24th May 2005

NAME AND SHAME

The ongoing problem with vandalism, graffiti and property damage must be tackled with a “name and shame” campaign.

Country Liberal Party Shadow Minister for Youth Terry Mills said those who come before our courts charged with senseless vandalism and damage to property should be named and shamed and forced to wear bright tee-shirts featuring “name and shame” while doing community work.

“Naming and shaming is an appropriate response to those who snub their nose at the justice system and treat the values and principles that hold our community together as a joke,” Mr Mills said.

“Too often people feel that justice is not done; publicly naming an offender is an important means to strengthen that notion.

“While shaming for some would be seen only as a humiliating punishment it can unleash the motivation for rehabilitation.

“The families of young offenders who take the view that their children are the responsibility of others may be given a jolt to reality if public naming is likely.

“We need a well rounded approach with carrot and stick to show that we are serious about crime and lawlessness. As shame is a powerful emotion, naming and shaming can be a very effective stick.

“Through shaming a young person learns that his or her action has seriously offended community standards.

“The community needs to see that justice has been done. Naming and shaming is far more than humiliation; it aims to connect the offender with the people they have offended against. It also requires an appropriate form of community service to go to repaying the cost their actions have caused.

“A young offender needs to know that his or her actions have not only affected another person but has violated values and principles that hold our community together.

“This is a harsh response but a tough love approach is often seen that way.”