Paech slams Elferink stance on YSOS

Sarah Rohweder
COUNCIL REPORTER

ALICE Springs Town Councillor Chaimay Paech has hit back at suggestions his petition calling for the re-establishment of the Youth Street Outreach Service was “misleading”.

In a statement released last week, Children and Families Minister John Elferink said YSOS, which has been dubbed a “bus service”, had failed to achieve lasting outcomes for vulnerable youth.

He said the council was “well within its right to fund and operate the program”.

“This Government must prioritise its spending on services which are effective and relate to the core business of child protection, and it was clear that YSOS was not one of these services."

But Cr Paech said Mr Elferink needed to reassess the current social issues in town, instead of placing them in the “too hard basket”.

"John Elferink just proved he is more interested in making personal attacks than making sure vulnerable young people and the wider community are protected," he said.

"If he says YSOS wasn't working, it was up to him as the minister to fix it.

"I'm doing my job, as a local representative, by bringing the concerns of local residents and businesses to light.""There are hundreds of local residents who have signed the petition and the Government needs to take action.

"John Elferink should get his head out of the clouds and actually get out and talk to members of my community because for those of us who actually live here, we are feeling the loss of the YSOS service."

Day says it’s time to join PUP
Sarah Rohweder

UNSUCCEEDFUL Alice Springs Town Council by-election candidate and youth advocate Matty Day is the latest to sign up to join the Palmer United Party.

He is the sixth Northern Territory identity to join the party in recent weeks, alongside former Country Liberal Party members Alison Anderson, Larissa Lee, Frances Xavier Kurapnpu, Eli Melky and Bredon Earley.

"It's a big decision for myself and my family, but after feeling rather disenchant with the current political representation I could not resist the need to join," Mr Day said.

"There has never been more need to bring accountability to NT politics than right now and I am confident PUP is the force... and will do just that."

"I have never been one to sit on my hands and rely on others to solve the challenges and I am looking forward to helping strengthen and build the new force in NT politics."

"Alison Anderson is a brave and courageous woman who continues to stand up for people and I like to think I can do something to assist."

Mr Day ran his by-election campaign focusing on youth issues and recycling initiatives.

He received the second highest vote behind Kylee Bonann.

PUP's NT Leader Alison Anderson said it was “fantastic news to have a young Territorian on board.”

"Matty has experienced living in Aboriginal communities," she said. "I think he's a good fighter for future generations of Territorians and that is our youth."

Ms Anderson hinted at more sign-ups. "There are a few more to come but we've got to let them out of the bag one by one." she said.

Tourism feels pinch

SHADOW Minister for Territory Assets and Environment Affairs Rob Venakatala has called on the CLP Government to support local tourism businesses.

He said the $3 million cut to marketing in the tourism budget will hit the sector hard.

"The CLP needs to be investing more to support the Territory’s tourism sector, not whacking it with budget cuts," Mr Venakatala said.

"The Government’s own budget shows the Top End had 71000 less visitors this financial year than was estimated in last year’s budget."

"It makes no sense at all to be reducing the marketing budget by $3 million in the current climate."

"It is absolutely crucial that the Territory tourism sector gets the support it deserves."

"I've lost too many friends and family to violence," he said. "The impact on the community is widespread and horrific and yet it still continues."

"We cannot remain silent on this issue and I hope this walk not only raises awareness, but ultimately prevents all forms of violence."

"I want victims, and families of victims, to know there is support and people who care and that help is available."

Price walks for justice

THE Northern Territory’s Minister for Youth Justice joined Derryn Hinch on his Jail to Justice Walk in Melbourne yesterday.

Best price said Mr Hinch created the walk as part protest, part commitment to the cause and also as tribute to the family and friends of victims whose lives have been wrecked by violence.

"I've lost too many friends and family to violence," he said. "The impact on the community is widespread and horrific and yet it still continues."

"We cannot remain silent on this issue and I hope this walk not only raises awareness, but ultimately prevents all forms of violence."

"I want victims, and families of victims, to know there is support and people who care and that help is available."

It’s time to say sorry

YESTERDAY was National Sorry Day, 30th anniversary of the release of the “Bringing Them Home” report.

The Alice Springs Greens in conjunction with the Intervention Rollback Action Group will be holding a forum on Wednesday, May 28 to give an overview of the impacts of the Intervention and Stronger Futures.

Speakers will highlight the issue of the increasing removal of children from their families and culture into foster care or juvenile prisons. The program will include an overview of seven years of intervention and stories from mothers and grandmothers focusing on their children back home.

The forum will be in the Anzac and Venn Room Council Complex at 7pm. More information from 8952 5032.

Party in push for numbers but no deals yet

Sarah Rohweder
POLITICS

PALMER United Party front woman Alison Anderson has vowed to reveal her followers “one-by-one”, raising speculation over who will be next to join her ranks.

The move by Alice Springs local Matty Day to PUP last week has opened the scope for potential prospects.

While information suggests the next PUP member is likely to come from the Top End, political aspirants locally have been sounding out.

It appears the recruitment process has been strategic thus far with the three rebel bush MLAs driving Indigenous policies, the NT Interventions, PUP's sights based on his connection with the Greens and anyone else to help the people of the Northern Territory.

But Mr Cocking said he had “no interest in joining” the party.

“I have an organisation to run and I could do a lot more for my constituents if I was inside the political system like I could inside, to be honest,” he said.

“I am meeting with (Alison), but it’s more about understanding what their policies are around the environment and seeking to get an understanding about where they fit into the political ecosystem.”

ASTC by-election candidate and Eli Melky supporter John Bridgefoot was also asked if he would follow his friend to PUP.

“I can’t answer because I don’t know what PUP represents,” Mr Bridgefoot said.

“I believe (Clive) … will do what is good for PUP and his arguments seem to be quite reasonable but I can’t form an opinion on that.”

Former Alice Springs town councillor Geoff Booth was also suggested to have been in PUP’s sights based on his connections with Eli Melky, but he was quick to shut down the suspicions.

“My issue of becoming an escort agency owner might affect my political career,” he said. “I haven’t given considerations to any options just yet. I’m very busy with work.”

Picture: JUSTIN SIBERT

Matty Day is now a member of the Palmer United Party.