



**Dale Last MP**  
**Member for Burdekin**

Shadow Minister for Police and Corrective Services, Shadow Minister for Fire and Emergency Services  
Shadow Minister for Rural and Regional Affairs

**Burdekin Electorate Office**

Shop 30 Centrepont Arcade

AYR QLD 4807

Tel: 07 4767 0500

Freecall: 1800 817 594

Email: [burdekin@parliament.qld.gov.au](mailto:burdekin@parliament.qld.gov.au)

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**Media Release – Last calls on victims to raise their voice**

Shadow Minister for Police & Corrective Services, Dale Last MP, has called on victims of crime in Townsville/Cairns to nominate for a new forum being convened by the Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council.

The Community Connection Group (CCG) will provide an opportunity for the issues facing communities to be brought to the attention of the Advisory Council who, in turn, provide advice to government on sentencing for offenders.

“It is absolutely essential that victims of crime have input into sentencing,” Mr Last said. “Sentencing is about rehabilitation and deterrence but it is also about recognising the effect of crime on victims.”

“I learnt during my time as a Police Officer that if you want to know the true effect of a crime, you have to listen to victims because, in a lot of cases, it is the victim that carries the true burden emotionally and financially.”

Mr Last said he welcomed the move to provide equal representation on the group for the north and south of the state and said a person’s location was no barrier to playing their part.

“Meetings of the group will be held using video or teleconference technology which will enable a wide range of views,” he said. “By including people from outside the South East, the group and the Advisory Council can get a clearer picture because the types of crime affecting Townsville/Cairns, and the effect of that crime, can be very different to what is happening in Brisbane.”

“Having spent a large portion of my policing career in smaller centres, I’ve seen first-hand how a crime can have a much more profound effect on a small town than the same crime would in a city. As an example if you have a grocery store in a small town closed because it was robbed that means people can’t get groceries without driving for hours but, in the city, you’d just drive a few blocks down the road.”



“Nominating to be a part of the CCG allows people to be a part of ensuring our justice system achieves the goals it needs to in order to make our communities safer and I’d definitely encourage people to consider putting themselves forward.”

**ENDS – Media Contact:** David Cooper (07) 4767 0500 or 0427 834 844

More information is available from [www.sentencingcouncil.qld.gov.au/community/connection-group](http://www.sentencingcouncil.qld.gov.au/community/connection-group) or by phoning 3738 9499 during business hours.