

Question on Notice

No. 1065

Asked on Thursday, 26 November 2020

MS S BOLTON ASKED THE MINISTER FOR COMMUNITIES AND HOUSING, MINISTER FOR DIGITAL ECONOMY AND MINISTER FOR THE ARTS (HON L ENOCH)

QUESTION:

With reference to the critical shortage of rental properties in Noosa, the Sunshine Coast and South East Queensland with many facing homelessness for the first time—

Will the Minister outline what extra emergency measures will be provided to assist in this crisis and a strategy moving forward to address the urgent need for long term affordable accommodations for our workers, retirees and vulnerable residents in these areas?

ANSWER:

I thank the Honourable Member for the question.

The *Housing Construction Jobs Program* is a key initiative of the *Queensland Housing Strategy*, providing a \$1.6 billion investment to deliver more social and affordable housing over 10 years (2017 to 2027) in priority regions across the state. Over the first five years (2017-2022), the Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy has committed to invest \$71 million to deliver 243 new social housing homes in the Sunshine Coast Region (including Noosa), prioritised for the region's anticipated population growth over the 10 years, and supporting 40 full-time industry jobs each year. Since 2017, contracts have been awarded for commencement of 177 new social housing homes in the Sunshine Coast Region, with 83 completed. A further 20 are targeted to have contracts awarded for commencement by June 2021. The department is also actively seeking to acquire land in the region. In Noosa, nine units have been completed. Since the release of the strategy, the department has actively engaged with the Noosa Shire Council to improve housing choice and affordability in the Noosa community.

People who have difficulties accessing the rental market can be assisted through the department's private rental market products and services, including RentConnect, bond loans and rental grants.

In 2020-21, the department allocated \$4,359,109 (GST exclusive) in Homelessness Program funding to six non-government organisations to deliver nine Specialist Homelessness Services in the Sunshine Coast and Noosa Local Government Areas. These Specialist Homelessness Services deliver temporary supported accommodation and other support services to people who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

The Queensland Government has also implemented Coordinated Housing and Homelessness Responses across Queensland, boosted by a \$1.93 million investment. On the Sunshine Coast, Integrated Family and Youth Services Ltd has been funded to employ a Care Coordination Facilitator to promote greater integration of services on the Sunshine Coast and strengthen multi-agency responses for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. A Place-Based Response Team operates on the Sunshine Coast to work directly with service providers to engage and respond to the needs of homeless and vulnerable customers.