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Time For A Fresh Change at the SMRC

"SMRC deputy chairman Clive Robartson, who is seeking re-election to Melville's Bull Creek-Leeming ward, told the Herald this week the organisation continued to play down the smells despite knowing the odour-eating filters weren't working properly. He says the SMRC didn't speak out earlier because of an investigation by the WA environment department."

Excerpt from a story by Steve Grant, Fremantle Herald on 26 September 2009, Page 11.

Dr Mike Nahan, the Member for Riverton said the above statement by Clive Robartson reinforces the need for change in the senior management and board of directors of the SMRC.

"The board of the SMRC has overseen a terrible period in the local community's history where a large composting plant was built close to existing homes and inflicted severe odour pollution on the community," said Dr Nahan.

"Whether the odours are noxious or just plain annoying, the SMRC has been aware that acute reactions to offensive odours can lead to chronic psychological stress over time. That is exactly what the local community has been experiencing."

"These odours have been allowed to go on intermittently for years. We now know from Deputy Chairman Clive Robartson that the SMRC knew more than a year ago when it was under investigation by the Department of the Environment that the composting plant was emitting serious odour pollution."

"Yet the SMRC once again denied the existence of the pollution to the public and to the regulator, and at the same time, denied that they could or should resolve it. In fact, worse than that, they went out and said that if there was an odour, it was from the green waste, not the composting plant."

"In short, the SMRC misled the community and the regulator with the aim of continuing to emit odour pollution and undermine the community's quality of life."

"Such behaviour simply should not be tolerated, particularly in a community-owned facility funded by ratepayers. It also shows why the public has lost all confidence in the management of the SMRC and why changes need to be made to the board and senior management."

"Only when changes are made to the senior personnel and culture of the SMRC can we move on to address the longer term issues of whether the plant can be fixed or replaced, and if so, with what and where."

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