

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 1522

asked on Tuesday 30 October 2018

MR A PERRETT ASKED THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND SMALL BUSINESS AND MINISTER FOR TRAINING AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT (HON S FENTIMAN) —

QUESTION:

With reference to the Minister's answer to Question on Notice No. 4 of 2018 regarding the government's delay of now almost four years in granting a lease to the University of the Sunshine Coast (USC) of the empty and unused TAFE building at the Gympie Education precinct, and given that discussions had recommenced almost nine months ago—

Will the Minister advise if (a) a lease has been granted to the USC so that it can increase enrolments and courses on offer at the precinct, (b) a lease will be in place for the start of the 2019 tertiary academic year, (c) the government is contributing to the upgrade of the building given that it has deteriorated under the government's watch and (d) there are any outstanding issues regarding the granting of a lease and if so, what are they?

ANSWER:

The Department has been working closely with USC and the local Council regarding the lease for this property. Given that funds gained from leasing facilities are invested back into the education and training in local Gympie students, the lease proposal represents a reasonable and fair deal which balances the desire of the University to expand its current lease with tax payer expectations of value for money for publicly owned assets.

The Palaszczuk government has committed to contribute \$130,000 towards refurbishing teaching space for USC students, along with the support of the local council and Mayor Curran who committed \$100,000 in August.

The draft lease is currently with USC for review and the University is resisting the terms of the lease, and have recently indicated they are only prepared to enter a peppercorn arrangement. I too am disappointed by the delay.

Regardless of the lease negotiations, which will continue, the University has been advised students will be able to be accommodated for the start of the 2019 academic year.