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FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-FIFTH PARLIAMENT

Wednesday, 17 August 2016

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Mr MANDER: My question is to the Minister for Housing and Public Works. With so much uncertainty about the future of public housing in Logan, can the minister explain why he is having closed-door meetings with property developers to discuss the sale of government land rather than meeting with social housing tenants like Aunt Betty?

Mr de BRENNI: I thank the member for Everton. It strikes me as curious that the member for Everton and minister at the time did little to jump to the defence of the people of Logan when the then Premier Campbell Newman stood in this place and referred to the people of Logan as bogans. Where was your concern then, member for Everton?

Let me explain to the House why we last week had a meeting with developers to consider the revitalisation and renewal of Logan. We have a plan for Logan that will see revitalisation in partnership with those developers in neighbourhoods and we will do it over a shorter period of time, not over 20 years. The previous government used Logan as a test case for one of the riskiest privatisation of public housing schemes in history. Why we met with developers last week and why we met with the Logan City Council this week and why we will meet with the building and construction industry, our maintenance partners, in weeks to come, and why we will continue to meet with stakeholders and why we will continue to listen to tenants is because our plans are based on partnership models that are tried and tested and proven to work to deliver a mix of modern social housing, private housing and affordable housing. What is important is that there are many people in our community who need a roof over their head. There are many people in our community who need to rely on public housing. There are people in our community who have told us very clearly that they would like to see our government take steps to address affordable housing and our 10-Year Housing Strategy will do that.

At these meetings, on the agenda was opportunities to accelerate development through strategic partnerships delivering achievable outcomes—not fantasy outcomes, not mass privatisation and not giveaways of publicly owned assets. The important thing is that in cities and towns across this state that I have visited, from places like Roma to Mount Isa to Charters Towers to Townsville and Cairns, there are neighbourhoods that offer a very, very similar opportunity to deliver better housing outcomes for those in need and at the same time revitalise those suburbs while at the same time provide construction work opportunities for that sector. What we do in Logan will be a template for redevelopment across this state. Our next steps will involve a market sounding exercise which I expect to see completed soon. Let us not forget that the decision of the previous government in relation to public housing tenants in Logan and across this state was to slam the door shut and throw away the keys.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Burleigh and member for Burnett, you are both warned under standing order 253A for your continual interjections. If you persist I will take the appropriate application.

Barrett Adolescent Centre

Mr KELLY: My question is of the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services. Will the minister advise the House on progress in implementing the recommendations of the Barrett Adolescent Centre Commission of Inquiry and any alternative approaches?

Mr DICK: I thank the member for Greenslopes for his question. As I said yesterday, we are proceeding with the planning stage of the new extended treatment facility for young Queenslanders living with severe and persistent mental illness. We are consulting those families who were affected by the closure of the centre. I am advised they are having a meeting today with the department. I want to ensure the House that we will keep them involved. At least some of the planning already exists because prior to 2012 the then Labor government prepared a costed and funded plan to build a new facility at Redlands to replace the Barrett centre. That is what the commission of inquiry concluded. As the commission of inquiry concluded, there were some obstacles to building a new facility at Redlands but these were not insurmountable. To quote from the commission report at page 49—

There is little doubt that drainage, koalas and other incidental environmental issues were obstacles impeding or delaying the Redlands project. But there is no evidence that they could not be resolved.

There were some issues but, as the inquiry has noted, nothing that could not be resolved. However, what happened when those opposite came into government? The cost cutter in chief for Campbell Newman, the then treasurer and member for Clayfield, required between \$100 million and \$120 million in savings from Queensland Health. The commission found that ultimately it was the minister at the time, the member for Southern Downs, who made the decision to cut the funding for the Redlands project without any consultation with mental health experts or considering the long-term

implications. Most damningly, at page 92 the commission concluded that neither the minister at the time nor any other person—nor any other member, one can infer—of that government accepted responsibility for the decision to cancel the replacement facility.

Mr Springborg interjected.

Mr DICK: They are in denial. I hear the interjections from the member for Southern Downs. They were in denial then and they are in denial now. That state of denial continues, which is evident in an email that my office received this month. In that email, a member of this House asked me—

Please can the Minister advise what residential options are available for children or young people on the Sunshine Coast who are battling with severe depression and in need of treatment in a residential mental health care facility.

I am sorry to inform the member for Maroochydore, who was a member of that government, that there is no facility in Queensland that meets that description. Why? Because the government of which she was a part, the Newman and Nicholls government, closed the Barrett centre without any replacement. I table a copy of that redacted email.

Tabled paper: Email [redacted], dated 4 August 2016, from the member for Maroochydore, Ms Fiona Simpson MP, to the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services, Hon. Cameron Dick, regarding residential mental health care facilities for children or young people on the Sunshine Coast.

I see that those members opposite are still in denial. They are in denial about the actions that they took in government and the very severe and extreme consequences that followed their actions. There is still no apology from the Treasurer who demanded those savings and still no apology from the member for Southern Downs. However, to ask where the replacement is now, even for them, is a very low—

(Time expired)

Moreton Bay Rail Link

Mr POWELL: My question is to the Minister for Transport and the Commonwealth Games. I table a Queensland Rail briefing note dated 15 May 2016.

Tabled paper: Briefing Note from Queensland Rail to the Minister for Transport and the Commonwealth Games, Hon. Stirling Hinchliffe, regarding Moreton Bay Rail Link signalling.

I refer to the briefing note and the contract with Ansaldo STS, which requires the new signalling system to interface with the ETCS. I ask: what is the minister doing to protect taxpayers and enforce the contract with Ansaldo STS?

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I thank the member for the question. The Moreton Bay Rail Link is a vital piece of transport and economic infrastructure for the growing Moreton Bay region. It consists of a 12.6 kilometre dual track passenger rail line between Petrie and Kippa Ring and includes six new rail stations, at Kallangur, Murrumba Downs, Mango Hill, Mango Hill East, Rothwell and Kippa Ring. As the member is very well aware, in May I announced that further work was needed to be completed prior to the commissioning of the new rail line, due to advice I received from QR regarding the signalling system.

The member's question goes to the very heart of what will be occurring into the future with the replacement and how we will deal with the shortcomings of the signalling system that was installed by the contractors under the arrangement with Ansaldo. It was important to get to the heart of and understand the reasons behind the decision making process and the decisions that were made that resulted in the installation of what has turned out to be an inferior product that would not provide integration with our universal train control system across the rest of the Queensland Rail network in South-East Queensland. That system had been installed. It was discovered and identified, as has since been confirmed by independent audit, that it would fail to deliver the 26 signalling instances that would need to occur at one given time, but would only deliver 15. As a consequence, it was identified that the system would not deliver the level of safety and reliability that we expect and that we want to see on this fantastic piece of infrastructure that will deliver for the people of the Moreton Bay region and the people of Queensland.

The member's question comes to the issue of ensuring that we do not lose out for Queenslanders as a result of the error that has been made. That is a very key part of the ongoing consideration of the independent audit that was received by the Department of Premier and Cabinet and is being further considered by the Department of Transport and Main Roads and QR, to ensure that we get the best possible outcome into the future. That clearly involves some commercial issues that need to be dealt with on the basis of negotiation with the contract delivery agent. That is why I look forward to ensuring that the independent audit—