

GOLDFIELDS–ESPERANCE DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION — CUSTOM MILL PROJECT, LEONORA

356. Hon Robin Chapple to the Minister for Agriculture and Food representing the Minister for Regional Development:

- (1) In reference to question on notice No. 5326 asked on 20 March 2012, in respect of the Goldfields–Esperance Development Commission (GEDC), and the Custom Mill Project Leonora; reference to website http://s4.zetaboards.com/Gold_Detecting/topic/9221898/1/ (need to log in) or copy of email string from that website located at —
<http://www.robinchapple.com/sites/default/files/New%20Mill%20emails.pdf>;
page 17 of the Shire of Leonora Minutes of the 20th September 2011 located at —
http://www.robinchapple.com/sites/default/files/Leonora%20minutes_sep_11.pdf,

I ask:

- (a) was a meeting proposed to be held regarding the Leonora custom mill project in the GEDC office at 10am on Monday, 12 December 2011;
- (b) if yes to (a), did that meeting occur;
- (c) did the GEDC CEO, Robert Hicks, send an email on 16 November 2011 promoting attendance at this meeting;
- (d) did the Shire of Leonora, in acquitting their Royalties for Regions Country Local Government Funds, identify they had engaged Australian Mining Advisors to undertake work related to the Leonora custom mill project;
- (e) is it correct that the Shire of Leonora council minutes of Tuesday, 20 September 2011 stated “the Shire and staff will be seeking further support for the project at a Ministerial level”;
- (f) what approach and to whom did the Shire make to either the Minister, staff or agencies under his purview in relation to this matter;
- (g) is the Minister aware of an email signed off from Graham Thomson, Logistics Management Services, which states “We are assisting Bruno Sceresini (Australian Mining Advisors) with the preparation of a business case to have a regional mill established in Leonora”;
- (h) with respect to (a), was it appropriate for Graham Thomson as chair of the GEDC and the Regional Development Council to allow or permit the GEDC office to be used for these meetings, given his interest in the matter; and
- (i) was it appropriate for the GEDC CEO to send out emails promoting the meeting for the benefit of Mr Thomson?
- (2) With reference to the answer to question on notice No. 5326 which included the statement “the Goldfields–Esperance Development Commission...have been unable to find any record of being approached by any party seeking assistance in the building of a gold processing plant in Leonora” and despite the Shire of Leonora President being on the board of the GEDC, officers of the GEDC hosting meetings related to that project at the GEDC office, the custom mill for gold ore being identified as a priority project in the Goldfields–Esperance Strategic Development Plan drafted by the GEDC, the Chairman of the GEDC being somewhat involved with Australian Mining Advisors on this project and answer to question on notice No. 5326 being answered the way it was, did the GEDC or the Ministers department deliberately mislead the Minister and/or did the Minister mislead Parliament:
- (a) in respect of answers to (2), what action will the Minister take;
- (b) in respect of answers to (2), will the Minister apologise for misleading the Parliament;
- (c) in respect of the answers to all of the above, will the Minister review the answers given to question on notice No. 5326, and provide corrected answers; and
- (d) if no to , why not?

Hon Ken Baston replied:

- (1) (a)–(c) Yes
(d) No
(e) Yes

- (f) There is no indication of an approach to the Minister or his office. In regard to portfolio agencies, it would be necessary to conduct a review of records, however the Member is referred to the response to Question on Notice 5326.
 - (g) The link to the website provided in the Member's question contains an email of this nature.
 - (h) I am advised that the meeting the Member refers to was convened by the Chief Executive Officer of the Goldfields Esperance Development Commission (GEDC), not Mr Thomson. The CEO advises that he was unaware of any interest that Mr Thomson may, or may not have had at the time of the meeting.
 - (i) The meeting was not for the benefit of Mr Thomson. The meeting was to bring together stakeholders interested in advancing a project that was identified in the 2011–21 Strategic Development Plan and it is appropriate that the CEO would convene such a meeting.
- (2) The GEDC has reaffirmed to the Minister that it has not had an approach seeking assistance in the building of a gold processing plant in Leonora. The meeting that the Member refers to was designed to bring together stakeholders interested in advancing the project.
- (a)–(d) Not applicable.