




Speech By
Hon. Stirling Hinchliffe

MEMBER FOR SANDGATE

Record of Proceedings, 2 May 2019

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Logan City Council

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Local Government, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (9.46 am): Today I will be recommending to the Governor in Council that the Logan City Council be dismissed. This recommendation under the Local Government Act will be made out of necessity, to ensure the residents of Logan have a functioning council. This action does not interfere with the relevant judicial proceedings. I wish to be very clear: this action is being recommended because I have no other choice at this point in time under the Local Government Act. I will not be making any specific comment in relation to the current charges involving the councillors.

Following the mayor and eight councillors being charged with integrity offences, from Friday, 26 April 2019 Logan City Council has been left with only four non-suspended councillors. These charges constitute serious integrity offences and, accordingly, upon being charged these councillors were automatically suspended. Let me be clear: these individuals are innocent until proven guilty. However, as a result of the suspension of nine of the 13 councillors of Logan City Council, under the Local Government Act I have been left with no option but to dismiss the council.

Logan City Council has a quorum of seven councillors. With only four councillors remaining, it cannot perform its responsibilities. Logan cannot pass a resolution and there is no mechanism under the local government legislation that would allow this to occur. Importantly, this means that the council is unable to pass its budget for the 2019-20 financial year, appoint an acting mayor or pass a resolution to delegate matters to a standing committee or indeed the chief executive officer.

This is a situation that I cannot let happen. Immediate action must be taken to ensure that the ratepayers and residents of Logan have a council that can function. Logan City Council must have a budget and it must be able to make decisions. For this reason, as I say, I will be recommending to the Governor in Council that the Logan City Council be dissolved and an interim administrator be appointed until the March 2020 local government quadrennial elections.

The people of Logan deserve foremost a functioning council that can continue to provide services. Unfortunately, they find themselves in an extraordinary situation that must be addressed as quickly as possible in order to move forward with confidence. Actions such as those proposed today are integral in ensuring our communities are served by councils which are capable of acting in the best interests of their diverse communities.