

Ministerial Housing Council

Tuesday, 19 February 2019

COMMUNIQUE

On Tuesday 19 February 2019, the Honourable Mick de Brenni MP, Minister for Housing and Public Works, Minister for Digital Technology and Minister for Sport, reconvened the Ministerial Housing Council (the Council) for the first meeting of 2019.

The Council heard first hand experiences from members who have been delivering services and providing support to the Townsville community following the flooding event. The Minister acknowledged the collaborative effort of the sector and government to support impacted people, including social housing tenants, private renters, property owners, the real estate industry and the general community. The Queensland Government is joining forces with the Real Estate Institute of Queensland, the Residential Tenancies Authority and Tenants Queensland to establish a Rental Recovery Hub, a dedicated space where agents and renters can access co-ordinated advice and assistance to resolve their housing situations. Flexible responses are helping to preserve tenancies in the private rental market, respond to increased housing demand and ease pressure on the broader housing market. Members were also advised that North Queenslanders now have easy access to an online North Queensland Flood Register of qualified local contractors ready to help rebuild homes and bolster the North Queensland economy.

The Minister highlighted the significant achievements made in 2018 against the *Queensland Housing Strategy 2017-2027* and thanked members for their contribution and continued support to key initiatives such as the housing legislative reform program and the Open Doors to Renting Reform consultation process. The Council welcomed the appointment of Mr Mick Gooda to the role of First Nations Housing Advisor and acknowledged his significant leadership around consultation and the development of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Action Plan.

The achievements of 2018 provide a solid foundation for the Department of Housing and Public Works (the department) to move forward in 2019. The Council discussed opportunities to support and grow the homelessness and community housing sectors through the *Partnering for Growth* and *Partnering for Impact* initiatives. The Council were invited to be actively involved and the Minister noted that he looks forward to continuing to work with the Council in 2019 on these and other initiatives.

An update was given on the Commonwealth and New South Wales Governments' review of the National Regulatory System Community Housing (NRSCH). A roundtable consultation session involving providers and peak groups is scheduled for 20 February 2019. All interested stakeholders were encouraged to participate in the review. Written submission on the review are open until 15 March 2019.

Dr Michael Fotheringham from the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute delivered a presentation on the Canadian National Housing Strategy, "A place to call home". Members discussed the synergies and differences between the Canadian and Australian housing landscape.

The Council was provided with an update on the Australian Building Codes Board's (ABCB's) Accessible Housing reforms. The ABCB will commence a Regulatory Impact Assessment on minimum accessibility standards for private dwellings following the release of the consultation outcomes report in the first quarter of 2019. On 1 May 2019, the National Construction Code will mandate the inclusion of accessible adult change facilities in significant public buildings, based on the Changing Places standards.

Ms Paige Armstrong, Chief Executive Officer, Queenslanders with Disability Network (QDN) presented an item on housing for people with disability. The Minister recommended a sub-committee of the Ministerial Housing Council be established to bring a set of recommendations for improving housing outcomes for people with disability for consideration at the next meeting.

The Ministerial Housing Council will reconvene in the second quarter of 2019.