

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Motion

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

MR I.C. BLAYNEY (Geraldton) [2.47 pm]: The Robson report also suggests that building new merged councils around activity centres makes sense. I think that is very true. So that would be about a dozen new metropolitan councils. Looking at the two suggestions for new larger councils, I lean towards going ahead with simple mergers and not all the boundary changes that are in the second proposal. From experience, mergers in themselves are hard enough for a community; wholesale boundary changes would be much harder still. I do not see the two proposals as being different enough or the pay-off big enough to go through a large number of boundary changes, but I think the Robson report is well thought out and an excellent blueprint.

The other bit of reading I did over the summer was a book written by Hugh White, professor of strategic studies at the Australian National University, called *The China Choice*. Anybody with an interest in the emergence of China and the impact of this on Asia and the Pacific should get this book and read it. White argues for America to find a way to share power in Asia with China as an alternative to either competing with China or relinquishing power in the Asia-Pacific. How this shapes up is incredibly important for Australia. The countries involved are all our biggest trading and security partners. The group that runs the In the Zone conference at the University of Western Australia could perhaps start working towards a north Asia peace centre at UWA to work in this area. I think it is an area in which there could be a role for Western Australia.

Finally, I will return to my jewel of an electorate, Geraldton. We are going through a period of steady growth that is being managed well. I thank our ministers for their interest in my electorate and hometown. I was delighted that the government committed late last year to build a new bridge at South Greenough. The existing bridge is quite old, narrow and dangerous. This was the number one priority for the Mid West Industry Road Safety Alliance, to which I belong, and I thank them for their support. I also hope that we will be able to straighten the S-bends to the south of the bridge at the same time.

Next year we will open the first new government primary school to be built at Geraldton since Waggrakine opened in 1979 at Wandina. While I am talking about primary schools, I thank the principal of Waggrakine, Lis Turner, and her staff for the way they have coped with the fire that destroyed the school's administration block recently. I am happy to report that design work on a new block has started, and I thank the minister, Hon Peter Collier, for agreeing that due to the numbers at the school rising considerably, the new administration block will be considerably larger.

I am also happy to report that one of the state government's new child and parent centres will be built at Rangeway Primary School, which happens to be the primary school I attended for most of my years in primary school, and the one whose board I hope to join when it becomes an independent public school—IPS.

I agree with the member for Moore's concerns about the impact of the closure of Nagle Catholic College's boarding facilities in 2015. The board of Geraldton Residential College has put to the Department of Education a proposal to expand its facilities in a way that will not cost any extra money, but simply redirect existing committed funds. I hope that this will be agreed to or another way can be found to expand the college. Students are a valuable commodity in Geraldton, and the Nagle boarders would be a sad loss to the city. Geraldton's choice in education will expand with a number of new courses this year at Geraldton Universities Centre, along with expanded classroom facilities. Likewise, Durack Institute of Technology will gain a new resources training centre and health training facilities.

It is clear that Geraldton Hospital is now inadequate for our needs. Unfortunately, requests for federal government programs to invest in this hospital have been as yet unsuccessful. The hospital runs at near capacity but it has to be borne in mind that St John of God Geraldton Hospital runs at only 50 per cent capacity. The state hospital buys beds from the private hospital when required. It is my hope that Geraldton Hospital will be expanded during this term of government. It can only be a lesson for the future, but the question that always comes to mind is: why were the hospitals not co-located? This would have solved many issues.

The CSIRO has built a valuable facility in Geraldton to service the Square Kilometre Array project. This exciting project is steadily developing at Boolardy in the Murchison region. Other projects that I am supporting and working on as the local member include new premises for Foodbank, which does a wonderful job in Geraldton and the Murchison shire; Sun City Christian Centre's new facilities at south Rangeway; the Fusion village development; Bundiyarra's accommodation project; and the diocese of Geraldton's cathedral restoration project and associated Monsignor Hawes Interpretative Centre. I also intend to work closely with the Salvation Army to try to develop more emergency housing, with Community Housing Ltd to build more local housing and with Sun City Christian Centre to also develop more emergency housing.

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In the area of large infrastructure, projects I would expect to see progress on in this coming term include Oakajee port; Oakajee–Narnngulu corridor; Oakajee industrial estate; the sewerage network to service Geraldton’s northern suburbs; completion of the 330-kilovolt powerline to Moonyoonooka; the heavy vehicle bypass around Geraldton—I will add there that I support the heavy vehicle bypass around Northampton—expansion of Geraldton Hospital; and reform of government secondary education in Geraldton.

I look forward to renewed activity by our government to reduce red tape and make the conduct of business easier. Like all members of Parliament, I have many frustrations in this area. I acknowledge the help and support of the office of Barry Haase, MHR, federal member for Durack, and Hon Brian Ellis, MLC, member for the Agricultural Region, both of whom have offices in Geraldton.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the help and support of my family and, in particular, my wife, Barb. Barb does the trolley round at the Geraldton Regional Hospital, serves on the board of Aidan’s Place, which is a service provider for children with disabilities, and the Women’s Health Resource Centre, and is the local chair for Relay for Life. She never complains; she is often frustrated, but carries on, just like the rest of us.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms J.M. Freeman): Member for Albany.

MR P.B. WATSON (Albany) [2.53 pm]: Thank you, Madam Acting Speaker.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Madam Acting Speaker!

Mr P.B. WATSON: That sounds good, does it not?

The ACTING SPEAKER: Yes!

Mr P.B. WATSON: It is good being on this end instead of up there!

I congratulate all new members to the house. I congratulate the Speaker. I know that a lot of my colleagues and I voted for him last week! I also congratulate the Deputy Speaker and everyone else who has been nominated. Mostly I would like to thank the candidates whom I went against, Barry Critchison, Hans Vermeulen, Robert Sutton, Diane Evers and Trevor Cosh. I have heard some people over the last few days really bag the candidates and the things they did, but as everyone in this chamber knows, a tremendous effort is made by not only those who get in, but also those who do not get in and there is pressure on the family with the time taken up. I congratulate all those candidates.

I move to the campaign. I will not necessarily say I was happy with the Liberal Party campaign. Robbie Sutton did a great job for the National Party. The National Party did not give me much to work with, but I thought he did a tremendous job. Once again, the Liberal Party spent a massive amount in Albany in a bid to buy the seat of Albany. The talk around town, and this is from the candidate, is that more than \$500 000 was spent. Members opposite may laugh, but on the day of the election every lamp post in Albany, right throughout the electorate, had a photo that big. If members opposite do not think that it was \$500 000, they should ask the candidate. He did not put in a cracker himself; it was all done by the party office. So if other Liberal Party members did not get that much, ask for it next time. There was a constant stream of direct mail, pamphlets, full-page newspaper ads and TV advertising from November 2011 to election day. On election day every polling booth was swamped with Liberal Party banners and bunting. A team of Young Liberals, along with other party members, was even brought in from Perth to help on polling booths. Thirty-five people were brought down, and paid. They were the most aggressive non-country people someone could ever meet. They were up there pushing stuff in people’s faces saying, “Vote Liberal. Vote Liberal.” People did not even know who they were. It might have worked in Perth, but it does not work in regional areas. I thought it was absolutely disgusting. This is my fourth election in this caper and I have been the underdog each time; I love that. Each time the Liberal Party comes up with an excuse such as “We didn’t have enough money.” The first time Hon Kevin Prince had the finance brokers. The next time the guy did not work hard enough. The time after that there was not enough money and the candidate did not work hard enough. This time the candidate worked very hard, a lot of money was spent, and still the Liberal candidate did not get in. There is a reason for that, but I will not tell members opposite what it is. I will tell the people on my side and I will write my book—the book. I am married to an award-winning author, so I am getting all the tips, and boy, have I got some juicy ones from both sides of the chamber!

Mr M. McGowan: Don’t you mean when she writes your book?

Mr P.B. WATSON: No, she could not write about some of the things I want to write about!

That Liberal Party had three main themes to its campaign. The first was that I was a good bloke, but that a person needs to be more than a good bloke to be an effective member of Parliament. This is perhaps the most condescending statement that could ever be made to the voters of Albany and they quickly saw through it. The second theme was that Albany would be best served by having a Liberal member of Parliament as part of Barnett’s team in government. To the people of Albany this was nothing but a meaningless slogan. Third, was that Colin Barnett and the Liberals would build a Bunbury to Albany gas pipeline, a broken promise—hello!—

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from the previous election campaign. This meant that the Liberal Party was talking about its own broken promise, a strange way to campaign, given that the newly promised pipeline would have had less than half of the capacity of the one promised in 2008. The Premier then said during the campaign that he wanted a gas-fired power station to go with it. As I said to the Premier in the chamber yesterday, show me the money; show me how much it will cost and how it will help the people of Albany. He did not tell me during the election campaign and he cannot tell me now, and we wonder why the people of Albany do not trust the Premier.

I felt sorry for the poor candidate; he is a good bloke. He is a Collingwood supporter and, like me, has a dog called Harry. He is Liberal and I am Labor, but apart from that, we get on pretty well. He had to walk up York Street with Julie Bishop and Colin Barnett. I happened to be driving up the street and I could see everyone trying to cross the road to get away from them. The poisoned dwarf and the Premier were walking up the street with the poor old would-be local member.

In contrast, Labor identified the issues that were important to the people of Albany and campaigned around them. Well over 100 local people contributed to my campaign in whatever way they could, from helping on polling booths to having a poster in the front yard or making a contribution in their own way. One of the oldest ladies in my electorate, who is in hospital, rang me and said, “Peter, I can’t come to help you on the day, but my thoughts are with you.” These are the sorts of grassroots people of Albany who make us want to go out and do all the things we do.

Firstly, I would like to thank my campaign team, Guy Wroth—some of my colleagues know who Guy Wroth is; he is an Essendon supporter, for a start, and loves campaigns; he lives for campaigns—Ian Bishop and Bob Thomas, who is a former upper house member. I say to all the new members: look to use experienced people who have been in the chamber, not necessarily the upper house, because I know it is a lot different from this place—people who have been in the system. Bob has been tremendously helpful to me. Those three guys have been with me since 2001. A lot of members’ staff have come and gone. If we look after our staff, they will look after us. They have been there since 2001, when we defeated Kevin Prince. I feel a bit sorry for Kevin Prince. I knocked him off with a 15.8 per cent swing not only the first time I stood; he has put someone up during the last three campaigns to knock me off. I have not had the opportunity to be congratulated by Kevin yet because he has gone into hiding, but I am sure he will be there again next time. No election campaign is ever the same, but it has been reassuring to me to have had that stable campaign team, because, firstly, we know how to work together and win, but also no matter what crisis may happen during a campaign we know how to deal with it.

My thanks to the WA State Labor Secretary, Simon Mead, for letting us run our own campaign; assistant state secretary Lenda “Cyclone” Oshalem, for her ongoing support and superb campaigning skills; David Michael, the ever popular deputy mayor; and Sarah Thurgate, for their great work in designing material with the limited resources they had available to them. Thanks also to Meredith Hammat and Madeleine Holme from Unions WA for coordinating the local Save Our Services campaign, and to those unions with public sector workers in Albany, who contacted their members, including the **Australian Manufacturing Workers Union**, the Australian Services Union, the Community and Public Sector Union—Civil Service Association, the State School Teachers’ Union of Western Australia, United Voice and the Western Australian Prison Officers’ Union. Thank you for your help.

Of course, election campaigns these days are expensive, and fundraising is an important part of them. One of our two biggest local fundraisers was Peter Watson’s acoustic music concert, which was successful because I did not compete! It was put together by Rod Vervest, who did a fantastic job getting an acclaimed artist to join him for a one-off concert at the Albany Entertainment Centre. Bernard Carney, Andrew and Karen Winton, Peter Grayling and Dave Clarke came to Albany and donated their time for the cause. Locals, Bob Lipinski, June Iddison, Kiersten Fage, Craig Sinclair, Simone Keane and Steve Scanlon and friends also came. Thank you all for a fantastic night. The other fundraiser was a quiz night hosted by Hon Alannah MacTiernan, and the venue was packed. People either love her or hate her and I love her. She is one of the most inspirational people I have ever worked with. Thanks to Trish and Crispin Travers, Sandy Bishop, Michelle Pardini and Carol Thomas for organising it all and making sure everything ran smoothly on the night. WA Young Labor also put on an entertaining fundraiser celebrating stories from the pasts of me and the member for Collie—Wellington. My thanks go also to David Scaife and Patrick Ashforth for the work they did to make it a success. I would like to thank my south west colleagues, Adele Farina, MLC, and Sally Talbot, MLC, for their support. I thank Dave Kelly and Carolyn Smith of United Voice and Stephen Price and other AWU members for the support of their unions and I thank those United Voice, Community and Public Sector Union—Civil Service Association of WA and Australian Services Union members who helped on the polling booths. I thank Robert Foster and Ron Bryant from the Sporting Shooters’ Association of Australia WA branch for their support and for contacting their members in Albany. Many thanks to Mark Wareing, Louisa Van Halteren, Eddie Summerbell, Greg Cross and Tony Elwood for their support.

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One of the things that need to be done in Albany that I will raise in Parliament over the next four years is reviewing the sustainability of shark gill net trawling along the south coast. Shark is not a high-value fish and the netting results in a large bycatch of other species that have a great value target for recreational fishing. Areas that are popular for recreational fishers turn out to be devoid of any fish once these gill nets have passed through.

The Labor Party went to the election promising to fund the Albany motorplex, but, unfortunately, we did not get in. I will work very hard to make sure that we get funding for it through royalties for regions. I hope that the National Party stands up to the Premier on royalties for regions. It was the National Party's idea in the first place and it has been a tremendous success, although I do not always agree with the way some of the money has been spent over the past few years. People who live in the rural areas should be encouraged to go to the Albany motorplex.

I went to Wellstead Primary School the other day because I have been a strong advocate against the primary to secondary year 7 transition. The government came in without any consideration and said that right across the state year 7s will go to high school next year. I will give the Premier and the Minister for Education an example. Wellstead Primary School is 100 kilometres from Albany. It is a very small but beautiful community school. The year 6s become the leaders of the school in year 7. The year 6 boys in particular take longer to develop, but after having that position of leadership in year 7 they really blossom. The government is saying to farmers who are struggling that the government will take away their child a year earlier. Wellstead Primary School is 100 kilometres away from Albany so those young students have to go away to boarding school. I do not want to keep referring to boys, but the boys do develop later. They will attend the boarding school from year 7 to year 12. A mother at Wellstead told me that education is not the only form of development for our young people. She wants her child at home to nurture and enjoy the benefits of the family unit. Everyone is saying that the students who will be sent away are a different cohort, but they are not. It means that a child will go away a year earlier than previously and will cost a family that is already struggling at least \$25 000 a year. I cannot understand why the National Party never fought for this. I have been fighting for this for over 12 months. I brought it up at the budget estimates with no support from the National Party. It worries me that the National Party is getting sucked into the Liberal Party. It is alright for Brendon Grylls to go to the Pilbara and get another member elected to the house, the new member for Kalgoorlie, which is great, but the National Party must look after the country people. Royalties for regions is a tremendous concept. I can see the Leader of the National Party sitting over there. Four years ago he was bouncing around as the kingmaker but he is very subdued now. Show some ticker and stand up to the Premier. I know what the Premier will do and I said it right throughout my election campaign. The Liberal Party said the Premier would never do that. Rubbish. Just wait and see what will happen to royalties for regions now.

During the election campaign, the Premier came to town. As I say, the Premier is not very well liked in Albany. I do not think he realised that until the second or third visit, when no-one spoke to him. When he came to Albany, one of the first things he said was that the government would put bolts on rocks for fishermen at The Gap and right along our coast. Our coast is one of the most dangerous coasts in Western Australia. If a person falls in the water on the west coast, they can swim out, but if a person falls in the water on the south coast, they fall straight down, there is current underneath and the only way they can survive is to swim out and hope that someone gets them because they cannot get back in over the rocks. Twelve months before the election, I wrote to Hon Bill Marmion about putting bolts on the rocks and he said, "No. My department has said that it is not safe." We brought this letter to the Premier. I told the Premier that the letter was from one of his departments, and he said, "No; we're not taking any notice of them. We're going to do it, and we're going to have them in by Easter." I have eaten my Easter eggs and I think everyone else has as well, but the bolts are still not in. The Premier did not even go to Recfishwest, because I spoke to people from Recfishwest and they said that they are wary of the bolts and that it would have been nice if the Premier had spoken to them about it.

This is the Premier. He comes to town, sees an issue and then—bang. When I was doorknocking, the Esplanade Hotel was a big issue for people. So into town on his white horse comes Col: "I am going to send them a letter and I am going to tell them that if they don't sell, I, Colin Barnett, am going to reclaim it and build a hotel there." My staff looked up the Land Administration Act, which states that he cannot do that; if he reclaims the land, it can be used only as a public utility. The Premier said, "I'm going to send a letter and if it's not back by the twenty-ninth, I'm going to take action." I stood in Parliament the day before yesterday and asked the Premier what is happening with the hotel site. He said that he got a letter but he had not read it yet. It was the most important thing when he was in Albany, but when he gets back here, he says that he does not have the letter but he thinks the owners are going to sell the hotel. We knew they were going to sell it four years ago; they had it on the market. Now the Premier is saying that the owners are going to sell it and that he has a letter but he has not read it. It was the most important thing in the world; it made headlines: "I'm the Premier and I'm going to do this." I cannot say what I want to say about that, but the Premier comes to Albany and treats us as fools. I got into trouble the other day for using an unparliamentary word in the chamber.

[Member's time extended.]

Mr P.B. WATSON: I have a list of all the things that the Premier is going to do in Albany. I want to let the Premier know that there are 1 423 days to go and the clock is ticking! The new members on the other side of the house should not worry; a lot of promises have been made in their electorates but a lot of the promises depend on someone else funding them. All the polling is indicating that we are going to have a Liberal–National federal government. Whether or not people love Julia Gillard, she has made the Premier look really good. She has spent a great deal of money over here. I drove along Great Eastern Highway the other day and I thought, “The federal government did this.” When I look at all the schools in regional areas that have brand-new buildings, I think, “The federal government did this.” But who has been taking the credit? I was disappointed with a lot of the members who are very arrogant. It is not so much the new members, but those who have just got through their first term. They are very arrogant: “I did this. I’m loved by everybody.” It changes overnight. I listened to the member for Collie–Preston earlier. Members have to get out and be part of the community. It is no good getting up in this place and talking about things like that. They can come in on a swing and they can go out on a swing. They can stay in here for a little while, but they have to remember that on only three occasions in 100 years has a first-term government been thrown out. There is record debt. People in Albany are sleeping in cars because they cannot get a house. There is congestion. I hate coming to the city. The best part of Perth at the moment is the drive up the Armadale hill. When I come into town, it is congested.

Dr A.D. Buti interjected.

Mr P.B. WATSON: Yes, because I always drop in and have a coffee with the member for Armadale. These are some of the things that were promised: no lack of specialists in the new hospital; \$900 000 of state government funding for the City of Albany to plan and build significant bike network projects; a child and parent centre at Mount Lockyer Primary School—I am on the board; and a gas pipeline! We were promised a gas pipeline at the last election; it was the big ticket item! Nearly five years later they have halved the size of the pipe and now the big promise is that we are going to have a gas-fired power station. I do not know who is going to do it, but it sounded good during the election! That is estimated to cost \$133 million, just to get everything ready. We were also promised nine overtaking lanes between Albany and Kojonup. The Labor Party came out with three lanes, I think, but Col came to town and said, “We’re going to do nine!” I do not know where he is going to put nine overtaking lanes, because that would mean people could overtake the whole distance between Albany and Kojonup! But Col will come down in a flash car and drive straight down the middle! We were promised \$8.75 million for the Centennial Park precinct redevelopment and \$8 million for the Anzac interpretive centre. I would like to let the Premier know that at the last election the Labor Party said it would allocate money for the Anzac interpretive centre, and every time I brought it up Colin said he would give us some money. At the time of the budget before last, the former Treasurer Hon Christian Porter said to me, “I’ve got the money for you, Watto; don’t worry about it.” Four months later the Premier announced this project—the same day he announced the Liberal Party candidate for Albany! The Premier was putting politics ahead of the most important thing in my electorate in 100 years! I will never forgive him for that.

Let me see what other issues I have here. Some of the new members opposite might not know that I instigated the Blaxell inquiry into the boarding school at Katanning. I have just received an email, and I know that Todd and Becki Jefferis will not mind me reading this. Todd was one of three young men who came to me about things that happened at St Andrew’s Hostel. I thank the Premier for setting up the inquiry; he said he would do that. The inquiry came out with a number of adverse findings. Todd sent me an email the other day stating that no action had been taken against four people: Ian Murray, Colin Philpott, Bill Todd and Ainslie Evans. Todd asked: why have an inquiry that results in adverse findings against people, if nothing is done? He said that the first two have Order of Australia medals, which should be rescinded; and the other two should be removed from their respective positions. This is all part of the process that the victims have gone through. These people had the opportunity to stop this horrible thing happening to those children and they did not do anything. All that has happened is they have been named in a report, and they have walked away. That is one other issue that I will follow up.

Albany has a new hospital and I congratulate the Minister for Health and the Premier. However, I had a meeting with one of my constituents the other day who told me that Albany Regional Hospital provided a cardiac program four days a week, but 12 months ago my constituent was told it would be reduced and now the program at the new Albany Hospital operates for only two days a week. This program keeps people out of hospital, because they are going along and exercising. The hospital said, “Just go to a gym in town and do it.” One of the gentlemen who contacted me said that he went to the gym, which asked him to get a letter from the hospital to cover them. But, no, the hospital will not give my constituent a letter; it is not going to do anything. We have a brand-new hospital, but now the cost cutting is starting. We had a really good system at the other hospital. Now we have a brand-new hospital with fewer beds. We are told that is because they have a better system of looking

after things—hello! They are also cutting down on the cardiac program. What will happen is that these people's health will get worse and they will be back in hospital. I cannot understand the reasoning behind this.

I would like to talk about some of the members who are no longer here. John Bowler had a chequered career in the chamber. He sat on both sides of the house. John was part of Gallop's halfback line, which is the second last row. That line included the late Paul Andrews, Martin Whitely, John Bowler in the middle, me and John Quigley. If anyone has ever sat next to John Quigley for more than five minutes at a time, they would know that it is a very interesting experience. We used to have a lot of late nights during those first four years. Quigs would be sitting in the chamber with a whole lot of papers in front of him and say, "Have a look at this stuff. This guy's not guilty." I would not have a clue. He used to sit for hours and hours looking at material on the Andrew Mallard case. Quigs is one of the characters of the house. When he walks around, he might see you one day and he will not the next. If I happen to get into trouble and I need a lawyer, Quigs is the first person I would have on my side. Johnny Bowler has been my mate since I entered Parliament in 2001. I have not always agreed with some of the things that have happened. He was a great member for Kalgoorlie, and I wish him really well in his retirement.

Martin Whitely and I did not start agreeing on anything for the past four years. He said it was time to get out when he was starting to agree with what I said. The Treasurer took a pretty cheap shot today having a crack at Andrew Waddell. Andrew did a tremendous job in keeping the swing against the Labor Party down to one per cent. Our biggest regret is that Andrew was our IT guru. Now we do not know who will fix our iPads. Let us hope the new member for Forrestfield has a few skills; we might be knocking on his door. The former member for Forrestfield worked really hard. We can work our backsides off and if there is a swing, we can go just like that. I say to new members that there is no such thing as a safe seat. They should not think they are safe. There are a lot of issues out there, including record debt, the cost of power going up, people not being able to get a house and traffic congestion. Governments may be able to get away with it the first time but if problems are not fixed, they are in trouble. There are a lot of new members in this place today. In 1997 we had the same number of members that we have now.

Mr R.F. Johnson: It was 1996.

Mr P.B. WATSON: I thank the father of the house, Mr Johnson, very much for his expertise.

Mr R.F. Johnson: I'm not quite the father of the house. I'm not far off.

Mr P.B. WATSON: I am sorry I did not vote for him the other day. A lot of us on this side of the house voted for the Speaker. The member for Hillarys was not here before.

Mr R.F. Johnson: I didn't expect you to.

Mr P.B. WATSON: There are quite a few on this side. We are trying to work out who did vote for the Speaker. I would like to congratulate the Speaker. I think he will do a great job. I see the Speaker down in the gym in the morning. He is obviously getting himself right.

Standing at a booth at the end of the election campaign from eight in the morning to six at night was pretty hard work. Then we go back and get all the results coming through. Halfway through the night, the ABC always looks at Wellstead, Manypeaks and Emu Point. We know they are always going to go to the Liberal Party. The ABC gives a tick to the Liberal Party. I was sitting in the corner having a beer and my granddaughter Amelie came up to me with her fingers crossed and said, "You'll get in, papa." They are the sorts of things we remember. I must not forget to thank my wife, Meg. She is from the arts community and not used to the robust parliamentary groups and the cut and thrust. I love her. She is a tremendous support to me, as are my children, Kristy, Sarah and Justin, my grandchildren, Amelie, Mason and Eden, and my stepchildren Sophie and Dan. The member for Collie-Preston said today that they are the things that keep us going. We see these young kids coming through. They are the best thing that ever happens to you, apart from your kids. That is why we go out and work hard.

I hope all the new members enjoy their job; it is a tremendous job. But just remember that once that constituent comes into your office, they are the most important person in the world. I wish the government all the best for the next four years. I think it is going to be hard, but, as I say to the Premier: 1 423 days to go; I will be watching every day.

DR A.D. BUTI (Armadale) [3.26 pm]: I also would like to commence by congratulating all the new members of this house on both sides. Some have made very impressive inaugural speeches. I would particularly like to thank the three new members on our side: my neighbour here, the member for Kimberley; and also the member for Fremantle and the member for Bassendean. Of course, the member for Fremantle has the fortunate privilege of being an automatic member of the South Fremantle Football Club; that goes with being the member for Fremantle. Of course, on the other side we have the new member for Alfred Cove, who of course played for South Fremantle, which, in my books, is an outstanding achievement. Probably his second-most outstanding

achievement is that he is now the new member for Alfred Cove, which means that the former member for Alfred Cove is not here anymore, and I am sure that there are as many people on this side of the house who are happy with that result as there are on the other side of the house. But I do wish the former member for Alfred Cove the best of luck, because she was a former student of mine at law school.

Mr P.B. Watson: So you're at fault!

Dr A.D. BUTI: Yes, I know; some people keep telling me that it was my fault. But I wish her the best of luck in her endeavours, and also all the previous members who have now moved on to other careers.

One of my passions, and one of the reasons I entered politics, is education. Of course, in this Parliament we have been joined in this house by two professional educationists, the member for Balcatta and also the member for Forrestfield, so I look forward to some robust debates over the next four years, because I am sure they can bring their expertise to the debates. In particular, I have had quite a few dealings with the member for Forrestfield over the last few years because he was deputy principal at one of the high schools in my electorate. I respect his knowledge of education, so I look forward to hopefully working with him in a collaborative manner, but of course we will disagree, I am sure, on some philosophical matters.

I suppose one of the philosophical issues that has been debated in education is IPSs—independent public schools. I am not necessarily opposed to IPSs. I actually sit on the board of two independent public schools in my electorate. In fact, many years ago I advocated for more flexibility for schools. I thought there was a problem with the education department being a monolithic structure, and there was not enough flexibility at the school level. So, as far as that goes in the IPS framework, that should be applauded. But we should not be carried away by saying that because IPS is a popular system, and more and more schools are seeking to become IPSs, it has been successful. We have to get the educational empirical evidence to show that it has been successful. Once that is shown to me, I will be the first person to agree that it has educational merits. I can see that there is a possibility that it will have educational merits by giving the headmaster and the school greater control over the use of their resources, but I think the jury is still out on whether that then transfers into higher educational achievements, and we will have to wait to see which way it falls.

With the way in which the IPS system is structured at the moment, I think there is a need to look at how we can increase the outcomes for schools in lower socio-economic areas. The member for Forrestfield was the deputy principal at Cecil Andrews Senior High School in my electorate, where, overall, the socio-economic indicators are on the lower, rather than the higher, end of the scale. If we are going to have a successful IPS system, we must have some funding models that would attract high-quality teachers to those schools. Apart from it being a challenge for teachers who want to go to schools where there may be a greater need for outstanding teachers to try to improve students' educational outcomes, economics is always an important matter. What monetary incentives are there under the current model of independent public schools for so-called less attractive schools to attract high-quality teachers?

Mr N.W. Morton: I wasn't too bad!

Dr A.D. BUTI: No; the member for Forrestfield is an outstanding educationalist. I am not trying to say that the teachers in my electorate are not outstanding people. I have to say that the principals in my electorate are outstanding. All the principals at schools in my electorate, including the three high schools and the various primary schools—I think there are 13 primary schools—are outstanding. I am not criticising my local schools in that respect, but there is no doubt that overall it is hard to retain teachers sometimes at the schools that, superficially, may not be as attractive. What monetary incentive does the IPS system have at the moment? What encouragement is there to attract quality teachers to go to the more challenging schools?

There is no doubt that teaching is an incredibly demanding profession. This government seems to think that IPS is the solution to everything. It is not the solution to everything. The solution to better educational outcomes is higher quality teachers. Overall, we have very good teachers in WA. We also have very committed teachers in WA. But there is no doubt the quality of students entering educational faculties at universities in Western Australia are not as high as they were when the member for Balcatta or the member for Forrestfield were at university. Students can get in to some universities to study education or teaching despite having a failed mark in their final leaving exams. That is appalling. We have students in educational faculties at university who have not really passed year 12. People who aspire to be educators should be our highest calibre secondary students. We have to restructure the education profession to make it an exciting profession for people to enter. It is an incredibly rewarding profession. I am sure the two members I referred to would agree it is incredibly rewarding. I was a teacher too many years ago. When I was a student, incredibly high calibre people entered university to study teaching! Jokes aside, there is a problem with the overall quality of people entering the educational faculties of our universities.

Before I get onto the Gonski review, I will refer to the most recent data from the Australian Early Development Index for 2012. In respect of the various communities in my electorate of Armadale, we have seen an improvement since the previous figures. Unfortunately, the overall Armadale community scores below the state and national averages in nearly every indicator: physical health and wellbeing, social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive skills, communication skills and general knowledge. The percentage of students in the Armadale community who are vulnerable in one or more domains of the data index is 28 per cent. The state average is 23 per cent and the national average is 22 per cent. When we look at the state and national averages, that figure takes into account remote communities. The percentage of students in the Armadale community entering grade 1 below the state average is 28 per cent. The state average is 23 and the national average is 22 per cent. Those who are vulnerable in two or more domains—this is critical—of the Australian Early Development Index: Australian average, 10.8 per cent; state average, 11.2 per cent; Armadale community average, 12.6 per cent. That is not a major difference, but it is still below the state average. But the positive thing is that there has been improvement, and there should be improvement because we have some outstanding primary school programs in schools in my electorate. Challis Primary School, which is one of the feeder schools to the member for Forrestfield's former high school, has led the way in early childhood education, with the support, may I say, of the former Gallop government and former member for Armadale. It is good to hear that the current government is looking at some of the programs and some of the structures commenced by the Gallop government.

I return to the Gonski report. I do not think anyone on this side of the house would disagree that Western Australia should receive more than \$300 million; of course we should be receiving more than \$300 million. The Premier is right to say that we should receive more than \$300 million, but he is not right to say we have a fantastic education system that is great, because I now want to read to members two scenarios from a primary school in my electorate. Not long after the election I received a phone call from one of my primary schools asking whether I could visit the school because they needed to discuss some issues with me, and one of them was Schools Plus. When I became a member of this house in 2010 after a by-election, I invited all the principals of the high schools and primary schools in my electorate for an afternoon tea at my office and asked them what the major educational issue was—the major problem confronting them—and they all answered that it was Schools Plus. For those who are not aware of what Schools Plus is, it is about additional funding for students with disabilities.

I am going to read to members two examples that have been given to me by someone at a primary school in my electorate. There is some educational jargon, so I want to let members know what the jargon refers to: "ESC" means education support centre—we have one at Armadale Senior High School; "SNA" means special needs assistant—people employed to assist students with disabilities; and "EN" refers to the student's level of educational need and is an additional teacher time allocated for a student who fits one of the Schools Plus criteria. This allocation provides the teacher who has a student with a disability additional time to meet with other professionals who may be supporting the student—that is, the parents, therapy focus staff or school psychologist et cetera. The time is also used for writing and reviewing the detailed individual educational plans and individual behavioural plans required to support the students. The first example reads —

In 2012 one of our Year 7 students with a diagnosis of ASD,—

Autism spectrum disorder —

an allocation of 0.8 Special Needs Assistant time and an EN (extra funding for teacher time) of 3 was being prepared to transition to the Education Support Centre at Armadale Senior High School. This student has an IQ in the forties and has major sensory issues and high anxiety. She had been at our school since Year 3 and was making good progress considering her high needs and low academic level.

To access the ESC the student needed to catch the special bus provided. Her mother, as a single parent, worked and was unable to transport the student in the morning or the afternoon. In order to fit the criteria to use the bus a student requires an EN4. This child had an EN of 3 and so did not automatically qualify for the bus service.

I was advised by the school's psychologist and the principal of the ESC to make an application to SchoolsPlus. A checklist had to be submitted, in an endeavour to gain an increase in the student's EN amount. My staff and I and the visiting teacher for students with a disability spent many hours compiling the required checklist and we felt confident the student would gain the EN4 given her high need. At this point it is interesting to note that we had another student on the spectrum who was also headed for the ESC in 2013 ... because he is high functioning, hopefully going to have some time in the mainstream high school as well. This student has an average IQ, no where near the same level of need, but he had an EN4 allocation. This of course meant he could access the bus ...

This was frustrating —

The outcome of the checklist submitted was that 0.2 (one full day) of Special Needs Assistant time was removed and the EN level remained unchanged. It appeared to staff that the student was being disadvantaged almost as a consequence of the good work that had been done with her over many years.

We did appeal the loss of SNA time and the EN allocation remaining unchanged, but we were unsuccessful. The outcome also meant that \$8 800 was immediately removed from the school budget.

So, that is the first example. In a roundabout way the teacher is saying that if they actually improve the student, they may lose some of the Schools Plus funding, even though it really is needed. So, where is the incentive? Of course, the incentive is to get the best educational outcome for the student, but the school may not actually have the same amount of resources. One has to remember that this additional resource is there not only for that student but also to help the teacher spend more time with that student so that the SNA and other assistants can also help with other students. I turn to the second example —

This year we have a Year 6 student who is very violent at home and has, on a number of occasions, threatened to stab members of his family and his pets. He has been very physically aggressive towards his mother and sister. His sister has had to live with her father for extended periods of time because of the fears her mother has for her safety and her emotional well being. He spends a lot of time at school very emotionally heightened and this has impacted significantly on the dynamics in the classroom.

Earlier this term the student's mother brought the student and his sister to school informing us that he had thrown an object that hit his sister in the head. The sister was extremely upset and stressed and the mother also informed the school that her son had threatened to kill himself.

[Member's time extended.]

Dr A.D. BUTI: The second example continues —

It was a serious suicide ideation that required intervention by suitably qualified health professionals. The boy's mother could not get her son to a hospital on her own so to avoid having the student run off or having to restrain him a fictional story was concocted about his sister needing to attend at Armadale Hospital's Emergency Department because of the blow she had suffered. The two deputy principals drove the mother and her children to the emergency department concerned that at any minute the student may escalate his behaviour and even run off when we were at the hospital waiting to be attended to.

After a wait of over an hour the student was seen by the medical staff and an assessment undertaken. He was not admitted, but the mother was advised to bring him back to the hospital or take him to PMH if she had any further concerns. His mother was also informed that he could be considered for a referral to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service. However, this option was not clear cut as the student had a pending appointment with a paediatrician regarding concerns that he may have an ASD.

In the following week the student continued to exhibit the same behaviours and his mother took him back to Armadale Hospital where, even though the paediatrician had been seen and had referred the student to DSC —

That is, the Disability Services Commission —

for an ASD assessment, he was referred to Armadale CAMHS.

In my role as deputy principal I liaised with the CAHMS intake nurse and described the situation. I was concerned that because he was referred to DSC for an assessment for an ASD that CAMHS would not see his behaviour as fitting a mental health disorder. I clarified with CAMHS that the referral to DSC, once he was accepted on to their waitlist, would mean he met the criteria for a Schools Plus allocation of only 0.2 Special Needs Assistant time with no avenue to gain any time in addition to this allocation. Given the student's high level of need and because of his age he could be on the waitlist for up to eighteen months with only this limited amount of SchoolsPlus time. The situation at home was dire and if he received a diagnosis of a severe mental health disorder, within the SchoolsPlus criteria (a very limited number of conditions) then the student could, if he was also receiving on going counselling, immediately receive a generic allocation of 0.3 SNA time as well as a small amount of EN funding (additional teacher time). With the completion of a detailed checklist the school may even be able to get both allocations increased.

The outcome was that CAMHS provided an assessment and the student met one of the required SchoolsPlus criteria. Unfortunately, as mentioned above, a diagnosis by a child psychiatrist is only part of SchoolsPlus' criteria. The second aspect of their criteria involves the student receiving counselling from a suitably qualified psychologist and that psychologist providing a letter to SchoolsPlus stating the nature of the counselling being provided and that it will be conducted over the long term. CAMHS

could not provide the counselling at the time of diagnosis and this meant the student's parent had to source counselling for her son elsewhere. The process of accessing counselling and acquiring the letter took another three weeks. It was very fortunate that this family had previously received counselling through Parkerville Children's Services and an appointment with a clinical psychologist was able to be expedited.

After all this effort the student was granted 0.3 SNA time and an EN1 allocation on Thursday of last week. The school now will now submit a detailed checklist in an effort to increase the allocations thus, hopefully, providing the student with an even better opportunity to improve his academic, social and emotional outcomes at school.

Please note that these two examples are but a small indication of the difficulties often confronting schools when trying to gain adequate additional resources from SchoolsPlus for high need students with a disability that fits SchoolsPlus criteria. If you require any further information please don't hesitate to contact me.

I am sure members of this house would argue that those two scenarios attest to the urgent need for governments to reconsider how we administer funding for people with disabilities in the education system. That is why the Gonski reform has some potential because, as we know, it will give students a baseline of funding and then there is additional funding for students who come from lower socioeconomic areas or have a disability. Of course, the problem is the amount that has been allocated to WA, but I dearly hope that the Premier can sit down with the Prime Minister and discuss it. Let us not try to play politics with this. That is an easy thing to say, but let us look at how the Gonski reforms or the funding model can be changed to ensure that Western Australia receives what it should receive and that people with special needs in lower socioeconomic areas who may require additional funding receive that funding. As we and I am sure all the educationalists in the house know, the more money that we spend at the earlier end of the lifecycle, the less money we may need to spend further along.

In the past few days in this house we have been hearing about the problems in the corrective services area. If we invest in education, that will, hopefully, have a beneficial effect later in the lifecycle of each individual and for society as a whole. Therefore, we need not to see educational funding as money that is added to the debt of governments; we need to see it as an investment that will have a future economic benefit to society. I mean it is quite obvious. It is quite simple. But for whatever reasons, the governments of both persuasions in many respects do not see it, especially at election time. It is interesting —

Mr P. Papalia: We offered policies.

Dr A.D. BUTI: We offered policies but, unfortunately, our policies will not be implemented because we are not on the Treasury benches. I think it is true, though, that while education is discussed a lot within a parliamentary term, and granted we did have some very worthwhile and exciting education policies during the last election, overall the public does not tune in to education at election time. We need to change that. Somehow we need to change the thinking of the public about the need for us to be fair dinkum about, and give a high priority to, education.

I want to mention one other thing about education. Neerigen Brook Primary School is another one of my primary schools. I am sure the member for Forrestfield would also be aware of this school because it is another feeder school into Cecil Andrews Senior High School. Neerigen Brook Primary School sent a letter basically with a list of proposals or recommendations to both sides of the political spectrum before the election. The school came up with some very worthwhile recommendations that I think need to be considered by the Barnett government. Neerigen Brook Primary School is an independent public school with a general student population of about 400. It caters for about 68 Aboriginal students as well as students from other cultural groups. It made some very worthwhile recommendations, including the need to establish a parenting centre at Neerigen Brook Primary School. Challis Primary School has a centre where parents can attend to learn about education and to learn about being a better parent, and Neerigen Brook in many respects wants to repeat that. Another recommendation seeks —

The Government committing additional funds to disadvantaged schools to employ additional EAs —

That is, education assistants —

as a commitment to social justice and equity so that all students can be included in ways that enable them to achieve their potential.

Also it said that the government should work —

... with West Australian universities to align the rhetoric of enhancing teacher quality with improved policy and practice.

I think the government is also looking at having a greater service hub around schools, as recommended by this school. Some of these schools require additional speech pathologists and greater assistance from the Department for Child Protection and Family Support et cetera. To have them more closely linked into the school system is advisable. There were other recommendations but I am running out of time.

I want to move on to the issue of crime. Of course, at election time law and order becomes a very important issue. I was the only candidate in the Armadale electorate who was committed to having a 24/7 police station in Armadale. The minister is nodding his head. I am talking about the electorate of Armadale. In that electorate I was the only candidate committed to having a 24/7 police station. It is absurd that for a regional centre the size of Armadale, which is growing and which is at the higher end of crime statistics in the south east metropolitan area, our police station closes at 4.00 or 5.00 pm on weekdays and is not open on the weekend. That is absurd. Granted there are some police officers in the police station, but members of the public cannot enter the police station at night time or on weekends. It is absurd that in Armadale, which is a regional centre with some specific crime issues, the general populace cannot attend their local police station. Of course there will be some philosophical arguments that it is better to have the police out on the beat. Of course it is better to have police out on the beat, but there is a problem, as told to me by senior police officers. Cannington is the nearest 24/7 police station to Armadale and the next hub is down in Mandurah, if we look at it on a linear scale. What the police said to me is that because Armadale is quite a distance from Perth, by the time reinforcements from Perth get to Cannington they have other jobs to go to, so they do not even get to Armadale. It is a shame that I do not actually have time to read out an email from a constituent. There was a home invasion and the people there rang up the police. It took the police 25 minutes to get there—25 minutes! I am not blaming the police. As the member for Darling Range and the honourable minister know, we have some great quality police officers in Armadale; however, there are not enough of them. It took 25 minutes to attend a home invasion in Armadale! I would bet anything that if we had a 24/7 police station, which would bring additional police to Armadale—the police have told me that would bring additional police to Armadale—we would not have to wait 25 minutes for them to attend to a home invasion. We can therefore have all these draconian laws and harsh penalties, but what is the point if we do not have the police to enforce them?

MS J.M. FREEMAN (Mirrabooka) [3.55 pm]: I am proud to stand now as the member for Mirrabooka. I congratulate the Speaker for his election and the Acting Speaker who is before us today, the member for Maylands. I wish the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker and other fellow Acting Speakers every success and the very best in their positions. In noting the Speaker's position, I formally recognise the passing of Joan Childs, the first woman to be appointed Speaker of the federal Parliament. She passed away in February this year. Joan Childs was a bit of an inspiration for me as a young woman coming up through politics. She was recognised as a pretty powerful voice in Parliament. Unfortunately, there were lots of claims to fame for Joan; she was pretty amazing. But when she got elected, the media turned up and said to Joan, "Do you mind if we could take a photo of you either doing something around the kitchen in terms of washing dishes"—this is 1974, so not that long ago—"or hanging out some clothes to show, you know, how great it is to have a housewife in Parliament?" Joan said, "Yep; you can have me in front of the clothesline." So, she got a whole bunch of people to go out and put a banner up there that said, "Go Gough" and she stood in front of it with a glass of champagne and got her photo taken! So, go Joan Childs; you were an inspiration to young women like me—not so young now!

I also recognise the Wadjak people of the Noongar nation—their elders past and present—the original owners of the land in the Mirrabooka electorate. I do that particularly so that I can congratulate the Wadjak Northside Aboriginal Community Group and the City of Stirling on the recent agreement to lease the disused Warriapendi preprimary school in Balga for an Aboriginal resource centre. That is just great news for our community. I particularly congratulate the chairman, Len Yarran, and the rest of the group and the committee, including Shane Garlett, who have worked very hard with Balga Senior High School and others in forming the Wadjak Northside Aboriginal Community Group and for working with young people in the Balga and Mirrabooka area.

I want to share with the Parliament Mr Yarran's vision for the centre so that we understand the importance of it. It is to contribute to building a strong community, showcasing Aboriginal culture and coming together to yarn, but also as an avenue for cultural exchange with the whole community in the area. As members would understand, that is really important given the cultural diversity of Mirrabooka and that we have not only a high percentage of Aboriginal people, but also a great percentage of Vietnamese and Macedonian people, people from central Europe, Africans and Australian-born people. As Mr Yarran said in the *Eastern Suburbs Reporter* this week —

... we're planting the seed that will last for a long time, and we want to make sure the seed that we plant is healthy, we know who is going to water it, we know who is going to fertilise it and we know who will pick the fruit off that tree.

"If we do that right, then that tree will feed the community with a lot of fruit and knowledge."

I think that is a great sentiment and a great testament to the work of the Wadjak Northside Aboriginal Community Group.

While this is good news, I also wish to raise my concern with the progress of the stolen wages campaign, which is another issue that is confronting Aboriginal people in the community of Mirrabooka. For example, Doolan Leisha Eatts, who is a very senior elder in the Noongar community and who many of us would have seen in welcome to country ceremonies, is, after some two years and advice that she is eligible for stolen wages, still waiting for the payment. This is particularly concerning given that other people in her community who put in applications around the same time have received the payment. This is despite her repeated requests for that to progress and my requests for that to progress. The question has to be asked whether the minister has committed enough resources to make timely and respectfully timed payments. One must appreciate that such a senior elder not being paid at the same time as others in her community is actually quite a form of disrespect, which needs to be acknowledged in this place. That error of her claim having been accepted without making sure a timely payment was made needs to be corrected.

I congratulate new members on their election and existing members on their re-election. I also send my best wishes and commiserations to those people who were not successful. There were many great candidates in the last election. The former member for Forrestfield was a particular favourite of mine, as everyone will know. We spent many times chortling away up the back of this place. Andrew and I had a similar sense of humour to the point that at one stage I think our colleagues thought it was best to separate us about halfway through the term! With the indulgence of the new member for Balcatta, I note the Labor candidate for Balcatta, Janet Pettigrew. Janet Pettigrew is a friend of mine and a great community member. I want to recognise the fact that after she lost I asked her how she was feeling and she replied, “You know, Janine, I am an actor. I have gone for lots of auditions and sometimes I’m successful and sometimes I’m not. It was a great privilege to be in an audition for the Labor Party, because it holds the principles I hold and they are the principles I share with the community, and that was the privilege of just running.” That is the sort of person that Janet Pettigrew is and I hope she continues to aspire to public office in some form, because she really will make a great contribution if she does that.

I look forward to working with the staff at Parliament again. It is always a pleasure to work with the friendly faces of Parliament in all aspects, right from the gentleman who always seems to clean the toilet just at the time I am going, to the friendly staff in every part of the organisation—catering, up in the library and of course the clerks, who are a joy to work with; I look forward to the next four years.

I thank the community in Mirrabooka, and the broader community that supported me, for support and guidance. I thank the Mirrabooka constituents—the residents who voted for me and those who did not. I really look forward to working with both over the next four years. I look forward to the opportunity of showing those who may not have thought to cast their votes for me for whatever reason that I am worthy of representing them in this place. A gentleman who came to get help from me once said to me “I am never going to vote for you, but can you help me out?” I said yes and we did all of the work and he said at the end, “You know, actually I think I am your biggest fan now.” I hope I get the opportunity to show quite a few more people, because I certainly had a pretty hard campaign run against me and I had quite a few people who decided, after having voted for me in 2008, that they would not do that in 2013. For that I suppose I should congratulate my opposing Liberal candidate for a very hard-fought campaign. As I have told her myself, I look forward to continuing to work with her in her capacity as a community member in the Mirrabooka area and as the director of the Ishar Multicultural Women’s Health Centre over the next four years for the benefit of all of those in the Mirrabooka and broader community. I also thank and congratulate the Greens candidate Mark Cooper. It was a bit funny, really, because he is the dad of my son’s best friend. How strange politics really is!

The electorate of Mirrabooka—an Aboriginal word for southern cross, which differs from my previous seat of Nollamara, an Aboriginal word for kangaroo paw—now includes Balga, an Aboriginal word for grass tree or xanthorrhoea. It also includes part of Ballajura, which I think is also an Aboriginal word, which I should find the meaning of. Nollamara is no longer an area I represent, which is unfortunate because I enjoyed living in the electorate I represented. It is a shame the electorate decided to move from me and not me from the electorate. I thank my neighbourhood for its support and care.

Mr A.J. Simpson: All your stationery had to change.

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: Yes, everything had to change. That is right. In particular, I would like to thank the Nollamara Seniors Club, the Nollamara sportsmen’s club, the Nollamara RSL and all of those at the Nollamara shops who worked with me over the past four years on the Police and Community Together project.

During the past four-year term the area I represented saw a number of vital projects progressed or brought to conclusion. These included the Reid Highway overpass at Alexander Drive and Mirrabooka Avenue, and the establishment of a successful Police and Community Together community policing pilot. This project has

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unfortunately ceased, but I believe it should be available to other communities in the Mirrabooka area and others. I think it has great merit.

The Mirrabooka bus station upgrade was completed during the past four years as was the Mirrabooka revitalisation by the City of Stirling with funding from the state government, which the previous Labor government had committed to; the traffic lights at Beach Road and Butterworth Avenue, Koondoola; the Butterworth Park playground and the many successful community celebrations, including Harmony Days; NAIDOC; the Girradooia Christmas functions that I was involved with; and great projects such as the progress of the Westminster community garden. They have been some of the few events that have occurred in the past four years that I am very proud of.

I would also like to note the successful campaign that I worked on with the businesses and community in Balga to bring back a doctor to what was a new suburb for me in the electorate of Mirrabooka. It seems rather odd to not have a doctor for a period in a suburb such as Balga. I was also very proud to work with the southern Sudanese community to ensure they voted in the historic referendum that resulted in the newest nation on earth.

I thank those who supported my successful campaign for re-election to the seat of Mirrabooka. I thank the many volunteers who assisted with doorknocking. I will go through a few names and if I forget anyone, I do apologise. I thank those who helped with doorknocking, street corner meetings and stuffing letters—people like Jonathan, Kiara, John, Cassie, Lyn, Sabah, Helen and Tomas. I particularly would like to thank those who were booth captains on election day. As we all know, it is probably the hardest job of all during an election. It is a hard ask to ask people to be booth captains. I really appreciate their support and the love and care they gave in being booth captains. Booth captains do an invaluable job coordinating and setting up the booths and my success is a testament to them and all the volunteers who worked on their booths—Stephanie, Ron, Chris, Jodie, Kiara, Carmen, Donata, Cassie, Dai, Hugh, Sulaman, Adrian, Linda, Rob, Neil, John, Alan, Jonathon and Rebecca, I am ever appreciative of your efforts.

To other significant contributors to my campaign, in particular the trust shown in me by Ellie, Keryn, Adrian and Danny—I thank you for your support and guidance throughout the campaign.

Special thanks go to my partner, John, who, despite our personal difficulties, was a rock and a great on-the-ground worker. I could not have done it without him, even though we have gone through our issues this past couple of years. There are many supporters in a campaign, individuals and members of various community organisations and businesses and I thank you all. I would like to thank and recognise my staff, especially as the three have all taken their experience to new members. They are all going to work for the new members elected in Parliament, which says that either I am a great boss who has trained them well or I am a terrible boss and they have left—or something in between. I thank two of them very much for their work over the past four years and the one staff member who was with me for the past year.

While doorknocking and leaflet dropping in the area over the years, I have seen many changes and the impacts they have had on the local community. The biggest change is urban infill and the impact the removal of trees has on the natural environment and on the ambient temperature of a neighbourhood, which in turn leads people to be over-reliant on air conditioning at great expense.

The most distressing thing about the changes to the urban environment through this type of large block development is that it creates dormitory suburbs rather than neighbourhoods. People in dormitory suburbs no longer know their neighbours because they drive in their enclosed cars into their enclosed carports—or overcrowded streets with people parking on the roads and verges—and walk into their enclosed houses and wonder why they have a feeling of despondency with their life in the suburbs. It is my strong belief that a sense of wellbeing comes from a sense of worth and a sense of worth comes from positive human interaction; a friendly hello across the fence can change a person's outlook. But we are creating suburbs in which people think that to achieve happiness they must move to the leafy green suburbs. They are aspiring to purchase wellbeing rather than creating the environment for it in their own neighbourhood.

It is absolutely imperative that we work collaboratively and effectively with local governments by giving them powers under the local government planning laws and through the development assessment panels to ensure that we do not continue to make heat sumps and overcrowded ill-planned areas that were once vibrant neighbourhoods. On the United States Environmental Protection Agency's website are some of the strategies used by some states to mitigate urban heat islands. Those strategies include increasing tree and vegetative cover, installing green roofs called rooftop gardens or echo roofs, installing cool and mainly reflective roofs and using cool pavements.

Also, we should invest in our local bushlands, such as the Bush Forever sites, of which there are a number in the Mirrabooka electorate. In particular, it is imperative to effectively manage public spaces such as the Mirrabooka bushland north of Reid Highway. That has been an issue over the last four years. The Department of Planning

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cannot hand over the land to the Department of Environment and Conservation to manage it because DEC does not have enough money to manage it. Therefore, the Department of Planning, which is not supposed to manage it other than by doing small structural work such as putting up fences, cannot do any significant work. The City of Stirling says that it will not manage the land unless it receives some payment.

[Member's time extended.]

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: Now that you are in the chair, Mr Speaker, you missed me congratulating you on your appointment. I look forward to working with you over the coming four years.

Focus is needed to make the Mirrabooka bushland the jewel of the area that is used sustainably by the community. Flora and fauna is integral to a community. Wallabies reside in the bushland—I cannot remember the other name for them—and there are even kangaroos in other areas, although not as much in the Mirrabooka bushland. We need to create the bushland in a sustainable way, not as a dumping ground or as a four-wheel drive driving course, because that is detrimental to and degrades the appearance of the area.

[Quorum formed.]

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: I was talking about Bush Forever and the importance of ensuring that Bush Forever land is properly managed and resourced. Although the urban planning issues that I have raised are important, they are, however, not the most urgent in Mirrabooka, as that is dominated by the tragedy of many of the people in Mirrabooka not having a permanent roof over their head. We have a housing crisis in Mirrabooka. The 2011 census found that 42.3 people per 10 000 people were homeless. I have a feeling that a lot of those people are in the Mirrabooka area. But homelessness takes on a different context. It is not just sleeping on the streets; it is sleeping in and overcrowding other people's accommodation, sleeping in cars, and constantly trying to get accommodation through the Department for Child Protection and Family Support and other agencies. The Western Australian Council of Social Service did an opinion piece on 11 March. It referred to social services turning away about 30 per cent of clients. This is very much stressing the client services in the Mirrabooka area. The frustration of the community workers is palpable. They meet regularly to try to find solutions when there just are no solutions, because there are not enough houses to accommodate the people in need. With Perth recording a 22 per cent increase in private rental prices over the past year and with a median income in Mirrabooka of just above the minimum wage, Mirrabooka residents are struggling to meet the high rents of the area. Average rents have risen by about 85 per cent in the decade from 2000 to 2010 compared with an increase of about 35 per cent in wages between November 2000 and November 2010. Rents in Mirrabooka sit around the Perth median of \$470 per week. With vacancy rates below 1.2 per cent and a population growth of around 3.4 per cent, this puts vulnerable communities at the cutting edge of the housing crisis and in increasing need of public housing.

My staff and I and many community sector workers are dealing with these vulnerable people searching for appropriate and affordable rentals every week, if not every day. For example, an Iraqi man who was accepted by Australia as a refugee after he had spent some time living in Italy and working at the Vatican arrived in Australia with his family of five. He was housed in a settlement service house and recently one of our good community agencies that works in settlement had to issue him with an eviction notice. The service did not want to issue him with an eviction notice, but it needed the house to fulfil its contract for settlement. Despite numerous applications for this man and his five children—it is not as though he did not have assistance to do so—it took six months to find him a property to live in. That is just one story.

In another story, two Afghani women came to see me a week or so ago. They share the care of a son, because they shared a husband. They came to Australia on a woman-at-risk visa. They are subletting a room in a house with a community member who is a male shift worker, so, culturally, it is not the most appropriate thing, but they would not have a house otherwise. They cannot make a noise if he is sleeping during the day but are often disturbed when he entertains late at night. Their son is now 16 years of age and he wants to study but he is finding it difficult. They have no capacity to gain a private rental given their English language skills, but they have been told by the Department of Housing that they are not eligible for priority housing.

In another story, an Australian-born mother of two daughters has to live with her mother and father while dealing with one of her daughter's mental illness and suicidal ideation. Much of these issues have been created by the housing situation because this woman has to live with her parents, who question their granddaughter's health and behaviour on an ongoing basis. Despite numerous applications, which she showed me, to enter the private rental market, and despite having a part-time job to supplement her income, she has had no success in accessing urgently needed housing. These are just a few of the people who are suffering because of the Western Australian housing crisis.

I commend the Edmund Rice Centre for establishing a housing office, and my hat goes off to Piok and Mandy for the tireless work they do to identify private rentals for those in dire need. They go to home opens and help

people with their rental applications so that people who are vulnerable can find housing. Unfortunately, they are often gazumped; and I will go to gazumping a bit later, because we need to address that as a consumer protection issue.

As members may appreciate, because the Mirrabooka electorate is very culturally diverse, many newly arrived Australians, including humanitarian entrants, choose to live in the area. However, as a recent Senate inquiry established, the insecure nature of their tenancy means that they are likely to move more than twice in four and a half years, in contrast with one move in seven years for the general community. This has a profound effect on the settlement outcomes for families, with the stress impacting on the health, education and English language skills of the entrants and their children. One worker recently commented to me that they cannot concentrate on learning English because they are worried about housing themselves and their family; so, no English, no job; no job, no capacity to pay high rents; the cycle goes on.

Currently, the Department of Housing manages 36 749 rental properties. It is, however, questionable what percentage of these sit vacant for too long waiting for maintenance and reallocation. As of November 2012 there were 19 697 applicants on the waiting list, and despite the questionable decrease from a waiting list of over 24 000 in June 2012, we have seen waiting times increase beyond the eight-year wait at that time. It is my view that the decrease from 24 000 to 19 000 was because they took many people off the list in a manner that I do not think was particularly ethical. Even though they were able to decrease the numbers on the waiting list, the waiting time has increased. The priority housing list sat at 3 174 in November 2012, with waiting times in 2007–08 being just over one year. This was hardly acceptable for priority housing, but in December 2012 it increased to two and a half years! Even when I talk to a constituent, and I believe they qualify for priority housing and I can get them on the priority waiting list, I have to say to them that it will not solve their housing crisis, because they will still have to wait for two and a half years. This housing crisis has only got worse since the eighth report of the Community Development and Justice Standing Committee in the thirty-eighth Parliament, “A Fading Dream – Affordable Housing in Western Australia”. The government did not fully accept any of the recommendations and only partly accepted some, so I call on the government to relook at that report and the housing issues in the community. It is imperative that the minister and this government address the urgent need in our community. The minister should begin by making clear what he will do with the Mirrabooka land south of Reid Highway, being lots 60 and 61 Milldale Way. The minister’s silence about that land has been deafening and the community needs to know what will be happening with that land.

Dr K.D. Hames: Are you talking about Health land?

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: I think the minister is going to lose that; is he not?

Dr K.D. Hames interjected.

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: I have only three minutes, minister.

The silence has been deafening and the community needs to know what is occurring. Other action needs to be taken to address gazumping to gain available rentals. Gazumping is when the prospective tenant offers cash incentives to the owner or property manager to gain the house over other applicants. We need to ensure that rental and consumer laws prevent this. We need to investigate, with local government and communities, innovative housing developments, such as using available airspace; for example, building over council car parks, retaining the car park and delivering housing above it. We need to ensure that building and planning laws can enable such innovations. We need to further pursue a regional focus, where there is available housing, on the settlement of newly arrived Australians.

I would like to congratulate the enthusiasm of and assistance given by Paul Kyaw from Multicultural Services WA and Chris Ward of the Edmund Rice Centre, who have worked on resettling Burmese and Twa communities in the Katanning region. We need to work on effective rooming house and shared accommodation legislation to ensure that people who are forced to live in shared accommodation because of the current housing crisis are protected. The government needs to deliver on its commitment to enable granny flats to be used for broader rentals.

Talking of government commitments, it is important that the government deliver on its election commitment for transport into Mirrabooka and deliver the Metro Area Express in the time frames promised; that is, commenced by 2016 and completed by 2018. The residents of the area were excited by the Metronet plan offered by the Labor opposition. Although I welcome any effective transport in the Mirrabooka area, I believe there is still a strong case for heavy rail along Reid Highway connecting the Joondalup line with Midland. I will continue to argue strongly for this over the next four years.

In terms of law and order, which was raised by the member for Armadale, I too have received many emails that show that the waiting times for a police response are unacceptably high. People who are fearful of things that

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Mr Ian Blayney; Mr Peter Watson; Dr Tony Buti; Ms Janine Freeman

have happened in their home are waiting for hours, if not until the next day, for a police response because they have been deemed as not a priority.

I commend the City of Wanneroo for its work so far in looking at the changes that are needed in the Koondoola area, particularly the Koondoola shops.

In closing, I point out that we need to work on truancy. Truancy is a large issue in Mirrabooka. Education is very important but delivery of education is no good unless kids are in schools. The failure to have truancy officers has been to our detriment.

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Mr J.H.D. Day (Leader of the House)**.