

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL**  
**Question on notice**

**Tuesday, 11 March 2014**

856. Hon Robin Chapple to the Minister for Mental Health  
representing the Minister for Local Government.

I refer to the proposal to amalgamate the seven councils in the  
Western Suburbs into one council, and I ask:

- (a) what will it cost to amalgamate seven councils;
- (b) what economies of scale will the seven councils achieve;
- (c) what new services can be delivered that the seven councils do not already deliver, or are planning to deliver;
- (d) how will the existing amenity of the seven councils be protected for residents and ratepayers who already live there; and
- (e) has the State Government adopted a centralist approach with its proposal to force amalgamation?

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**Answer**

- (a) The cost of amalgamating local governments will depend upon the model recommended by the Local Government Advisory Board and the decisions of the individual Councils on how they merge administrations and services.
- (b) Local governments will benefit from economies of scale in such areas as administrative overheads, procurement, and better utilisation and rationalisation of assets.
- (c) The Metropolitan Local Government Review Panel found significant levels of duplication and wasted resources; inconsistencies in approach that result in difficulties for business and lost opportunities for communities; and fragmented approaches to local planning resulting in unnecessary complications. In addition, the Panel found great variation in the capacity of local governments and large disparity in service levels. Stronger, more capable local governments will be able to respond to these service deficiencies.
- (d) In preparing its recommendations, the Local Government Advisory Board will consider a range of factors including communities of interest and history of the area. Elected councillors also represent the interests of local communities.
- (e) No. The 36 proposals received by the Local Government Advisory Board include 24 from local governments and one from a community group.

