

CONSTITUENT QUESTION

House of Assembly

ASKED BY: Member for Lyons, Jen Butler

ANSWERED BY: Minister for Community and Multicultural Affairs, Hon Roger Jaensch MP

QUESTION:

My constituent question is from Scott of Seymour, who writes: in November 2025, you were contacted by concerned staff and volunteers of the St Helens Neighbourhood House, citing concern with some members of the board and their treatment of staff and volunteers. You ignored the plea for assistance. The Premier has now had to intervene, as the situation in the subsequent six months has snowballed to the point that the Neighbourhood House is now unable to provide essential services to the community. Will you place the Neighbourhood House into temporary administration to restore services and programs for vulnerable people? Will you amend the act to ensure a situation like this cannot happen again? What actions will you take to recreate the professional and caring Neighbourhood House? The dedicated staff and volunteers are desperate to get back to work.

ANSWER:

The situation at St Helen's Neighbourhood House is disappointing for all involved.

The Tasmanian Government is aware of the governance concerns and we are acting.

It is important to note that Neighbourhood Houses are independent incorporated entities, with their own boards and management structure. They are not governed by an Act of Parliament or the Government.

Regarding action taken over the past six months, the Government, through the Department of Premier and Cabinet, engaged an external, experienced former House manager to provide support for the operational functionality of the St

Helen's Neighbourhood House, including working with the interim House manager.

In addition, a separate independent consultant has been engaged to undertake an assessment of the current operations of the House to ensure alignment with its grant deeds.

As part of this work, the consultant will be engaging with the board and staff, along with targeted community members.

The outcome of this work will inform the Tasmanian Government's future actions relating to this matter.

As you would be aware, a Neighbourhood House needs analysis is currently underway. This important project is examining effective and sustainable governance structures across the Neighbourhood House network, which has been identified as a key area for consideration through this work.

We are committed to ensuring clarity around the respective roles and responsibilities of Government and independent incorporated entities.



Hon Roger Jaensch MP
Minister for Community and Multicultural Affairs

Date: 22 June 2026