



Dale Last MP
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Media Release – Last calls for additional care in Bowen

Member for Burdekin, Dale Last MP, is calling for the expansion of childcare services in Bowen.

A lack of childcare places in Bowen has meant that parents are needing to take leave to care for their children and, according to Mr Last, the situation could worsen over coming years.

“One member of the community has been able to identify 10 families who have been waiting for vacancies for up to 12 months already,” he said. “I have absolutely no doubt that there are many other families who are facing this problem as well.”

“Issues like this deter families from moving to the area, it prevents people from working and it could quite easily pose a challenge for job-creating projects.”

“Using a few days of leave for the sake of their family is a sacrifice any parent would make but what happens when leave runs out or if you operate a small business? If we have a major project that needs to attract staff, and there is no childcare available, people will think twice before committing to relocating their family and may even decide against moving altogether.”

Mr Last said there was no simple solution but that he would like to see private enterprise show some faith in the future of the town.

“What we really need is for private enterprise to step up to the plate and fulfill the existing need and cater for the future,” Mr Last said. “A large proportion of childcare services are run by private enterprises, and I would like to think that they would see Bowen as offering a great opportunity.”

“In addition to helping people who already work, a new centre would also create direct jobs and that’s another positive. With the Bowen Rail Company expected to ramp up over the coming years, I would think that private enterprise could see the potential for demand to grow.”

“I’d be more than happy to work with any provider who was eager to provide more services in Bowen. As the local member it’s my job to advocate for better services for the entire community.”

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