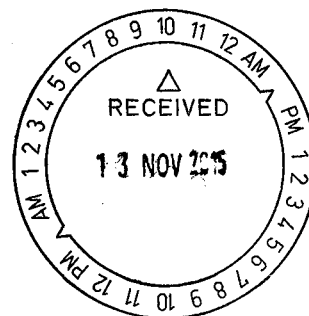




**The Hon Tony Simpson MLA**  
**Minister for Local Government; Community Services;**  
**Seniors and Volunteering; Youth**

Our Ref: 49-09621

Hon Simon O'Brien MLC  
Chairman  
Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs  
Parliament House, Harvest Terrace  
WEST PERTH WA 6005



Dear Mr O'Brien *Simon*

Thank you for your letter dated 21 October 2015 enclosing a petition from Mr Steven Lenz of Byford, requesting the Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs ("Committee") to conduct a judicial inquiry into the operations and affairs of the Shire of Serpentine-Jarrahdale ("Shire").

I note the views of the petitioner and note the Committee is undertaking preliminary inquiries in relation to the subject matter of the petition.

As you may be aware, local government elections were held on 17 October 2015 across the State, and the Shire now has a number of new elected members, together with a new Shire President.

I am aware of a number of concerns that involve governance at the Shire and with the Acting Chief Executive Officer and Shire President. In response to those concerns, my Department of Local Government and Communities is monitoring the Shire's Council meetings, together with other aspects of the Shire's business.

Ultimately, any impetus for change at the Shire must be driven by Council, as Council is responsible for governance of the organisation. Council is also responsible for the performance of the organisation through management of the Chief Executive Officer.

Whilst my Department is conducting an assessment of a number of matters arising from resident complaints in the Shire, the Department is unaware of the specific matters raised in Mr Lenz's submission, and as such, I am unable to offer any comment on them. However, I would encourage Mr Lenz to provide the details of these matters, and accompanying evidence, to my Department, who will investigate accordingly.

As you would expect, this does not fetter the discretion of the Committee to conduct its own inquiry into matters concerning the Shire, particularly those raised in the petition. Should the Committee proceed with this course of action, I and my Department will be pleased to support the Committee's deliberations.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tony Simpson', written in a cursive style.

HON TONY SIMPSON MLA  
**MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT; COMMUNITY SERVICES;  
SENIORS AND VOLUNTEERING; YOUTH**

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