

MANNING BUS SERVICES

Grievance

MR J.E. McGRATH (South Perth) [9.26 am]: My grievance today is to the Minister for Transport about bus routes in my electorate. The minister knows my electorate very well; she has occasionally come over to Johnny's Quality Fish Bar in Como. But this is about the southern tip of my electorate: Salter Point, Manning and a little of Como. There are two bus routes there, routes 30 and 31. In South Perth we believe we are very well treated with bus transport. We have a great bus service and it is very accessible to people. In Manning, there has been a change recently, as the minister might be aware, with the development of what has been described as the Manning hub. Manning hub is a project developed by the City of South Perth after it sold the triangle of land near Mends Street, which will be developed into high-rise residential and commercial buildings. With nearly half of those funds, the city built Manning hub in Manning at the back of the Welwyn Avenue shops. It is a fantastic development. I was involved in the Manning Rippers Football Club getting a new facility and the oval being re-laid; it is a great facility for the community. The hub includes Manning Library, a community hall, the Manning Child Health Clinic, Moorditj Keila Aboriginal group headquarters and, as I said, the sporting club rooms for the Manning Rippers Football Club. It is a famous football club that produced such champions as Brian Peake, Rob Wiley and Peter Spencer, and another great player Mark McClure, who played for Carlton, also played juniors at Manning. It is a little trivia, but very important to the people of Manning. We have this development, but also in December last year, the Metro Central joint development assessment panel approved an application for a four storey mixed-use development between that community hub and the shops at the front at Welwyn Avenue. That development comprises a mix of active commercial land use on the ground floor including restaurant, cafe, retail and office tenancies and 28 residential apartments at the upper level. All those things will support the surrounding commercial businesses and community services. It is really futuristic stuff for the people of Manning, who are on the southern extreme of my electorate. One matter that some constituents have raised with me is that neither the 30 nor the 31 bus routes run past the Welwyn Avenue shops. My research officer, Daryl Pranata, and I drove around the other day and followed the 30 and 31 bus routes to see how they could be realigned or changed. I must admit that I could not come up with a solution. However, I am here today to ask the Minister for Transport whether she could get the Public Transport Authority to look at that. The facility has a library and a health centre, places where people in the community want to visit or travel to, so having a bus that runs past the Welwyn Avenue shops or within fairly close proximity needs to be looked at.

I will provide some statistics about my electorate. As of 30 June last year, the population in Manning was 4 100; in Salter Point, which some people call the dress circle, it was 3 000; and in Como, where I live—I cannot make it to the dress circle yet!—it was 15 000.

Ms R. Saffioti: Are you on the old super scheme?

Mr J.E. McGRATH: No.

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup: That is why.

Ms R. Saffioti: Otherwise you could have made it!

Mr J.E. McGRATH: Some of our members got rid of the old super scheme.

Some other statistics that are interesting, but a little worrying for me, according to the latest census on population and housing in South Perth, are as follows: 11.3 per cent of the city's residents are empty-nesters and retirees, aged 60 to 69, compared with 9.7 per cent in greater Perth. We have more in that category than does greater Perth overall. Further, 7.8 per cent of residents in South Perth are seniors aged 70 to 84, compared with 7.5 per cent in greater Perth and 2.7 per cent are elderly, aged between 85 and above—one would not think they would be driving cars but would need to catch buses—compared with 1.8 per cent in greater Perth. Between 2011 and 2016, the population of the City of South Perth increased by three per cent. The empty-nesters or retirees and the seniors are in the top three categories of the largest changes in the age structure in the city between 2011 and 2016. The empty-nesters and retirees have increased by 21 per cent. Seniors have increased by 16 per cent and, additionally, the proportion of elderly people experienced a three per cent increase. South Perth must be a good place to live because people keep living longer. These numbers indicate also that the City of South Perth has a greater proportion of older people than the overall greater Perth population.

That is a bit of a snapshot for the minister. Bus routes 30 and 31 are fantastic services. One of the buses runs past Curtin University, enabling people to access the university or the big shopping centre at Karawara. With the fantastic development at the Manning hub that the local people have been supportive of, and with the proposed changes to that hub, a lot more people will want to travel to and from there. I could have put this in a letter to the minister, but I thought it would be better to raise the matter today so that I could explain to her in seven minutes roughly what the story is. I am not saying that I have the answer to this matter, but the experts in the PTA might be able to have a look at it on behalf of those people.

MS R. SAFFIOTI (West Swan — Minister for Transport) [9.34 am]: I thank the member for South Perth for the grievance. Sometimes it is better to have the conversation in this place. I warn the member for South Perth that following buses through communities is not a good thing. Luckily he was not caught by security! He should not make a habit of following buses throughout the community in his car.

Mr J.E. McGrath: I followed the route, not the bus.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: That is better. Luckily he was not arrested by security!

I have had a quick look at the new Manning hub and it is pretty impressive. Obviously I am not too familiar with it, but the creation of this new centre and, as the member outlined, more people living in that proximity raises a good question: can we do something with the bus routes? I had a quick look at the bus routes while the member was speaking to see their proximity to the area the member referred to. They are in proximity; however, I will ask the PTA to investigate whether it can make any changes and what would be the impact. Of course, bus kilometres, whether the roads are wide enough, where the bus stops are located and the style of the bus shelters must be considered. Where the bus stops is always an interesting debate in the community; in particular, people often do not like them in front of their homes.

Mr J.E. McGrath: One statistic I did not have was the patronage at each stop.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Yes, that is what the PTA will be able to look at. I noticed that bus route 31, I think it was, ran on a parallel street.

Mr J.E. McGrath: It is a fair walk through.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Yes, but potentially there could be a reroute into that centre. I will ask the PTA about that. In its notes it said it was keen to look at it and I will work with the PTA on that. Should any decisions be made on the relocation of bus stops, for example, we will work with the local council. It looks like a very good area. Have they named anything in the centre after the member for South Perth?

Mr J.E. McGrath: Not in Manning, no. We are working on it!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Honestly, they should. If we reroute this bus route, I will erect a plaque.

Mr S.K. L'Estrange: The last member got a ferry named after him.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: He did, actually.

Mr S.K. L'Estrange: There you go—*The John McGrath!*

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: We are trying to get a new ferry too!

Mr J.E. McGrath: That would be overkill.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Does the member think so? I am sure that if we reroute that bus route, we will be able to unveil a plaque for the member.

More generally—I know the member is interested in this—we met with the city recently to continue discussion on the train station. I met with the city in the past two or three weeks about some of the wider planning issues in that area, of which the member is aware, and also about the station. Preliminary studies have been done and they handed us a copy of that. It will take a lot of good community consultation.

Mr J.E. McGrath: While you are on your feet, could you comment on how you think the Mends Street development is going? There is a fair bit happening.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: There is a fair bit happening. I am very keen to work with the council to keep progressing that and some other developments with new cafes as well, further towards the Narrows Bridge, to activate that foreshore, which is a beautiful part of the world. I know that some owners have objections, as the member would be aware, but it is a beautiful part of the world and it will encourage more people down there who will then access the small businesses, which is very important in that area.

Mr J.E. McGrath: We will pay for the toilets, too.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: You are very good at paying for toilets! The western suburbs do not want us to interfere in their planning powers but they want us to take over their toilets.

Mr K.M. O'Donnell: An arm around your shoulder, minister.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: That was a bit of a debacle.

They have had some discussions. Members would be aware that the Metronet team is pretty busy at the moment trying to get all of these projects into construction.

Mr J.E. McGrath: Pardon my interjection, but while you are on the subject of Metronet, I saw in a document that the South Perth train station was in Metronet. Is it part of the same system?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: It is part of the considerations. We will give it to them to look at to develop a case for it. The South Perth option may be one for which we do some preliminary work but then maybe go out to the market to see what the market says on how it would build it. We want to do a lot of design up-front. We would let the market tell us. We know where the station would be. A lot of community consultation would need to happen in that area.

Mr P.A. Katsambanis: It would be perfect to be named after the member for South Perth—McGrath station.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Of course. If the member gets the local community to support it and some of the associated issues, I will name it after him!

We are working with the City of South Perth. I have met with it on a number of occasions. It is all going well, but I will ask the Public Transport Authority to look at this particular matter.

Mr J.E. McGrath: Now that I have the minister on her feet, because I do not often get the minister for seven minutes, I will go on to another matter that was raised with me the other day. The owner of the Windsor Hotel tried to get a bus to ferry people from the hotel to the footy, but was not allowed to take the bus into the stadium precinct to drop them off because of the restrictions around the ground. He asked if it would be possible to run a bus to Canning Highway to catch the buses that run through there or whether someone running a business like that could get access to drop off people at the stadium.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: They probably can on the other side of Matagarup Bridge.

Mr J.E. McGrath: On the other side?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Yes. While I am on my feet and having a lovely chat, I have the PTA reviewing all the transport to and from Optus Stadium over the season with the aim of making some potential changes. Drop-offs and pick-ups are a big issue in particular because many people are using Orrong Road and Graham Farmer Freeway. They park on the Graham Farmer Freeway side and it is quite dangerous.

Mr J.E. McGrath: The cabs have a big issue getting in after the game.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The cabs are doing okay, but we may look at the other side of Matagarup Bridge as a potential drop-off point. We are separating, in a sense, a lot of the people who flow through to the normal buses.