

ESTIMATES OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE

Consideration of Tabled Papers

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

HON STEPHEN DAWSON (Mining and Pastoral) [5.12 pm]: When I spoke on this motion earlier, I was saying what a pleasure it was to host Ms Jennifer Campeau in my electorate last week. I want to put on record my thanks to BHP Nelson Point and Craig Wainwright and Chris Cottier. We also had the opportunity to visit the Spinifex Hill art gallery, and Jennifer and I got to talk to some of the artists and watch them at work. We also visited the town of Port Hedland. It was an absolute pleasure to have Jennifer attend, and it is also great to have the other parliamentarians from Saskatchewan visiting us here.

Over the last few weeks since we last sat, I have been busy in my electorate. I am very pleased to say that Hon Sue Ellery, MLC, came to visit my electorate and we spent a couple of days travelling throughout the electorate.

Hon Sue Ellery: What happens on the road stays on the road!

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Indeed; what happens on the road stays on the road! However, I would like to put on the record my thanks to some of the schools that we visited during those two days. We had the pleasure of visiting St Luke's College in Karratha and spent some time with the principal, Tom Kavanagh, and his wonderful staff. We visited Karratha Primary School and spoke to the principal, Mark Smyth, and some of the staff at that school. I want to pay tribute to Mr Smyth. He has been a long-time principal at that school, and I believe he will be retiring later this year. He does a tremendous job. It is a great school, and it is well resourced—or it had been well resourced at that time. So thank you, Mr Smyth.

We also visited Roebourne District High School and had the pleasure of spending some time with the principal, Erica Prosser, who had previously been at Tennant Creek. Erica is a wonderful woman and she is doing tremendous work—amazing work, in fact—with the children at Roebourne, and we were very pleased to chat to Erica. We also spent some time with the principal of St Cecilia's Catholic Primary School in Port Hedland. The principal of that school is Peter Allen—not the same Peter Allen as the singer, but a character nonetheless. I put on the record my thanks to him. We also visited Cassia Primary School. The principal of that school, Janine Kinniment, is an award-winning principal. Her school has a range of students, including some children with disabilities. Janine and her staff are doing a great job. We had the pleasure of sitting through one of the classes and watching the students sing the times table. I have to say that every student enjoyed it. We can see the benefits from the explicit teaching and learning that they do at that school, so I want to acknowledge Janine and her wonderful staff at that school. We also visited Hedland Senior High School and the principal, John Burke, who is another principal doing an amazing job. There is a range of students at that school, and it is a great school. I also want to say thank you to John. It was great to have Sue with me when I visited those towns, so thank you, Hon Sue Ellery.

Since that time, I have visited a number of other schools in my electorate. I visited Sacred Heart School in Beagle Bay and spent some time with Lyla Forte. I also spoke to a number of people in the Beagle Bay community. There are a range of issues in that community, some of which I have asked about in questions to ministers in this chamber. Members would be aware that there had been an issue with asbestos in a derelict building on the edge of the school. Minister Collier, having been asked a question about the removal of this building from the community, acted upon it straightaway and instructed his department to ensure that the removal of that building took place. I have to say, though, that it is very unfortunate the department started to remove the asbestos only late last week, three weeks before the end of term. That has caused a bit of angst in the community, because obviously this building is on the edge of the school grounds, and a number of parents have unfortunately decided to not send their children to school while this demolition takes place. That is very sad, because during the wet season the students cannot get to school on the school bus because the roads are closed. So some of these students have already missed school earlier this year for two weeks, and now they have to miss school again because the department has chosen to remove this asbestos building during the school term. I have written to the minister and have phoned his office to see whether he will ask his department to put a hold on this removal for three more weeks so that these children will not miss out on school for any longer than they need to.

The issue of road access to that school is very important. As I said, for two weeks earlier this year students could not get to the school because the roads were closed. This happens every year. It is about time the state government acted on this issue. It is very unfortunate that the state government did not choose to spend some of the money in this state budget to fix those roads. I will certainly be talking about this issue again, because the parents of students who live in Middle Lagoon, Munget, Meem, Bells Point, Goombargin and Imbalgun deserve to be able to send their children to school every day of the school year and not just at certain times of the year.

So I hope the state government and the minister are listening to this and will do everything in their power to ensure that those roads are fixed.

I also had the pleasure of visiting Yandeyarra Remote Community School and to chat with the principal of that school, Dave Fitzpatrick. Dave is formerly from Fitzroy Crossing, and he is a wonderful bloke. He is very passionate about his school. I got to spend some time with some of the students at that school. A few months ago, I had the pleasure of greeting some students from South Hedland Primary School who were being hosted at Parliament House and given a tour of the Parliament. Three of the students at Yandeyarra Remote Community School were part of that tour group, so it was my pleasure to see those students again. Those three students were given the opportunity of visiting the Parliament because of their attendance rates at that school. It is a great thing that if students attend every day, the school recognises that and those children benefit from it. Those children benefit, but also other children benefit because they can see that attending school every day of the year is a great thing, and that if they do attend school every day of the year, there might be some sort of reward at the end of it. That is a really good way of ensuring that kids go to school. I congratulate Dave and his small staff at that school.

I also got to spend some time a few weeks ago with Paul Bridge, the principal of the Derby District High School. Mr Bridge runs a fabulous school and has great staff. The Clontarf Foundation is involved with the school and there are some fabulous teachers doing a wide range of extracurricular work with children to ensure that they get a quality education. All the principals that I have mentioned do a wonderful job and deserve the Parliament's recognition. However, I have to say that, since I visited those schools, the Barnett government's attacks on the education system have come to the fore. I am appalled to think of some of the quality educational services and teaching staff that may well be lost at those schools as a result of the Barnett government's cuts; I will speak more about that issue later.

I was shocked to hear today that teachers at the Wangkatjunka Remote Community School had been advised that they would lose Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education officers as a result of these cuts; the school will also lose an education assistant. I am appalled to think that there will be staff cuts at a school like this. Teachers at schools in remote areas do not just teach; they have an exceptional workload. At some schools they even have to pick up the slack if the cleaners do not arrive, and they are the lifeblood of the community in many respects. They ensure that children have extracurricular activities, such as sporting events after school and on the weekends. Schools like this do a tremendous job in educating young Aboriginal people, and to hear that such a school is going to lose its staff really concerns me. The Wangkatjunka Remote Community School will also have its canteen staff cut. For a school that uses food as an attendance incentive, to be told that it will no longer have canteen staff is really of concern. There is a breakfast program for kids at this school, and they are fed at lunchtime. Were it not for some of these initiatives, these children would not attend school every day and they would not be getting the same access to quality education as children in the metropolitan area. I am appalled at the Barnett government's education cuts. These schools do a tremendous job and it really concerns me that vital staff will be lost as a result of the Barnett government's education cuts.

The Minister for Education has referred to the Teese report; the reality is that the Teese report has been sitting around for a long time, but the minister chose to bring it into the Parliament only recently. Although he said that some of these changes were recommended by the Teese report, members on this side have pointed out that the author of that report is also concerned about cuts to the education system resulting from the Barnett government's recent state budget. It concerns me that there will be a 30 per cent cut to the school support program resource allocation; I am concerned about the long service leave liability levy. I am concerned about things like postage. Every job that a school performs, everything in the operational manual, will be cut as a result of this budget. I am concerned about the reduction in level 3 teachers; I am concerned about the reduction in FTE allocation to the Intensive English Centres. Students in remote areas of Western Australia face a lot more challenges than do students in the metropolitan area, and these cuts will really have an impact on children in schools all around regional and remote Western Australia.

I refer to an article that appeared in *The West Australian* of 28 August by Bethany Hiatt, the education editor, titled "Fear schools will struggle with reforms". The article reads, in part —

The architect of the school funding model the State Government will adopt in 2015 has raised concerns that schools would struggle to introduce the planned reforms if jobs and resources were slashed at the same time.

The reality is that jobs and resources are being slashed. The minister is being disingenuous when he says that no jobs will go; yes, jobs are going, and it is appalling. The article continues —

Professor Teese yesterday questioned whether schools would be able to switch to a new funding model if resources were cut.

“The question I’ve got is whether introducing these savings measures at the same time as bringing in a substantial change in the funding formula is a good idea,” he said.

“It’s strange to see this happening at a time when nationally both major parties are committed to a substantial increase in school funding.”

The Leader of the Opposition is right to point out that not one person, other than the minister, thinks that these cuts are good and are beneficial to the education system. That really concerns me.

While I am on the subject of schools, I recently had an opportunity to catch up with the Catholic Education Office to discuss funding of the Ngalangangpum School in Warmun. Some members may be aware that in March 2011, the township of Warmun experienced a devastating flood that resulted in the entire community being evacuated and the school being largely destroyed. The school is an integral part of that community, and the staff at that school—again, wonderful staff—played a vital role in the process of evacuation. For a number of months afterwards, the students were accommodated in Kununurra, where they attended St Joseph’s Catholic Primary School, and some of the senior students went to Kununurra District High School. A temporary school has been established at the site of the old school in Warmun, and students returned there at the commencement of term 3 in 2011. The Warmun community expressed a desire to ensure that the school was rebuilt in that community and re-established as a Catholic school; the Catholic education system, as the sole provider of education in that community, wants to stay there. However, given that the site is prone to flooding, the school will obviously need to be moved to a different location. The school and the Catholic Education Office have worked on a plan to ensure that the construction of a new, permanent school will be on an elevated site; the cost of that construction is estimated at \$11 million. However, the amount received from the insurance company after the school was destroyed was only approximately \$7 million, so there is a shortfall of approximately \$4 million for that community to have a full-time, permanent quality school built on an elevated site.

The current enrolment at the Warmun school is about eight students in kindergarten and about 90 students in preprimary. For those of my colleagues from the metropolitan area who have never been to Warmun, it is located about halfway between Halls Creek and Kununurra, and it is a wonderful community, well known for its art; but, again, like a lot of communities in the north west, it struggles with school attendance rates. Again, the teachers at the school do a tremendous job, and the community really does need a permanent school. The Minister for Education may or may not be aware that I have written to him over the past two weeks, asking him to do his best to ensure that this school gets the funding it needs and deserves —

Hon Peter Collier: In Warmun?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: The Ngalangangpum School.

I have written to the Minister for Education to ensure that the school gets this money. While we are talking about the budget, a worthy use of state revenue would be to ensure this school is rebuilt to a permanent standard to ensure that the children in that community have a quality education.

I have previously stood in this place and raised the issue of students whose families are on 457 visas. Members would be aware, given that I have asked some questions of the minister and have spoken on this issue, of the Barnett government’s plan to charge 457 visa families a \$4 000 fee for their children to attend state schools. According to research I have done, with some assistance from the group representing 457 visa holders in Western Australia, I am aware that approximately 8 600 students in Western Australian schools come from families on 457 visas. Not all these families earn \$150 000 working in the mines. As members around the chamber would be aware, having had contact with families affected by this issue, some families earn \$50 000, and they have four children. As at 1 January next year, from what we know so far, they will have to pay \$4 000 per student to attend a state school. I am appalled by this. I believe that education should be free to children. Everybody deserves the right to quality education, as they do to shelter. They are fundamental things that a state government should provide. I am shocked that the government would attack this community, given that the Minister for Education, in a previous role, visited countries such as Ireland and pleaded with citizens to come to Western Australia to pick up the slack; to fill the jobs that we needed to fill to ensure the Western Australian economy ticked over. Having got those people to come to this state, we are now attacking those families. We are making them pay \$4 000 per child to send them to school.

From conversations I have had with people in the Catholic education system, it costs approximately \$1 500 a year to educate a student in a Catholic school. If I were a conspiracy theorist, I would ask: What are we trying to do? Are we trying to kick these kids out of state schools and send them to the Catholic system, or are we trying to send these people back to their own countries? The pressure of finding \$4 000 per student to send children to school will cause some families to reach breaking point. Families are already stressed. I have said previously that a family making a decision to move to this state goes through an enormous amount of upheaval before deciding to make the move. It is a real challenge. They leave their families behind. They sell their houses, if they can.

Some families affected by this policy are still paying a mortgage in Ireland or in England because the global financial crisis in those countries has dropped the price of houses. They have no equity in their house; they have to keep paying the mortgage to ensure they have something they have worked for for a very long time. This \$4 000 fee is a real attack on these families.

It would perhaps be fair for a government to say, “Okay, from 1 January next year, any family coming to this state on 457 visas will have to pay a \$4 000 fee.” I would not agree with it, but if that were the policy, if that was what the government decided, at least people in other countries—whether it be the Philippines, India, the United States of America or the United Kingdom—could say, “Right; we will have to pay \$4 000 per child to send our children to school. We can factor that in. Yes, we can afford it; no, we can’t. We won’t go to Western Australia; we will go somewhere else.” Perhaps they will go to Saskatchewan. Having spent some time with the Saskatchewan delegation, I am aware they are going through some of the same issues we are in Western Australia. They are going through a boom. Companies like BHP Billiton operate in that province. It too is struggling to get a labour force to take up jobs there. I am pleased to say that the Saskatchewan government has no plans to slug families of workers coming to that province to help its local economy. It really concerns me that we are going to bring this policy in but that it has not been thought through. The Premier said a few weeks ago that we would know the policy in a week’s time. We do not. The government has dragged its feet on this one. It has ruled out means testing families. The government will not even say, “If you’re on \$50 000 a year, we recognise you’re not going to be able to pay \$4 000 per child for your children to attend school; therefore, we won’t charge you the fee.” It has ruled that out. The government has ruled out bringing the fee in only for new families who have not got here yet. I think it is unfair. I am very concerned that this state government is discriminating against a group of people who have come to this state to help us out, to ensure that our economy keeps ticking over.

A couple of other issues I want to take the opportunity to raise tonight concern the royalties for regions policy and the country local government fund. I, too, am very concerned about these issues. I am very concerned that the Barnett–Grylls government has slashed the country local government fund from what was a \$350 million fund to only \$97 million over the next few years. It is really attacking country people. Some regional local governments have relied on this funding to ensure they can provide quality services to their communities. This slash and burn of the country local government fund will have a great impact on regional communities. Hon Dave Grills would know—he would have seen press releases from the Shire of Esperance expressing concern about the government’s short-sighted attack on the country local government fund. This decision will starve small local councils. Maybe this is amalgamation by stealth—if we starve local governments of funds, they will have to amalgamate. It is appalling. The state government went to the March election making no mention of its plan to slash this fund; yet afterwards it was slashed. This decision will leave many rural communities high and dry.

Hon Dave Grills interjected.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I said that this fund is important and that I support the royalties for regions program. It has done some good stuff in regional Western Australia. Hand on heart, I am very happy to acknowledge this policy. It was a great brainchild of the National Party, but the reality is that it has been slashed. Its city cousins in the Liberal Party have slashed it. Regional people are again getting it in the neck. It is outrageous. It would not do this to metro councils—attack, attack, attack! Regional Western Australia again faces appalling attacks. Just when regional areas were beginning to benefit again, they are getting it in the neck. They will lose vital funding, and it is appalling.

Hon Helen Morton interjected.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I am not going to take an interjection from the Minister for Mental Health because she is not a regional member of Western Australia.

Hon Helen Morton interjected.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (Hon Alanna Clohesy): Order! Hon Stephen Dawson has the call.

Hon Helen Morton interjected.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Are you giving the call to somebody else, Madam Deputy President?

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: No. I gave the call to you, Hon Stephen Dawson.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Thank you; I appreciate it. I did not quite hear you over the interjections from the Minister for Mental Health.

Hon Helen Morton interjected.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Just to be clear: Hon Stephen Dawson has the call; not the Minister for Mental Health.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I am actually pleased that the Minister for Mental Health pointed out that she recently visited Meekatharra. She has visited Geraldton too.

Hon Helen Morton interjected.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I have to point out that she has not visited Carnarvon in the last few weeks. She certainly has not visited Carnarvon to deal with the issue of suicide, to ensure that that community gets funding for the Gascoyne community action plan. The minister has not visited Carnarvon, has not fixed this issue and has not dealt with the appalling rates of suicide in that community. I asked a question a few weeks ago on this matter and I did not like the answer that the minister gave. That is fine; it is the minister's prerogative to give me whatever answer she wants. But I raised this issue and the importance of this issue to the Carnarvon community. If the minister, or her office, were doing their work, they would have seen an article in the last *Northern Guardian* newspaper about this issue. If I was the minister—bear in mind it might be a long time before I am a minister, so I am not getting ahead of myself—and I had a member of Parliament raise these issues with me, ask me a question in Parliament, raise it in the media and highlight the important issue of youth suicide or indeed, suicide in the community, I would act on it. I would go visit the community. I would fix the problem. Minister, we have not seen any action on this issue in our community. It is not too late and I hope the minister does listen, does heed the call and does fix this issue for the Gascoyne region. I know the minister would agree with me: the issue of suicide and youth suicide in regional areas is a huge concern. Whatever party we are from, we all understand that. I hope that in this instance the minister fixes the issue and ensures that the Gascoyne community action plan is acted upon.

Hon Helen Morton: It is Suicide Prevention Day today, so the member may like to add that as well.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I appreciate that interjection, but it actually kind of appals me because today was a perfect day for the minister to address this issue in Carnarvon. But did she? No. Is the minister interjecting now to say she will fix it? No. Again, the Carnarvon community will miss out. I hope the minister reconsiders and she seeks to sort out and address this issue in Carnarvon.

I have a number of other concerns with the state budget, aside from the slashing of the \$350 million country local government fund and aside from the fact that this will starve local councils. Yes, some good policies and some good initiatives were funded in the state budget, but a lot of them have not been funded. A lot of them have been put off. Things like the North West Health Initiative that the Liberal Party brought to the election worth \$161 million; all we see in this year's state budget is \$1 million. The government is not addressing this and it is not keeping its promises. I am concerned, though, that the National Party has been silent, particularly on the country local government fund. Royalties for regions is a good policy and has been a good policy, yet royalties for regions has been gutted in this budget. There has been silence from some National members. At least one National Party member is in the house to listen to my concerns and complaints, because National Party members have been silent thus far. They have not issued a word, not one word, against the government's attacks and slashing and burning of funding schemes and programs like the country local government fund. I am very, very concerned.

Hon Jim Chown: Didn't you hear the election results on Saturday? Haven't you noticed the decline in the Labor vote?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Madam Acting President, if other speakers want to take the call, I welcome them seeking the call when I am not on my feet. But I am on my feet for another few minutes.

Hon Jim Chown: Give him an extension!

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Thank you, the member is enjoying himself so much!

Hon Jim Chown: Aren't you going to take my interjection?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: No, I am not taking the interjection! The reality is that I am talking about the state. I am talking about you guys slashing and burning and attacking education staff and attacking every single regional remote Western Australian community. That is my point tonight. Leave the federal election aside. We have ample opportunities in this Parliament to talk about federal issues. In fact, Hon Liz Behjat has a motion on the books to talk about the federal sphere. The federal election is over and I am pleased it is over.

Several members interjected.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Absolutely! I am sure that we all agree that the federal election is over. I am glad it is over mostly because it puts pressure back on the other side of the house, and we will have clear air and the community will see that those opposite can no longer blame the federal government of whatever colour. The

buck stops with them. They run the state budget! They are the ones who are attacking the education system. They are the ones who are slashing education assistants. They are the ones not building all the country roads that should be built. They are the ones attacking the country local government fund. It is not the federal Labor Party, not the federal Liberal party; it is them. Those people on the other side of the house need to face the music. It is not just the Labor Party that is concerned about the country local government fund essentially disappearing. I have had the pleasure of catching up with a range of shires throughout the state. I have recently been to the Shire of East Pilbara and I caught up with Elsie Archer from the Shire of Derby–West Kimberley. I have been to the shire of Kalgoorlie–Boulder amongst others.

Hon Dave Grills: Shire? It's the City of Kalgoorlie–Boulder.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Whatever. The fact is that right throughout the state of Western Australia, local governments are concerned about the policies of this government and concerned about the fact that this government went to a state election with promises on a range of policies that it has broken. The minister raises the issue of living within our means. Those opposite have not lived within their means since they came to government. It is wasting money on a new stadium and on the Perth waterfront. What about regional Western Australia? When will regional Western Australia benefit?

Several members interjected.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Those opposite have slashed and burned, and regional Western Australia is missing out. One of the other issues I want to raise tonight is the predicted shortfall of internships.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (Hon Alanna Clohesy): Order! Hon Stephen Dawson has the call.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: In the last week I received correspondence from the Australian Medical Students' Association. It has alerted me to the fact that there is an internship crisis, not just in Western Australia, but throughout Australia generally. It said that the predicted shortfall of internships in Western Australia is 14 for 2014. I urge the Barnett–Grylls government to do whatever it can to ensure that we keep filling these spots and that we have enough doctors throughout the state—particularly in regional areas. I refer to not just doctors, but health professionals. Take, for example, the Yandeyarra community, which earlier this year had a nurse who was resident in the community. That nurse left around Easter—April this year—and the position has not been filled. That community has not had a nurse for a number of months. It gets a medical service when the Royal Flying Doctor Service flies in once a month, but in reality that community can afford to get sick only one day a month. I urge the Barnett–Grylls government to ensure that its penny pinching on these vital, vital services is fixed.

Hon Michael Mischin: Why don't they have that position filled! You don't know, do you?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: With the pressure from up above, the health department has chosen not to fill that vacancy.

Hon Michael Mischin: Is that the reason?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: That was in the last financial year —

Hon Michael Mischin: That's the reason, is it?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: That is certainly what I have been told.

Hon Michael Mischin: What you've been told by whom?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: By somebody in the community; somebody I trust in the community.

Hon Michael Mischin: So you haven't actually inquired of the minister.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I have been in the community recently and various people in our community have told me.

Hon Michael Mischin: You haven't inquired of the minister, have you?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I have not had the opportunity to raise it with the minister yet.

Hon Michael Mischin: You've got gossip and complaints, but no facts.

Point of Order

Hon KATE DOUST: Madam Deputy President, it is very difficult to hear the speaker on his feet with the very loud interjections coming from the Attorney General.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (Hon Alanna Clohesy): I take that point of order. Hon Stephen Dawson has the call.

Debate Resumed

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Madam Deputy President, I do welcome the Attorney General having an interest in this issue. I hope as a member of the executive, he will now go away, after having listened to my concern about the Yandeyarra community not having a community health nurse, and will certainly raise it with his ministerial and government colleagues. The Yandeyarra community does not have a person in the position because, quite simply, the health department had decided, due to budget pressures, to leave the position vacant.

Hon Michael Mischin interjected.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: That is what I said. Not having a community nurse in Yandeyarra is of real concern to me and I hope that the Barnett government takes up this issue. If members opposite knew where the Yandeyarra community was located, maybe they would appreciate my concern. Yes, it is only 150-odd kilometres from Port Hedland, but the reality is that for various times throughout the year, due to the weather in the north west, the roads are impassable. It is not as if sick people can get in the car and drive to Port Hedland or wherever because they cannot get through the roads. If there was a community health nurse in that community, as there should be, sick people could be seen to in their communities, they would get better and kids would not have to miss school. I urge the Barnett–Grylls government to take this issue on board.

Some of the other issues that have been raised with me over the past few weeks include Indigenous driver licensing. I am aware of correspondence between the Attorney General and the Bloodwood Tree Association in South Hedland. Indeed, I am aware that the state government is doing some good stuff with Indigenous drivers' licences and training in the Kimberley. However, there is a big gap in the Pilbara. It is just a fact that some Aboriginal people and communities really struggle with this issue; not having a licence—in short, it can keep the poverty institution going. I believe and say to the Attorney General that his department's running of the Indigenous driver's licence scheme in the Kimberley is a good scheme, but I would urge him to rethink his thoughts or certainly his words about the Pilbara, given its crying need for Aboriginal people, particularly in remote communities, to have access to driver education. These are the issues that have been raised with me over the past few weeks; however, I will quickly scan over my notes to ensure I have not missed any of the schools or indeed any of the comments made by a range of communities. I have one minute left, so I —

Hon Peter Collier: Do you want an extension? I will offer it!

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I realise that the Barnett–Grylls government does not have many pieces of legislation on the notice paper.

Hon Peter Collier: Don't be so cynical.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Whilst the government may not have work for its members to do later in the week, it would be happy for me to keep talking about my wonderful electorate; it would be happy to keep listening to me attacking government members on their inadequacies, inefficiencies or attacks on the education system. However, I do not want to take up time that has been allocated to legislation in this Parliament because the people in the Mining and Pastoral Region—indeed, the people from electorates right around Western Australia—deserve to have this Parliament deal with pieces of legislation. They deserve to have a Parliament whose members are working to ensure the state is a better place. Yet the reality is this government does not have legislation on the notice paper; it probably will not have it later in the week. I certainly will not take up government members' time; I will not take the pressure off them. It is not my fault that they are not doing the work that they were elected to do; it is not my fault that they are not serving the best interests of Western Australia.

HON DAVE GRILLS (Mining and Pastoral) [5.55 pm]: I say to my colleague Hon Stephen Dawson that it must have been a different Mining and Pastoral Region that he went to than the one I went to!

Recently, I corresponded with members of this chamber and other places expressing my dismay that the best option we could provide for a 14-year-old boy in my electorate was to be ordered by the court to serve a six-month community-based order. To address his drug and alcohol-related issue the court housed him where he would be sharing accommodation with a convicted sex offender. That caused me some concern; however, I am happy and glad to say that I have received correspondence from the Minister for Mental Health; Disability Services; Child Protection. She indicates that is no longer the case and that the matter is being addressed. My correspondence with the minister did not fall on deaf ears; it was taken care of. I also thank the minister for her acknowledgement of my experience in that field.

Although I recognise that, outwardly, this appears to be an extreme case, it is unfortunate that it is not that uncommon. I know from my experiences of community engagement with people who work with young offenders that it is indicative of a widespread issue with youth justice in regional areas. It highlights the need to allocate appropriate funding to the regions. We talk a lot about what happens in communities, but it sometimes

comes down to the procedures we have to deal with. As members know, until recently I was a member of the police service, and one of my roles brought me into contact with the priority prolific offender program. As a PPO officer I managed those guys. We had a young fellow who lived in a house in Kalgoorlie–Boulder with his mother. They applied for a new house through Homeswest. This young fellow just happened to be a PPO; he was on bail and he had a curfew to be at this place from seven o'clock in the evening until seven o'clock in the morning. However, his mother moved premises. The police went around to the house and found nobody home. Following procedure, the police issued a warrant for his arrest. My role was to find out why and what exactly was happening. I found that it was not something that somebody had done intentionally; it was just a lack of communication. Through communication, we fixed the problem. The warrant was withdrawn and the young man had his bail address changed. He went about his business by going back to school, getting a job and was a bit of a success story for us. But sometimes the difficulty can be procedure, and having worked with procedures, if people are flexible and use a bit of lateral thinking, then things can be overcome. I think sometimes heads of agencies need to be held accountable for things they do because if they work in silos, it's sometimes hard to get the point across.

Recently, I attended a briefing with the Inspector of Custodial Services regarding a review into the incident at Banksia Hill Detention Centre on 20 January this year. As a result of that I am even more convinced that we need to adopt and support some recommendations of that report and invest in new and groundbreaking regional projects to address the high juvenile incarceration rate. Western Australia is second to the Northern Territory in the number of detained juveniles, and the unacceptable level of young Aboriginal suicides is well documented, as my colleague said. We really need to start investing the budget wisely. The ministers who are responsible need to make some real tangible change; there should be a paradigm shift in how we deal with young offenders. We need to look realistically at regional holistic support centres where family health professionals, counsellors and support staff can work together with these young offenders.

Sitting suspended from 6.00 to 7.30 pm

Hon DAVE GRILLS: Picking up where I left off, I said I recently attended a briefing from the Inspector of Custodial Services on the review into the incident at Banksia Hill Detention Centre on 20 January this year. I am convinced from that briefing that we need to support and adopt some of the recommendations of that review. We really need to invest in new ways of funding and different ways of dealing with young folk from around the state, especially regional WA, and we need to address the high rate of juvenile incarceration. Western Australia is second only to the Northern Territory in the number of detained juveniles, and there is a high rate of suicide among young Aboriginal people. We really need to invest in holistic support centres in regional WA where families, health professionals, counsellors and support staff can work towards addressing some of the issues with young offenders. One of the biggest challenges we face is when a young person, especially a young Aboriginal person, is taken out of the land; it breaks their connection with the land and takes them away from their family. That does not really help with the process of working with them. Most of those young people have some issues other than the crimes they have committed, and we really need to address those issues before we start working on putting them back into the community to live fulfilling lives and getting gainful employment.

One of the biggest issues is when a magistrate sentences a young person to a curfew or a period of detention. It means that the young person is in a place where we can deliver what youth justice calls multisystemic therapy. It means that lots of programs work together, such as StrongFamilies, with all the support agencies. Unfortunately, that is not the best-case scenario. The worst-case scenario is that we do not have those young people in one place long enough to see whether any of these programs work, because they move on, do not engage and then the whole round of referrals starts again. A young person who never turns up and never engages therefore gets referred on and referred on. Quite often that is what happens, and so the cycle continues. We really need to be able to keep the young person in one place and then bring in all the support agencies to work with that young person in one place; otherwise, they get a bit of support here and a bit there and it is not consistent and not really the way to change anybody's offending ways. We have plenty of data and policies to support alternatives to incarceration for young people, but we seem to ignore them and we do not realise how much that costs. There is an alternative to getting children to take part in a program so that they are accountable for the outcomes and for their achievements.

As I mentioned before, when we put prolific priority offenders on curfews, sometimes the curfews really do not work and in some ways we set them up to fail. If there has been a death in the family or a crisis in the family business, young people really do not have much option but to go to the funeral or the family business, and quite often they do not tell the people at youth justice that they are going. Therefore, when the police turn up to sign the young person on for his curfew, they find he is not there and they immediately issue a warrant, which means any police officer in the state can arrest the young person. So there are definitely gaps there. I am not really sure whether the gaps are caused by people not taking an interest in their portfolios or whatever, as has been

suggested. I think it comes down to the process sometimes. We need to go back to the grassroots of the process and look at how to address these things.

There has been a lot of talk about, and I have the utmost admiration for, the intent and hard work of people at police and community youth centres across the state. I want to take this time to acknowledge the efforts of Kalgoorlie–Boulder PCYC, which recently received an award for the most improved PCYC in the state. The award was presented at the PCYC annual general meeting and was based on the PCYC having improved and turned itself around. The president of Kalgoorlie–Boulder PCYC, Esther Roadnight, and the manager, Daniel Ogle, have done a very good job there. I am proud to say that I was vice-president of that PCYC. I managed the PCYC for a while and it is good to see that outcome. There is still a long way to go. There are still some infrastructure issues there that need to be worked on, and I hope there will be some money in the budget that we can put towards that centre. It is good to see that Kalgoorlie–Boulder PCYC has turned itself around. The youth council in the City of Kalgoorlie–Boulder is engaged with the PCYC. A heap of young people go there and do good stuff, from kindy gym all the way up to girls stuff like the Wanna Have Fun centre and the youth space. It is a good place. Having said that it is a good place, I do not think it is quite the place for priority prolific offenders who are at the upper end of the offending chain. PCYCs are a good re-entry point back into the community for people who are coming back through the system and they are good for diverting young people to do things. So, good on Kalgoorlie–Boulder PCYC for its award!

There are other places and youth services, especially around regional WA. We find that most young people in regional WA play sports or are involved in some activity. As a member of the Army Reserve, I am also happy to be an assistant at the 55 Army Cadet Unit in Kalgoorlie–Boulder. We have been doing some really good stuff with the young folk there—boys and girls from 12 and a half to 19 years of age. We are also working with the Air Force cadets there. As a result we have been able to increase the capacity of both units by sharing and working together and getting the outcomes that we want for the cadets.

It is unfortunate that, although all governments have funded Cadets WA, the funding is limited and based on the number of cadets and, like any organisation, they are required to do fundraising activities and all that associated stuff. But because the Army helps out with the cadets, it provides travel assistance and material to attend promotion courses and the annual camp. But other things are available that cadets like to go to that we have to fund. Obviously, being in regional Western Australia, the biggest drawback is the tyranny of distance. Quite often the kids hold a sausage sizzle or we raffle a trailer full of wood, which is a popular thing to do around our way when it is cold. The other day 100 litres of diesel was donated. Although we do those sorts of things, we pretty quickly find that by the time we have put kids on a plane or on a bus or have hired a bus, the cost has blown out and pretty much all the money we have has gone on travel. Logistically, it is one of the hard things we do. Today I contacted the minister who looks after Cadets WA; I have spoken to him and, even though I am not asking for a lot of money there are little things we can do that will help young people in our communities. The whole idea is that at the grassroots level, the little things mean a lot. It was mentioned to me today when we were talking about things that most people will say, “Oh, yes, the politics of it is good and what have you, but I’m a principal of a school”, or, as Hon Steve Dawson said, “I’m the manager of the PCYC,” for example. They really care what happens in their schools and how they get their kids this or that. One of the things I feel, and probably we all feel, is that working at the grassroots level is somewhat selfish. It is selfish because it makes me feel good, and I like feeling good, so it is selfish in that way. I like to help people at that grassroots level. It is not rocket science; it is not hard, and the return from it is huge.

I do not want to sound like a one-trick pony, but after 22 years in the police service I have an interest and I see lots of things. I hope that if I keep talking about these things, the message will get through that we do not have to spend millions of dollars or develop huge programs or erect huge buildings. As I said, it is often things at the grassroots level that give the best bang for the buck. The Chinese say that it does not matter who holds the cow; it is who gets the milk. When it comes to things like this, that is probably not a bad way to go because everyone here has an interest in seeing young people develop because they will be here tomorrow.

I welcome the support from the Minister for Police and the \$1.2 billion the government is putting into Western Australia Police in 2013–14 and the \$10.5 million from royalties for regions to help attract police to remote and hard-to-fill regional postings as well as spending it on station upgrades. Hon Kate Doust asked recently about the police station with the mould. That money pays for that sort of thing.

Hon Kate Doust: That was not the real reason, there was another purpose behind my question, and I will come to that.

Hon DAVE GRILLS: I know that. It is a little thing, but it means a lot. It is just a little thing we can do.

Having said that, on the issue of recruiting, we were promised 500 police. Today I looked on my Facebook page and saw that two police officers I know and had served with have just resigned; they are moving on. We try to recruit more people into the police service but attrition is at a high level with people leaving and retiring and the

rest of it, so it is one of the areas in which we have to keep topping up the bucket. I was glad to hear that the minister and the Commissioner of Police have started the Aboriginal police liaison officer program again, and are running a trial in Broome.

Hon Mark Lewis: Five.

Hon DAVE GRILLS: Thank you, Hon Mark Lewis. The APLO system was run previously, but there were no Aboriginal police officers at Kalgoorlie–Boulder and, as a result, the disengagement from the community was huge. Police officers are recruited from Ireland, England, South Africa and other jurisdictions. With no disrespect to them, it would be like sending me to Zimbabwe with generic policing skills. It was interesting that we were asked how much training police officers undergo. I think it has been identified that whilst we can do two days' training in a classroom, the best way to train is to work with people—someone who knows the land, the customs and the traditions. It is pretty easy to offend someone unintentionally. It is good that the APLO scheme is being brought back, and I am glad the trials are going ahead.

Hon Mark Lewis: There are two females.

Hon DAVE GRILLS: I was speaking to a young lady in a community outside Fitzroy Crossing who is a police constable, and she made the transition. It would be better to recruit Aboriginal police officers than APLOs. Some people have made the transition and are still there. Programs such as police cadets, which are like police rangers and the Cadet WA program, are good ways of bringing people into police work because they get the opportunity to learn on the job and in the right environment. I remember some time ago writing a letter to the Commissioner of Police and telling him that I had a great idea about mature-age cadets. He said, "Oh yes, what's that?" I said, "We have people in the workforce and people who have done jobs and have a wealth of experience that we can tap into and bring them into the police service." We could bring them in for a year and they would work as mature-age cadets and learn all the systems they need to know, of which there are heaps, including custody and incident reporting. They would learn to work with the community and at the end of the 12 months we would know that they were good operators. They would have to go through the process gradually and pass each step. But at the end of the 12 months they would be familiar with how Western Australia Police runs. As we do with police officers from overseas, we would send them to the academy for a month so they could brush up on the skills they need about our laws. Sometimes we miss the boat with regard to recruiting from within our own community. We were talking earlier about visas and what have you. Policing is like mining, which is cyclical. In that type of program, a mature-age cadet would be someone who lives in the community and has gone through the process. They would be at an age at which they would stay, so we would get some value from them, whether they became a police officer or we utilised their skills as an auxiliary officer. We are moving that way. There are lots of opportunities and different ways to look at how we do things. There are also retired police. I have spoken to a few retired police and, as we all do, they have asked what has been happening to the police service. It is never as good as when we were in the job. They have said that they would volunteer their time and work in a police station at the front counter. I think we are heading the right way, but I would like to see a bit more of that happening and more opportunity for that. None of these things come cheaply and I would like to think there is some money in the budget to look at ways of doing that. It is fairly expensive to recruit a police officer and to keep on that police officer from go to woe. I think it would be worth looking at people who could work while doing their cadetship and at the end of it make a seamless transition into the police service.

My last posting with the police service in Kalgoorlie was as crime diversion and diversity officer and I have a belief that community engagement plays a big role. I worked in the police road safety section and used to teach kids bike education and road safety—all the things that seem to have gone by the bye at the moment. When the current commissioner came along, he went to front-line policing, and the road safety section was unfortunately closed. I went to Leonora and everyone asked me why I would want to go there and they told me what a terrible place it was. I had been there before with the road safety section and the kids were great. Kids are fantastic, no matter who or what they are; they are just great. One of the teachers at Leonora, Rosemary Reddingius, had some bikes, which were in pretty bad condition and there was not much of that gear. I saw this when I went there with the road safety section and that is one of the reasons I went back. When I went back I took a whole heap of helmets, some bike gear and all the rest of it. I also took some little footies, some rulers and some biros. I used to drive around and stop kids riding bikes. I would give kids wearing bike helmets a footy or a ruler. The kids who were not wearing a bike helmet would say, "What about me?" I would tell them they were not wearing a helmet and they would say, "Okay". I knew pretty well that helmets were as dear as poison to buy in Leonora and most kids did not have them and did not understand the concept of them, but we persevered. With kids who used to be a bit recidivist in riding bikes without wearing helmets, I used to let their front tyres down. People would tell me I could not do that, but I told them that of course I could. The second time I caught kids without a helmet, I let the air out of the back tyres and the third time I would put the bikes in a cell at the old Leonora Police Station and leave them there for a bit of a holiday. I told the school teacher, Rosemary, that if the kids came to school I would give them a bike helmet and get the bike program up and running. So that is what happened and in the end

I took 60 bike helmets and used every one of them. The kids were wearing helmets and even the kids who were a bit hard to get on with were wearing them, which was a good thing.

Hon Alyssa Hayden: They wanted a footy!

Hon DAVE GRILLS: Yes, there were footies—I was like Constable Care! That was just one way of doing things. Good behaviour has to be rewarded and there needs to be some incentives to go along with that. On the long weekend of July this year I went back to Leonora, as I often do, for the Leonora Golden Gift. I am proud to say that the kids rode their bikes from Menzies to Leonora as part of a bike race that goes from Kalgoorlie to Leonora. They were all wearing helmets and uniforms, and were riding nice bikes, so the program was going well. It is just one of those things that the community gets behind and underpins. We can do whatever we like, but the community helps these things be successful. All I did was facilitate the program; it is about what the community wants. People understand that if they fall off a bike and hit their heads, there is a good chance they will do some sort of damage. There was a want through the community to do that program.

That was also evidenced when we did the Police Rangers program. I had a couple of young blokes who unfortunately ended up being adult offenders. I remember doing the Anzac Day parade down the street and putting those young fellas in a Police Rangers uniform and they stood up bolt upright as proud as they could be and marched down the street. It was just a good thing. As I said before, it is worthwhile investing in that sort of thing. They are not a huge spend and they are not big things; we just have to have the want to do them and to help the community work towards them. I have had people say to me that it is a waste of time, and I told them that I have actually done things like this in Leonora and they actually work. I like to think that because I have done things like this, and I have done them in other places as well, I can get something out of them.

At Laverton there were Police Cadets and we had them at the opening of the new Laverton Police Station. Since then I have worked with Laverton quite a bit—not as much as I would like to, but as much as I was allowed to—and we put in some of the programs that we had done in Kalgoorlie–Boulder like Eyes on the Street, keeping kids in school and things like that. While there was a sergeant at the police station in Laverton prepared to drive the program, Eyes on the Street went really well there. Unfortunately, once he left, the program did not go as well as we had hoped, which often happens with these things. It is unfortunate that with people coming and going to these places someone for a two-year posting can do a really good job and then someone who comes later does not do such a good job, and as a result the community suffers. We are always searching for the thing that underpins the community, what the community wants to do and how the community can do it. As I said, we just facilitate those things.

There is plenty to do, and like I said, it does not have to cost a million dollars. For example, there is the Cadets WA program. I was at Fitzroy Crossing last week and saw they had cadets at the school. There are all sorts of cadets programs. There are the Police Rangers, Army Cadets, Navy Cadets and Air Force Cadets, as Hon Donna Faragher will attest to as she was in that role.

Hon Donna Faragher: It is a very good program.

Hon DAVE GRILLS: Hon Donna Faragher came to Bindoon and saw the results of that program.

Hon Donna Faragher: It was good fun!

Hon DAVE GRILLS: It was absolutely.

There are also programs like the CALM Bush Rangers and all sorts of other cadets. It is a good thing; it is a good diversion program and it is good for kids to do. That is one of the things I hope will have funding. It would not take much, a bit of royalties for regions money, maybe, who knows? If we have the will and we put something towards it, it is a good thing. If the programs are run out of schools, there is a benefit for schools as well and there is a double edge there. We used to run the rangers out of Leonora District High School and the kids loved it. There was a time there when we actually ran the cadets at the school—my friend Talbot and I did that. There is much to be done. If we invest in just a small way, the flow-on effect, the downriver effect, is huge. There are big things that we get out of it and people would be surprised.

On Saturday whilst busily campaigning, I had a quick look at *The Weekend West*, as you do, and I saw a very interesting article on page 20 with the headline “Council’s eyes guide the long arm of the law”. The article caught my eye because when I was on the council at the City of Kalgoorlie–Boulder, we spent a lot of money on CCTV and we got grants from the community safety section, as it was then called, for community policing and put the cameras in. There were a lot of other police stations and districts around the place that also did the same. Unfortunately, with front-line policing and resources not always being available, the cameras were not always used in a manner that I thought would achieve a good outcome. Kalgoorlie Police Station, for example, has two positions for auxiliary officers and two positions for cadets, which are positions that could be filled. There is currently a young lady who is a cadet there. These auxiliary officers cadets could monitor the CCTV. I am not

suggesting that they would be monitored 24 hours a day, seven days a week, but on Friday and Saturday nights there are places where those cameras could be trained, because they are known as hotspots. I have always had those thoughts, but it was always hard to get through. The story in *The Weekend West* is pretty good and I suggest members have a read. The article states that supervisors say it takes three months to learn the positions of all the cameras and nearly 12 months to be good enough on them to know which camera to go to to pinpoint Joe's Bar, for example, when an officer on the street says to train the camera on it. I read further in the article about the police who actually operate the cameras. I remember an assistant commissioner saying on TV that police would not man CCTV cameras because it detracted from the operational capacity of front-line policing. I remember when I graduated in the police service in 1991 that the City of Perth used to run its CCTV cameras from the town hall. They were run by a young bloke in a wheelchair and he had control of all the cameras. The article I am referring to goes on to state —

Director of city services —

Of the City of Perth —

... said though the CCTV network was an important part of the city's safety and security plan, it operated to complement other measures that were in place.

This is the thing: in police stations we have cameras in cells and in my day we used to knock on the door, wake the bloke up, ask him if he was all right and make sure he was good, and then he would go back to sleep. Now they do what are called remote cell checks, which are done by the camera operators. I thought if we could do that in cells, we could obviously do remote patrolling with cameras. We could look outside known trouble spots or what have you, and I actually did it a couple of times with a couple of my colleagues. I trained a camera on a spot in Boulder that we knew and I said, "Look at that," and we looked. We were all gathering evidence. We zoomed the camera in and saw what was going on. We then got on the radio and got a van to go to that spot. When those people saw the van coming, they stopped doing what they were doing. The van rolled up and we said that it was the bloke in the blue jumper. They went over to the bloke in the blue jumper, and I told them it was under his jumper. They searched under his jumper and he asked how they knew that. Of course, that was the result, the whole plan. There was only one vehicle and two police officers out on the road patrolling, but we were able to react to the offence positively and be right onto it. We also had evidence beyond a reasonable doubt so we were able to go to court and say, "Here is the evidence of what this person was doing, we apprehended the offender, and thanks very much." For me that is the smart way of policing. It is known as intelligence-led policing.

The officer in charge of the Perth police stations says that their surveillance is 24 hours a day, seven days a week and that gives police a greater perspective for what is going on. *The West Australian* article also states—

He said the cameras allowed police to get to scenes in a much more timely manner than waiting for the public to phone something in and helped them police the area proactively.

"Through the use of move-on notices and prohibitive behaviour orders, we can often deal with things before they become a big problem," Sen-Sgt Hazell said.

"If we take care of the little things, the big things will take care of themselves."

If members ever want a good read, they should read the autobiography of Rudy Giuliani. It is a bit of a doorstopper and is about yea big. It talks about how he worked on what he called the "broken glass" principle. He says that if a person walks past a building and there is no broken glass, nothing is likely to happen. But if someone walks past the building and one pane of glass is broken, people will think, "Oh, the glass is broken," and they will break the rest. His theory was to fix the broken pane of glass. New York has a police officer on almost every corner and has gone from being one of the most crime-ridden cities in the world to being a relatively safe place through the use of such practices. That is what it comes back to—doing the small things, such as the example of the kids with their bike helmets in Leonora. It is the small things, the grassroots things, that make people think, "What is the point of that?" Those things have a real flow-on effect.

I would like to see closed-circuit television cameras utilised more. I would like to see a greater capacity and ability to utilise those cameras through proactive police recruiting, with more cadets and perhaps even adult cadets. It is a good thing. It is cost effective and it has an outcome. It is a cradle to the grave sort of thing. It also makes the community feel safe and secure. If someone out walking knows there is a camera, they may stand near that camera or will go to the areas that are well lit and have cameras.

The police have changed how they operate. It is not community policing anymore, it is called community engagement. There are three divisions in community engagement—a youth division, the community policing one and another one. I would like consideration to be given to spending on the community engagement area—that is, working with the community, local shires and councils to have good outcomes. Cameras are not the panacea, but they give the ability to get bang for the buck out of resources. It means that an issue can be looked at. For

example, it is Friday night outside a certain establishment and the police know there will be trouble, or that a certain bloke has a barring notice, or this person has a move-on notice. The beauty of a move-on notice, and the beauty of utilising them with CCTV, is that if a man in an orange jumpsuit is identified as causing problems, the police can give him a move-on notice. The move-on notice moves him out of that area for 24 hours. As they do in London, where everything is on CCTV, they will follow the man in the orange jumpsuit, or the orange suit, and he will go, “Yeah, yeah, yeah,” and wander off, and then if he comes back to the same bar or goes to another place, the police can be there straightaway and say he has breached his move-on notice and deal with him in another way.

A barring notice is the same. A barring notice means that a person is barred from a licensed premise for a period of time. As I said before, that gives the police evidence beyond a reasonable doubt, which is needed to prove that that person went to that place. Big issues can arise when police chase a person on a motorbike. They can chase him and catch him and, like the old smoking gun, it is difficult to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that it was that person on that motorbike, because unless he takes off his helmet, the police cannot identify that person. That is another good thing about CCTV. It streamlines the court system when the police say, “Well, we have evidence of that.” And he says, “Oh yeah—show me!” So the police disclose the evidence and he has nowhere to go. The police hope there is a plea of guilty straightaway or a proceedings by summons. A proceedings by summons or a plea of guilty helps. It stops the court system being clogged up, and it is a more streamlined system where the person goes, “Yeah, summons” and doesn’t have to attend court, rings up, finds the result, gets the fine or whatever the punitive measure is, and it works. Basically it is the smart way of policing.

In a lot of the programs I spoke about and in the community engagement division, the guys who work there, crime prevention and diversity officers are trained to do security audits. I used to do security audits of businesses. I would go to somebody’s house that had been burgled. We would knock on the door and “cocoon” the area. We would drop off a brochure and tell the resident that the house next door has been burgled. We would leave our name and number, and people would ring up and we would do security audits at their houses. We would suggest putting in things such as lighting here or there—safe things that would reduce the risk of being broken into.

Before I left the police I started a Neighbourhood Watch Facebook page for Coolgardie and Boulder. The current officer in charge of the police station in Kalgoorlie contributes a monthly article. That sort of thing is good. It is good to let people know what is happening. But it is a little like shutting the stable after the horse has bolted, when it is reported that crime happened here and there, and please be aware. We need to get back to being proactive and working with the community engagement division and the city or the shire and being proactive towards that and having the police back it up. If money is to be spent on the police service, there is value in spending that money on the prevention of crime. It makes the community feel safer and it also has an outcome. With that in mind, I would like to see some thought given by the police service and district superintendents on how to use cameras better and how money spent on cameras could enhance front-line policing programs. That could mean that if we start looking after the little things, we will have better outcomes.

People who commit offences are not silly—they know that if there is a good chance they will get caught by CCTV, they will move on. There is value there, and it also provides an opportunity to see who is around and act on information. The police know the people who commit volume crime offences, such as breaking and entering, domestic violence and assaults. The police know who those people are and where they are going, and are able to keep an eye on them and get them to the places they need to go, which takes me back to the beginning of what I said—getting them into a place, especially if they are a young offender, where they can benefit from remedial education. That can help not only them but also their families. A young person can be put into the best environment in the world, but if that person is taken out of that good environment and put back into a dysfunctional environment, we may not have wasted our time—nothing is ever a waste of time—but we have not achieved the best outcome for them or ourselves. As I said at the start of my speech, if we invest money into this, all these things that we put back in will have an outcome. They will feed on themselves; they will have a feed in and a feed out. To be proactive and not reactive, we can get a lot of agencies working together and achieve better outcomes if we work closely with youth justice and the Department for Child Protection and Family Support, and facilitate some of these programs in a way that we can deliver instead of having the unknown quantity of the person in question not being able to be contacted or not being able to engage with them. We need them in a place that is safe and secure and that looks after their wellbeing and allows for their family to be engaged too. I have had people say to me, “I belted him and then I locked him up in his room. He got out and ran away. I can’t do anything else—what else do I do?” When somebody says that, they are saying that they do not have the tools to deal with the person in question. We send young folk out to communities where they have family, in the belief that that family will put this young person back on the right track, which, in my experience, is not always the way because the communities and the families that they are sent to do not have the skills. Mothers who look after young people have said to me —

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (Hon Brian Ellis): As Hon Dave Grills is a fairly new member, I remind him of his option of asking for an extension of time if he wishes.

Hon DAVE GRILLS: Yes, thanks.

[Leave granted for the member's time to be extended.]

Hon DAVE GRILLS: Thank you, Mr Deputy President. When everybody said to me that I have to get up and speak for 45 minutes, I thought, great, but it seems to be coming out all right.

Realistically, these people are saying that they do not know how to deal with these young people. I know a mother who has three kids. Her young bloke is a bit of a ratbag. She said that she cannot deal with him, so she pushed him out of the home. People tell her that she has to take responsibility for him; she cannot just turn her back on him. She does not know how to take responsibility; she cannot handle him. This young bloke is having an impact on her other two children, who are younger than him. As a mother, she is saying that she has to look after those children so he does not have this impact. She cannot deal with him. When that happens, he commits offences and then he gets in that system that I was talking about before with youth justice and things like that. He goes back on curfew and is sent for a mental appraisal or sent to do this or that. We do not really achieve anything. Everyone is making the mother feel bad, saying she should take responsibility for her young bloke but she cannot because she does not have the ability. We need a facility that not only looks after the wellbeing of the young person but also engages the mother. We know that in every instance DCP will put a young person back with their family if it can. If we put the young person back with their family, we have to ensure that the family has that coping mechanism and the ability to deal with that young person so everybody benefits from it, otherwise we keep chasing our tails. I would like to see that outcome. I would like to see some consideration. I would like somebody to stand and say, "This isn't a bad idea. We will do this."

While I was in the police service, for a long time I was looking for somebody to give me the opportunity to run a pilot program for a year. I have worked really hard towards that, as have a lot of other people. It is not a big ask; it is not a case of building a brand-new facility. We have facilities available. We really need a station or a place where young people cannot leave of their own volition, a place where they can start doing some of the stuff that they want to do. It needs to be a place that works with them and gets around the issue that is causing them problems. Most young people who sniff glue sniff because they are hungry. It takes away the hunger pangs. When they sniff, they have the bravado to break in to somebody's house or break in to a car. Quite often, they will then steal more paint. It is unfortunate that a lot of people in Kalgoorlie-Boulder who are involved in the mining industry have paint in the back of their cars. It is a hard row to hoe but we have to start somewhere. We need to work on getting these young people into these programs. All the police and community youth centres and the other programs that we run enable these people to re-enter the community. These are ways that we can help young people get jobs and do things.

I was up in Fitzroy Crossing last week. There is a station up there called Gogo Station. Some really wonderful things are being done with cotton and sorghum and things like that. People there are talking about harvesting water—10 per cent of the rainfall—and irrigating 100 000 hectares of fertile land. It is absolutely marvellous. I flew from Noonkanbah Station back to Fitzroy Crossing and I could see all through that valley, which has the best fertile soil. There is a huge opportunity to get a program running and to put some money in to have a facility. The ideal situation would be to have facilities like this in the Kimberley, the Pilbara, the midwest, the goldfields and the south west. One size does not fit all. We would be value adding back into young people in the community. It will help break the cycle. I ask that consideration be given to using a small part of everybody's budget just to try that. I do not know whether that is the correct way to do it, but I will put my hand up. I will run it. I have that commitment because I have seen it; I just need a bit of a hand to get it started. Members would be surprised at the effect it would have; it is like a domino effect.

A wonderful couple up in Halls Creek run a program from a place called Burks Park. Roy is an old cowboy. The young kids walk from Halls Creek to Burks Park to get a feed because they feel safe there. He teaches them about animal husbandry and horses. This couple are on their way to helping these kids. They just need a hand to continue. It is not really hard. We will not catch everybody but the whole point is to at least try. What we are doing now does not always work. The money spent at this end will add value and enhance PCYCs and things like that and allow them to diversify and put more programs in place. Young people have come up to me and asked whether they have to be bad to go on the *Leeuwin* or to do something else. I say that of course they do not. At the end of the day we need to provide that opportunity anyway.

As I said, I am not here to bemoan the budget. The Nationals copped a bit of flak about things earlier. We put money towards these projects because there is a need to do these things. Once we get these little things squared away, they will lead to bigger things. I challenge everybody to talk to people they know, all the connections they have, about all the good work that everybody in this chamber and the other place do, particularly when they go

and talk at schools. If we have their best interests at heart, we can have a little think about how we might start this. It does not matter how we do it but we have to get that conversation going. The other day I heard Warren Mundine on the radio saying that we had spent enough money on Aboriginal people now. Whether that is true or not, the fact is that we need to put more money into things that are going to help, such as that agricultural program up in the Kimberley. We should not set people up to fail. We need to give them the ability to get that work ethic back and get out there and do it. It all starts with getting people back on track. As I have said, I will not bemoan the budget; the budget is what the budget is. We can all get out there. It does not take a million dollars to get out there and talk to some kids in a school in a remote place and encourage a principal or a member of the community. I would like to see that. I can see the value in that. I know where the budget came from. I congratulate the government for some of the projects and programs it is putting in place, but I encourage the government to look outside the box and think laterally about this, because it will not be too big a shift to achieve it. How do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time. That is what we need to do now. We need to draw a circle around somewhere, have a look at it and go from there. It might sound naive; it might sound a bit pie in the sky. It is not for me to say, but I know it works in Leonora. I used to walk around Leonora without a gun. I would walk down to the village when people were drunk and fighting and stop them fighting without a gun. It is not what we do; it is how we do it. The opportunity to do that is out there.

HON SALLY TALBOT (South West) [8.20 pm]: Hon Dave Grills has set the bar very high time-wise tonight, but I announce at the beginning of my speech on the budget that I will not seek an extension of time!

Several members interjected.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: I saw the fleeting expression of pain across the Leader of the House's face when he realised that he might lose another vital 15 minutes of legislative time! Hon Peter Collier will be relieved to know that I will not subject him to the loss of another 15 minutes. I know how pressing his legislative agenda is. I know sarcasm does not translate well into *Hansard*, but I will give it a go; I cannot resist!

Hon Donna Faragher: It won't stop you from trying!

Hon SALLY TALBOT: It does not stop me from trying; the member is absolutely right.

I know that the budget debate is a wide-ranging debate and I will take the opportunity to range fairly widely. Hon Dave Grills made a very interesting and thoughtful contribution to the process of scrutinising the budget to see where it passes and where it fails. Of course, our job in opposition is to find the places it fails, examine those places in more detail and make constructive suggestions about how the government could have done better, and there are indeed a great many of those.

I could not help comparing the two contributions we heard from members for the Mining and Pastoral Region today. The first was from Hon Stephen Dawson, who talked with the same kind of knowledge of his communities as did Hon Dave Grills, but the difference of course was that Hon Stephen Dawson has had conversations with people about what they are experiencing on the ground and their disappointment with the shortcomings of the budget. I do not think Hon Dave Grills sounds naive at all. I think we heard from a person who is very much embedded in his community and understands exactly what communities need. But I suggest to Hon Dave Grills that he use some of the power he has from essentially being on the government benches in this Parliament, because some of the things he talked about tonight are very important. They are not far away from the points that we in the Labor opposition are making about the shortcomings of the budget. But I say to Hon Dave Grills that he needs to knock on a few doors of ministers and he needs to walk in and shut the door behind him and say, "If you like your big white car, then listen to what I am telling you about your community." That is the advantage that people who sit on the government benches have that we do not. That is something that I will have other conversations with Hon Dave Grills about. He is in a very powerful position on the government benches. I would like Hon Dave Grills and other members of the National Party to use that position of power to get better outcomes for their communities, because they sure are not getting them with the Barnett Liberal government. The Barnett Liberal government just does not get it; it does not tell the same stories that people such as Hon Dave Grills tell about their communities, particularly regional communities.

My starting point is the question about the sort of budget this is. But before I do that, I note that we are having this debate only three days after the federal election. I note that the Prime Minister-elect made a great deal of this in his victory speech at the end of a very long day for everybody when he said that Australian federal governments change relatively infrequently. This is indeed an important moment in history that we marked only about 48 hours ago. I moved around my electorate on election day. Other members for the South West Region who are sitting in this place tonight will know that it is a big electorate and members drive an enormous number of kilometres, particularly on election days. It is a good moment to pick up the mood of the electorate. We read the mood of the electorate every day of our working lives because we are professional parliamentarians, but on polling day itself, members get a bit of a snapshot. I have worked on polling booths for many, many decades and I have seen many, many election days. The thing that struck me on Saturday that was a bit different from many

of the election days that I remember was that there was not that kind of passion on the polling booths. There was not anger or exhilaration; there was fatigue. People on both sides were exhausted from what they have lived through in the past few years. A lot of questions arise, and we will argue with members on the government benches about the answers to those questions. One I heard being canvassed in the other place earlier today was whether people are angry with the Premier, whether what the government has done in the month since it brought the budget down was getting through to people and whether people were prepared to express that anger when they voted. At many of the booths I went to, the state's budget had had a marked effect on people's unhappiness, but I think I was reading something over and above that anger. That anger, as I will come to later in my speech, is very well placed and has a lot of grounds for being genuine, but there was something a bit more than that. I for one am prepared to stand in this place and say that this applies to both sides of politics. In my opening remarks on the budget I am doing a mea culpa, because I think that both sides of politics are equally guilty of letting down the electorate. We have to bear a collective responsibility for that. I think that people are angry with politicians because there are so many occasions on which the electorate gives us a chance to rise to the occasion and for one reason or another—there is a very long list of the reasons we fail—we fail them, and we fail them too often.

It is very important that we consider what we are doing in our role as politicians. I am sure that many honourable members in this place tonight will have met somebody at a shop or will have gone to see a physiotherapist or someone else who has asked, "What do you do?" and when they say that they are a member of Parliament, they see that expression on their face because we have let them down. We have not built respect for our profession in the community, and that is an indictment of all of us.

Hon Phil Edman interjected.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: I have said to Hon Phil Edman that I agree with him. I am actually making a comment about politicians on both sides. In fairness, I do not think that the member can claim to have his feet entirely on the moral high ground. I am going to come to some points about the budget where I do not think that the member has helped the general cause. That is the point that I am trying to make tonight. But I am not laying the blame solely at the feet of the Barnett Liberal government; I am saying that there is a culture of letting down the electorate and of not living up to our responsibilities to serve the electorate well. I suggest that there are many points in the budget that the government has just brought down where that trust has been betrayed, just as much as any of the other examples that I know can be listed.

There was an article in *The West Australian* the day before the election by a former member of this place, Linda Savage, in which she talked about post-trust politics. Her argument was that politicians in general have let the community down in terms of eroding trust. I do not like to think of it in that way. I do not think that is a very constructive path to go down, but I did read her article with great interest. There was one particular paragraph that stood out to me. This is a quote from the article of Friday, 6 September; the day before the election. It is titled "New era of post-trust politics" —

It can be described as a new era post-trust politics. It means that the assumption that politicians will act in good faith and keep their promises has been replaced with the assumption that promises will be broken, that governments are likely to fall below expectations and that many politicians are self-serving, or worse.

I ask members of the government and members of the National Party, who are also in government—if not in formal coalition, but along with the Liberal Party—to have a look at this budget and to listen to members of their communities about how it has been received. If members genuinely think that people in the community are wrong when they ask why promises have been broken, then put forward the arguments why they are wrong. Do not just hide behind the spin and budget documents that, quite frankly, year after year tell us less and less about what is actually in the budget. I urge the newer members of this Parliament—I am not saying Labor got everything right—to go back to the 2006 and 2007 budgets of the former Labor government. Have a look at the length and the detail of the line items in those budget papers and compare them to what we get today.

I will give an example. One small line in every allocation stated "program rationalisation" with a dollar amount next to it. It was only in estimates in the other place that we found out that in the child protection portfolio, program rationalisation actually involved a cut of \$600 000 to emergency relief. That is emergency relief that is provided from the offices of the Department for Child Protection and Family Support. There was no reference to that cut in the budget papers. Now that we get the budget papers online, a search can be made for that line item but it cannot be found because it is simply not there.

There were numerous other examples, but in terms of the portfolios that I have been most closely involved with, that was probably the most glaring example. The reality is that it was actually \$1.2 million—only half of the funding has been taken out; the other half was taken out last year. Emergency relief funding has disappeared out

of the child protection budget. The minister was asked to explain, and bear in mind that what I am talking about is not actually in the budget papers. It was not an announcement the government was prepared to make; it was something it was trying to hide by not itemising it in the budget documents or making any kind of statement about it. What we found when we went to the child protection offices—members would have seen the television pictures of it a couple of weeks ago—was a notice put up in every departmental office stating that the funding was no longer available, so go somewhere else. When the minister was asked to explain what had happened, there was some validity to the general point she was making that child protection is not always the appropriate agency to provide emergency relief—I accept that. I have worked enough with people in the north west, particularly Aboriginal people, who, for extremely good reasons, have a deep and abiding distrust of anybody from child protection. I accept that part of the minister’s argument about why it is more appropriate for people to go to other agencies. But what the minister forgot to mention is that the people who have access to what is, after all, a relatively small amount of money, \$600 000 a year, have already walked through the door of the Department for Child Protection and Family Support. They are already in the office. They have gone there because they have had some kind of calamitous event at home. It might be that the fridge has blown up and they have had to buy a new fridge, and they have lost a fridge full of food and do not have the money to buy food. It might be that they have had some kind of unpredicted medical situation arise and have had to spend money on medication and have run out of money. Those people are already in the office asking for help. When we got hold of the circular the department sent to its staff in the days following the budget, we saw that staff had been directed to put people in taxis and send them somewhere else.

The first thing about the minister’s response that I took exception to was that these people were already in the offices, so it was entirely appropriate for the Department for Child Protection and Family Support to be providing that emergency relief. The second thing that I took exception to was when the minister said that other agencies were able to provide that service. There would have been another way of doing this. I have already said that it was a relatively small amount of money, \$600 000 a year. The way to do it would have been to re-allocate that funding to other agencies, but that was not done. This is purely and simply a budget cut, yet it was not itemised in the budget and it was not publicised at all. It was hidden and we had to wait for the estimates process to find out what had happened, and the only way we got to it was by trying to unpack that “program rationalisation” line item. The minister has used this kind of fancy language before when offering some sort of explanation about why things go wrong. But the term “program rationalisation” which actually, in real life, means “cut” is not the way to go about managing a portfolio in a way that builds community confidence about what the minister is doing, or builds community trust about the reliability of the minister’s judgement in terms of managing that portfolio.

I make the basic point about trust. I think that trust can be built and similar outcomes can be brought about but that requires openness, honesty and transparency about what is being done. People have to have things explained to them and things need to be debated. We do remarkably little of that in this place. There is constant hiding behind spin, innuendo and, quite frankly, what I have seen in my eight years in this place, increasing over the last 12 months, is a simple point-blank refusal to answer questions. We see it day after day in question time, when a question is asked but the answer that is given does not answer the question. So we have to ask the question again and again. There have been a few occasions in the past couple of months—this is the stage I have reached—when I have thought that we would not be that much worse off if we scrapped question time because this government has turned the act of evasion into an art. None of that does anything to deal with the anger that people in the community feel about the way politicians are behaving. I said that I do not think we have moved into an era of post-trust politics—I do not think we can. It is incumbent on all of us to rebuild that trust. The government is not showing any signs of realising there is a problem let alone showing any willingness to deal with it.

Another theory increasingly talked about is that governments are no longer capable of providing the type of leadership the community wants or of driving the social change that all of us as political activists ought to value highly. The theory is that governments are simply no longer capable of doing that. That is an even more terrifying prospect than moving into a post-trust era of politics. After all, if governments vacate the field of taking responsibility for providing leadership and driving social change, who will fill the vacuum? There are a number of answers. One of them clearly is that multinational companies will fill that space. I do not think that is an outcome that anyone on the conservative side of politics would embrace. I hope it is not. Sometimes I think that by default we head in that direction when we have a conservative government. It is certainly not a direction that anybody on the left of politics would countenance. We have had nearly 113 years of government in Australia and the history of the Labor Party is synonymous with the history of government in Australia. We have seen business and capital betray the interests of ordinary Australians, which is the problem. Governments do not build trust and appear to see no value in building trust in the community. There is talk about being in an era in which governments are incapable of leading and incapable of driving social change. We simply cannot let that happen. We must step up and find a different way of doing things. That is the challenge for all of us in this place.

We have to introduce new words into our vocabulary. Two such words should be “truthfulness” and “honesty”. People do not use those words very often; and, if they do, they are used almost as bullets or ammunition—in a negative sense. A person will accuse me of being untruthful and vice versa. I will accuse that person of being dishonest. We do not build on those concepts. Terms such as “love”, “mercy”, “justice”, “honesty” and “truth” have been eliminated from the Australian political lexicon. All of us have to do what we can to reintroduce those concepts. That is what motivated all of us in the first place.

As I have said before in this place, one of the things a member of Parliament is asked to do—I do it quite regularly and I am sure that is the experience of others in this place—is to talk to year 11 and 12 students who are doing political and legal studies and who have the beginnings or first stirrings of an interest in the political realm. One thing has always intrigued me when I have done that. I have been doing it for many years as a staffer, but more particularly when I was working for Kim Beazley when he was the Leader of the Opposition. I would always go with him to Western Australian schools when he did those sessions. Over the years it struck me that the same questions that were asked 20 to 25 years ago are being asked in 2013. Often those questions are, “Do you fight in Parliament?” Obviously the public face of Parliament is question time when viewers see members lean across the chamber and do the famous finger point. Hon Michael Mischin is not listening to me, but I know he is particularly taken by my objection to the finger point. We do it all the time in question time, particularly in the lower houses. I always go to some trouble to point out to young people that it is actually not like that most of the time. The figure I use—I ought to go back and check it to make sure it accurately represents reality—is that we get bipartisan agreement on 85 per cent of what we do. Of the remaining 15 per cent, about 85 per cent is negotiated in discussions behind the Chair or in amendments to bills. What we are left fighting about is quite a small proportion of what is dealt with in any political chamber in Australia. Of course, the small percentage left can be ferocious and bitterly fought out. It is quite right and proper that people should be passionate about what they believe in. But the reality is that if we lined up all the members of this place who represent the south west and asked what communities such as Eaton, Dwellingup, Albany, Bunbury and Mandurah need, in a number of respects our agendas would not be so different from each other. The problem, of course, is that the very fact that we have to explain that in detail shows what a big problem it is. Of all the young people in our electorates who might be interested in politics, we talk to only a few of them. Most of them reach the end of school, forget they were interested in politics and move on and become as unhappy with the behaviour of politicians as everybody else. That is a big challenge for us. I make that point to illustrate that I believe that almost all of us are motivated by good intentions when we start. If only we could be courageous enough to engage the electorate in what we are trying to bring about in our objectives, we could begin to rebuild that trust.

I turn directly to my question about what type of budget this is. We can go through lists of broken promises. I have already laid down a challenge to the government that if it believes they are not broken promises, it should put out some press releases explaining how those promises are being kept. I will refer to a couple of them. As I have spoken about previously in earlier debates in this new Parliament, I spent a lot of time over the last 12 months working in the electorate of Collie–Preston with Mick Murray. I will put three figures in front of the government tonight and ask for a response. The first of the three figures is \$18 million for the Millbridge bridge. For those who are not familiar with that area, as people drive along the Australind bypass towards Bunbury, they will notice on the right-hand side of the road driving south that somewhere south of Preston Beach there are fully inhabited subdivisions. As they drive 20 kilometres down the road, they come to a right-hand turn that leads into those subdivisions. Of course, for well over a decade people have been looking at how to make a short cut into those subdivisions. It must be intensely frustrating to live in a house that can be seen “over there, just through the bushes” on the central reservation, with it taking a round trip of somewhere between 20 and 25 kilometres to get to that house.

What happened in the election campaign? The Liberal Party went to Bunbury and promised to build the Millbridge bridge, and costed it at \$18 million. I did an enormous amount of doorknocking in that community around there. I scratched my head about why the government was making that promise of \$18 million for the Millbridge bridge, because for every person who said to me, “This is going to be great because I’m sick of driving 20 or 25 kilometres once I’ve passed my house to get there”, there was another person in the house next door who said, “We don’t want this to become a rat run through to the highway.” That told me that there had been no proper planning done to back up that promise. No planning was done at all. It was something that was just pulled out of the air because it was a couple of easy votes—\$18 million for the Millbridge bridge.

The second thing I remember very clearly was the promise of \$7 million for Collie Senior High School. There was no particular allocation for what it was going to be spent on. Again, it was just one of those ideas, “What a great idea. What do we need? Get the research in.” I can just see those at the Liberal Party headquarters saying, “Get the research in. We’re still not there in Collie. What are we going to do? Let’s pull some more money out.” So we got \$7 million for the high school.

Neither of those amounts of money is in this budget. It took five months—between the state election and the budget—for the government to walk away from that promise. Of course when the Liberal Party made those promises during the election, Mick Murray—because he is a good local member—knew that the Liberal Party would not be able to deliver on them. We therefore put those messages out there. He knew that the \$7 million would never materialise for the high school. He knew that there would be no \$18 million for the Millbridge bridge. Guess who was right? Guess who actually knows what is going on on the ground in their electorate? It is not the Liberal Party. I do not know how any member of the Liberal Party can drive through those communities now. How do Liberal members look people in the eye? It is the same question that Hon Sue Ellery was asking Hon Peter Collier in question time today. When the Liberal Party members have broken promises like this, how do they go back and explain to those communities what they have done?

I said there were three figures. We had \$18 million for the Millbridge bridge—gone, red pencil, out of the budget. We had \$7 million for Collie Senior High School—gone, no mention of it in this budget. But there is another figure: \$330 million on the Muja power station; \$330 million that the government has just blown away in the wind. The government might just as well have taken sacks full of money and stood at the Narrows Bridge and emptied them all out. In fact that would have been better, because now that we have plastic money, we could have fished it out of the river and spent it on other things.

Hon Samantha Rowe: That is what affected the Greens—pouring money into the river with the foreshore plan.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: Pouring money into the river with the foreshore plan, absolutely! That is what all this boils down to. It is a question about the government's priorities. We therefore sit here in this chamber looking at a government that is prepared to go out into the community and buy votes with promises of \$18 million for a bridge here and \$7 million for a high school there; and almost five months later to the day those promises are just in tatters. What does that do when we compare that with \$330 million worth of lost money? What does that buy the government? It would almost pay for the whole of the waterfront project, which I think is around \$400 million.

In answer to the question about what sort of budget this is, we need to look at who misses out. Clearly the electorate of Collie–Preston misses out, because for every person who did not want the Millbridge bridge as they thought it would make a rat run of their suburb, half the community actually thought it was a good idea. So, they have missed out. There is a very, very long list of people who have missed out. I could talk about the Ignite Basketball program, which must cause the government some grief. Hon Phil Edman often gets up in this place and talks about the good ways to spend money to keep kids out of trouble, yet the Ignite Basketball program is going to the wall because it has been pushed from department to department and section to section; nobody will pick up the cost of it. Clearly a whole bunch of kids there will miss out.

Let us look at the Western Australian Council of Social Service “2013 Cost of Living Report” that came out recently. There is a reference in that report to a national figure, which is actually an Australian Council of Social Service figure, on the number of children in Australia who live in poverty; 575 000 children in Australia live in poverty. I am asking the government the question: who misses out when the government is prepared to put its name to a budget that breaks basic promises with which it bought votes, yet does nothing to address children all over the state living in poverty?

I particularly noted the contribution to this same debate in the other place when the new member for Kimberley, Josie Farrer, talked about a number of her constituents who were camped out in bushland in, I think it was, Mirrabooka. There was an article in the *Eastern Reporter* about the number of Aboriginal people from the Kimberley who were camped out in bushland because all the Aboriginal hostels were filled and had no room left in them. These people had come from the Kimberley because they had sickness in their families, and Aboriginal people often bring others with them. I was with the Minister for Disability Services tonight at a function for the Parliamentary Friends of Disability Reform. We heard two very moving stories from young men who had had catastrophic injuries. Both of them made particular mention of the fact that all the way through their months and months and months of rehabilitation they had their families with them, bathing them, feeding them, encouraging them and helping them stay sane essentially.

Aboriginal people do the same thing—surprise, surprise! They come to Perth because that is the only way they can access medical services and when they get here, there is nowhere for them to go, so they camp in bushland. Josie Farrer, the member for Kimberley, talked about that and held up the article from the newspaper. She took an interjection that she got from the Premier. She talked to the Treasurer and the Premier and asked them to come with her to her electorate and talk to these families about what was happening to them. When she raised the article in the *Eastern Reporter*, she was interjected on by the Premier, who said that it was not fair, that it was not just a problem in the Kimberley and that there were people sleeping in the bushes in the electorate of Cottesloe. What an extraordinary interjection!

Hon Samantha Rowe: That's all right then!

Hon Michael Mischin: Of course back when you were in government none of that ever happened!

Hon SALLY TALBOT: That just does not cut it, Hon Michael Mischin.

Hon Michael Mischin: Everyone was happily housed and there was never any shortage of housing.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: So, does that make it okay?

Hon Michael Mischin: No, it does not, but it is a problem that can't be quickly solved; that's all.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: That is the clue, is it not? That is the key. It does not make it okay.

Hon Michael Mischin: No, it doesn't, but you are being self-righteous about it to suggest that the problem can be solved overnight.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: Members opposite have been in government now for five years.

Hon Michael Mischin: And you were in government for eight years.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: Five years the government has had to fix it—not five minutes, five weeks or five months.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order, members! A little bit of interjection is fine but keep your comments through the Chair.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: Thank you, Madam Deputy President, I shall direct my comments to you.

Five years this government has had to fix it, yet we got that extraordinary interjection from the Premier. Presumably he must have regretted it when he heard what had come out of his mouth. What was the point of saying it? The member for Kimberley then asked him whether any of them were Aboriginal people and he said that some of them were but that some of them were white. What is this about? Is it okay to have people living in bushland because there is nowhere for them to go? I do not think it is.

I went to another report to get a Western Australian read on that figure of 575 000 children Australia-wide living in poverty. I will share with honourable members a short extract from “The State of Western Australia’s Children and Young People—Edition One” report prepared in February 2012 by the Commissioner for Children and Young People. I refer to a section on page 12 in the executive summary. If anyone is interested in following this up, they can go to the substance of the report, which is a couple of hundred pages long. Under the heading of “Homelessness”, the report states —

In 2010 around 8,400 children in WA were members of homeless families who sought support from service providers. Data shows that the rate of Western Australian children under 18 years who are with a parent seeking housing support increased from 127 per 10,000 in 2006–07 to 158 per 10,000 in 2009–10.

The instability and chaotic nature of homelessness can have profound effects on a child’s physical health, psychological development and academic achievement. Significantly, nearly 45 per cent of WA children from homeless families are aged 0 to four years, meaning these children are at increased risk at a very important time in their development.

I do not have figures for 2013. In 2010, 8 400 children were homeless in Western Australia. Where are the measures in this budget to address that? They are simply not there. They are not even hidden away; they are not even detectable in mysterious line items such as “program rationalisation”. They are simply not there. What is this government assuming? Is it that homeless children do not vote so it does not have to deliver services for them? These are the people who have missed out in this budget. As I say, it is a very long list and I promised not to seek additional time, but I want to make one comment about a program I came across the other day for the first time called the Yellow Bird project. A woman called Marjorie Cawhou runs it, but, like many others in our community Marjorie has just run out of funding. I rang Marjorie and asked her to give me more details about the service. She has opened a shopfront in Midland shopping centre.

Hon Alyssa Hayden: Centrepont Midland Shopping Centre.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: Yes. With two staffers she is providing basic information technology help to people who are mentally ill, homeless, disabled in some way, elderly or depressed. It does not matter who they are; they can walk into Marjorie’s shop in Midland and she will give them a hand with what they need to sort out. I asked who the people were and what were the problems. She said, “The problem is we don’t fit into any of these baskets.” If ever there was an example of silo government thinking, this surely has to be it. We could use Ignite as an example, but why not use the Yellow Bird project. Listen to the people Marjorie has serviced. All the names have been changed so I will read from the document Marjorie has given me —

Extract from Hansard

[COUNCIL — Tuesday, 10 September 2013]

p3635d-3655a

Hon Stephen Dawson; Deputy President; Hon Dave Grills; Hon Dr Sally Talbot

Veronica (57) was introduced to us by the SAMHS HOST team. Veronica lives in a hostel in Midland. She is mainly interested in religious programs on YouTube but she also enjoys watching documentaries, politics and cooking. In the two years she has been coming to us she has not really progressed in learning how to get around the computer and the internet, but she persists in trying, and enjoys the experience.

Yellow Bird has run out of money; the Mental Health Commission said it could not help them and the Office of Multicultural Interests said it could not help. It has fallen between the stools—crash, bang—on the ground. I refer to another one —

Leonard (62). A regular visitor, Leonard lives in a hostel in Koongamia. He is mainly interested in news, documentaries and music. He has now obtained his own netbook which he uses at the hostel, and this allows him access to programs and news that he was not able to watch in the past. We have also enabled him to access information about his rights with regard to his “trustee” and this has increased his choice and confidence about how his life is managed.

Why would the government not fund a program like that? I simply cannot understand it. As I said earlier in my speech, \$600 000 was not very much money for emergency relief. Marjorie was looking, basically, for the rent of a property—that is, for about \$50 000—to keep going, and this government would not give it to her. The amount of \$330 million has been just thrown away on Muja AB, yet these people have run out of assistance. I will read one more —

Ian (38) came to us through the HCSG Inc Drop-In centre program. Initially, Ian was very reluctant computer user, but quickly engaged with Facebook and later other programs. When we first knew him he was quite isolated but became good friends with several of the younger people who come to YB, and then, through Facebook with his relatives.

When I talked to Marjorie she said, “You know, like the problem is that not enough of our people are sick enough for the government to give us a couple of thousand dollars.” That is what it boiled down to. I said to her, “But Marjorie, maybe one of the reasons the people who walk through the doors are not sick is because they come to you.” That is the reality, yet we have a government that is happily driving us into more and more debt, happily pushing up the prices of utilities and the cost of public transport. Yet people who are desperately in need—homeless children like Veronica, Leonard and Ian who got just a little bit of assistance from a tiny little program running out of a little shop in Midland—have been left high and dry by this government.

Hon Alyssa Hayden: Let them know they can go to the Midland Public Library and get the same service.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: It is just not fair and the community knows it is not fair. We know it is not fair and we will continue to take it up to members.

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Hon Peter Collier (Leader of the House)**.