

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AMALGAMATIONS — SUBIACO

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

I refer to the reports that Subiaco council will instigate legal action to oppose the minister's broken promise on forced amalgamations, in direct opposition to his local amalgamation agenda.

- (1) Will the state's response to this legal action be funded from the \$15 million put aside as grants for the amalgamations?
- (2) Is the minister confident that he will be able to break his promise and defeat the legal action; and, if so, what is this confidence based upon?

**Mr A.J. SIMPSON replied:**

I thank the member for the question.

- (1)–(2) I have heard about a couple of groups talking about legal action in regard to the process of the local government reform. Unfortunately, to date—I will use Subiaco as the example—I do not know what sort of action it is taking. It says it is taking legal action, but I do not actually know what it is doing. It has voted on it, and if members read the motion, they will see that it is quite loose and does not actually define what part of the reform process or my proposals to the Local Government Advisory Board it wants to take legal action on. I have not actually received anything that states the parts it wants to take legal action on. It is interesting to note that we have also received a challenge from another group, and we have looked at that and I have had State Solicitor's advice on it, and I am fine with the part that that group raised with me.

In regard to the member's question, until the documents relating to that legal action are sent to me, I will have to wait and see what it is. I am a little confused because I am not quite sure what the council is taking me to court over.

Several members interjected.

**Mr A.J. SIMPSON:** I am not! The part of the process it relates to is not actually defined. The only thing I can tell members is that reform is happening, as we all know, and it is on its way to the advisory board. I am awaiting the release in July of the Local Government Advisory Board report into the final outcome, and I am looking forward to getting that out to the sector so that we can actually put this little baby to bed and get it on its way because it has been a long process.