




Speech By
Hon. Stirling Hinchliffe

MEMBER FOR SANDGATE

Record of Proceedings, 3 May 2018

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Ipswich City Council

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Local Government, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (9.34 am): When a community loses faith in its elected leaders, as is the case in Ipswich, it is time to act. The situation we see in Ipswich today is of the gravest concern. The people of Ipswich are shocked by what has happened. Some are angry. Many are outraged. Others are, quite frankly, appalled at what they perceive as the repeated breaches of trust from their elected representatives. The Ipswich community is reeling.

Twelve people, including two mayors and two CEOs, are facing a total of 66 charges. The current Ipswich mayor is facing seven charges of fraud as a result of CCC investigations. Frankly, the eyes of the Ipswich City Council have been off the ball. The impacts we have already seen are devastating on the morale of council staff, including on the personal wellbeing of individuals; on council's ability to deliver good policy outcomes; and on the Ipswich community as a whole.

Based on urgent legal advice, the government will now commence the process of appointing an administrator at the Ipswich City Council, as provided by the Local Government Act. The government has not taken this decision lightly; however, I have reached the conclusion that the Ipswich City Council can no longer function effectively. I acknowledge the support of the Leader of the Opposition and the CEO of the LGAQ for this course of action.

Today I will ask Ipswich City Council to show cause why they should not be dismissed. Next week I will be asking cabinet to consider strengthening the legislative powers of the local government minister to dismiss councils when they have lost the trust of their community. I appreciate that this course of action will impact councillors who were only recently elected; however, I believe this course of action is necessary to restore public confidence in the Ipswich City Council.