



Speech by

Dr Mark Robinson

MEMBER FOR CLEVELAND

Hansard Thursday, 23 August 2012

NORTH STRADBROKE ISLAND, LAW AND ORDER

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Cleveland—LNP) (2.51 pm): Last sitting week I spoke about the bright future of North Stradbroke Island now that the former government has been removed and we can get Straddie back on track. One of the unfortunate legacies of the former government has been a less than acceptable situation with respect to law and order. The former government failed to adequately deal with the community concerns and fears about violent crime and drugs. In spite of the hard work of the Queensland Police Service and the island's police officers, serious issues were not sufficiently addressed by the former government.

An escalation of crimes in 2012 culminated recently with the burning down of the Dunwich post office and assault of the postmaster's wife, Hetty Conlon. I want to again pay tribute to Brian and Hetty Conlon and the community for the amazing response of warmth and practical care shown towards them. A recent community event on 11 August attracted many hundreds of people, mainly island residents, to the sharks football club, where over \$30,000 was raised to support the Conlons.

Recently, community leaders called a meeting of the community and invited the island's elders, government members, government departmental representatives, the mayor and others to discuss the issues and to look for answers together. I want to acknowledge local residents Bill Giles, Robyn Mortimer and others for their invitation and good work in facilitating the meeting that several hundred people attended. After opening comments by a panel, residents asked questions and received informed answers. I took detailed notes of the questions and comments and committed to the room to take up the issues with the Premier and the relevant ministers. I met with the Premier, the relevant ministers and other departmental representatives this week to discuss the community's concerns. I want to particularly thank the Premier, the Treasurer, the police minister and the minister for Indigenous affairs for their immediate response and for taking action. I also thank the mayor of Redland City Council, Karen Williams, for her keen involvement.

We all recognise that this is a safe and peaceful place and it must not be allowed to deteriorate. Action needs to be taken now. In response to the community concerns, we planned the following action: first, to work with the mayor of Redland City Council and the Queensland Police Service to establish a community safety group to provide better cooperation between the community and the government to prevent and deal with crime; second, to assist the QPS with whatever resources they feel are needed to address the issues and make the community safer, including consideration of additional resources; and, third, to review current youth programs for their effectiveness and see what can be done in that regard. The residents of North Stradbroke Island gave the Newman government a very large mandate to change directions on Straddie, and we intend to fulfil our commitments.