

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT AMENDMENT BILL 2009**

*Introduction and First Reading*

Bill introduced, on motion by **Hon Peter Collier (Minister for Energy)**, and read a first time.

*Second Reading*

**HON PETER COLLIER (North Metropolitan — Minister for Energy)** [7.32 pm]: I move —

That the bill be now read a second time.

I am pleased to introduce the Local Government Amendment Bill 2009. This bill is substantially similar to the Local Government Amendment Bill 2008, which was introduced to Parliament last year but did not complete its passage because of the calling of the state election. The government has added three minor amendments to the bill resulting principally from the recent Corruption and Crime Commission report into the City of Cockburn. The bill also incorporates a further amendment concerning the privacy of local government information.

The bill consists of more than 40 amendments to improve the operation of the Local Government Act 1995. The key amendments include provisions for new powers for local governments to enter private land to remove graffiti; widening the circumstances in which local government can take gravel and other building materials from land for building purposes; stronger powers for the minister and the Department of Local Government and Regional Development to obtain information from local governments when carrying out investigations; and improving various accountability provisions relating to declaring financial interests and election donations, and restricting the types of gifts that council members may receive. The accountability provisions in the bill have been extended to cover issues arising from the Cockburn CCC report. These additions include requiring council members to disclose the actual value of gifts and travel benefits in their annual financial returns and extending the requirement to declare a related financial interest at meetings when a person has provided a travel benefit to a council member.

The bill includes a further matter proposed by the previous government as an amendment to be made in committee to the previous government's bill. The amendment provides for a regulation-making power to be added to limit the circumstances in which local governments may provide copies of the rates record and electoral roll to people for private marketing purposes.

The bill incorporates a range of technical amendments to the act. With respect to the rating powers of local governments, the bill clarifies the powers of local governments to rate mining tenements on the gross rental value system and provides for minor improvements to differential rating. Improvements are being made to the provisions relating to the disqualification of council members for the failure to attend meetings and the procedures to determine disqualification. A number of the electoral provisions of the act are being amended to clarify enrolment arrangements. New provisions are being added to the act to set out the requirements for entering into contracts using the local government's common seal or other instruments. Various minor drafting improvements have also been included.

There has been extensive consultation with the Western Australian Local Government Association, Local Government Managers Australia and relevant private and state organisations on the amendments in this bill. I commend the bill to the house.

Debate adjourned, pursuant to standing orders.