

CRIME AND ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR — CARNARVON

**458. Ms M.J. DAVIES to the Premier:**

I refer to the letter written to the Premier and members of his cabinet from the president of the Shire of Carnarvon, Eddie Smith, that outlines the challenges facing his community. It includes the comment —

It breaks my heart when I am told of an 86 year-old woman who is woken at night by a group of children standing over her bed, who then go on to steal items and trash her property. The elderly ... are living in fear!

Has the government considered the proposal for the intensive family and community intervention support program, which was developed by the Shire of Carnarvon in consultation with key community stakeholders, including Yinggarda Aboriginal Corporation, and is designed to tackle these difficult issues; and, if not, why not?

**Mr M. McGOWAN replied:**

I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question.

The Western Australian government recognises that some significant antisocial issues have been occurring in various parts of the state. That is why we are employing an additional 1 100 police officers across Western Australia. That is a 15 to 20 per cent increase in the police force, which is exactly what the former Commissioner of Police, now Governor, requested when he sought additional resourcing. In addition, there has been a significant increase in the complement at Carnarvon Police Station of full-time police officers, plus an additional youth police officer to Carnarvon. That has been a significant boost to the station that will provide additional resources to deal with these issues.

Thirdly, Operation Regional Shield has been deployed to Carnarvon to support police with additional overtime, in particular for dealing with youth offending in Carnarvon. Fourthly, the Western Australian government has put in place, in conjunction with police, what is called Operation Test Curve, to reduce juvenile offending antisocial behaviour. This is about engaging street-present juveniles, targeting offenders, and crime reduction strategies.

Fifthly, the Target 120 program is being rolled out across parts of regional WA, including Carnarvon. That is an \$11.1 million increase. That is a peer-reviewed program that we brought in when we came to office. It is designed to intervene early in families where children are having severe difficulties and give parents and families the appropriate strategies to enable them to provide more structure and support for their children so that they do not engage in antisocial and criminal behaviour. Sixthly, the community youth officers for the program are being recruited currently, so that is already occurring. That program has worked effectively across the state. It is evidence-based. It has actually reduced offending in families where these difficulties are in place.

I have been to Carnarvon a few times in the last year or so. The PCYC is one thing that we have brought into the town centre. The gym, which is relatively new, has been converted to the PCYC. That is being appropriately resourced to provide a huge number of additional activities to engage young people in Carnarvon.

I realise these issues are difficult. They are difficult for all involved. They are very unpleasant for all involved. There are six or seven different initiatives that the government has put in place to deal with these issues in Carnarvon.