

CRIME AND ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR — CARNARVON

537. Ms M.J. DAVIES to the Premier:

I draw the Premier's attention to the question I asked last week in Parliament regarding the letter he received from Councillor Eddie Smith and the Shire of Carnarvon that outlines the challenges facing his community. I remind the Premier that 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!

As it has now been over a week since I asked the Premier whether the government has 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 the Yinggarda Aboriginal Corporation, and is designed to tackle these issues, has the Premier considered this plan; and, if not, why not?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

The Leader of the Opposition did not listen to the answer I provided last week, which was that the government is extending what we term the Target 120 program to various regional communities, including Carnarvon. The Target 120 program is peer reviewed and well accepted as making a significant difference. It has resulted in families, particularly those with children who are involved in the justice system, having much lower levels of recidivism. That is the reality. That is a proven program that we are rolling out in Carnarvon. It is working in various parts of the city and we are rolling it out to various communities in the Kimberley and the Pilbara and also to Carnarvon. The funding behind that is very significant. Target 120 works with families to ensure that kids go to school. It includes programs about parenting. We work on an individual case-by-case basis with those families who have difficulty managing their children, particularly when the children have been involved in the justice system. I advised the Leader of the Opposition last week that that program is going to Carnarvon.

On top of that, we are employing more police officers, or we have posted more police officers, in Carnarvon. Those police officers work in enforcement, obviously, but they also work with families. That is the nature of policing in regional Western Australia. They work with families, particularly those who have children involved in the justice system.

On top of that, I think one police community officer has been posted there in addition to a significant number—we do not reveal individual numbers—of additional police in Carnarvon. As I told the member, I went there I think last year, or perhaps earlier this year, to open the new police and community youth centre in the heart of town. What do PCYCs do? We also put funding into the PCYCs because they were going to collapse under the last government and we had to backfill the funding to ensure that they continued to operate. What does a PCYC do in a town like Carnarvon? It runs sporting, cultural and social programs with children and families, and engages them in productive and exciting activities. That is now in the heart of town. It is a wonderful facility right in the middle of the town in Carnarvon. People can go there and access those services.

All those things are happening, but the Leader of the Opposition does not listen to the answers.