

PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT

FIRST SESSION

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

6, 7 and 8 June 2017

(Extract from book 11)

Internet: www.parliament.vic.gov.au/downloadhansard

By authority of the Victorian Government Printer

The Governor

The Honourable LINDA DESSAU, AC

The Lieutenant-Governor

The Honourable Justice MARILYN WARREN, AC, QC

The ministry

(from 10 November 2016)

Premier	The Hon. D. M. Andrews, MP
Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Minister for Emergency Services	The Hon. J. A. Merlino, MP
Treasurer	The Hon. T. H. Pallas, MP
Minister for Public Transport and Minister for Major Projects	The Hon. J. Allan, MP
Minister for Small Business, Innovation and Trade	The Hon. P. Dalidakis, MLC
Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change, and Minister for Suburban Development	The Hon. L. D'Ambrosio, MP
Minister for Roads and Road Safety, and Minister for Ports	The Hon. L. A. Donnellan, MP
Minister for Tourism and Major Events, Minister for Sport and Minister for Veterans	The Hon. J. H. Eren, MP
Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing, Minister for Mental Health, Minister for Equality and Minister for Creative Industries	The Hon. M. P. Foley, MP
Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services	The Hon. J. Hennessy, MP
Minister for Local Government, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Minister for Industrial Relations	The Hon. N. M. Hutchins, MP
Special Minister of State	The Hon. G. Jennings, MLC
Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation	The Hon. M. Kairouz, MP
Minister for Families and Children, and Minister for Youth Affairs	The Hon. J. Mikakos, MLC
Minister for Police and Minister for Water	The Hon. L. M. Neville, MP
Minister for Industry and Employment, and Minister for Resources	The Hon. W. M. Noonan, MP
Attorney-General and Minister for Racing	The Hon. M. P. Pakula, MP
Minister for Agriculture and Minister for Regional Development	The Hon. J. L. Pulford, MLC
Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence	The Hon. F. Richardson, MP
Minister for Finance and Minister for Multicultural Affairs	The Hon. R. D. Scott, MP
Minister for Training and Skills, and Minister for Corrections	The Hon. G. A. Tierney, MLC
Minister for Planning	The Hon. R. W. Wynne, MP
Cabinet Secretary	Ms M. Thomas, MP

Legislative Council committees

Privileges Committee — Ms Hartland, Ms Mikakos, Mr O’Sullivan, Ms Pulford, Mr Purcell, Mr Rich-Phillips and Ms Wooldridge.

Procedure Committee — The President, Dr Carling-Jenkins, Mr Davis, Mr Jennings, Ms Pennicuik, Ms Pulford, Ms Tierney and Ms Wooldridge.

Legislative Council standing committees

Standing Committee on the Economy and Infrastructure — #Mr Barber, Mr Bourman, #Ms Dunn, Mr Eideh, Mr Elasmr, Mr Finn, Ms Hartland, Mr Leane, #Mr Melhem, Mr Ondarchie, Mr O’Sullivan and #Mr Rich-Phillips.

Standing Committee on the Environment and Planning — #Mr Barber, Ms Bath, #Mr Bourman, Mr Dalla-Riva, Mr Davis, Ms Dunn, Mr Eideh, #Ms Hartland, Mr Melhem, #Mr Purcell, #Mr Ramsay, Ms Shing, #Ms Symes and Mr Young.

Standing Committee on Legal and Social Issues — #Mr Barber, #Ms Crozier, #Mr Elasmr, Ms Fitzherbert, #Ms Hartland, Mr Morris, Mr Mulino, Ms Patten, Mrs Peulich, #Mr Rich-Phillips, Mr Somyurek, Ms Springle and Ms Symes.

participating members

Legislative Council select committees

Port of Melbourne Select Committee — Mr Barber, Mr Mulino, Mr Ondarchie, Mr Purcell, Mr Rich-Phillips, Ms Shing and Ms Tierney.

Joint committees

Accountability and Oversight Committee — (*Council*): Mr O’Sullivan, Mr Purcell and Ms Symes. (*Assembly*): Mr Angus, Mr Gidley, Mr Staikos and Ms Thomson.

Dispute Resolution Committee — (*Council*): Mr Bourman, Mr Dalidakis, Ms Dunn, Mr Jennings and Ms Wooldridge. (*Assembly*): Ms Allan, Mr Clark, Mr Merlino, Mr M. O’Brien, Mr Pakula, Ms Richardson and Mr Walsh.

Economic, Education, Jobs and Skills Committee — (*Council*): Mr Bourman, Mr Elasmr and Mr Melhem. (*Assembly*): Mr Crisp, Mrs Fyffe, Ms Garrett and Ms Ryall.

Electoral Matters Committee — (*Council*): Ms Patten and Mr Somyurek. (*Assembly*): Ms Asher, Ms Blandthorn, Mr Dixon, Mr Northe and Ms Spence.

Environment, Natural Resources and Regional Development Committee — (*Council*): Mr O’Sullivan, Mr Ramsay and Mr Young. (*Assembly*): Mr J. Bull, Ms Halfpenny, Mr Richardson and Mr Riordan.

Family and Community Development Committee — (*Council*): Mr Finn. (*Assembly*): Ms Britnell, Ms Couzens, Mr Edbrooke, Ms Edwards and Ms McLeish.

House Committee — (*Council*): The President (*ex officio*), Mr Eideh, Ms Hartland, Ms Lovell, Mr Mulino and Mr Young. (*Assembly*): The Speaker (*ex officio*), Mr J. Bull, Mr Crisp, Mrs Fyffe, Mr Staikos, Ms Suleyman and Mr Thompson.

Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission Committee — (*Council*): Mr Ramsay and Ms Symes. (*Assembly*): Mr Hibbins, Mr D. O’Brien, Mr Richardson, Ms Thomson and Mr Wells.

Law Reform, Road and Community Safety Committee — (*Council*): Mr Eideh and Ms Patten. (*Assembly*): Mr Dixon, Mr Howard, Ms Suleyman, Mr Thompson and Mr Tilley.

Public Accounts and Estimates Committee — (*Council*): Ms Patten, Ms Pennicuik and Ms Shing. (*Assembly*): Mr Dimopoulos, Mr Morris, Mr Pearson, Mr T. Smith, Ms Staley and Ms Ward.

Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee — (*Council*): Ms Bath and Mr Dalla-Riva. (*Assembly*): Ms Blandthorn, Mr J. Bull, Mr Dimopoulos, Ms Kilkenny and Mr Pesutto.

Heads of parliamentary departments

Assembly — Clerk of the Parliaments and Clerk of the Legislative Assembly: Mr R. W. Purdey

Council — Clerk of the Legislative Council: Mr A. Young

Parliamentary Services — Secretary: Mr P. Lochert

MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT — FIRST SESSION

President:

The Hon. B. N. ATKINSON

Deputy President:

Mr K. EIDEH

Acting Presidents:

Ms Dunn, Mr Elasmarr, Mr Finn, Mr Melhem, Mr Morris, Ms Patten, Mr Ramsay

Leader of the Government:

The Hon. G. JENNINGS

Deputy Leader of the Government:

The Hon. J. L. PULFORD

Leader of the Opposition:

The Hon. M. WOOLDRIDGE

Deputy Leader of the Opposition:

The Hon. G. K. RICH-PHILLIPS

Leader of The Nationals:

Mr L. B. O'SULLIVAN

Leader of the Greens:

Mr G. BARBER

Member	Region	Party	Member	Region	Party
Atkinson, Mr Bruce Norman	Eastern Metropolitan	LP	Mikakos, Ms Jenny	Northern Metropolitan	ALP
Barber, Mr Gregory John	Northern Metropolitan	Greens	Morris, Mr Joshua	Western Victoria	LP
Bath, Ms Melina ²	Eastern Victoria	Nats	Mulino, Mr Daniel	Eastern Victoria	ALP
Bourman, Mr Jeffrey	Eastern Victoria	SFFP	O'Brien, Mr Daniel David ¹	Eastern Victoria	Nats
Carling-Jenkins, Dr Rachel	Western Metropolitan	DLP	O'Donohue, Mr Edward John	Eastern Victoria	LP
Crozier, Ms Georgina Mary	Southern Metropolitan	LP	Ondarchie, Mr Craig Philip	Northern Metropolitan	LP
Dalidakis, Mr Philip	Southern Metropolitan	ALP	O'Sullivan, Luke Bartholomew ⁴	Northern Victoria	Nats
Dalla-Riva, Mr Richard Alex Gordon	Eastern Metropolitan	LP	Patten, Ms Fiona	Northern Metropolitan	ASP
Davis, Mr David McLean	Southern Metropolitan	LP	Pennicuik, Ms Susan Margaret	Southern Metropolitan	Greens
Drum, Mr Damian Kevin ³	Northern Victoria	Nats	Peulich, Mrs Inga	South Eastern Metropolitan	LP
Dunn, Ms Samantha	Eastern Metropolitan	Greens	Pulford, Ms Jaala Lee	Western Victoria	ALP
Eideh, Mr Khalil M.	Western Metropolitan	ALP	Purcell, Mr James	Western Victoria	V1LJ
Elasmarr, Mr Nazih	Northern Metropolitan	ALP	Ramsay, Mr Simon	Western Victoria	LP
Finn, Mr Bernard Thomas C.	Western Metropolitan	LP	Rich-Phillips, Mr Gordon Kenneth	South Eastern Metropolitan	LP
Fitzherbert, Ms Margaret	Southern Metropolitan	LP	Shing, Ms Harriet	Eastern Victoria	ALP
Gepp, Mr Mark ⁶	Northern Victoria	ALP	Somyurek, Mr Adem	South Eastern Metropolitan	ALP
Hartland, Ms Colleen Mildred	Western Metropolitan	Greens	Springle, Ms Nina	South Eastern Metropolitan	Greens
Herbert, Mr Steven Ralph ⁵	Northern Victoria	ALP	Symes, Ms Jaelyn	Northern Victoria	ALP
Jennings, Mr Gavin Wayne	South Eastern Metropolitan	ALP	Tierney, Ms Gayle Anne	Western Victoria	ALP
Leane, Mr Shaun Leo	Eastern Metropolitan	ALP	Wooldridge, Ms Mary Louise Newling	Eastern Metropolitan	LP
Lovell, Ms Wendy Ann	Northern Victoria	LP	Young, Mr Daniel	Northern Victoria	SFFP
Melhem, Mr Cesar	Western Metropolitan	ALP			

² Appointed 15 April 2015

³ Resigned 27 May 2016

⁵ Resigned 6 April 2017

⁶ Appointed 7 June 2017

¹ Resigned 25 February 2015

⁴ Appointed 12 October 2016

PARTY ABBREVIATIONS

ALP — Labor Party; ASP — Australian Sex Party;

DLP — Democratic Labour Party; Greens — Australian Greens;

LP — Liberal Party; Nats — The Nationals;

SFFP — Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party; V1LJ — Vote 1 Local Jobs

CONTENTS

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

TUESDAY, 6 JUNE 2017

<i>Solar energy</i>	3417
<i>Public transport disability access</i>	3417
<i>Local government property valuation</i>	3417
<i>St Kilda Junction substation</i>	3418
<i>Eltham, Greensborough and Montmorency</i> <i>railway station car parking</i>	3418
<i>Level Crossing Removal Authority</i>	3419
<i>Docklands primary school</i>	3419
<i>Bendigo railway station</i>	3420
<i>Brimbank school sites</i>	3421
<i>Taxi and hire car industry</i>	3421

WEDNESDAY, 7 JUNE 2017

<i>Motorcycle noise</i>	3423
<i>Early childhood education</i>	3423, 3424
<i>Wyndham City Council</i>	3424
<i>Local government elections</i>	3425
<i>Wind energy</i>	3425

THURSDAY, 8 JUNE 2017

<i>Ballarat GovHub</i>	3427
------------------------------	------

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

Responses have been incorporated in the form supplied by the departments on behalf of the appropriate ministers.

Tuesday, 6 June 2017

Solar energy

Raised with: Minister for Planning
Raised by: Ms Dunn
Raised on: 21 February 2017

REPLY:

Thank you for your question about overshadowing of solar panels. You are correct that the Andrews Labor Government encourages installation of solar panels in appropriate locations. Indeed we have recently approved a doubling of the feed-in-tariff from 5c to 11.3c per kilowatt hour from 1 July 2017.

I commend the many households and businesses who are investing in renewable energy and energy efficiency. This is one of many ways Victorian's can support sustainable development and participate in the government's TAKE2 pledge initiative to reach net zero emissions by 2050. The government also supports sustainable transport and enabling more people to live in proximity to train and tram services, and in walking distance to jobs and services.

In the inner suburbs this leads to challenges I am carefully investigating such as how to balance appropriate urban renewal and a possible increase in shading, against support for more sustainable energy choices such as roof-top solar.

I am looking carefully at the relevant Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal cases and the approaches adopted by various local governments. There is no simple answer, but it is an important issue. I will provide you further information once I have concluded my consideration of different options later in June.

Public transport disability access

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport
Raised by: Ms Dunn
Raised on: 2 May 2017

REPLY:

Transport for Victoria have been working with the City of Melbourne and PTV to prepare plans for the upgrade of the remaining safety zone stops within the CBD for upgrade to fully Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliant level access stops.

I have asked TFV to consider prioritising stops along William Street, particularly at stops that interchange with train stations.

Local government property valuation

Raised with: Treasurer
Raised by: Mr Davis
Raised on: 9 May 2017

REPLY:

Centralising the valuation function under the management of the Valuer General will improve the currency, efficiency, consistency and transparency of rating authority valuations in Victoria.

By undertaking annual valuations, land and property values will be more accurate and up to date. A taxpayer's land tax bill will more accurately reflect the value of their landholdings. This will reduce the shock caused by biennial valuations, addressing an area of community concern.

The annual revaluation will be managed by the Valuer-General, using external valuers under contract. This will be largely the same as the current arrangement; however there will no longer be a need for revaluation processes to be carried out in parallel by each municipality. All other Australian jurisdictions manage ratings authority valuations through a centralised system.

In the regions, the majority of Shires outsource the valuation function to contractors or have transferred responsibility to the Valuer-General. Only four regional councils use in-house staff. Some councils may choose to retain a number of in-house valuers on an ongoing basis for asset valuations.

18 councils have already opted into using the Valuer General as their valuation authority.

Regular meetings are being held with the Municipal Association of Victorian to work through the implications of the change for all affected parties.

St Kilda Junction substation

Raised with: Minister for Planning

Raised by: Ms Fitzherbert

Raised on: 9 May 2017

REPLY:

The City of Port Phillip adopted the St Kilda Road South Precinct Urban Design and Land Use Framework (the framework) in November 2015. The framework was developed to provide a strategic basis to revise planning policy and controls that respond to the changing development context of the precinct and to guide future development.

To give statutory effect to the framework, council prepared an amendment to the Port Phillip Planning Scheme (Amendment C122). I authorised this amendment in May 2016.

Amendment C122 was exhibited from 8 August 2016 to 12 September 2016. An independent panel hearing was held in March 2017. Once the panel release their report, the council must consider whether to adopt the amendment and submit to me for approval.

While Amendment C122 progresses, I also approved Amendment C145 which introduced discretionary and mandatory overshadowing and building height controls on an interim basis.

Eltham, Greensborough and Montmorency railway station car parking

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport

Raised by: Ms Wooldridge

Raised on: 10 May 2017

REPLY:

There is demand for more car parking across the network. To address this, the Victorian Government is making an ongoing commitment to fund additional car parking spaces across Victoria. This includes the \$20 million VicTrack station car park upgrades program, that is delivering 2100 new spaces across 16 stations.

A further \$8.7 million was announced in the 2017-18 Budget to go towards additional station car parking and station upgrades.

The 2017-18 Budget also provides approximately \$5 million for planning and development for the second stage of the Hurstbridge line upgrade, with a focus on addressing the single track constraint between Greensborough and

Eltham. Station infrastructure changes and upgrades may be required at Greensborough, Montmorency and Eltham as part of this second stage and subsequently the provision of bicycle facilities, bus interchange facilities and appropriate pedestrian connectivity would be considered in the context of that future project.

Public Transport Victoria (PTV) will be introducing a new weekday bus service between Greensborough and Hurstbridge train stations (Route 343) in June 2017, which will service the St Helena area and provide better connections to train stations. We encourage those who are able to use alternative modes to private vehicles to access the station to do so, in order to open up car spaces to those who have no alternative option.

For more information about station upgrades, see:

<https://victrack.com.au/projects/key-projects/station-car-park-upgrades>.

Level Crossing Removal Authority

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport

Raised by: Mrs Peulich

Raised on: 10 May 2017

REPLY:

The Auditor General's (VAGO) report to 'Public Participation in Government Decision-Making' tabled 10 May 2017 found that the Level Crossing Removal Authority (LXRA) has shown leadership by establishing public participation as a priority. VAGO found that public engagement on the project to remove nine level crossings between Caulfield and Dandenong project was effectively conducted. VAGO noted that LXRA have already provided detailed action plans and time frames for implementing the report's recommendations.

The previous Liberal Government did not remove a single level crossing on the Frankston line and due to the strong advocacy of the Member for Southern Metropolitan the community remains well aware of the Liberal Party's continued opposition to the removal of these congested death traps.

The community is also very well aware that the Andrews Labor Government is delivering on its election commitment and is getting rid of thirteen sets of boom gates on the Frankston line with three already gone.

The supposed safety concerns raised by Member for Southern Metropolitan in relation to elevated rail need to be understood in the context that elevated rail safely exists right around the world, including the existing 98 rail bridges across Melbourne.

The Andrews Government will continue to consult with the community as we get on with our election commitment to remove 50 of Victoria's worst level crossings.

Docklands primary school

Raised with: Minister for Education

Raised by: Mr Ondarchie

Raised on: 11 May 2017

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

I am surprised that any member of the Liberal Party would have the audacity to be critical of Labor delivering a new school in Docklands. If only you had been as vocal during the previous Government's tenure then the Liberal Party's failure to deliver new schools to address population growth may have been avoided.

For four years the former Liberal Government did not invest one cent to build new schools or upgrade existing ones across the City of Melbourne. Matthew Guy's reckless planning decisions mean we are mopping up his mess across every corner of the city, from Fishermans Bend to Docklands.

Let's also not forget that it was Jeff Kennett and Ted Baillieu who sold more than 300 schools across Victoria. In contrast, the Andrews Labor Government's Inner City Schools Package means that Labor has 9 new schools in the pipeline — just in the inner city. A stark contrast to the dark old days of Kennett where schools were closing down across every corner of Victoria, including the inner city.

Docklands Primary School will be designed and constructed as a state-of-the-art primary school and will accommodate a long-term enrolment of up to 500 students. The site presents good accessibility and transport links to the communities it is intended to serve. The proposed school is one of the key measures the Andrews Government is undertaking to address the growing needs of inner city Melbourne.

Across the city Labor is already:

- planning for a new primary school in Docklands
- building South Melbourne (Ferrars Street) Primary School — opening in 2018
- building Richmond High School — opening in 2018
- building Beaumaris Secondary College — opening in 2018
- building South Melbourne Park Primary School — opening in 2019
- building Prahran High School — opening in 2019
- building Preston High School — opening in 2019
- delivering the Footscray Learning Precinct
- identifying sites for a new primary school to support North Melbourne families
- identifying sites and planning for a new primary school at Fishermans Bend, and
- identifying sites and planning for a new secondary school at Fishermans Bend.

Instead of talking down the new school in Docklands, you should be apologising to 'your' constituents for your total failure to represent their interests since being elected.

Let me be absolutely clear here — Labor opens schools, your party closes them.

Bendigo railway station

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport

Raised by: Ms Hartland

Raised on: 11 May 2017

REPLY:

The safety and security of staff and passengers is our number one priority.

Public transport operators have undertaken a range of security measures across the network, including the removal of rubbish bins and lockers at some locations a number of years ago, including at Ballarat and Bendigo stations. This practice is in line with the general increase in security alert. It is important to note that the precautions are not following any specific threat to public transport.

Public transport operators regularly monitor their security measures and at this point in time, there are no plans to re-install lockers at Bendigo station. We understand that this may cause inconvenience to passengers but these precautions are in the best interests of community safety.

Brimbank school sites

Raised with: Minister for Education
Raised by: Mr Finn
Raised on: 11 May 2017

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

The Andrews Labor Government has long supported the provision of recreational facilities to local communities through its Schools as Community Facilities policy, which unlocks school land for the use of the community outside school hours. All existing school sites located within the municipality are available to support this objective, and this government welcomes discussions regarding local government investment in sporting facilities on school sites to benefit local communities.

The Government continues to liaise directly with the City of Brimbank on a range of education portfolio matters.

Taxi and hire car industry

Raised with: Minister for Public Transport
Raised by: Ms Lovell
Raised on: 24 May 2017

REPLY:

The concerns that the Member for Northern Victoria claims she has for taxi licence holders need to be understood in the context that the Liberal Party she represents is opposed to taxi licence holders getting any financial assistance from the Government.

The Liberal Shadow Minister for Public Transport, David Hodgett, has described the Government's financial assistance package as 'a slush fund to buy the votes of the companies that hold these taxi plates'.

In the Legislative Assembly of the Victorian Parliament the Liberal Party supported removing taxi licences but voted to try and remove the provisions in the Government's legislation that would provide for financial assistance.

In contrast, the Member for Shepparton, Suzanna Sheed, voted in support of taxi licence holders in her electorate receiving financial assistance from the Government.

If the Member for Northern Victoria wants financial assistance to be provided and wants it to happen as soon as possible then she will vote in support of the Government's legislation that is currently before the Parliament.

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

Responses have been incorporated in the form supplied by the departments on behalf of the appropriate ministers.

Wednesday, 7 June 2017

Motorcycle noise

Raised with: Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change
Raised by: Mr Barber
Raised on: 9 May 2017

REPLY:

Environment Protection Authority Victoria (EPA) regulates noisy vehicles under the Environment Protection (Vehicle Emissions) Regulations 2013. These regulations aim to reduce community impacts from noisy vehicles, including motorcycles which create excessive noise through poor maintenance or inappropriate modifications. The regulations prescribe the noise limits for vehicles, making it an offense to drive a vehicle on a public road that exceeds these limits.

EPA last undertook a joint roadside noisy vehicle operation with Victoria Police on 14 May 2017. This operation resulted in EPA testing six vehicles, including a motorbike that exceeded legal noise limits. EPA is planning future operations to target noisy vehicle hotspots including the Melbourne CBD.

In relation to motorcycle noise complaints on Elizabeth Street in the Melbourne CBD, EPA will be working with Victoria Police via the Melbourne Highway Patrol Unit to increase police reporting of noisy vehicles to EPA. Where a Victoria Police officer reports a noisy vehicle to EPA, EPA issues the registered vehicle owner with a notice requiring them to demonstrate that their vehicle complies with legal noise limits. Failure to demonstrate compliance may result in suspension of the vehicle's registration. In addition, EPA is also organising joint roadside operations with Victoria Police in the upcoming months to target noisy vehicles in or within the vicinity of the Melbourne central business district. These operations will involve noise testing of vehicles on the road, including motorbikes that are deemed to be excessively noisy. Owners of tested vehicles that do not comply will be given a sanction and a notice requiring them to demonstrate compliance.

I encourage members of the public to report excessively noisy vehicles to their local police station. Victoria Police can then assess the matter and if verified, report the vehicle to EPA. In the past three years, EPA has issued approximately 3300 noisy vehicle notices, with approximately 17 per cent of these issued to motorcycle owners.

In addition to EPA's noisy vehicle enforcement campaign, the Andrews Labor Government is currently reviewing the state noise policy framework for industrial and commercial noise, and the Environment Protection (Residential Noise) Regulations 2008 for residential noise. Members of the public can provide feedback to this process and keep up to date with the review process by registering their interest at noiseSEPPreview@epa.vic.gov.au for commercial and industrial noise, and residential.noise@epa.vic.gov.au for residential noise.

Early childhood education

Raised with: Minister for Families and Children
Raised by: Ms Bath
Raised on: 9 May 2017

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

The Andrews Labor Government recognises the early years matter. They matter because the right early childhood education experience will set children on the course for successful lifelong learning.

Through the Victorian Budget 2017/18 the Government is investing \$202.1 million, the largest ever investment in early childhood services by a Victorian Government, to deliver the Education State Early Childhood Reform Plan. The Plan sets out a range of nation leading reforms and long-term, vision for the early childhood system in Victoria — a high quality system that is accessible and inclusive for all Victorian families. These reforms include:

- \$55.3 million in school readiness funding, an Australian first, to fund additional supports such as speech therapy, parenting support or more time for one-on-one learning to improve literacy and language development.
- \$37.7 million to expand the Enhanced MCH Service to support up to 37 000 families at risk of poor outcomes with 20 hours of additional support for their children up to the age of three.
- \$22.3 million to rollout supported playgroups across Victoria, to provide parents with additional support, and help children with their speech, cognitive development and social skills.

In addition, my Department is using a multi-disciplinary approach to deliver place-based, locally responsive services to ensure better educational outcomes for the children in the inner and outer Gippsland areas of the Department of Education and Training and have identified a number of priorities for 2017 including:

- addressing the impacts of disadvantage
- improving attendance rates and learning outcomes for vulnerable children
- improving participation, engagement and connectedness to education
- building data literacy in schools
- improving exit data and positive destinations

Our government's early childhood reforms will give all Victorian children including children in the member's electorate the best start in life.

Wyndham City Council

Raised with: Minister for Local Government
Raised by: Mr Finn
Raised on: 9 May 2017

REPLY:

The dismissal of a council and appointment of administrators represents the most serious intervention that the Victorian Government can make into the democratic processes of a council.

Ordinarily, such an intervention would only be considered in circumstances of the most serious governance failures at the council and on the advice of an integrity body such as the Local Government Investigations and Compliance Inspectorate, a commission of inquiry or municipal monitor.

As you have noted, there is an ongoing Inspectorate investigation underway at Wyndham City Council. It would therefore be inappropriate to comment on this matter while matters are under investigation.

I will consider my options after the Inspectorate announces the final outcomes of that investigation.

Early childhood education

Raised with: Minister for Families and Children
Raised by: Mr Elasmr
Raised on: 10 May 2017

REPLY:

I am informed as follows:

I thank the Member for his invitation to visit a kindergarten in the Northern Metropolitan Region electorate which we both share and to speak to local families about the Education State Early Childhood Reform Plan.

As the Member mentioned, Victoria is embarking on a groundbreaking and transformative program of reform with the Andrews Labor government investing \$202.1 million to help every child thrive. In becoming the Education State, we are helping all Victorian children be ready for kinder, ready for school and ready for life.

This investment means more and better support for Victoria's young children when they need it most. It includes:

- \$81.1 million for more help for parents to handle the challenges of parenting and for more time with skilled professionals like Maternal and Child Health nurses.
- \$108.4 million boost to our kindergarten system to help kindergartens deliver high-quality programs that make the most of every minute that our children are playing and learning.
- \$5.4 million to provide culturally relevant programs for Koorie parents and children.
- \$7.2 million to support children with a disability to access early intervention services in preparation for their transition to the NDIS.

We have a long term vision for the early childhood system we want, and the Victorian Budget 2017/18 marks the next step in realising it. I thank the Member for his interest in and advocacy for the early years. I welcome the opportunity to share this vision with families in the Northern Metropolitan Region and discuss how our reforms will give Victorian children the best start in life.

Local government elections

Raised with: Minister for Local Government
Raised by: Mr Davis
Raised on: 11 May 2017

REPLY:

As previously announced by the Government, there will be no change to the local government electoral franchise as part of the Local Government Act Review.

Wind energy

Raised with: Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change
Raised by: Mr Barber
Raised on: 25 May 2017

REPLY:

The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) is preparing to undertake a strategic review of the planning permit requirements for wind farms in Victoria in the second half of 2017.

I understand that the issue you raise about small scale wind turbines has been raised previously, and that this will be considered as part of the strategic review.

The duties of a responsible authority are to efficiently administer the planning scheme for the whole or part of a municipal district. DELWP's Planning Group is always available, on request, to provide advice to municipal council planners about the planning system and wind energy facilities.

WRITTEN ADJOURNMENT RESPONSES

Responses have been incorporated in the form supplied by the departments on behalf of the appropriate ministers.

Thursday, 8 June 2017

Ballarat GovHub

Raised with: Treasurer
Raised by: Mr Morris
Raised on: 10 May 2017

REPLY:

Thank you for the adjournment matter you raised in relation to the relocation of VicRoads' Headquarters to Ballarat.

The former government promised to relocate the VicRoads office to Ballarat without a business case or any proper consultation. This promise was completely hollow and left both the employees at VicRoads and the people of Ballarat in the dark.

I received advice from VicRoads that the costs outweigh the benefits of moving VicRoads Headquarters to a regional location. This is due to the significant costs associated with the relocation of staff and the attraction of new employees.

As you are well aware, the Andrews Labor Government is committed to driving job creation in regional Victoria, including Ballarat. The 2017-18 Budget includes \$47.8 million to build the Ballarat GovHub, bringing up to 600 new jobs to Ballarat in a purpose-built new government office, which will house employees from VicRoads as well as from the following departments and agencies:

- Department of Education and Training
- Department of Justice and Regulation
- Department of Economic Development, Jobs Transport & Resources (DEDJTR)
- Consumer Affairs Victoria
- Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP)
- State Revenue Office
- Service Victoria

This employment boost is in addition to initiatives delivered by the Andrews Labor Government in Ballarat, which include:

- the redevelopment of the Eureka Stadium, Ballarat Sports Precinct, and Ballarat's historic station precinct and surrounding area funded from the Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund;
- the creation of the Ballarat West Economic Zone to support the region's economic and job growth over the next 20 years in conjunction with the City of Ballarat;
- the establishment of an Australian Craft Beer Centre of Excellence in Ballarat funded from the Regional Tourism and Infrastructure Fund;
- the creation of the Ballarat Innovation Lab and Digital Space;

- the \$518 million upgrade to the Ballarat rail line as part of a \$1.3 billion investment into projects to improve Victoria's regional transport system; and
- the order of an additional 19 X'Trapolis trainsets from Alstom's Ballarat based construction facility since the Labor Government came to office

This long list of initiatives has brought jobs and growth to Ballarat, and regional Victoria more broadly.

The Andrews Labor Government will continue to support further options for job creation in Victoria. The Government is committed to maintaining the strong jobs growth in Ballarat by continuing to create job opportunities.