

## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL Question On Notice

**Tuesday, 12 February 2019**

### **1823. Hon Robin Chappie to the Minister for Electoral Affairs**

I refer to question without notice No. 1161 asked in the Legislative Council on 20 November 2018 by Hon Martin Aldridge to the Minister representing the Minister for Electoral Affairs in relation to the Electoral Commissioner's referral on 17 April 2018 of suspected electoral fraud in the Pilbara to the Western Australia Police Force, and page 33 of the Town of Port Hedland minutes of 24 October 2018, and ask:

- (a) was the Mayor of Port Hedland advised that there is insufficient evidence into his claims of mail fraud evidence that he obtained in the last Local Government election;
- (b) if yes to (a), on what date was the Mayor informed;
- (c) has the Mayor submitted a FOI application(s) for all documents in relation to this investigation;
- (d) if yes to (c), were documents supplied and on what date;
- (e) if yes to (d), will the Minister table the FOI documents;
- (f) did the police send Mayor Blanco a letter stating that the investigation had been reopened;
- (g) if yes to (f), on what date;
- (h) is it correct that "The investigation has been closed and the Mayor's understanding is that the police have evidence of mail tampering and fraud in relation to the Town of Port Hedland election, but they do not have enough evidence to charge a specific person.";
- (i) is it correct that "The Department of Public Prosecutions is not accepting expert witness evidence on handwriting.";
- (j) if yes to (i), why not; and
- (k) the Mayor has stated that in his opinion, "that there was fraud, corruption and mail tampering in the last Local Government elections.";
- (i) is there any evidence to support this statement;
- (ii) if yes to (k)(i), will the Minister provide that evidence; and
- (iii) if no to (k)(i), is the Mayor at liberty to continue by inference to suggest there was corruption?

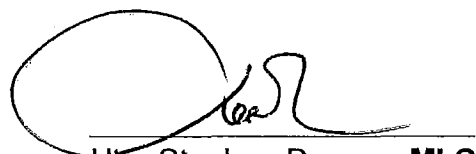
---

(a)-(k)(iii) The Electoral Commissioner has advised that having referred the matter to WA Police, and given that the results of the Port Hedland Local Government election were not in question, the Commission was necessarily circumspect, conscious of not wanting to prejudice any enquiries the WA Police chose to make, and the matter therefore was not raised directly with any party.

As previously advised in the response to QWN1161 - (Hon Martin Aldridge), by the Hon Darren West on behalf of the Minister for Regional Development representing the Minister for Electoral Affairs, the Electoral Commissioner has received an update from WA Police.

The update was that there is insufficient evidence to support a prosecution. Formal notification of the outcome of the inquiry has not yet been received.

Question relating to WA Police and 'The Department of Public Prosecutions' should be asked of the appropriate Ministers.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'S' followed by 'Dawson' in a cursive script.

Hon Stephen Dawson MLC  
**MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT;  
DISABILITY SERVICES; ELECTORAL AFFAIRS**