

EXTRACT FROM PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

# HANSARD



James Newbury  
Member for Brighton

ADJOURNMENT  
*'WORLD GAME FACILITES FUND'*

Wednesday, 14 October 2020

## **WORLD GAME FACILITES FUND.**

Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (19:37):

My Adjournment is to the Premier, and the action I seek is for the Premier to immediately instigate an independent investigation by the Department of Premier and Cabinet into the state government's World Game Facilities Fund.

The World Game Facilities Fund is a funding program aimed at assisting local soccer clubs and organisations to upgrade or develop new facilities. Applications are managed by local council. The latest \$20 million funding round was announced in March by the former Minister for Sport.

Notably one of the assessment criteria for the project was for the applicant to detail the consultation process undertaken with the community. Put simply, funding approval was contingent on community consultation.

In August the new Minister for Sport announced 13 successful grant recipients.

Recently the Labor Member for Pascoe Vale announced one of the successful grants—a \$500,000 investment to construct a new synthetic soccer pitch at Hosken Reserve in Coburg North.

What beggar's belief is that the Member's announcement of funding for the project was the first time the local community became aware of the project.

The community was consulted after the grant was approved.

Understandably, the community has been outraged. Local resident John has written to the Member for Pascoe Vale:

*You do know Lizzie that there has been absolutely no consultation with residents*

Lucy wrote:

*It appears not many of the local community actually want this and we were never consulted! Disgraceful!*

In fact, a local petition has now garnered almost 3,000 signatures in opposition to the project.

As the petition sets out, the only stakeholders consulted in the recent phases of the project were sporting groups. And Moreland City Council waited until 18 September to announce the destruction of Hosken Reserve oval, just four days before entering the caretaker period for the 24 October election. The tender for

the works opened on 19 September and closed on 13 October, before the end of the caretaker period.

Even a Moreland Councillor now claims Councillors were kept in the dark by Council. This announcement stinks.

The recent Ministerial announcement that funds have been delayed while the department considers community feedback is nothing more than a cover-up.

Victorians should have no faith in a Department investigating a grant that it approved. Any investigation must be independent, reassess the grants and examine the behaviour of Moreland Council.

The Premier must immediately instigate an independent investigation, or Victorians will know that this fund is another rotten example of Labor running a dodgy government.