

NEWS

Funding boost for community legal service



MATT HARRIS | 28th Mar 2017 5:02 PM



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GLADSTONE residents will come out winners after an almost \$400,000 funding boost to legal services over the next three years.

It comes after Monday's announcement that the Queensland Government would provide a \$3 million funding boost for vital community legal organisations in the central Queensland region.

The Gladstone Community Legal Program, run by Gladstone Regional Council, will receive \$398,953 in funding beginning on July 1.

Legal centres in Rockhampton and Mackay will receive \$1.7 million and about \$1 million respectively.

The GRC legal program is provided by local law firm Farnsworth Legal with funding from Legal Aid Queensland.

It provides information to the public on a wide range of legal issues, including criminal law, traffic matters, family law, employment law and other matters.

Member for Gladstone Glenn Butcher said the Gladstone Community Legal Program was an invaluable service to so many members of our community.

"My staff and I regularly make referrals to this service and the feedback we receive is overwhelmingly positive," Mr Butcher said.

"Not only does this service offer individuals legal advice and referrals, but they also run a range of community information and education sessions.

"While the Federal Government continues to make cuts to vital community legal services, I am proud to say that the Palaszczuk Government has increased its funding contribution, because we know just how important services like these are to our communities."

Mr Butcher said the State Government had worked in partnership with the sector's peak body, Community Legal Centres Queensland, to develop an evidence-based approach to funding allocations.

Member for Rockhampton Bill Byrne warned that despite Queensland boosting its contribution, there was still a funding shortfall because of the Turnbull Government's decision to slash \$2 million from Queensland's services.

The GCLP was one of 36 community legal assistance services announced in a \$51.3 million State and Commonwealth funding package by Queensland Attorney-General and Minister for Justice Yvette D'Ath.



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