

Question on Notice

No. 280

Asked on 22 March 2011

MR SHINE asked the Minister for Community Services and Housing and Minister for Women (MS STRUTHERS)—

QUESTION

Will the Minister outline the reasons why she has agreed to fund the Wilsonton Heights Community Centre for a three year period?

ANSWER

I was happy to approve three year funding totalling \$232,570 for the Wilsonton Heights Community Centre in recognition of the centre's demonstrated capacity to deliver targeted services to identified clients, in line with the Queensland Government's *Toward Q2: Tomorrow's Queensland* vision that providing support and services for communities is of the utmost importance if you want to create fairer, more caring communities in Queensland.

I also agreed with the honourable Member's view that this community could not afford to lose the services provided by the centre and a reduction in or loss of services would have had an unacceptable impact on the well-being of the whole community.

The Queensland Government's investment in the Neighbourhood Centre initiative purchases universal access to a range of community services and an entry point to early intervention services for some of the most vulnerable individuals and families in our communities.

Wilsonton Heights Community Centre has previously received three year establishment funding from the Australian Government in 2007 and operates out of a Department of Communities-owned building.

Under this arrangement, the centre has been staffed on a part-time basis and has been accessed by approximately 100 people a month during its opening hours.

Over the past year, and in preparation for the cessation of Australian Government establishment funding, the Department of Communities has worked with the centre to support its alignment to departmental priorities, including targeting vulnerable client groups and working collaboratively with other service providers.

The centre has forged a close collaborative relationship with the nearby Harlaxton Neighbourhood Centre enabling better use of staff and resources to ensure programs delivered by both services respond to identified community needs.

The three year funding I have now approved will enable Wilsonton Heights Community Centre to continue delivering its services including the Deadly Readers for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their parents and other literacy programs run through Rockville State School, as well as the establishment of a Homework Club for Indigenous children and the formation of an Indigenous Reference Group for the centre.

Both organisations have good track records in supporting their community and this local partnership will help build people's confidence and personal skills.

I thank the honourable Member for his commitment to the delivery of support and services in his electorate and elsewhere across the Queensland.