

Legislative Council

HANSARD

Tuesday 23rd September 2025

Kingston Learning Centre - Long-Term Options

Ms WEBB question to MINISTER for EDUCATION, Ms PALMER

My question is about the long-term future of the Kingston Learning Centre at the site of the old Kingston Primary School. As you're aware, minister, the abrupt closure of two blocks and all the car parking facilities on 22 August caused a serious disruption to a range of community organisations reliant on those affordable facilities, especially U3A, whose term 3 commenced yesterday, on Monday 22 September, I believe.

Minister, in correspondence to me last week, which I appreciated it, you stated the Department for Education, Children and Young People is now exploring the possibility of reopening part of the car park while continuing to investigate long-term options for the site.

My question is: what exactly do you mean by 'investigate longer-term options'? I'm particularly interested to know, are you committed to retaining the Kingston Learning Centre at its present central site at the old Kingston Primary School or are you or your department considering alternatives for that site which would mean the Learning Centre would have to move?

Can you guarantee the necessary refurbishments of the site will occur to facilitate the Kingston Learning Centre remaining there in the long term, for current use?

ANSWER

Mr President, I thank the member for her interest in this matter. The car park was closed by Libraries Tasmania due to a recent safety incident. I'm very mindful of the impact this closure has had on some of our really valued community groups, and I do recognise the disruption that's been caused. These concerns around the disruption have to be really carefully balanced with the obvious need to ensure public safety, which has to be the highest priority.

I know that Libraries Tasmania has worked with the affected client groups, and the vast majority have been able to be accommodated in the two main buildings. As I advised you in my reply to your letter, we have been looking at available options, and a number of options have been presented, quite wide-ranging options, about what we could do there. Where we have settled is that sections of the car park will be reopened this week, allowing access for our valued community groups, while we take a little more time to explore long-term options.

A community consultation session is going to be held with the user groups regarding the reopening of the car park, to make sure that their voices are clearly heard and that they're part of that conversation. At this stage, I'm not aware of any considerations in moving the learning centre.

Ms Webb - In terms of the longer term? My question was about that longer term.

Ms PALMER - I'm not aware of that. I know that we are going to be bringing the community groups together, but the advice that I have is that that is about a long-term solution to the car park.