




Speech By
Ann Leahy

MEMBER FOR WARREGO

Record of Proceedings, 2 May 2019

MOTION

Dissolution of Logan City Council

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (2.10 pm): I rise to speak to the motion moved by the member for Sandgate and Minister for Local Government. The matter before us today represents an exceptional day for this parliament and is something that no member of this House should take lightly. May I remind members that as state parliamentarians we should be very careful about where and when the powers to dissolve an elected local government are used.

Firstly, it is important that we put the ratepayers and residents of Logan at the forefront of these deliberations. Ratepayers need to be assured that life will go on, roads will be repaired, rates will be collected, rubbish will be removed and the delivery of utility services will continue. That is important for the functioning of the Logan region; therefore, on behalf of the ratepayers there is a need to end the uncertainty about the future of the Logan City Council.

Councils are the closest level of government to the people. Councils play an important role in their communities. They deserve support and encouragement to fulfil their duties. The LNP wants to work with councils to enable them to be responsive and provide good services to their communities. Unfortunately, in the case of Logan there is no longer a quorum at the Logan City Council, and that prevents the council from functioning and serving its community. Accordingly, it has been determined by the state government that the council will need to be dissolved and an administrator appointed.

The LNP opposition was only informed after question time today who the administrator would be. We have not had the opportunity to conduct our own due diligence in relation to the administrator. The ratepayers and staff of the Logan City Council will be obliged to work with the administrator until at least the March 2020 local government elections. We do note that the four councillors who were not suspended will be appointed as paid advisors to assist the administrator, and we will maintain a watching brief on this situation in the LNP opposition.

It is important to place on the record that the situation that has occurred at Logan is somewhat different to the earlier situation we saw at Ipswich and it is not as a result of systemic corruption. The parliament today is ending uncertainty for the non-suspended councillors as well as the ratepayers and residents of Logan. I use this opportunity to re-state the importance of local government in Queensland. The LNP's commitment is to respect the role of local government, work with local government and earn the trust of local government and their ratepayers.

I do, however, contrast this to what has happened today with the Palaszczuk Labor government. I understand that the government has not even picked up the phone to speak to the LGAQ, who are the peak representative body, and advise them of this motion and what the government is planning. I find that very disappointing. We hear the government talk about consultation a lot, but the reality is that on the ground it does not happen. I hope that the government now at least makes contact with the LGAQ and talks to them about what is being proposed here today and how it will operate. To the best of my knowledge there has not even been a phone call.