

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

### WRITTEN QUESTION

Mrs Lambley to the Minister for Housing and Community Development:

#### **Department of Housing and Community Development**

1. Why did your Government choose to scrap the Department of Local Government?
2. Was there any money saved by scrapping the Department of Local Government?
3. How has the decision to scrap the Department of Local Government benefitted Local Government in the Northern Territory?
4. What changes have been made to Local Government in the Northern Territory since the 2016 NT General Election in August 2016?
5. What are your Government's Local Government policies?
6. What is the total funding allocation for Local Government in 2017/18?
7. What was the budget for Local Government in 2016/17?
8. How many people were employed in the division of Local Government as of 1 June 2017?
9. How many people were employed in the division of Local Government as of 1 June 2016?
10. Why has your Government chosen to diminish the importance of Local Government?

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- 1 Local government responsibilities now sit with the Department of Housing and Community Development. Amalgamating departments provides efficiencies and improved staff interaction.

As you have written to me to ask this question, it appears you are aware that I am the Minister for Local Government.

- 2 Machinery of Government changes provided the opportunity for administrative savings through amalgamation of Departments and the introduction of efficiencies.

Direct funding to the local government sector has increased, particularly through the establishment of a \$5 million Strategic Local Government Infrastructure Fund and increases to NT Operational Subsidies and Special Purpose Grants that improve key infrastructure in remote communities.

- 3 The amalgamation has resulted in efficiencies and better coordination, including additional funding to the sector.
- 4 There have been no changes to wards or boundaries of local government councils since the time of the NT General election in 2016. However, changes to some councils will take effect for the August 2017 general elections. These changes were notified in [Gazette S30 9 June 2017](#) and [Gazette S32 16 June 2017](#). Copies of these Gazette notices are available at [dhcd.nt.gov.au/publications-and-policies/northern-territory-government-gazette-notices](http://dhcd.nt.gov.au/publications-and-policies/northern-territory-government-gazette-notices)
- 5 This government's policy is to support Local Government to provide services to the people they represent. Policies for increasing funding to the sector and strengthening Local Authorities were taken to the election and are being implemented, a review of the Local Government Act is underway.
- 6 \$97.159 million. Refer Budget Paper No. 3 page 151.
- 7 \$93.688 million. Refer Budget Paper No. 3 page 151.
- 8 FTE 35.06.
- 9 FTE 37.90.
- 10 The importance of local government has not diminished. Local government councils across the Territory continue to provide important services. Department staff continue their committed work to support councils and this government has significantly increased funding to the sector.