



Minister for Communities and Housing
Minister for Digital Economy
Minister for the Arts

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15 JUL 2021

Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

Neil

I refer to Petition No. 3471-21 titled 'Appropriate location and supervision of troubled tenants in community housing' that was tabled on 15 June 2021 to the Honourable Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland.

The Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy provides homes to some of the most vulnerable people in Queensland, many of whom require additional support to sustain a successful tenancy. Most tenants however, meet their tenancy responsibilities under their tenancy agreement and the *Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008*.

Through the COVID-19 pandemic public health response, the Palaszczuk Government's priority has been the safety and wellbeing of Queenslanders, and we have been focused on the most vulnerable in our community. We have listened to our front-line service partners and responded quickly. On 25 March 2020, the Palaszczuk Government announced the housing and homelessness coronavirus response – a \$24.7 million package to assist vulnerable Queenslanders and support our partners.

Additional funding has been directed to assist people who are experiencing homelessness and are impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic into immediate accommodation with support followed by transition to long-term housing solutions.

The Government's Coordinated and Housing Homelessness Responses – Service Integration Initiative, currently being delivered in nine locations across Queensland including on the Gold Coast, was also leveraged during the pandemic. As part of this critical service, the Gold Coast Care Coordination Group works collaboratively across government and with non-government agencies to deliver person-centred, multi-agency responses for people with complex needs experiencing homelessness, matching them with appropriate housing and support to meet longer term needs.

During peak periods of the COVID-19 pandemic, the use of motels as temporary emergency accommodation increased in the interests of community safety, to protect vulnerable individuals and reduce the risk of infection within the community. On the Gold Coast, longer-term housing solutions have been sourced for these households and the use of motels at this time is limited.

The provision of immediate housing assistance such as motel or hotel accommodation, either directly through the department or indirectly through the department's network of funded Specialist Homelessness Services (SHS), is intended to provide short-term accommodation for individuals and families who are experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness where no other accommodation is available.

Hotels and motels are used as interim responses in emergency situations while our services work with the individuals and families towards longer-term housing solutions. People provided with

temporary accommodation are given support and sign an agreement regarding behaviour expectations as a condition to maintaining that accommodation.

I am advised that the department receives regular advice from SHS about the use of hotels and motels to house vulnerable clients in the Mermaid and Miami local areas. The number of clients supported has steadily decreased and the latest advice is that there were no clients supported in hotels/motels in this area.

Regarding public housing tenants, the department is actively managing complaints in these areas and works closely with complainants and tenants to resolve issues.

The department has a Fair Expectations of Behaviour policy which aims to actively manage disruptive behaviours with a focus on understanding tenants needs, intervening early to investigate a complaint and refer tenants to support services. The policy encourages good behaviour and recognises that it is not reasonable that neighbours and the community experience repeated disruptive behaviour.

Staff have liaised with the Queensland Police Service (QPS) regarding criminal activity in the area and reports indicate that criminal offences decreased in the Mermaid Beach postcode between 1 January and 31 March 2021.

If criminal activity is suspected or anti-social behaviour is witnessed, QPS advise that the appropriate course of action is to contact the Broadbeach Police Station directly on (07) 5581 2800 or dial 000 for emergencies. I encourage specific incidents to be raised directly with QPS.

The Queensland Government is committed to the vision of the *Queensland Housing Strategy 2017-2027* - that every Queenslander has access to a safe, secure and affordable home that meets their needs and enables participation in the social and economic life of our prosperous state. The *Queensland Housing and Homelessness Action Plan 2021-2025* (Action Plan) reaffirms our objective to increase social and affordable homes and to transform the way housing services are delivered.

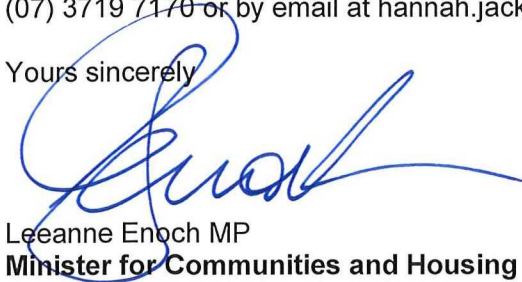
Under the Action Plan, the department commits to:

- co-designing improved housing and homelessness system responses, including integrated service delivery across government and community services, with significant focus on mental health
- increasing housing for people in crisis and assist them to transition into longer-term housing with support
- enhancing coordinated housing and homelessness responses in priority locations
- equipping the government and community sector workforce to enhance contemporary responses to homelessness.

Local activities under the Action Plan will be based on place-based needs and priorities. Local responses are already underway in the Gold Coast area with a new 20 unit properties identified to provide supported accommodation focussing on people that have experienced homelessness. This is a 12-month pilot project that will offer tenants long-term housing with on-site support seven days per week.

If you require further information, please contact my Chief of Staff, Ms Hannah Jackson on telephone (07) 3719 7170 or by email at hannah.jackson@ministerial.qld.gov.au.

Yours sincerely



Leeanne Enoch MP
Minister for Communities and Housing
Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts