

4.13. Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier of the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding the ‘Adopt a Granny’ Scheme:

Can the Minister inform the Assembly whether she has accepted the ‘Adopt a Granny’ scheme and if so when it will be implemented? For the sake of clarity, it is not that we go out and seek grannies, it is that grannies in schemes run in other cities are matched to young people who, for various reasons, have family issues or no family.

Deputy A.E. Pryke of Trinity (The Minister for Health and Social Services):

I will ask my Assistant Minister, who has responsibility for children, to answer this question.

Deputy J.A. Martin (Assistant Minister for Health and Social Services - rapporteur):

The Deputy has explained the ‘Adopt a Granny’ scheme. The problem in Jersey... and this was mooted to me on a talkback show from 2 different people, one adopting a granny across the scheme of where a normal mother and father of 2 or 3 children struggling may not have a nanny or a granddad, and people will help maybe take the children to the park, things like this, and be an extra relative. Then there was another lady who phoned-in who thought the scheme would be absolutely ideal for vulnerable children. Firstly, we need to decide which scheme we want, or possibly both. We have been looking at this for a year and officers are working on this. The more general scheme matching, like myself all my family on both sides are in the UK, would be hopefully working with the Assistant Minister for Education and somebody like the Jersey Childcare Trust whom will probably identify these families for us.

4.13.1 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

Would the Assistant Minister not acknowledge that while indeed this was brought up on a radio programme a year ago, in fact it has been longer than that and one of the main proponents has told me she is in deep likelihood of becoming a great granny, so could we change the title? Secondly, would the Assistant Minister not acknowledge it is taking far too long, even if there was a difference? Why were not the people interested brought around a table given that at least one of these persons has already recruited volunteers in the hope that the programme would take off.

Deputy J.A. Martin:

I have been in email contact with the person the Deputy talks about and the volunteers were very grateful. We had 2 volunteers. I do not think the Deputy understands. I have also been told that Guernsey have a scheme. Guernsey refute they have a scheme called Adopt a Granny. They have something called Home Star, and they say they would not put this in with vulnerable families because of child protection issues. I do not want to get people round the table. Do we want to do it as a States? Should it be done, I think, in partnership with the private sector and then obviously people who are volunteering out there will have to be trained, they will have to be vetted and we have to decide what scheme we need. I do not say it is too long. The ultimate job for the children’s service is to protect children.