

Home Department

Thank you for your letter dated 9th June 2015 requesting an update in respect of the Home Department's work in support of the Disability & Inclusion Strategy.

I set out details of the Department's work below and as they relate to Resolution 11 of the 2013 Report (Billet D'Etat XXII).

- a. Contribute to a multi-agency approach to implementing the Strategy where their assistance is required and, in particular, to implement the actions laid out in the timetable;**

The Home Department remains very supportive of all opportunities to work collaboratively in order to achieve positive outcomes for the local community.

- b. Take account of the Strategy when developing strategies, policies, plans, procedures and when making changes to services or capital works;**

In anticipation of the Disability & Inclusion Strategy's development, the Criminal Justice Strategy was designed to feature a specific strategic commitment to "equality of access to justice, including physical access and anti-discriminatory practices." There is an action plan that sits behind this strategic commitment and related to the CJ Strategy's key outcomes. This action plan is the main, though by no means exclusive, interface point for the CJ Strategy and the Disability & Inclusion Strategy. The Head of Policy & Strategy and the Criminal Justice Strategy Coordinator have met with the Disability & Inclusion Strategy Steering Group to invite shared ownership of this action plan and is pleased to acknowledge that this suggestion was favourably received. The Home Department notes, however, that there will be key actions and initiatives that may be considerations for the CJ Strategy in isolation. For example, from an access to justice perspective, individuals for whom English is not their first language will need to be a consideration for the CJ Strategy but not necessarily the Disability & Inclusion Strategy. The Department looks forward to the development and delivery of the CJ Strategy's commitment in conjunction with the Disability & Inclusion Strategy.

- c. Note the requirement to provide for reasonable adjustments under existing budgets, when legislation is introduced."**

The Home Department remains supportive of this requirement.

I should also acknowledge that the Home Department currently has responsibility for delivery of Resolution 8 of the same report, namely "to lead the development

of policies and procedures for safeguarding vulnerable adults in conjunction with other States Departments, reflecting those already in place for children."

Since 2013, the Home Department has sought to administer its own responsibilities under this Resolution by conducting preliminary research into prospective solutions but with it always in mind that key decisions are not Home's to make in isolation in view of the fact that the Health & Social Services Department ("the HSSD") sits on the front line of safeguarding services and is clearly a significant stakeholder within any safeguarding initiative.

At their Business Planning Day on 24th November 2014 Department Members agreed that, in view of the breadth of knowledge and professional expertise within the HSSD, this work-stream could perhaps be best led by the HSSD with the Home Department remaining as a key stakeholder, and also that any research Home conducted whilst appointed lead would be very willingly shared with any prospective new lead in order to put them on a supported footing to move forwards. At the time, the Home Department Board acknowledged that current HSSD Members were new to post following their election on the 29th October 2014, and that the timing may not therefore have been considered opportune for the Home Department to approach the HSSD to ascertain its interest in this proposal.

Acknowledging the positive developments that the HSSD is leading in relation to the safeguarding agenda for children, and also the commitment of resource to the vulnerable adults agenda in the appointment of a new Safeguarding Advisor for Adults, the Home Department remains of the view that lead responsibility for this work may be better placed with the HSSD so that the safeguarding agenda may be seamlessly developed. The Home Department Minister wrote to the HSSD Minister on 22nd May 2015 and it is understood that the HSSD supports this transfer. A Resolution has accordingly be included for debate in the Policy Letter currently being drafted for debate in September.

A staff discussion paper was drafted and shared with the HSSD in respect of how the future of safeguarding vulnerable adults could look. This paper has also been shared and discussed by the Home Department's designated lead officer with the Disability & Inclusion Strategy Steering Group, and comments have also been gratefully received from the Founder and Non-Executive Chair of the Guernsey Disability Alliance. To date a Home Department lead officer has been working closely with the Safeguarding Advisor for the HSSD and also the Director of Environmental Health, by virtue of her lead responsibility for the development of Regulation of Care legislation. This project team continues to scope relevant existing and planned workstreams across the States of Guernsey so that a suitable gaps analysis may be conducted to inform the delivery of the Resolution going forwards. Should the Resolution to transfer lead responsibility to the HSSD be approved, this work will willingly be handed over to the HSSD's designated lead officer to continue.

I trust that the information provided in this letter demonstrates the Home Department's support for the Disability & Inclusion Strategy and its efforts to deliver it.

Deputy F W Quin, Deputy Minister

Housing Department

Thank you for your letter of 9th June 2015 asking for details of the work that the Housing Department has undertaken in relation to the above Strategy.

I am pleased to report that since the Strategy was approved by the States in November 2013 the Department has:

- Opened two extra care housing schemes in St. Martin's and the Vale;
- Changed its social housing eligibility criteria so that more disabled people can access the Department's social rented housing; and
- Revised its allocations policy to 'fast track' applicants with physical and mental disabilities.

To take each in turn:

Extra care housing

At time of writing 26 disabled people, including people with learning disabilities, have moved from Health and Social Services Department accommodation into extra care housing, where they can live more independently. Further are expected as the two schemes expand in 2015 and 2016.

Extra care housing has also been made available to disabled people who were living in the community, either by themselves or with their families.

New eligibility criteria

Now, working age adults with physical disabilities but no dependents are eligible for rented accommodation managed by the Housing Department and the Guernsey Housing Association, as opposed to just the latter.

Revised allocations policy

When they apply for social housing, disabled people living in accommodation which does not meet their needs are now given greater priority than before. In combination with the new rules governing access to Housing Department properties (see above), this has meant that, on average, disabled people are likely to be offered suitable accommodation more quickly than before.