago, I had the privilege of taking the Premier on what I have dubbed the “tour de Vincent”. The Premier spent two hours in my electorate enjoying the inner-city vibe and experiencing what the City of Vincent is all about, and he was really impressed by that inner-city lifestyle and vibe. In fact, we had to drag him away from Vincent because he enjoyed being amongst it all so much. I am hoping for a merger outcome and I am working towards it with my electorate on a daily basis. I have taken the privilege of answering every single email I have received, which have numbered in the hundreds. I have been up all hours of the evening answering those emails and I will not go to sleep until they are all answered—I am committed to this issue. The fact is that the Premier was impressed. He is happy to listen to what the Vincent community has been advocating all this time. My next challenge is to get the Minister for Local Government to visit the City of Vincent so that he too can experience what it is all about and then he will also acknowledge that the City of Vincent belongs in the City of Perth. That is what I have been fighting for and what I will continue to fight for. I will not support this motion that is completely misleading. Words used in the motion include “forced government amalgamations”—no-one has been forced. We are discussing the topic at hand and it would be great to see some legitimate debate from members opposite. I thank them for their interest in my electorate, which is the best electorate in this state. I have often said that Perth is becoming one of the best cities in the best country in the world, and I am so proud to be representing the City of Vincent and the Perth electorate in this place.

**MRS M.H. ROBERTS (Midland)** [4.47 pm]: What a speech we have heard from the member for Perth! Anyone would think she was not a member of the Liberal Party. It is like someone else is doing this to the City of Vincent. Where has it come from? Why are they all fighting? Why did they have to have a referendum? Where did these absolutely silly proposals come from? They came from the Liberal government and that is why government members are in this mess. That is why ratepayers in the City of Vincent have had to spend over \$48 000 of ratepayers' money on a referendum and campaign against the Liberal government proposals for amalgamations. The member's government is the one proposing the amalgamations. The member for Perth can be in denial if she likes but they are the facts of the matter. She is the Liberal member for Perth and she is part of that party that is inflicting amalgamations on local government. That is the absolute truth of the matter. The member for Perth said that she is really pleased that other members of this house have an interest in her electorate. I think that I might have had an interest in her electorate for longer than she has —

**Mr P.T. Miles** interjected.

**Dr A.D. Buti** interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for Armadale, I call you for the first time.

**Mrs M.H. ROBERTS:** I note that that interruption was caused by the member for Wanneroo, who complained when members interjected on the member for Perth.

Several members interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** I will thank the member for Wanneroo to stop interjecting.

**Mrs M.H. ROBERTS:** I, along with my family, have had a very long association with both the City of Perth and the City of Vincent areas. In fact, my grandfather was born in James Street in Northbridge in 1910, and my family has had a continuous association with both those areas since that time. Indeed, I served as a councillor for the City of Perth between 1986 and 1993. I was elected on four occasions to the City of Perth. In the first instance, I was elected to the west ward of the City of Perth for a three-year term, which was cut short to two years because of some boundary changes within the City of Perth. I was re-elected in 1988 for a two-year term and then again in 1990 for a three-year term. Then in May 1993 I was elected for another three-year term, which was cut short to only three months because of the then Liberal–National government’s abolition of the City of Perth. Back then, the Liberal Party had a very different argument; it argued that we needed four tiny towns rather than one big council. The Richard Court government legislated to sever the City of Perth into the City of Perth and the tiny towns of Vincent, Cambridge and Victoria Park. I think all of them have now become cities rather than towns because of population growth.

Member for Perth, the Liberal Party has a history of riding roughshod over local government. I have seen it time and again. I can probably attribute my first election to this place, at least in part, to the Liberal Party riding roughshod with local government boundaries. When the City of Perth was abolished on 31 December 1993 and commissioners were put in place for the City of Perth and the other towns, I was given the opportunity to stand for the seat of Glendalough on 19 March 1994. There is a historical pattern here. At the 1993 election the aspirant Richard Court government promised that it would not forcefully change local government boundaries. It gave that commitment. A letter was sent to residents in the electorates of Perth, Glendalough and Victoria Park. Carmen Lawrence was the Premier of the state and her opponent in the seat of Glendalough sent a letter on behalf of the Liberal Party stating that no boundaries would be changed without community consultation. That was in the lead-up to the February 1993 election, yet in October 1993 Richard Court showed up and announced that the City of Perth as we knew it would be severed four ways. There was quite an embarrassing episode during the Glendalough by-election when my opponent denied he had sent that letter stating that the boundaries would not be changed without consultation.

At that time, residents in the Town of Vincent and elsewhere within the old City of Perth held a referendum. I cannot remember the exact percentage, but the vast majority of people who voted in that referendum did not want to be in a separate town. Nothing has really changed in 20 years. At that stage, somewhere in the order of 90 per cent of people voted to stay in the City of Perth, where most of them had lived all their lives. There is a long history of suburbs such as Highgate and North Perth being part of the City of Perth. I suspect that they had been part of the City of Perth for the best part of 100 years, yet in 1993 the Court government carved up the then City of Perth into four authorities for political gain and for political reasons; it was not for any sensible, rational, local government reform reasons, but for sheer political reasons. The authority that made the least sense at that time was the Town of Vincent, especially when the boundary was cut so far short near Newcastle Street. It had a very tight northern boundary. The City of Perth’s actual boundary was Walcott Street, which is not much further along, and it would have made sense not to have ever created the Town of Vincent. It was created by the Liberal Party of this state against the wishes of its residents. That is the history of the Town of Vincent. The people voted against becoming a town. The people voted at that time to stay in the City of Perth, yet the Court government pushed legislation through this house and the other house to create the Town of Vincent. It was wrong then. I have consistently had a view that the whole of the Town of Vincent should have remained in the City of Perth.

Now we reach this point and there is only one right thing to do—that is, to put the lot back in the City of Perth where it came from and belongs. Members might be surprised at how strongly people feel about it. Do not be surprised; people in the City of Vincent, as it is now, feel very strongly about it. They felt that they were badly wronged by the Court government when the “Town of St Vincent De Paul”, as it was nicknamed at the time, was created in the first place. They wanted to remain in the City of Perth. It should have remained in Perth and it should be put back there now because that is what the residents want. We have had this kind of Pollyanna point of view from the member for Perth who says, “Isn’t it great? I love all the councillors who were elected at the City of Perth. The guys at Vincent do a great job too and I’m really behind everyone in the community in fighting against whatever the naughty City of Perth is doing by not having everybody back in the City of Perth because I think it is a good idea.” Get real, member for Perth. The only reason this is on for debate is that the Liberal–National government put out a very bad proposal to sever Vincent in half and put one half into Perth and shove the rest into the City of Stirling. That is a very, very bad proposal by the Liberal coalition government in this state. The party and the government, of which the member for Perth is a member, proposed that. Everybody

says it has been made perfectly clear; the Premier does not need any more visits. The Minister for Local Government does not need another Vincent to know what people think because he knows what people think. Even the member for Perth in her garbled statistical way said that of the 28 per cent of people who voted, 77 per cent voted against forced amalgamation, and of those 70 per cent, 90 per cent are in favour of putting the whole City of Vincent back into the City of Perth. There is nothing new in this world. That has consistently been the position of the majority of residents of the City of Vincent for the past 20 years. Nothing has changed. We do not need another poll to know it. We did not need last weekend's poll to know it. The government could have looked back at the referendum held in 1993 when people said that they did not want their council to go. Various mayors of Vincent have said that if there are to be any changes, Vincent should go back into the City of Perth. That makes sense; we do not need more discussion on this.

The residents and the electors of the City of Vincent have made their views clear. Their views have been consistent for 20 years. It is absolutely logical that they should be there. After having that pointed out to him by the member for Perth, the Premier still does nothing about it and does not care. He said, "Oh, well, perhaps the two councils could work it out between them. They have come up with one set of boundaries and if Vincent and Perth can agree on something, that might be okay." The City of Perth looked at it and said, "If you want to know our view, we will start again." It came up with a view that is even more bizarre than the government's view. It wants to cut the city even more. The Liberal government's proposition was to go up to Vincent Street and cut up and around, up to Walcott Street at some point, and take in the area north of Summers Street and Moore Street, and take in a large part of Highgate. The City of Vincent says, "Why take just that part? Take the lot." The City of Perth says, "Actually, we don't even want as much of Vincent as the government is trying to give us. We want even less. Let's cut it short at Bulwer Street. Let's just take in the nib Stadium and Leederville and a few areas there that we like and let's cut it even further short."

In a further bizarre twist, the City of Perth says, "Let's maybe carve ourselves a section of a high ratepaying area in the City of Nedlands." There is a little area bordered by Aberdare Road, Smyth Road, Stirling Highway, Bruce Street and Princess Road that the City of Perth is now trying to hive off for itself. I will make sure that I have that boundary right. I am sorry, it is not all of that area; it is a lesser part. However, it certainly includes the University of Western Australia. It is a little hard for me to see the exact boundary on the iPad I am looking at, but it certainly takes in UWA in another area. UWA was never part of the old greater City of Perth, and this amalgamation will include it.

I will cut to the nub of the matter. The government is basically putting to us that this matter is about the sensible reform of local government, that there are too many local governments and that there should be fewer.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr P. Abetz):** Members, can you just keep the conversations a little quieter or move outside the chamber, please. Thanks.

**Mrs M.H. ROBERTS:** I do not believe that the government is genuine in this matter. I believe that if it were genuine, it would reform country local governments—but it is not. There is arguably a much greater need for reform of country local governments than there is of metropolitan local governments. The stand-out areas for amalgamation are mainly in and around the Premier's own electorate. This government did not have the guts to say before the election what it was going to do. Now it has involved people in an interminable argumentative mess. Cities such as Vincent, South Perth and wherever else are expending ratepayers' money arguing against amalgamations and so forth that they should not have to do.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Members, can you please keep the conversations quieter; thank you.

**Mrs M.H. ROBERTS:** The current proposals for amalgamations are also pretty rich when we consider that it was the Liberal Party, when it was last in government, that divided the City of Perth into four local governments. There is just no real honesty in the way the government has gone about things. It was a political exercise in 1993 when the government determined to create four local government authorities out of one—the one being the City of Perth—and it is a political exercise now to promote these amalgamations. All of this could and should be stopped by the Premier and his minister. It should be stopped now. The member for Perth would do herself a much better service if she supported the motion that is before us today. It is a very sensible motion. It says —

This house condemns the Barnett government for its plan to force local government amalgamations and supports the outcome of the City of Vincent referendum where 77 per cent of people voted against forced amalgamations.

I note that the member for Perth herself has admitted that 90 per cent of that 77 per cent of people believe that the whole of the City of Vincent should be amalgamated with Perth.

The Premier and the government should not sit by and let the council of the City of Perth pick and choose which bits of Vincent it wants. This is not an exercise in good government. It is an exercise in poor government. It is an exercise in politics. The Premier could take the politics out of this. He could resolve the matter very simply and

very quickly if he just took this matter off the table and said, “City of Perth, you take the lot or you take nothing. Leave the City of Vincent as it is or take a full amalgamation.” I will not go through the arguments, as this motion is about the City of Vincent. However, I believe the principle of the arguments that I have outlined today applies equally to areas such as Victoria Park, South Perth and some other areas that are facing amalgamation. We have these cute weasel words from the government in its attempt to say that these are not forced amalgamations and that no local government has been forced yet to amalgamate. But this process has been going on for years. The government put out proposed boundaries. If these are not forced amalgamations, the minister should make it clear now—make it clear now that if the City of Vincent wants to stand alone, it can do that. At this stage it is in no man’s land; it does not know where it stands if it does not get agreement with the City of Perth. The City of Perth has made it perfectly clear that there will be no agreement, because it wants to cherry-pick the bits around the edges. How will the government resolve that matter? It could have a lot of talkfests and the member for Perth could have more visits to her electorate. But I do not see why she needs them. I do not see why the Premier and the Minister for Local Government cannot just acknowledge the simple fact that the residents of the City of Vincent have been sturdy and strong for 20 years. They did not want to get kicked out of the City of Perth in the first place. They did not support the creation of the former Town of Vincent. They simply want to go back to where they were. Perhaps the Lord Mayor and the councillors of the City of Perth think: We do not want those areas of Highgate, North Perth and Mt Lawley within our boundaries because there is no stadium, university or casino there. The fact is that 20 years ago every single one of those houses and business premises was part of the City of Perth. The people there have had a long attachment to the City of Perth. They were long-term ratepayers of the City of Perth. My view clearly is that the City of Perth should be obliged to take them back. The Premier should end the doubt and uncertainty. He should declare forthwith that this amalgamation is not going ahead and stop people wasting their time and money.

**MR A.J. SIMPSON (Darling Range — Minister for Local Government)** [5.06 pm]: I thank members for their contributions to this debate. I understand the issue a little bit and that going through any type of change is hard. I can understand why the City of Vincent would want to look at the results of last Saturday’s local government elections and to survey the residents about whether they want to be part of this amalgamation process.

It is interesting for me at the moment as a relatively new minister to go through this reform process. I was interested to see the numbers that came out of the election last Saturday at a time when local government reform is very much on the agenda. I had a careful look at all the documents sent out to electors by the candidates. A number of candidates said that they were against some sort of amalgamation or reform and against their local government being part of another city or council. They were very clear about that on the papers they sent out. Because petitions against amalgamation have come into this house from members, I thought that a lot more people would have voted at the local government elections this time around on the anti-amalgamation and reform platform. The number of voters was therefore very interesting to see.

There were a couple of issues that members were spot-on about, such as voter fatigue at having three elections in one year. That definitely would have had input to the numbers of people voting. However, people are very passionate and it is something that they care about. Considering that voting at local government elections is not compulsory and that the majority of people vote by postal vote, it is pretty easy to sit at home, sign a bit of paper and then send it back. It is not as though they have to turn up and vote on the Saturday the election is held.

I think everyone has an opinion. An interesting thing about local government is that people are very passionate about the area in which they live, and that is why people get out into their community and talk to people. They tend to be the ones I come across more regularly than the average ratepayer in the community. The City of Vincent has 21 000 voters. If we were to use the Dadour poll amendment, we would need to get up to 10 000 people to defeat the amalgamation process. It is therefore interesting to note that on Saturday only 28 per cent of voters turned out; so there is still a long way to go. But at that time they were asked only to vote; they were not asked to vote on the amalgamation of the City of Vincent.

I was pretty heartened to note that we had received 20 submissions at the close of submissions on 4 October and I am pretty sure that the City of Cockburn will put one in before the end of this week to make it 21 applications that we have sought through the Local Government Advisory Board. The advisory board will meet this Thursday to start looking at the draft plans that have been put in. I think one local government has put two in, so probably 20 out of the 30 will be —

**Mr D.A. Templeman:** When you do that, what are you going to do about the new members? What is the issue with the new members? When will that come through?

**Mr A.J. SIMPSON:** Currently, the board is made up of five members but very soon I will be bringing in some legislation to increase that by two members, making it seven. Also, a bit of help —

**Mr D.A. Templeman:** So that would be before the formal consultation and analysis?

**Mr A.J. SIMPSON:** No, I think it will happen probably more towards the end of the year and early next year. The initial work of the advisory board is a lot of desktop work that needs to be done to bring it all together before it starts working on it. Under the current legislation the board can deal with only one amalgamation at a time, so we will legislate to give it power to deal with more than one at a time. We will fix that, as well as add two more members. Hopefully, before the end of the year I will announce some finalised maps that the advisory board has been working on and it can produce a report.

A lot of members get caught up with, “What’s in it for our community?” That is the part about which everyone is running around at the moment saying, “It’s not in our best interests”, and they will pick on community assets or they will pick on the identity of numberplates on cars that will not be relevant to their shire anymore. But the detail in the advisory board report identifies the savings and benefits. The board will also meet with the shires, which is when the community will get involved. Through that involvement, the advisory board will release quite an in-depth report that will identify the costs and issues. Those community groups will then be able to put in submissions about the location of a pool or whatever other community facility. Also, there might be a slight adjustment to the original boundary because it takes in a certain facility that one community identifies with more than another. But I think the advisory board has a lot of work to do; I just hope it gets to that next level.

I became the Minister for Local Government in March and met more and more of the chief executive officers and mayors. The one thing they all told me over and over again was that the government needed to make a decision, so I made a decision. That was one of the clear things I wanted to do. We are now going to the next stage, and where we are heading is very exciting because we will have the detail to get to that next level and bring it all together. We gave them a decision and made an announcement on 30 July to reduce the number of local governments from 30 to 14. We have asked local governments to make a submission to the advisory board so that we can do some work on that. It has been very, very encouraging to see that we are getting some good replies, and it is now a matter of working through them. When I started in March, there was a lot of angst but in the last week I have seen local governments fighting each other to put in a proposal to the advisory board; it has gone full circle. It is quite good that it has been acknowledged that something has to happen. There is always a clear agreeance of everyone I meet within local government, be it elected members or paid employees, that something has to happen. The current system is not working to the benefit of the community. Bigger local governments can deliver far better services to their communities, and I think it is a matter of just trying to work through how we can best deliver that to communities. We have a long way to go on this, and I am very excited about the next level.

**Ms S.F. McGurk:** There is no evidence to show that amalgamated councils offer better services.

**Mr A.J. SIMPSON:** Yes, there is a lot of evidence. The member for Fremantle should hop on her computer there and look at the number of services that the City of Joondalup and the City of Stirling deliver for their ratepayers. We are talking between 200 000 and 160 000 ratepayers in those two cities, and if the member looks at the number of services they provide compared with smaller local governments, it is clear that a larger local government can deliver far more services.

**Dr A.D. Buti:** Where is the evidence of that?

**Mr A.J. SIMPSON:** If the member for Armadale wants to talk about the benefits of amalgamating Serpentine–Jarrahdale and Armadale, the advisory board will come back with that report to identify cost savings; it will look at the rating and the ratio of debt.

**Dr A.D. Buti:** So are you pre-determining what they are going to come back with?

**Mr A.J. SIMPSON:** No, I am not. I am saying that we could have benefits. If the member wants to know more about the benefits of amalgamation, let the advisory board do its work, because the detail will be in writing.

**Dr A.D. Buti:** So at the moment there is no evidence.

**Mr A.J. SIMPSON:** Yes, but hang on; I can show the member a report right now about Subiaco and Nedlands.

**Dr A.D. Buti** interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr P. Abetz):** Member for Armadale!

**Dr A.D. Buti** interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for Armadale, please be silent; you do not have the call. The minister took an interjection but shouting over the top is not acceptable conduct. If you do it again, I will call you.

**Mr A.J. SIMPSON:** The former Minister for Local Government, the member for Bunbury, said that in 2010 a quite detailed 300-page report was prepared on Nedlands and Subiaco. Off the mark, it identified \$4.4 million savings a year in the cash available alone, without going into asset management.

Several members interjected.

**Mr A.J. SIMPSON:** That was expensive. We can actually work through this, and that is where we will get to with the advisory board as we move forward.

I will get back to today's motion about the City of Vincent. A number of members have touched on what happened in 1994, when we broke up the big City of Perth. That was done because the City of Perth was not focusing on the capital city; the suburbs took over the council and the money that needed to be spent on the city was being spent in the suburbs. The idea behind the cut-up of the City of Perth in 1994 was to get the City of Perth to focus on the City of Perth. I think it has worked well. If we look back over the past 20 years, I think it has been a great success and the City of Perth has blossomed. As it moves forward there will be a greater focus on the City of Perth because the actual money it raises will go back to it. The suburbs are the suburbs and different councils make up the suburbs from that which makes up the capital city. As our population grows over the next 13 years by another half a million people, the city's footprint will grow and it will have to expand. The sinking of the railway line and encouraging Northbridge to be more a part of the City of Perth will mean the city will grow further to the north, so part of that area will have to be part of the actual City of Perth. We are still working on where that boundary will lie. A proposal that has been made is that the boundary should be Vincent Street, and I have seen the City of Perth come back with a proposal for it to be Bulwer Street. I think we need to find somewhere around that. That again goes back to the suburbs and the point the member for Midland raised about the City of Vincent being formerly part of the City of Perth, and it should all go back in. There is some room to move around that. I think the advisory board can probably have —

**Mrs M.H. Roberts:** Every last street of it was a part of the City of Perth.

**Mr A.J. SIMPSON:** Correct; it was. I think there is some area around there, but we also have to make sure that we do not lose sight of what the City of Perth is—it is our capital city. We have to be cautious about how much of the suburbs end up back in the City of Perth.

**Dr A.D. Buti:** Like Burswood and South Perth? Yes, that's right; I totally agree with you!

**Mr A.J. SIMPSON:** It is interesting. We will get to that stage. The advisory board will have a fair bit of work to do, working out how much of the City of Vincent ends up where and how we work through that process. I am heartened to see that —

**Mrs M.H. Roberts:** Is that going to be forced? This is where the whole argument is lost. Is it going to be forced at the end of the day, or will the people of Vincent actually get a choice?

**Mr A.J. SIMPSON:** They will have an input through the advisory board as it works through that.

**Mrs M.H. Roberts:** Input is different from choice.

**Mr A.J. SIMPSON:** The local council will be able to provide input, and the advisory board will come out and meet with it. The board will look at what the council is trying to achieve, keeping in mind that there are a number of issues around the rating. When we bring the two interested parties together—the two councils—under the act, the rating can be only twice the lowest rate. When two councils are brought together but the rates are quite separate, it takes a lot more time than a simple amalgamation. There are issues around rates and the ratio of debt. We would not expect one council to pick up the debt of another; it would have to be balanced out over a number of years. All those issues have to be looked at, which is the role of the advisory board. It will come back with a report —

**Mrs M.H. Roberts:** Those issues are no different whether you take half of it or whether you take the whole lot of it.

**Mr A.J. SIMPSON:** Correct. That is the role of the advisory board. It will come back with a report that will be sent to the council and to me as minister. The interesting part of the reform process that is related to the forced amalgamation is when the minister signs off on the new boundary. Under the current legislation, the advisory board will make a recommendation to me on the new boundary, and that will be signed off on. That will probably take another 12 months to get to.

As to the City of Vincent, I think it is great that there was a 28 per cent turnout. That was probably a bit lower than the last election, but it has to be said that there is quite a bit of voter fatigue and also voting is not compulsory in local government elections. There has been a bit of debate about whether voting should be compulsory. The Robson report stated that compulsory voting would bring party politics into local government.

The local government sector was quite clear that it did not want to be involved in party politics, and so we decided to take the initiative and not put in —

**Dr A.D. Buti:** They are there now!

**Mr A.J. SIMPSON:** They are there now, but we do not actually run tickets, which happens in the eastern states.

**Dr A.D. Buti:** They did in Gosnells!

**Mr A.J. SIMPSON:** They can certainly do that.

**Dr A.D. Buti:** He ran a ticket in Gosnells—of course he did.

**Mr A.J. SIMPSON:** I thought it was called a Facebook page.

Several members interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for Armadale, thanks.

**Mr A.J. SIMPSON:** How far do we go with local government if we start taking it down that road? The sector has made it pretty clear to me that it is happy with the way it is. It is partially apolitical, with a slight taste to it, but it is not actually full-on politics in local government at the moment running on tickets. When we start talking about compulsory voting, that is the road we are heading down. It then becomes another arm of government, and it is really full bore party politics around who can spend the most money. I think the important thing is to try to keep local government where it is today. I like the idea. It is little bit more apolitical. Local governments do not get involved in that debate too much, they have their own autonomy and their elected members work together.

The City of Vincent is a great little council and a great little city. The former mayor was very much in my ear for my first three months in the job before she got taken off to Canberra. She put forward her case for the City of Vincent. The interesting thing about the City of Vincent, which relates to the City of Stirling, is what to do with the Beatty Park pool and whether it comes in or goes out. Who wants the pool?

**Dr A.D. Buti:** Armadale wants the pool.

**Mrs M.H. Roberts:** It should be part of the City of Perth.

**Mr A.J. SIMPSON:** They are some of the issues that the advisers can look at. Does the City of Perth have a pool at the moment?

**Mrs M.H. Roberts:** It used to be called Beatty Park.

**Mr A.J. SIMPSON:** We might have to give it back. There are some things we need to look at with regard to the City of Vincent and how we make Perth a better place.

In closing, we do not support this motion, although I understand the intent of the member's motion with regard to the City of Vincent and that 77 per cent of people voted for no change at all. I am heartened that 20 of the 30 local governments put a submission to the advisory board, and we are full steam ahead with the reform process. I am very excited by the next step that will be coming up.

**MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah)** [5.21 pm] — in reply: I will be very brief. It has been an interesting debate this afternoon. It has been interesting to watch the member for Perth's response to the thrust of this motion. The thrust of this motion is very simple. The people of Vincent were asked for their opinion on two questions put to them on 19 October. The first question was: if they were forced into a situation in which they would have to be amalgamated, what would they prefer—would they prefer to be totally amalgamated with the City of Perth or split, as per the government's proposal? Eighty-nine per cent of the people responded with a definite response: if they are to be amalgamated, it must be a total amalgamation. A second question was asked about the general issue of amalgamations. People were asked whether they think the City of Vincent should be amalgamated. Seventy-seven per cent said no. They are stark results but when the question was put to the City of Vincent, the first option, according to the vote, is no to a forced amalgamation and a wish to stay as the entity they currently enjoy; but if forced, overwhelmingly, 89-plus per cent would like to see a full amalgamation with the City of Perth. They are the stark results of 19 October. I do not think we can fiddle with those figures.

In general, I want to finish by saying something about the whole amalgamation issue. I hope the minister has received this letter from a 78-year-old man. He does not live in the City of Vincent, but what he says underlines the angst that many citizens have for their circumstances with regard to the minister's amalgamation proposals with the City of Perth. It is from Mr William Booth, who is 78 years of age and lives in Bentley. He wrote to me. I understand the minister has a copy of his letter. It states—

**LOCAL COUNCIL AMALGAMATIONS**

**And their NEGATIVE effect upon People with Disability!**

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Wednesday, 23 October 2013]

p5407b-5420a

Mr David Templeman; Ms Eleni Evangel; Acting Speaker; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Tony Simpson

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On October 1st I attended and spoke briefly at a Public Meeting in the City of Canning. It was packed with **angry residents. FEW were in favour because of how amalgamation ‘might’ impact upon them.**

While I am neither in favor nor opposed to amalgamation ... I am firmly opposed to any **boundary changes** which impact negatively upon anyone.

My daughter Janelle and 6 other Intellectually Disabled Adults living in a cluster of 7 Special Needs Homes in Bentley, have received **wonderful support services provided by the City of Canning’s Disability Support Services, every day for the past 16 years!!!**

**However, they will be EVICTED from this arrangement by a small boundary change which just places their complex into the City of Victoria Park!!**

This would be under the government’s new proposal —

**The City of Victoria Park provides NO DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES and I quote the City of Canning’s Commissioner, Linton Reynolds...**

**“The City of Canning cannot guarantee future provision of Disability Support Services to this group of people.”**

**We do not want any change as my blood pressure is bursting through the roof!!!**

**I am requesting YOU —**

That is me, to whom he wrote —

**to advocate on behalf of these people by ensuring their boundary continues within the City of Canning.**

Many thanks — On behalf of these families

We in this place may debate lines on maps. We may say, as the minister has, that nothing changes when it comes to streets and locality names et cetera. The reality is that many people in the City of Vincent and other councils are genuinely concerned about the impacts that the local government reform proposal may have on them and their lifestyle and, indeed, on their personal circumstances. I hope that the minister will respond to Mr Booth. I will certainly be passing this letter on to the minister or write to him and make sure that he has a copy. Mr Booth is a 78-year-old man. As we know—I am sure the minister knows—all anybody with a loved one with a disability needs is assurance that services that have been delivered to their loved ones will continue. In the whole context of the amalgamation process, that is obviously a real issue for Mr Booth. He went to a meeting, as he said. He is an older man but he obviously felt and feels so strongly about that. Those sorts of stories are the ones that we must not allow to not be heard in this whole debate.

I ask that the member for Perth come across to vote with us when we vote. I believe that would be a clear indication of her support for the people of her electorate, particularly those who reside in the City of Vincent. I commend the motion to the house this evening.

*Division*

Question put and a division taken, the Acting Speaker (Mr P. Abetz) casting his vote with the noes, with the following result —

**Extract from *Hansard***  
[ASSEMBLY — Wednesday, 23 October 2013]  
p5407b-5420a

Mr David Templeman; Ms Eleni Evangel; Acting Speaker; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Tony Simpson

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Ayes (16)

Dr A.D. Buti  
Ms J. Farrer  
Mr W.J. Johnston  
Mr D.J. Kelly

Mr F.M. Logan  
Mr M. McGowan  
Ms S.F. McGurk  
Mr M.P. Murray

Mr P. Papalia  
Ms M.M. Quirk  
Mrs M.H. Roberts  
Mr C.J. Tallentire

Mr P.C. Tinley  
Mr P.B. Watson  
Mr B.S. Wyatt  
Mr D.A. Templeman (*Teller*)

Noes (32)

Mr P. Abetz  
Mr F.A. Alban  
Mr C.J. Barnett  
Mr I.C. Blayney  
Mr T.R. Buswell  
Mr G.M. Castrilli  
Mr V.A. Catania  
Mr M.J. Cowper

Ms M.J. Davies  
Mr J.H.D. Day  
Ms W.M. Duncan  
Ms E. Evangel  
Mr J.M. Francis  
Mrs G.J. Godfrey  
Mr B.J. Grylls  
Dr K.D. Hames

Mr C.D. Hatton  
Mr A.P. Jacob  
Dr G.G. Jacobs  
Mr S.K. L'Estrange  
Mr R.S. Love  
Mr W.R. Marmion  
Mr J.E. McGrath  
Mr P.T. Miles

Dr M.D. Nahan  
Mr D.C. Nalder  
Mr J. Norberger  
Mr D.T. Redman  
Mr A.J. Simpson  
Mr M.H. Taylor  
Mr T.K. Waldron  
Mr A. Krsticevic (*Teller*)

Pairs

Ms L.L. Baker  
Mr R.H. Cook  
Ms R. Saffioti  
Mr J.R. Quigley  
Ms J.M. Freeman

Ms A.R. Mitchell  
Mrs L.M. Harvey  
Mr I.M. Britza  
Mr N.W. Morton  
Mr R.F. Johnson

Question thus negatived.