

Question on Notice

No. 607

Asked on 26 August 2014

MS BARTON ASKED THE MINISTER FOR SCIENCE, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, INNOVATION AND THE ARTS (MR WALKER)—

Will the Minister advise how this year's library grants will benefit the Broadwater Electorate?

ANSWER:

The Queensland Government is committed to supporting public libraries. The State Library of Queensland (SLQ) works in partnership with local government, supporting 320 public libraries Statewide. In 2014–15, \$22.82 million will be invested in collections and services through SLQ's Public Library Grant. Of this, \$1,992,848.51 has been allocated to Gold Coast City Council which maintains 13 library branches – including a branch at Runaway Bay in the Broadwater electorate – and a mobile library serving residents in remote locations. This grant is additional to the library's capital and operating budget which is provided by Gold Coast City Council.

The Public Library Grant cannot be split into expenditure on a single branch as the Council purchases collections for the whole library service. Residents of Broadwater electorate have access to the Gold Coast Library Service's entire collection, including over 686,000 books, journals, newspapers and magazines; 204,000 audio books, DVDs and electronic games; and an extensive and growing collection of 57,000 digital items which can be access 24/7 via the library's online catalogue.

Residents can also request to borrow items through a Statewide interlibrary loan service. Funding provided through the Public Library Grant ensures that local governments maintain high quality collections (81 per cent of items in Queensland's public library collections have been purchased within the last five years) and collections that represent the widest possible coverage of subjects, formats and genres to cater for the diverse needs of the community.

From January 2015, the Broadwater electorate will also benefit from the recently announced *Best Start* family literacy program which is being coordinated by the State Library of Queensland. The Government is providing an additional \$20 million over four years to support stronger language and literacy environments for young children from 0–5 years and their families. In 2014–15, \$470,616 will be allocated to the Gold Coast City Council under the program. *Best Start* will directly support parents and primary caregivers to be confident as the child's first and most important teacher, and will provide parents with increased access to resources they need through public libraries.

In addition to direct grants, State Library supports public libraries through a range of services including Statewide access to ebooks, electronic journals, newspapers and magazines, travelling exhibitions and professional development for library staff.