



PORT LINCOLN SCHOOLS REPORT 23rd December 2004

Member for Flinders Liz Penfold attacked propositions which attempt to manipulate Port Lincoln City Council into bearing the cost for problems at Port Lincoln Junior Primary School and Port Lincoln Primary School as presented to Council last Monday night.

“The Minister for Education and Children’s Services, Jane Lomax Smith, and her department are trying to pass the buck in a grand manner.

“They are refusing to face the real problems that could lead to long time positive solutions.”

“The former education minister made a commitment at a community cabinet meeting in September 2002 that the government would provide \$250,000 to be spent “this year” to provide a long term solution to the over crowding issues in Port Lincoln town schools” Mrs. Penfold said.

This report has never seen the light of day, despite repeated calls from the Mayor and the local member.

Mrs Penfold was commenting on a report to Port Lincoln City Council by the Department of Education and Children’s Services chief executive Steve Marshall on the Minister’s meeting with council early in December.

“The new report concentrates solely on parking issues at the two schools, principally the lack of parking.

“Closing part of Adelaide Place and using Centenary Oval for parking are two of the options mooted in the report.

“There is no mention whatsoever that the present and future of the schools are being constrained by space restrictions arising from the schools being in the Central Business District of the city,” she said.

“This is just one more example of the current state government’s disregard for rules and laws that the rest of us have to comply with.

“For instance, St Joseph’s School has to supply parking at its own expense, just as businesses are required to install adequate car parks when relocating or rebuilding, however the education department have no such requirement.”

“The Minister and her department are attempting to put this necessity back on to council and therefore ratepayers,” she said.

Mrs Penfold said council had correctly observed that the report refers to Planning SA population projections that are out of date and substantially inaccurate, some even being based on figures from the 1996 Census.

“This report admits that the city is growing, the two schools are at capacity and that the associated parking and traffic issues are also at capacity but does nothing about finding a long term solution.

"I fully support council's decision not to accept this cost shifting proposal or take further action until the facilities report is released and the real issues are properly addressed," she said.
ENDS

REPORT ON PORT LINCOLN SCHOOLS IS YET TO SURFACE 17 September 2003

The Minister for Education and Children's Services Trish White was confused when asked by Mrs Penfold in Parliament for a response to the inquiry made into Port Lincoln schools and kindergartens.

The report was completed last year at a cost of \$250,000 however the Minister has obviously not sighted it yet.

The Minister explained to the Parliament that it had been with the Member for Reynell Gay Thompson, who chairs a Labor committee on these issues, and was "forwarded quite recently".

Then the Minister had to backtrack since it was Kangaroo Island's report that had been sent to her, not Port Lincoln's.

Mrs Penfold said that the report would hopefully see the light of day eventually.

"Hopefully a response from the Minister will be received and a decision will be implemented much sooner than the one for Whyalla that has been coming for more than a year and a half," she said.

In November last year a project officer was appointed to compile an education brief on the options for Port Lincoln's schools and kindergartens.

Mrs Penfold wrote to the Minister on 22nd May 2003 and again on 12th August 2003 asking when the report would be made public.

In today's question, she quoted comments from Mayor Peter Davis reported in the 16th September 2003 issue of the Port Lincoln Times.

REVIEW OF PORT LINCOLN SCHOOLS AND KINDERGARTENS 17 September 2003

The Minister for Education has misled the Member for Flinders, the Mayor and the people of Port Lincoln about a report into education facilities in the town.

During the Community Cabinet meeting held in Port Lincoln in September 2002, Ms White made a commitment on ABC radio on 26th September 2002 that *"There is population growth in Port Lincoln that needs to be addressed and we need a long-term solution to those base problems in our schools here and this \$250,000 is the first step. It will be spent **this year** on doing planning to come up with a very sensible solution to deliver education outcomes for children of Port Lincoln."*

After confusing the Eyre Peninsula school report with one on Kangaroo Island in answer to a question from the Member yesterday and having to make a Ministerial Statement correcting herself, the Minister in another Ministerial Statement today admitted that only some preliminary work to the value of \$48,535.79 had been spent.

"Clearly some preliminary work has been done on a range of matters associated with the potential impact of city redevelopment on education service delivery in Port Lincoln but the proposals being discussed are a lot larger than just the delivery of education services. There are a wide range of other interests in Port Lincoln to be considered," the Minister said.

In the statement she also accused the Member for Flinders of making an incorrect assertion that \$250,000 had been spent.

“It is not surprising that I as the local Member, the Mayor and the people of Port Lincoln believed that \$250,000 had been spent on the report completed last year, after the commitment to that effect that was made by the Minister for Education Trish White at the time,” Mrs. Penfold said.

“The Minister must now urgently spend the additional \$200,000 that was promised last year on actually resolving some of the issues,” Mrs. Penfold said.

“There should be no impediment as the funding has been committed and should have been spent by now by her own admission”.

“Once again it can be seen that the Minister is quick to announce considerable funding, but when it comes down to actually providing the funding to address the obvious needs, she is unable to come up with the goods.”