

Thursday August 11, 2005

*A break in electoral representation at Glen Eira City Council is required to send a clear message that a serious failure by Councillors to provide good government coupled with an incapacity or unwillingness to address the underlying causes, is unacceptable. It will also be a positive step towards restoring responsible elected representation to the City.* (Municipal Administration Inspector's report into Glen Eira Council, August 2005 p14)

## **ADMINISTRATOR APPOINTED TO GLEN EIRA CITY COUNCIL**

Local Government Minister Candy Broad today suspended the Glen Eira City Council on the advice of a damning report that raised serious questions of governance among councillors.

Ms Broad has accepted the report's recommendation to appoint an Administrator to run the Council until elections are held in November this year.

Ms Broad said a comprehensive report by Municipal Inspector Merv Whelan made it clear decisive action was required for the community to have confidence in the ongoing administration of council affairs.

"The Bracks Government believes everyone deserves fair representation in local government," she said.

"This report outlines, in great detail, a litany of deficiencies of governance which made it impossible for the council to provide fair representation for its local community.

"This is not a decision taken lightly. It is clear from the report that the situation had become serious. Some issues stretch back to the time of the previous State Government.

*The Council is very badly governed. There has been and continues to be, a serious failure to provide good government... Their failure to provide good government is due to a breakdown in working relationships, characterised by a total absence of goodwill, respect and trust between Councillors and an inability or unwillingness on their part to seriously attempt any remedial action.* (Municipal Administration Inspector's report into Glen Eira City Council, August 2005 p6)

"The investigation by the Municipal Inspector was prompted by a request by the council itself," Ms Broad said.

Among the reasons for the suspension of the council outlined in the report are:

- the lack of an effective code of conduct,
- the lack of an appropriate Councillor expenses policy,
- breaches of confidentiality,
- misunderstanding of councillor role and responsibilities, and
- a poor relationship between councillors and council staff, including the CEO

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“Under the circumstances I was left with no choice but to take this necessary course of action, which is available to me under the Local Government Act,”

Ms Broad has appointed Mr John Lester as Administrator until the election of a new council on the last Saturday of November, effective immediately. Mr Lester was the Chief Commissioner of Darebin City Council and is a former Chair of the Victorian Grants Commission.