

COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTRES — REVIEW

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

I refer to the Minister for Regional Development's comments in *The Avon Valley Advocate* on 3 May that this government is cutting community resource centre funding to deliver "really, really important things".

- (1) Why does the government believe community resource centres are no longer important? Is it because, as the Premier said last year, everyone in the bush now has a smartphone?
- (2) Will the Premier provide a detailed list of what "really, really important things" will be delivered by slashing funding to CRCs?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

- (1)–(2) It may surprise the Leader of the National Party that I have not read the 3 May edition of *The Avon Valley Advocate*. Notwithstanding that, I will still answer the question.

Several members interjected.

Mr I.C. Blayney: A train goes there.

Mr M. McGOWAN: We kept the train operational.

Several members interjected.

Mr M. McGOWAN: The *AvonLink* was defunded under the Liberal–National government and we reinstated it. There we go. There is one. On Thursday, the budget will come down and we will see one important thing; that is, we are keeping royalties for regions, and the Liberals want to get rid of it. That is one important thing. Secondly, we will see a massive infrastructure program across regional Western Australia. We will see unprecedented investment in roads across regional Western Australia and school and hospital rebuilds. We will see all sorts of important things across regional Western Australia because we care deeply about the regions.

I take members back to the original point about community resource centres. We have had a consultation program with the CRCs to get the CRCs back on a more —

Mr D.C. Nalder interjected.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Honestly! The member for Bateman can talk about secret meetings. What about the member's secret meeting with the Chinese consul? Why did the member not tell us about that?

Mr D.C. Nalder: You are dealing with CRCs.

Mr M. McGOWAN: We are not talking about the Gnowangerup CRC; we are talking about the member for Bateman's meeting with the Chinese consul. Now I am going back to the CRCs.

Mr D.C. Nalder: What meeting?

Mr M. McGOWAN: You tell us about your meeting with the Chinese consul.

Mr D.C. Nalder: It was not a meeting.

Mr M. McGOWAN: It was not a meeting. What was it?

Mr D.C. Nalder: I was invited to a dinner.

Mr M. McGOWAN: It was dinner with his business colleagues. That is right; he took his mates with investment propositions along to that meeting.

Back to the Leader of the National Party's question, we have put the CRCs back on a more reasonable funding trajectory than they otherwise would have been on.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Premier! Member for Bateman, you have asked the question. Give the Premier the opportunity to answer it.

Mr M. McGOWAN: I want to point out to the house that in 2009–10, the operational costs amount provided by the state to community resource centres across Western Australia was \$5.9 million. By 2015, five years later, the costs were \$13 million. It was an \$8 million increase—in effect, a 150 per cent increase or something of that nature. Instead of taking it back to the \$5.9 million that it was in 2009–10, we are taking it to \$8 million, which is a reasonable trajectory on what it would otherwise have been. We are not closing any CRCs.

Ms M.J. Davies interjected.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the National Party!

Mr M. McGOWAN: Because of the Liberals and Nationals, the state has inherited \$40 000 million worth of debt —

Dr M.D. Nahan interjected.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition!

Mr M. McGOWAN: We obviously need to deal with that debt legacy of the Liberals and Nationals.