

**COMMUNITY SERVICE GRANTS PROGRAM REVIEW**

*Statement by Minister for Youth*

**MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah - Minister for Youth)** [2.07 pm]: I inform the house that an independent review of the community service grants program, administered by the Office for Children and Youth, has now been finalised. As a result, funding for the youth sector will be more targeted and available to a greater number of organisations than ever before. The former Minister for Youth, Hon Mark McGowan MLA, wrote to service providers advising them of a planned review of the community service grants program. As the new minister, I appointed an independent assessment panel to review the funding distributed to 23 agencies in the youth sector through the community service grants program to ensure that they were each meeting the strategic guidelines of the Office for Children and Youth. Each of the agencies was invited to submit a service provider application form, which sought information on the services provided and their alignment with the priorities in the youth portfolio. In addition, all agencies accepted the opportunity to make a presentation to the assessment panel.

Given the competing demands for funding within the sector, it is important that services to young people are regularly evaluated to ensure that the funds are appropriated in accordance with the strategic priorities of government. The review has provided the opportunity to critically assess the services, which have not been reviewed in recent years.

While a number of agencies will no longer receive funding under the community service grants program, I acknowledge the services they have provided to the youth sector. All of these agencies are eligible to apply for project funding and sponsorship under the Youth Grants WA program, and I encourage them to do that.

The service that most impressed the assessment panel is provided by Youth Focus, which will have its funding increased to \$180 000 per annum. Youth Focus provides much-needed counselling and support services for at-risk young people and their families.

As a result of the review, the Youth Grants WA program will be expanded as follows: \$200 000 available for grants up to \$5 000 each; \$80 000 available for sponsorships up to \$10 000; and \$150 000 available for special project grants - advertised on an annual basis - of up to \$35 000 each. I encourage all members of Parliament to advise community organisations within their respective electorates that this grant funding is available. Guidelines and application forms are available from the Office for Children and Youth.