



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

General Purpose Standing Committee No. 5

BUDGET ESTIMATES 2013-2014

Supplementary Questions on Notice

General Purpose Standing Committee No. 5

Local Government, The North Coast

Monday 12 August 2013

Answers to be returned by: Thursday 5 September 2013.

Budget Estimates Secretariat

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GENERAL PURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE NO. 5

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Supplementary questions: Local Government, The North Coast

Answers are to be returned to the Committee secretariat by: Thursday 5 September 2013.

Local Government

1. In relation to recommendation 1.1 and 1.2 of the Companion Animals Taskforce on the management of Dangerous Dogs report to the Government of February 2013,
 - a. will the Government accept this recommendation?
 - b. if so, how what are the details and will councils be provided with additional funding?
2. In relation to recommendation 1.3 of the Companion Animals Taskforce on the management of Dangerous Dogs report to the Government of February 2013,
 - a. will the Government accept this recommendation?
 - b. if so, when will the new reporting framework be implemented?
3. In relation to recommendation 1.4 of the Companion Animals Taskforce on the management of Dangerous Dogs report to the Government of February 2013,
 - a. will the Government accept this recommendation?
 - b. If so, what will those new powers for council officers be under the Companion Animals Act?
 - c. If so, when will the Government introduce the new powers?
 - d. Will the government provide additional powers to the councils?
4. In relation to recommendation 1.5 of the Companion Animals Taskforce on the management of Dangerous Dogs report to the Government of February 2013,
 - a. Will the Government accept this recommendation?
 - b. If so, have you discussed this with the Attorney General?
 - c. Have you discussed this with any other Minister including the Premier?
 - d. If not, why not.
5. In relation to recommendation of 2.1 of the Companion Animals Taskforce on the management of Dangerous Dogs report to the Government of February 2013,
 - a. Will the Government accept this recommendation?
6. In relation to recommendation 2.2 of the Companion Animals Taskforce on the management of Dangerous Dogs report to the Government of February 2013,
 - a. Will the Government accept this recommendation?
 - b. If so, what agencies have been consulted on this recommendation?
 - c. Have you discussed this with the Australian Veterinarians Association and any other animal behaviour professionals?
 - d. Will the Government provide additional resources to councils?
 - e. If not why not?
7. In relation to recommendation 2.3 of the Companion Animals Taskforce on the management of Dangerous Dogs report to the Government of February 2013,

- a. Will the Government accept this recommendation?
 - b. If so, what funds will be made available?
 - c. Who will conduct the research?
8. In relation to recommendation 2.4 of the Companion Animals Taskforce on the management of Dangerous Dogs report to the Government of February 2013,
 - a. Will the Government accept this recommendation?
 - b. If so, how will this information be made public?
9. In relation to recommendation 3.1 of the Companion Animals Taskforce on the management of Dangerous Dogs report to the Government of February 2013,
 - a. Will the Government accept this recommendation?
 - b. If so, what discussions have taken place between the Division of Local Government and NSW Police?
10. In relation to recommendation 3.2 of the Companion Animals Taskforce on the management of Dangerous Dogs report to the Government of February 2013,
 - a. Will the Government accept this recommendation?
 - b. If so, what organisations have you discussed this with?
 - c. If not, why hasn't the Government developed this important MOU.
11. In relation to recommendation 3.3 of the Companion Animals Taskforce on the management of Dangerous Dogs report to the Government of February 2013,
 - a. Will the Government accept this recommendation?
 - b. If so, what agencies would be involved?
 - c. How would the information be made public to the community?
12. In relation to recommendation 3.4 of the Companion Animals Taskforce on the management of Dangerous Dogs report to the Government of February 2013,
 - a. Will the Government accept this recommendation?
 - b. If so, have you or the NSW Attorney General written to the Federal Attorney General on this recommendation?
13. In relation to recommendation 3.5 of the Companion Animals Taskforce on the management of Dangerous Dogs report to the Government of February 2013, will the Government accept this recommendation?
14. In relation to recommendation 3.6 of the Companion Animals Taskforce on the management of Dangerous Dogs report to the Government of February 2013
 - a. Will the Government accept this recommendation?
 - b. Have you discussed this with the NSW Minister for Health?
 - c. Have you discussed this with the Federal Minister for Health or representatives of the Australian Divisions of General Practice?
15. In relation to recommendation 4.1 of the Companion Animals Taskforce on the management of Dangerous Dogs report to the Government of February 2013
 - a. Will the Government accept this recommendation?
 - b. If so, has any decision been made about what agency will develop and implement a community-wide socially responsible pet education campaign?

- c. Will the organisations represented on the Companion Animals Taskforce be consulted on what should be included in any such education program and will they have an ongoing role in the implementation stage of that program?
16. I refer to the Responsible Pet Ownership Schools Education Program. Has the Minister discussed extending this program to include pre-schools and long day child care centres?
17. Has the Minister or his office contacted the Minister for Education to discuss? If not why not? If so,
 - a. Which agency would be responsible for the program?
 - b. How much additional funding would be required?
18. Why has the Government deleted the result indicators “Reported dog attacks” and “Seized pets reunited with owners” from the 2012-13 and 2013-14 Budget papers?
19. Can the Minister advise if the Division of Local Government investigated the termination of the General Manager of Camden Council? If not, why not?
20. What advice did the Division provide to concerned ratepayers who wrote to the division about the dismissal of the General Manager?
21. Can the Minister advise how many pecuniary interests declaration notifications have been made by councillors since the regulation was made?
22. Does the Division make that information publicly available? If not why not?
23. What action have the authorities taken against the owner of the three pit bull dogs that mauled Rob Nelson at Ashcroft on Sunday, 26 May 2013? Can the Minister advise why the owner did not show up for court on the stated date and the matter adjourned for the end of May?
24. I refer to the attack by a German Shepherd dog of Brittany Carter and her pet dog Lilly in Gregson Avenue, Mayfield in May 2013.
 - a. Has that dog and its owner been identified?
 - b. If so, what action has been taken?
25. Will the Minister consider introducing a new regulation that will restrict the number of dogs that can be kept at suburban homes?
26. How many dog owners have been received the maximum penalty of \$55,000 or imprisonment for two years or both, for a dog attack by a restricted or dangerous dog in
 - a. 2011-12
 - b. 2012-13
27. With regard to dog attacks involving restricted or dangerous dogs where the maximum penalty was imposed
 - a. was each one immediately destroyed?
 - b. if not, how many were immediately destroyed?
 - c. how many were subsequently destroyed?

28. How many owners have been fined the fixed penalty of \$550 for dog attacks not by restricted or dangerous dogs in
 - a. 2011-12
 - b. 2012-13
29. How many owners have received the maximum penalty of \$33,000 when their restricted or dangerous dogs have attacked, harassed or chased a person or another animal in
 - a. 2011-12
 - b. 2012-13
30. Was the owner of the off leash dog that attacked the blind man Ian Waller and his dog Banjo in Belmont in July 2012 penalised?
 - a. If so, what penalty was applied?
 - b. If not, why not?
31. What funding has the Government provided for the financial years 2011-12, 2012-13 and is forecast for 2013-14 to assist animal rescue services which have “no-kill” policies and rehome companion animals rescued from pounds which euthanize such animals?
32. Please provide a figure for each of the seven commercial consultant reports spent by the Independent Panel to date, including SGS Economics and Planning and Jeff Tate Consulting?
33. Was the work put out to tender, what was the criteria?
34. Minister, will you commit to publicly releasing the future directions final report, of Local Government due in September?
35. Please provide an explanations for the closure of Mt Druitt swimming pool?
36. Will you be seeking an explanation from Hawkesbury council regarding the increase in council rates above the IPART’s determination and its impact on pensioners, families and small business?
37. Minister I refer you to the draft future directions paper released in April, will you commit to publicly releasing the final report, future directions of Local Government due in September?
38. Minister I refer you to the proposed amalgamations and county council model, can you advise if treasury has costed those proposed amalgamations?
39. Has the Minister taken into consideration the concern by many councils affected by the proposed county council model?
40. Minister, I refer you to the future directions paper, which has proposed a number of mega council amalgamations including Sydney and county councils?
41. Minister the statement has been made by the independent panel that bigger means better and provides strategic capacity.
42. There is contrary evidence from Professor Brian Dollery an expert in Local Government economics from Armidale University that research done shows there is no relationship between

council size and council financial sustainability (as measured by TCorp ratios) in Sydney councils.

43. Do you agree? Has this evidence been taken into consideration?
44. Minister, did you, your staff or Division of Local Government officials attend any of the Independent Local Government community consultation meetings, if so who attended and location?
45. Minister, the community of Lachlan Shire are against any form of amalgamations, will this community be forced against their will.
46. Minister on the 20 May 2013, in the Daily Telegraph, Barry O'Farrell called for the GST to be raised and challenged Tony Abbott to consider broadening the goods it covers.
47. Minister, do you agree with broadening the base and goods?
48. If so, would that include extending GST to council rates?
49. What consultation have you undertaken directly with councils regarding the proposed changes to the NSW Planning System – particularly as they involve restricting council ability to decide development applications on merit?
50. Has the Department of Local Government made representations to the Minister for Planning regarding the proposed changes?
51. Regarding dangerous dogs, what consideration has been given to providing guidance to councils about their responsibilities?
52. Regarding the status of special constables and council rangers – what consultation was undertaken with the Minister for Police and his department regarding the proposed changes?
53. Has there been any progress on getting rid of undemocratic one and two member wards across NSW?
54. How many Code of Conduct complaints were made in 2012-2013?
55. Have any steps been made towards the creation of a centralised comprehensive record of Code of Conduct complaints?
 - a. If so, what has happened?
 - b. If not, what changes are proposed to address this?