MAYORAL MINUTE

MM-1 MAYORAL MINUTE - CRIME PREVENTION - RESPONSES FROM ELECTION CANDIDATES

Summary: The purpose of this Mayoral Minute is to provide Councillors with responses from State election candidates in regards what resources they will commit to crime prevention in the region if they are successful in the upcoming election.

Recommendation

That Council receive and note the attached responses from candidates in the upcoming State Government election.

Report

At the Ordinary Council Meeting of Council held on Monday 25 February 2019 the following was resolved:

That Council:

a immediately take steps to establish a Crime Prevention Working Group

b receive a further report including the proposed Terms of Reference, membership and confirmation of support for the initiative from key agencies

c write to all State Government candidates to seek commitment on what resources they will commit to the region if successful before the next Council Meeting on 11 March 2019

This Mayoral Minute is being presented to address part (c) of the resolution.

Attached are the responses that have been received.

Financial Implications

N/A

Policy and Legislation

N/A

Link to Strategic Plan

Safe and Healthy Community

Objective: We are safe
Outcome: We promote safety and safe behaviours
Risk Management Issues for Council

N/A

Internal / External Consultation

N/A

Attachments

1. Response letter - Dr Joe McGirr
2. Response letter - Mackenna Powell
3. Response letter - Ray Goodlass
4. Response letter - Seb McDonagh
5. Response letter - Colin Taggart
Ref: jmg.19/24

21 February 2019

Cr Greg Conkey OAM
Mayor
Wagga Wagga City Council
PO Box 20
Wagga Wagga NSW 2650

Email: cox.elizabeth@wagga.nsw.gov.au

Dear Greg

Crime Committee

Thank you for your letter dated 20 February 2019 regarding your proposal to establish a Crime Prevention Working Group.

I believe that it is also extremely important to involve the relevant state government agencies and I have discussed this matter with James Bolton, the Riverina Murray Director of the Department of Premier & Cabinet. I have also raised this matter directly with the Premier.

If I can assist in any way to facilitate this please let me know.

I think this is an important initiative for the community.

Yours sincerely

Dr Joe McGirr, MP
Member for Wagga Wagga

64 Baylis Street, Wagga Wagga NSW 2650
P (02) 6921 1622 F (02) 6921 4424
E wagga@parliament.nsw.gov.au
www.joemcgirr.com.au
6 March 2019

Cr Greg Conkey
Mayor
PO Box 20
WAGGA WAGGA NSW 2650

Email: mayor@wagga.nsw.gov.au

Dear Greg,

I refer to your correspondence of 26 February 2019, regarding the Crime Prevention Working Group.

Fixing crime in our region is not just about having more police officers on the ground, although I note the NSW Government’s commitment to 1500 more police officers across NSW over the next four years. It is also about engaging with our youth through other stakeholders such as PCYC, schools and education providers and other support services. The NSW Government’s promise for the next election term of a Regional Youth Minister is directly in line with my commitment to the youth in our region.

A major commitment of my campaign has been to establish a 24 Hour Drug, Alcohol and Domestic Violence centre in our region. To ensure access to services at all times and in an effort to combat the severity of these issues in our communities. I will continue to advocate for this facility via my petition to parliament regardless of the outcome on March 23.

I am committed to working closely with all stakeholders, including community members and youth, police, PCYC, mental health and other health workers, education providers, support services and others, to ensure that we can reduce crime in our area and all community members can feel safe.

Yours faithfully

Mackenna Powell
for The Nationals
CRIME PREVENTION WORKING GROUP

Response from Ray Goodlass, Greens Candidate for Wagga Wagga

The Greens NSW will provide resources to fund a just and effective criminal justice system that protects the community, reduces the social impacts of crime, addresses the causes of crime, protects the human rights of victims, suspects and perpetrators and offers a range of interventions in addition to loss of liberty.

It will be based on a rational, evidence-based, non-emotive approach to issues rather than on simplistic ‘law and order’ campaigns.

We will provide funding to ensure that local police forces are fully resourced to respond to the challenges facing them, based on population size and the local crime rate.

However, we believe that crime cannot be effectively addressed by concentrating only on policing.

At the core of our policy is "Justice Reinvestment", whereby money that would have been spent on the prison system is reinvested in programs and services in communities to address the underlying causes of crime and reduce re-offending.

However, in more detail we will provide resources that will prioritise programs that promote:

- A reduction in the likelihood of entry into the criminal justice;
- Alternatives to imprisonment that are widely available and not subject to geographic limitations
- Prevention strategies, including:
  - access to education, training and work opportunities
  - drug and alcohol treatment and rehabilitation centres
  - breaking the cycle of social disadvantage that may result in child abuse and neglect;
- Specific services for Indigenous Australians, people from Non-English Speaking Backgrounds, people with mental illness and people with disabilities;
- Early intervention programs, such as community based residential, counselling and other support services;
- Post release services to prevent re-offending;
- Restriction of the excessive availability of alcohol and liquor outlets.
- Introduction of an adequately funded and integrated approach to combating domestic violence and sexual assault, with services available throughout the state.
• Ongoing education of the public, the police, and the judiciary regarding domestic violence.
• Introduction of specific programs to combat hate crimes against people on the basis of their race, religion, gender identity or sexual orientation.
• Continue to support a well-resourced and independent Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research.
• Implement drug law reform in keeping with harm minimisation principles to reduce crime.
• Support trials of “justice reinvestment” in disadvantaged communities in NSW, whereby money that would have been spent on the prison system is reinvested in programs and services in communities to address the underlying causes of crime and reduce re-offending.
• Support the ongoing provision and expansion of safe proclaimed places for drug- and alcohol-affected persons.

Sincerely,

Ray Goodlass

Greens candidate for Wagga Wagga.
Good afternoon

I am supportive against of community education and initiatives in crime prevention. Due to the pace of the election I will not be able to delve into these issues in great depth keeping in mind the submission date.

There are a number of different types of crime in our region and the reasons for that crime are varied. These causes of crime range from opportunistic through to planned and targeted crime.

I am working with Wayne Deaner from Neighbourhood Watch and the police to see how we can improve awareness in the community of things that can be done to prevent crime or reduce the incidence of recurrent offenders.

The current issue of repeat offenders is I feel beyond council and the proposed committees responsibility. I would see councils role to include more of an educational role and that to facilitate the interaction between various interest groups who would be on the committee. I would foresee these groups as including representation from and I must say that this is a non exclusive list, local people, police, Family and Community services and Juvenile Justice.

I am also concerned that we do not spread unnecessary fear in the community. It is easy to play the politics of fear particularly coming up to the state election. I was at a Neighbourhood watch function last night and was saddened to see people carrying personal alert systems due to their fear of something happening. Is the rate of crime in our community really at that stage.

That being said I am happy to do an in depth submission for council once we have been provided with enough detail on what council is proposing, but due to time constraints caused by the election and the time frames of this request I don’t feel I can accurately provide council with the answers they are after in the question submitted.

Regards

Seb McDonagh

Wagga Wagga Candidate

Shooters Fishers and Farmers Party

Mobile: 0413 605 431 | Email: amcdonagh@sfj.net.au | Web: shootersfishersandfarmers.org.au
In regards to the Crime Prevention Working Group strategy being proposed by Wagga Wagga City Council, please find below a few points.

As a community we need to support the Local Area Command, PCYC and Wagga Neighbourhood Watch - initiatives which allow the ratepayers to publicly do that would be welcomed.

Of 820 break-ins for the year up to June 2016, children were responsible for the majority of crime. At that time Wagga Police had backed an online petition for a blanket curfew for kids aged between 12 to 16 between midnight and 6am to curb a spike in crime. The Protection and Parental Responsibility Act gives the police the right to remove children off the streets after dark and return them home to their parents or a halfway house. At some point we have to start speaking out that the parents also have a commitment to know where their children are at that time and to take parental control of their behaviour.


An Act with respect to the responsibility of parents for the behaviour of their children; to enable police to escort certain children from public places to their parents’ residences and other places; to make provision for local crime prevention plans and safer community compacts; to repeal the Children (Parental Responsibility) Act 1994; and for other purposes


**Children (Protection and Parental Responsibility) Act 1997 No. 78 - NSW Legislation**
(1) Rules of court may be made for or with respect to the attendance of parents and children required under this Act to attend a place and undertakings required to be given under this Part.

www.legislation.nsw.gov.au

**Parental Responsibility Laws - Parliament of NSW**
Advice on legislation or legal policy issues contained in this paper is provided for use in parliamentary debate and for related parliamentary purposes.

www.parliament.nsw.gov.au

Orange Councillor Glenn Taylor states that the program had been working for 20 years in the Central West with success. Presently police in Wagga have to wait for youth to commit a crime but in Orange because of the PPRA it gives police the power to remove them off the street before an event potentially happens.
Vandaltrak is a free app that I suggested being utilised. It was launched in Tasmania and has been very successful in tracking graffiti and tagging to see the movements of certain groups that are repeat offenders.

https://vandaltrak.com/graffiti-register/

I also suggested council funding a program where volunteers (often from the mens shed) were supplied with a car and a trailer to remove graffiti. Councils in Western Australia and also Cobar who have a 24 hour removal of graffiti which inhibits vandals from showing off their work. Graffiti is a blight on our community and only encourages certain gangs (for want of a better word) to grow and usurp their so called name and status with youth looking for a group to align themselves with.

Vandaltrak is the game changer. We use GPS coordinates embedded in smartphone images to fix the precise location of each tag. When graffiti incidents are uploaded, they are mapped, cataloged and made accessible in real-time to police investigators, volunteer clean-up groups, utility companies, contractors and councils.

vandaltrak.com

Kind Regards

Colin Taggart