




Speech By
Dr Christian Rowan

MEMBER FOR MOGGILL

Record of Proceedings, 31 March 2022

PARLIAMENTARY CRIME AND CORRUPTION COMMITTEE

Report, Motion to Take Note

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (3.03 pm): I rise to address Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee report No. 108, *Inquiry into the Crime and Corruption Commission's investigation of former councillors of the Logan City Council; and related matters*. The inquiry was conducted pursuant to a resolution of the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee, which is a statutory committee of the Parliament of Queensland.

On 5 May 2021 the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee received a complaint from the Local Government Association of Queensland regarding the conduct of the Crime and Corruption Commission in relation to its investigation of certain matters related to Logan City Council. In response to the complaint, on 28 May 2021 the committee unanimously resolved to investigate the issues raised by the Local Government Association of Queensland and publicly inquire into and report on the CCC's investigation of former councillors of Logan City Council which led to the former councillors being charged with fraud—and, as we know, these charges have now been discontinued; the decision and considerations of the Crime and Corruption Commission to charge these former councillors; the process by which the CCC considers and determines whether to refer matters to the Director of Public Prosecutions; the Crime and Corruption Commission's role in charging persons with an offence arising from its investigations; and other related matters.

On 2 December 2021 the chair of the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee, the member for Scenic Rim, tabled report No. 108 in the Queensland parliament. I have to congratulate the committee chair, the deputy chair and all members of the committee for the work they did. It was important work. As was stated in the chair's foreword—

This report outlines very serious findings about the Crime and Corruption Commission ... and its actions.

The findings and recommendations in this report are made on a bipartisan basis.

The committee's report made 14 findings along with six recommendations. Significantly, the committee found that the Crime and Corruption Commission exceeded the specific limits on its powers under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 2010 in the Logan City Council matter and the Crime and Corruption Act 2001 with regards to assistance with the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission's process and further found that the Crime and Corruption Commission chairperson did not ensure that the Crime and Corruption Commission acted independently and impartially.

A pivotal recommendation made was that the Queensland government instigate a review of the Crime and Corruption Commission structure in regards to its investigatory and charging functions and the role of seconded police officers at the Crime and Corruption Commission, and that a commission of inquiry or similar be headed by senior counsel of sufficient standing to consider the structural basis for the Crime and Corruption Commission that has its roots in the Fitzgerald inquiry. As we all know, this has now been commenced with both the Hon. Tony Fitzgerald AC, QC and the Hon. Alan Wilson QC leading such an inquiry.

It is very important that here in Queensland we have a robust Crime and Corruption Commission to ensure good public governance and public administration. As well as that, the public needs to have confidence in it as an institution. Certainly there is significant work to be done given the findings contained within this report. The commission of inquiry which has been established has some important work to look at the structure and the function of the Crime and Corruption Commission so that it acts in the best interests of all Queenslanders.

If we look back to those years between 1987 and 1989 when Tony Fitzgerald undertook that very important body of work, the then Fitzgerald inquiry, we saw a seismic shift in governance and public administration in Queensland. Equally, 30 years later, there are a number of serious matters which pertain to integrity, accountability and alleged corruption here in Queensland. The Crime and Corruption Commission is one of the critical bodies that needs to be robust, independent, transparent and act impartially when looking into matters. These matters will be looked at further through the commission of inquiry, and I look forward to the final outcome.

I take the opportunity to again commend the committee, the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee, for the work they have done and particularly the member for Scenic Rim, given he is the independent chairperson of the parliamentary committee and was appointed in a bipartisan way. Again, all of the members of the committee certainly undertook some important work on behalf of all Queenslanders to ensure a standard of openness, transparency and accountability when it comes to the Crime and Corruption Commission.