

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITIES — HOMELESSNESS

Statement by Minister for Community Services

MS S.F. MCGURK (Fremantle — Minister for Community Services) [9.13 am]: I rise today to update the house on the state government's important work in making inroads towards ending homelessness. Last week, I launched a directions paper, developed by the Department of Communities under the auspices of the supporting communities forum. The paper synthesises the work done to date, focuses community effort, and starts to map the path forward to creating long-lasting change. It provides an opportunity to consult widely on the key strategic directions to addressing homelessness in Western Australia. Importantly, it allows us to do so through an informed position. We are trialling new ways to work with the supporting communities forum and service providers to address the issue, and consulting directly with communities around the state. Fourteen consultations have already occurred from Kununurra to Kalgoorlie, and here in Perth. Feedback sought from the community through online surveys generated over 275 responses. We also received direct feedback. We are considering evidence through specialised research from leading academics, and working constructively alongside the efforts of WA Alliance to End Homelessness and multiple local governments. Most importantly, we are working from an informed position by ensuring that we hear the voices and needs of those with lived experience.

The directions paper provides future directions, focus areas and potential actions, and seeks feedback prior to the finalisation of the state homelessness strategy. I would like to thank the countless people who have been involved in this work to date. I know that homelessness is an area that several members in this chamber have an interest in. I would encourage all of them to join the government in promoting this work within their communities because only by working collaboratively will we start to realise outcomes for vulnerable citizens.