

## HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY 27<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2016

### ECONOMIC AND FINANCE COMMITTEE: INQUIRY INTO LOCAL GOVERNMENT RATE CAPPING POLICIES:

**Mr PEDERICK:** I rise to speak to the 91st report of the Economic and Finance Committee entitled Inquiry into Local Government Rate Capping Policies. I am a little bit intrigued with the stance of the Local Government Association. It is running a campaign against the Liberal Party because we have this proposal about rate capping. As the shadow minister and the member for Goyder has outlined, it does not mean that your rates will be capped at a certain level if the council is prepared to have a discussion with their community and put forward proposals for infrastructure builds and spending that they need to conduct within their council areas, put that to the public in a transparent way.

As has been indicated, 35 out of 36 times in another jurisdiction, that has happened. For the life of me I cannot see why the good citizens of South Australia would vote against saving money. The Local Government Association can lobby that way if it wishes. Whether it is state levies, federal taxation or council rates, people just want to see something back for what they are paying. My concern is that over the last few years especially, probably over more than a decade, councils have lost their way from their core responsibilities of roads, rates and rubbish, and I know they have expanded a lot more than this. I know they are involved in libraries and a whole range of other matters, but do we need this level of government involved in all these other matters?

I look at rubbish, and in my local council area we have the three bin system which is great. We have the waste bin, the recycling bin and we even have a green bin, but if you want those bins to be picked up you have to be privileged to be on the route to get them picked up in the Coorong council area. There were bin banks put in originally, and that was fine for the people who got onto them, but at another place of abode when I was renting a farmhouse just down from the farm I could not negotiate that for years to get involved in the bin bank, so I was rather disappointed.

However, with this rubbish collection, you pay for that now with a separate rubbish fee, so that is not even linked to rates at all. That takes that out from the rate argument, and that is fine because we want the ability to have these bins and we want the ability to have them picked up. Considering what councils' core issues are, I think this is reflected in some of the feedback I get from local councils, because councils are going into issues about how much money they are spending on art programs or other issues like that.

One that really intrigued me the other day to do with a council up here in Adelaide towards the Hills came up in a conversation at a dinner I was having with a footy club president who was talking to me about how the social inclusion officer from the council was offended with their football club because it was an all-male football club. I said, 'Yes, generally men play football. Don't you run the netball alongside like we do in the country?' He said, 'No, this is just a football club.'

In our football club at Peake, and right through the Mallee league, we have girls who can play up to the age of 16. I have mentioned a name in this place before of a player who is currently in Queensland playing in the under 15 women's side, Abbie Ballard. She was best on ground for her first game the other day. They did not go so well but she was best, as she should be. She is a little rocket.

I was intrigued to think that a council close to the city has a social inclusion officer. I question why you would be doing that. Why would you be doing that at local government level and giving heat to a local football club about how they manage their sport because it is essentially for men? What the president of this football club said to this social inclusion officer was, 'So, what do you want me to do? Do you want me to shut down the club, and all these kids in all these teams who play in the mornings, we will put them back on the streets and you work it out after that?' I think they suddenly had a rethink.

This is what I am saying: people look for value for money for their rates. In country electorates, especially with dirt roads and gravel roads and considering the maintenance of those roads, it is a key function that people want their rate money spent on. I have had people in some council areas come to me and say, 'We are on the end of the council area and we want to move into another one because we are not getting enough service on our roads.' I seek leave to continue my remarks.

Leave granted; debate adjourned.