

LOCAL GOVERNMENT — YORK SHIRE COUNCIL SUSPENSION

4086. Mr D.A. Templeman to the Minister for Local Government:

I refer to governance concerns and other matters associated with your decision to suspend the York Shire Council late last year, and ask:

- (a) has the investigation of all matters relating to the Show Cause Notice and the resultant suspension of the York Shire Council been concluded and if so, is the final report to be made public in the interests of natural justice to those adversely affected and for openness and accountability in local government;
- (b) is the Minister completely satisfied that the reinstatement of the York Shire Council at the expiry of the suspension period will provide good governance for the district of York as a whole as required under the *Local Government Act*;
- (c) will the Minister automatically authorize a reduced quorum for the reinstated Council which only has four elected members and due to leave of absence for August and September will be, in effect, a Council of three requiring a quorum of only two Councillors, if yes will this have an impact on governance in the district;
- (d) if the York Shire Council is reinstated at the end of the suspension period, what monitoring and assessment processes, if any, will be applied through your office and the Department of Local Government and Communities and for what period of time; and
- (e) have all official complaints lodged with the Department of Local Government and Communities on breaches or potential breaches of the Act, Regulations and Codes of Conduct been properly and fully investigated and actioned in relation to elected members of the York Shire Council?

Mr A.J. Simpson replied:

- (a) The Show Cause Notice was issued as a result of observations and concerns in relation to the conduct and actions of the Shire of York Council over a period of time. I formed a view, after considering the Shire of York's response, that it was inappropriate for the Council to act or continue to act without intervention.
The Show Cause Notice was tabled at a Shire of York Council meeting in November 2014.
- (b) During the period of suspension, the elected members have undertaken training in regard to their roles and responsibilities and I trust that they will return to their role in a position to provide good government for the community of York.
- (c) The Shire must lodge an application before I can make a determination on this matter.
- (d) It is my intention to put in place a three person mentoring/monitoring panel to provide ongoing support and assistance to the Council for a six month period when they resume their role on 6 July 2015.
- (e) My Department has one open complaint which is currently under assessment.