



Speech by

CARRYN SULLIVAN

MEMBER FOR PUMICESTONE

Hansard 30 October 2001

POLICE RESOURCES

Mrs CARRYN SULLIVAN (Pumicestone—ALP) (11.55 a.m.): I would like to share with honourable members the commitment of the Beattie government with regard to the safety of the people of Queensland. The member for Noosa has already highlighted recently her keen interest in community safety, particularly with reference to policing issues on the Sunshine Coast, and I share her interest within the Pumicestone electorate.

I, like the member for Noosa, receive complaints from the public and stories from victims of crime, and their main concerns are about the perception of there not being enough police in the area where they live and that they want quicker response times. Because of these perceptions, I am appalled at the recent action of the Mayor of the Caboolture Shire Council requesting the council to contact the local police to evict a councillor for whom I have a great deal of respect and in whom I have absolute faith.

Councillor Lynette Devereaux, an experienced councillor of some 11 years, was threatened with these bullying tactics after a notice of motion that she had handed in to council some five weeks beforehand was deemed illegal by the CEO on the day she was to speak to it in council. Cr Devereaux told fellow councillors that she had had a deluge of complaints about recent hikes in dump fees and she was simply bringing their concerns to the council to debate them. That is her job and she was prevented from representing her ratepayers.

At this point I will say that I support both her and Councillor John McNaught's fight to reduce the dump fees. Had Councillor Devereaux been abusive, either verbally or physically, councillors' actions would have been warranted. However, all she did was use the 'm' word. That is right; the 'm' word. She told the mayor in open council that the decision of council to gag debate made a mockery of democracy. And because she refused to retract it, the police were called.

All elected representatives must have the opportunity to represent the concerns of the people who put them there without fear of being threatened with forcible ejection. And I hope that these tactics will never be used again. The use of police in this matter is what many consider a disgraceful waste of state government resources.

I am pleased to announce that funding has been allocated for an extra police officer for the Bribie Island station. This brings the total to nine and will ease the busy times on the island, Sandstone Point, Godwin Beach and Ningi. There has been constant lobbying via the electorate office from constituents to the Minister for Police, through me, and we were delighted with the news. We are looking forward to the appointment being filled prior to the Christmas holidays. I take this opportunity to farewell Sergeant Allan Darby and wish him well in his retirement from the Queensland Police Service. He visited me at the electorate office each month, where we were able to discuss local policing issues. I was most grateful for his time in keeping me informed. His position at Bribie Island station will also be filled before the Christmas holidays.

This increase to local police numbers follows other positive steps that the Beattie government has taken to curb crime. The establishment of traffic response teams as part of the State Traffic Task Force will be available to help with the escalating problems of hooning. The Beattie government is listening to people's concerns. The commitment of also initiating 16 new tactical crime squads throughout the state during its second term shows that the real issues are being tackled.

Police play a vital role in society and any assistance they receive in helping prevent crime is very much appreciated. The valuable assistance of Neighbourhood Watch groups in communities does not go unnoticed. They consist entirely of volunteers who are ever vigilant in preventing crime in their neighbourhoods. Their aim is to improve the quality of life in their areas so that people feel safer in their homes and on the streets.

I am fortunate in Pumicestone to have a number of well run neighbourhood watches, and most area coordinators visit the office regularly to supply their monthly informative newsletter. I attend meetings when I can and so does a representative of the police, either from the Bribie or Caboolture station. Because of this regular contact, I have been able to get to know some coordinators very well. Mr Ray Bliss from Bongaree; Bill Burns from Bellara; Norm Shoveller from Beachmere; and Les Duncan from Toorbul are all regular visitors to the office and are a wealth of community information. I have also had the pleasure of meeting Jennie Mitchell from Banksia Beach; Arthur Hirst from Ningi; and Mark Earner from Woorim. They are all passionate about their community role, but they would like to see more people join their neighbourhood watches to make them even more effective. I am proud to know these people and the hundreds of other volunteers involved in the safety of residents. They deserve our heartfelt thanks for the effort and hours that they put into their work.
