



### PEACHEY BELT

Mr PICCOLO (Light) (15:41): Today I wish to speak in defence of a community within my electorate. This community has been unjustly targeted by various state media outlets to the point where many of the residents living in the locality feel that they have been vilified and made the scapegoat of all the ills in our society today. I can say that an overwhelming majority of residents in the Peachey Belt are proud, that is, they are Peachey Proud.

The media have the right, indeed the responsibility, to highlight problems in our community. Equally, the media also have the responsibility to provide fair and balanced reporting. They do not have the right to 'trash' a community for the sake of a headline. When they 'trash' a community, the wounds take a long time to heal.

The Peachey Belt community has been routinely 'trashed' by some sections of the state media and its residents have been stigmatised as a result. This unfair reporting not only influences how the wider community views the Peachey Belt and its residents but, just as importantly, how local residents see themselves. I am not suggesting that the Peachey Belt has no problems or challenges to face—indeed it does. However, this community is trying very hard to lift itself, so it is very destructive when, as they try to get to their knees, some sections of the media sink the boot in and force them to the ground again.

The greatest losers in this vicious cycle of stigmatisation are the young people who live in the area. How can we expect them to believe in themselves when the rest of the community (as demonstrated through the media) does not? By all means, report the problems, but also report the success stories. The Peachey Belt has been characterised as 'Streets of fear and loathing', but, in reality, when you speak with residents and get to know them, particularly the longstanding residents of the area, you soon learn it is also the 'streets of many successes'.

The recent attack by some sections of the media on the Peachey Belt has drawn an angry response from local residents. I will read excerpts from one letter I have received regarding the recent media report. I believe this letter epitomises how most residents feel. The letter reads as follows:

The negative reporting in this and other articles in the past about this area is of great concern to us.

We [the residents] cannot understand why you would want to do a two-page spread like we saw on Saturday on this area when other suburbs that are in similar circumstances do not get this attention.

It would be lovely if one day we could pick up our papers and see some positive and constructive reporting on this area.

We do have a lot of positives up here and I would like to share some of them with you.

For example, there are various Imagine Peachey projects which are run by a group of residents. The Imagine Peachey group run a community fun day, a newsletter, a radio station and also the information trailer to advise the community.

There is also the Playford Alive Community Reference Group. Again, a group of residents working hard to influence policy for the Playford Alive project. There is a Peachey Belt residents group (which I attend regularly) who work very hard for their community.

There is a Street Proud project where neighbours work together. A new soccer club has been formed in the locality. A number of community projects and club events are being held at the John McVeity Community Centre for all age groups. These are just some of the projects and things happening in this community. This person goes on to say:

I have lived in this area since 1962 and have never needed to or heard from my friends and acquaintances that they needed to ' carry a weapon ' to defend themselves when they leave their homes. Please do not degrade th e area because of a minority element.

Previous governments across the political spectrum have allowed a number of problems to grow in this area—in fact, some of the previous government policies have contributed to the problems—but I am proud to say that this current government, in conjunction with the local council and a number of non-government organisations, has stood up to the challenge to help rebuild this community. New schools are proposed, as are new residential estates, new community facilities, new parks and gardens, new training programs and new family support schemes. This community is looking towards the future. Nobody has the right to drag it into the past; we can all be Peachey proud.