**News reaches new levels**

**Pollies’ View**

DEBATE about youth services was a cornerstone of last year’s election campaign. “That was an issue Labor and myself have been quite vocal about,” said independent member for Araluen Robyn Lambley.

“Labor, when they were in opposition, promised to reverse some of the decisions made by the CLP Government in terms of cutting youth services.”

The Labor promise came in the form of a pre-election pledge to spend $750,000 a year on after-hours youth services in Alice Springs.

The Advocate understands the allocation of these funds is still being worked through.

Labor did not respond to requests for detail on where the funds would be eventually directed.

In the announcement on August 8, then shadow minister for corrections, Natasha Fyles, said her party would invest in the health and education of children from birth.

“There was a huge amount of optimism around a change of government and now voters are wondering whether it was worth it,” Mrs Lambley said.

“I think the town is crying out for leadership on this issue.”

Mrs Lambley said the annual summer crime was “unacceptable” and happened “despite government policies and the good intentions of the police to fight crime”.

Opposition Leader Gary Higgins said the CLP “would not have tried closing the police front counter during a crime wave”.

**New officers to hit the streets**

Andrea Johnston

TERRITORY Labor says it is delivering on election promises by assigning 18 experienced frontline police officers to tackle youth crime.

“Every Territorian has the right to feel safe and expect their homes, businesses and property to be secure,” Chief Minister Michael Gunner said.

Of the new officers, 12 will be on the beat, supported by six detectives.

They are in addition to the regular police and part of Taskforce Sonoma across the NT, and operation Winx in Alice Springs.

Mr Gunner said the Government was aiming in particular at preventing crime before it happens through youth diversion and early intervention programs and strategies.

“We believe it’s far better to stop a crime before it happens rather than clean up the mess,” he said.

“That’s why this Government is tackling the causes of crime and social dysfunction through a plan to combat alcohol abuse and by investing in the early years and appropriate rehabilitation strategies.”

Deputy Opposition Leader Lia Fiosocharo said Mr Gunner’s announcement did “nothing to solve the unprecedented crime wave” that was hitting Territorians.

“While we wait for the Government’s Youth Justice review and the Royal Commission, the Chief Minister must show some urgency and address now the concerns of citizens, business and victims of crime,” she said.

Labor said it would bring back the banned drinkers register by September this year and limit new take away alcohol licences.

“The NT Labor Government has a four-year recruitment plan to increase Police numbers by 120 over the term of Government,” Mr Gunner said.