

HOMELESSNESS — THE BEACON

554. Mrs L.M. HARVEY to the Premier:

I have a supplementary question. Can the Premier explain why his government's list of highest priorities, "Our Priorities: Sharing Prosperity", does not contain a single reference to addressing the issue of homelessness?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

The government has \$90 million in the budget each year to deal with homelessness issues. As the minister outlined, we are shortly to launch a 10-year homelessness strategy for the first time ever in the history of Western Australia, and we have a whole range of initiatives that we are putting in place, in conjunction with other organisations, to deal with this particular issue. As members will know, it is a complex issue and not one that lends itself to simple or easy solutions. That is why government working with non-government organisations is very important.

On Friday night, for instance, I was at a fundraising event for a homelessness charity with the member for Balcatta and Hon Anne Aly, in support of that particular charity. We are also working with the City of Perth. As we know, the City of Perth now has new leadership and it is aware that there is a responsibility on the part of the City of Perth to deal with homelessness and rough sleeping in the City of Perth. A whole range of new measures are being put in place by the City of Perth.

I think it would be better for the opposition if it stopped asking silly and immature questions and actually dealt with this important issue in a mature and sensible fashion.