

Question on Notice

No. 1724

Asked on 15 November 2018

MR T MANDER ASKED DEPUTY PREMIER, TREASURER AND MINISTER FOR ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PARTNERSHIPS (HON J TRAD)—

QUESTION:

Will the Treasurer advise what identifiable progress Treasury has made in pursuing a City Deal for South East Queensland since February 2018, and if there is a timeline for this pursuit?

ANSWER:

City Deals are an initiative of the Australian Government, bringing together all three levels of government to create place-based partnerships to deliver more liveable, sustainable and prosperous cities.

The Queensland Government signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Australian Government in November 2016, and signed the first Australian City Deal in December 2016 for Townsville. We established the Cities Transformation Taskforce (the Taskforce) in mid-2016 to assist with developing and negotiating city deals for Queensland.

A City Deal for South East Queensland is a high priority for both the Queensland Government and the Council of Mayors (SEQ).

Despite that fact that over the past two years there has been considerable instability and four different Ministers responsible for City Deals at the federal level, I have spoken with, or written to, all four ministers during this time with a view to progressing the SEQ City Deal concept.

This year, Lord Mayor Graham Quirk and I wrote to the Honourable Paul Fletcher MP, then Minister responsible for City Deals, on 27 March, met with him on 18 April, and followed up with a letter on 26 May. The Premier also wrote to the former Prime Minister on 18 April reconfirming the Queensland Government's commitment to the MoU and joint development of an SEQ City Deal.

On 7 September, the Lord Mayor and I formally wrote to the fourth Commonwealth Minister responsible for City Deals in two years, the Honourable Alan Tudge MP, Minister for Cities, Urban Infrastructure and Population, seeking a commitment from the Australian Government to commence negotiations towards an SEQ City Deal.

In addition, a delegation of SEQ Mayors met in Canberra with Minister Tudge in September to discuss the proposed City Deal. Following this meeting, Minister Tudge publicly stated: “I was pleased to see the planning and work done by south-east Queensland stakeholders on the submission”.

Nevertheless, and as the Honourable Member would appreciate, the turn-over in federal Ministers has not assisted the ability for the Mayors and I to progress the proposed SEQ City Deal as fast as we might have otherwise preferred.

In the absence of the Australian Government’s formal approval to commence negotiations, the Queensland Government and the Council of Mayors (SEQ) have continued to develop the SEQ City Deal concept.

Whilst there have been numerous activities undertaken to progress the SEQ City Deal, I would highlight the following recent milestones for the Honourable Members’ attention:

- a) In May, I released two key reports which are intended to inform the development of the proposed SEQ City Deal: the *SEQ Economic Foundations Paper* developed by the Taskforce and the *SEQ Benchmarking Report*, prepared by global cities expert, Professor Greg Clark and The Business of Cities.
- b) In June, officers from the Taskforce and Council of Mayors (SEQ) met with officers of the Australian Department of Infrastructure, Regional Development and Cities (DIRDC) to discuss the proposed SEQ City Deal.
- c) In August, Lord Mayor Graham Quirk and I jointly briefed industry on our collaborative approach to developing a City Deal for South East Queensland at a forum hosted by the Infrastructure Association of Queensland.
- d) In September, the Taskforce and Council of Mayors (SEQ) again met with officers of the Australian Department of Infrastructure, Regional Development and Cities (DIRDC) to discuss the proposed SEQ City Deal. This meeting followed the latest changes in federal Ministerial responsibilities.
- e) In September, the Taskforce and Council of Mayors (SEQ) began developing a new piece of work, the *SEQ City Deal Proposition*. When finalised and released, this document will provide an outline of the objectives, focus areas and opportunities that could be explored through an SEQ City Deal.
- f) In October and November, the Taskforce hosted a series of 12 workshops with state and local government officers, as well as a private sector workshop and a forum with university leaders, to develop the *SEQ City Deal Proposition*.

The Queensland Government and the Council of Mayors (SEQ) remain committed to working with the Australian Government towards a City Deal for South East Queensland. We await the Australian Government’s decision about whether they intend to support this important initiative for the future of South East Queensland.