

CORONAVIRUS — LOCAL RESPONSES

Statement by Member for Girrawheen

MS M.M. QUIRK (Girrawheen) [12.51 pm]: During the COVID-19 crisis, we saw many examples of grassroots responses by local heroes reaching out to others impacted by the pandemic. These examples demonstrate empathy and compassion for those less fortunate. Locals made the effort not because they had to but because they identified an unfulfilled need and felt compelled to do something. The BAPS Swaminarayan Hindu temple in Wangara made and distributed meals and essential care packages, mindful that “in the joy of others lies our own”. No Limits Perth in Wangara added to its already huge workload by providing meals to 30 international students stranded and without means.

Most outstanding were the efforts of Mike Gray, treasurer of the Kingsway Football and Sporting Club. Realising that the clubrooms would be vacant for many months and that family violence may escalate during the uncertain and stressful times, he offered the clubrooms for transitional accommodation for those experiencing family violence, with refugees impacted by increasing demand.

WA Police Force data for March, relative to March 2019, saw a 17.9 per cent increase in family assault offences and a 28.5 per cent increase in threatening family behaviour offences. Unsolicited, Mike did a detailed proposal, drew up plans, approached donors and builders who might give time and/or material for temporary renovations, calculated the security requirements, contacted local members and the council, and engaged the Department of Communities and the WA Women’s Council for Domestic and Family Violence Services. Mike showed great leadership in convincing his executive at the footy club to enthusiastically throw their support behind him.

Our community is blessed by such individuals and groups giving freely and generously of their time.