



**Question Without Notice
GLEN ELMES**

MEMBER FOR NOOSA

Hansard, 7 August 2007

Local Government Reform

Mr ELMES: My question without notice is to the minister for local government and planning. Noosa, as the minister knows, has been rated in the top 10 financially secure councils in Queensland. It is also the first local authority in Australia to be recognised as a model sustainable community. When the minister made his secret visit to Noosa he said that if there were 156 councils in Queensland like Noosa there would be no need for local government reform. Why has the minister gutted the mums and dads and kids of Noosa and imposed amalgamation on us?

Mr FRASER: Mr Speaker--

Mr Elmes interjected.

Mr FRASER: I thank the member for Noosa for his question. I would like to go back to one of the premises of his question which is that I somehow conducted a secret meeting in Noosa some weeks ago.

Mr Elmes interjected.

Mr FRASER: The reality is that it was so secret that the media was there for the entire time that I was talking with community groups from across Noosa.

Mr Elmes interjected.

Mr FRASER: More to the point, it was so secret--

Mr Elmes interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Noosa, you have asked the question and you have interjected four times in the last 30 seconds. Let the minister answer the question.

Mr FRASER: So secret was this meeting that the member for Noosa was huffing and puffing and running around outside the meeting for the whole time. As if anyone would call the meeting that I conducted with the community groups across Noosa a secret meeting. It was in no way a secret meeting. It was an undertaking I gave to go and talk with community representatives across Noosa. As the record of that meeting will show from the media that was present, I do not think one could describe it as in anyway a government fan club at that meeting.

The point of the matter is this. The independent Local Government Reform Commission considered all the submissions provided to it. As an independent commission it made a recommendation that it believes is the best result for the people of the Sunshine Coast as a whole, as a region, as a significant part of the state which is to join those councils to provide for the sort of clout that is needed on the Sunshine Coast for it to be an advocate not only to the state government and private enterprise but also to the federal government.

In the end, the point of the matter is this. At a state and federal level independent commissions set the boundaries and we should all accept the umpire's decision. In this regard, the independent Local Government Reform Commission has provided recommendations. As we have said as a government, this does not come without its difficulties for us. This does not come without its political difficulties for the government. But we have had the courage to stand by the process we set up at the start and that is accept the umpire's decision and look to the future.

Mr Elmes interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Noosa, you are interjecting on the basis that you do not want to be in the chamber. If you do want to be in the chamber--

Mr Seeney interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Excuse me, I have the floor here not you, Leader of the Opposition. I am saying to you that you have asked the minister a question so let the minister answer the question. You will have time to debate the bill that will eventually be before the parliament. I call the minister for local government and planning.

Mr FRASER: The independent commission has made its recommendations. It is incumbent upon all of us to look to the future and do not what is easy but what is right. That is what this government has resolved to do. I say to the member for Noosa and the other people in the Liberal Party: if the recommendation of the Local Government Reform Commission in relation to the Sunshine Coast is so abhorrent why does the member for Kawana want to leave this place and run as the mayor?
