

POLICE — SOUTH EAST METROPOLITAN POLICE DISTRICT — COMMUNITY SAFETY

64. Mrs G.J. GODFREY to the Minister for Police:

As the minister knows, crime in my electorate of Belmont is an ongoing issue for my constituents. With this in mind, can the minister please advise the house what the Liberal–National government is planning to do to improve community safety in the south east metropolitan police district, and what are some of the policing issues people have raised in the area?

Mrs L.M. HARVEY replied:

I thank the member for Belmont for the question.

As the member for Belmont is aware, her electorate is within the south east metropolitan district, and that district stretches from Burswood all the way through to Armadale encompassing also —

Dr A.D. Buti: It's a big district, a big area.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Member for Armadale, I have recently sent you a letter.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Right! It would be good if members allowed the minister to try to answer the question. There are further questions that members can ask so let the minister answer this question.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Just to address the interjection of the member for Armadale, I recently sent him a letter offering him a full briefing on how policing occurs in his area, and I hope he takes me up on it, because some of the utter nonsense that he mentioned on the radio proves to me that he has no idea about how policing occurs in his precinct.

Dr A.D. Buti interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member!

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: The south east metropolitan district does indeed present some policing challenges. It accounts for 19 per cent of total reported crime for the metropolitan area. Our response to that as a government was to commit \$282 million during the election campaign to provide additional resources to police. This will account for 550 additional police officers in a targeted approach. Sixty-seven million dollars of that will go towards infrastructure upgrades to allow for expansion of police infrastructure to house these officers.

Dr A.D. Buti: But you said that's not important.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I am pleased to have the member for Armadale's interjection because I would like to remind him —

Dr A.D. Buti interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Armadale, I call you to order for the first time. Minister, can you please answer the question that was posed to you, and if the member for Armadale wants to ask a question, he can ask a question. I do not want this banter between you and the member for Armadale.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I think a very interesting proposal has been put forward. The member for Armadale has been out in the community recently advocating for a 24-hour police station in Armadale.

Dr A.D. Buti interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Armadale! Minister, I ask you to answer the question that was asked of you and not to engage in banter with the member for Armadale. If the member for Armadale wants to ask you another question he can do so, so please answer the question.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I was actually trying to highlight that our government has made a commitment —

Mr P.B. Watson interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Albany, I call you to order for the first time.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Our commitment was for \$67 million to help accommodate infrastructure upgrades, particularly through the south east metropolitan corridor, to allow for accommodation for our officers as part of our growth program for our police force. The electorate indeed endorsed our law and order commitments resoundingly in the election, because our law and order commitments were fashioned around our community consultation across various regions of the metropolitan area and the state. We responded to what the community was calling for.

Mr J.R. Quigley: You didn't respond to what Butler was calling for—a 24-hour police station.

The SPEAKER: Member for Butler!

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: It is quite important that I address this myth that a 24-hour counter service will help solve crime—the issues of crime and law and order—in people’s districts.

Several members interjected.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: The member for Armadale might actually want to get his facts straight before he tweets that the station is closed.

Dr A.D. Buti interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Butler! Member for Armadale! Can the minister please answer the question and get back to the point, and if those members want to ask further questions they can.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Some members in this place seem to think that having a 24-hour counter service at a police station will somehow improve police response times. When people need police officers in this state —

Several members interjected.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I am absolutely addressing the question of the member for Belmont. The member for Belmont asked me what our government is doing about improving policing in the south east metropolitan district, and I am trying to say what we are doing.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: We are committed to improving police response times and that is not linked in any way, shape or form to providing additional customer service hours in 24-hour police stations. When people need police —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: When people need police they can call 000 or 131 444 and —

Mr J.R. Quigley interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Butler, I call you to order now for the third time; we cannot hear a word that the minister is saying. And minister, can you please wind up your answer?

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: A person calls for police and the police come to the person who has called for their assistance. That is the service that we are trying to provide and that is why we are increasing our police strength by 550 officers. Just to set the record straight, Cannington Police Station, which is the 24-hour police station for the south east metropolitan area, was closed over the weekend while we increased our generator capacity to ensure that we have electricity generator backup support should there be a power failure, so that the south east metropolitan district could still run from the Cannington 24-hour police station. As part of this staged closure of that police station, so that we could better fit it to cope with the demands in south east metro, we transferred the 24-hour district offices to the Kensington Police Station over the weekend so that there was still a 24-hour police station in the south east metropolitan district. To be clear, 24-hour policing occurs out of every police station in our metropolitan area. But the counters are not open because when people need police, they call for them. They do not go running to a police station and knock on the door.

To finalise, I would like to say that we were very forthright in our commitment to police and capital investment during our election campaign. What did the Labor Party commit to in the south east metropolitan area?

The SPEAKER: Minister, can you please wind this up.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Minister, I think you have had enough time.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I have one more sentence.

The SPEAKER: One more sentence and that is it.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: We committed to police officers and bricks and mortar; members opposite committed to raise with the police commissioner the possibility of expanding the Armadale Police Station.

Mr B.S. Wyatt: Where are your police in schools?

The SPEAKER: Member for Victoria Park, I call to you order for the second time.