

## Question on Notice

No. 575

Asked on 15 July 2015

**Mr King** asked the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice (Ms Yvette D'Ath) –

### QUESTION:

Will the Minister advise on changes to youth justice planned under this government?

### ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Kallangur, for his question.

The Government is committed to building a world class youth justice system, which adopts an evidence-based approach and is effective in reducing youth offending.

As the first step in achieving its vision for youth justice, the Government committed, at the 2015 election to repeal previous amendments made to the *Youth Justice Act 1992*, to reinstate Court referred youth justice conferencing and to evaluate youth boot camps.

Implementation of these election commitments represent the start of the Government's plan to transform Queensland's youth justice system into one that addresses the causes of offending, ensures young people are accountable for their actions, achieves positive outcomes for young people and their families, ensures victims are heard and leads to safer and stronger communities.

Reforming the youth justice system forms part of the Government's broader commitment to crime prevention and community safety.

Strategic areas for reform have been identified, which will guide all future work for youth justice and its key partners, these include:

- *Working together to prevent youth crime* by collaborating with government and non-government agencies to ensure that young people have their social, education, safety, accommodation and health needs met;
- *Acting early* to divert young people away from offending before they become entrenched in the criminal justice system and to reconnect young people to a life without crime by addressing their needs; and
- *Supporting change to new behaviours and a positive future* by addressing the underlying causes for offending behaviour and affecting change in young people's environments, through coordinated interventions across government and non-government agencies.

Priority issues that need to be addressed to achieve the vision for youth justice, have also been identified, including:

- developing a suite of actions to reduce the high number of young person's held in detention on remand;
- improving a young person's transition from the justice system back into the community to reduce their re-offending;

- implementing responses to reduce the overrepresentation of indigenous young people in the justice system; and
- implementing a trauma informed care model for working with young people to recognise the high level of trauma that young people have often experienced which then influences their offending behaviours.

Moving forward, my department's strategic platform will be built upon through the development of a whole-of-Government youth justice policy, which will further serve to bridge the gap between justice and welfare related responses to young people in the youth justice system.