

# Review Panel – Care of Children in Jersey

## Record of Meeting

Date: 24th January 2018

Present	Deputy S.Y. Mézec, Chairman Deputy T.A. Vallois, Vice-Chairman Senator S.C. Ferguson
Apologies	Deputy M.R. Higgins
Absent	
In attendance	Ms J. Taylor-Pointon, Chair, Jersey Association for Family Therapy [Item 3 only] Mr B. Heath, Chief Probation Officer, Vice-Chairman Victim Support Jersey [Item 4 only]  Mr A. Harris, Scrutiny Officer

Ref Back	Agenda matter	Action
<b>511/2/3/1</b>	<b>1. Records of Meetings</b>  The Review Panel noted and approved the minutes from the meeting on 10th January 2018. The Chairman signed them accordingly.	
<b>Item 3 10/01/18 511/2/3</b>	<b>2. Conflict of Interest</b>  No conflicts were declared by Panel members.	
<b>511/2/3</b>	<b>3. Meeting with Jersey Association of Family Therapy</b>  The Review Panel received Ms J. Taylor-Pointon, Chair of the Jersey Association for Family Therapy (JAFT), to discuss the submission made by the organisation.  Ms J. Taylor-Pointon explained that the current response to the Independent Jersey Care Inquiry did not make any reference to the role of health visitors. It was noted that health visitors had access to all children from birth through to 2 years of age, and a Maternal Early-Childhood Sustained Health-visiting (MESCH) scheme was currently being piloted in the Island.  A key concern was that training was not readily available due to the charitable status of the organisations that delivered these services. It was noted that JAFT had provided access to systemic family therapy training over the past 20 years, and recommended that any practitioner who worked with families added this to their 'toolkit'. It was felt that the focus was all too often only on the child, and a whole family approach was integral to building successful relationships and positive outcomes.  It was explained that this training was usually accessed by the individuals paying for it, and discussions were ongoing with the University of Exeter to provide accreditation for a new course. It was noted that the 2002 report by Kathy Bull titled <i>'Review of the Principle, Practices and</i>	

	<p><i>Provision for children and young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties and disorders in the Island of Jersey</i> had recommended six family therapy teams should be operating within the Island. However, funding was removed from the existing team and had yet to be reinstated. This was seen as a retrograde step. It was explained that the Government was responding positively to the IJCI recommendations, however past experience had shown a tendency to focus on ‘flavor of the week’ initiatives that were not sustainable funded, which needed to be avoided.</p> <p>Ms J. Taylor-Pointon explained that she was unaware of the planned Jersey Practice Model which was due to be implemented and create a common framework for working with children and families, however supported the concept.</p> <p>It was noted that housing in the Island was a real barrier to retaining staff, especially those from outside of Jersey, and in turn it was positive that steps were being taken to address this. It was explained that more information needed to be given to Social Workers looking to move and work in Jersey in relation to the difficulties the Island faced. Another key issue was to consider the family situation of any prospective employees and the impact of moving to the Island. It was noted that many Social Workers were women who came to the Island with their partners who were unable to find work. This inevitably ended up with both people leaving the Island.</p> <p>It was suggested that the response to the IJCI should contain reference to Therapeutic Centres for mothers and babies. It was noted that there used to be a mother and baby unit at the Le Chasse site, but this had been ended some time ago.</p> <p>Ms J. Taylor-Pointon noted that the current uncertainty surrounding the Nursery Education Fund (NEF) was unhelpful to families. The initial decision taken by the Minister for Education to introduce means testing for the NEF was a retrograde step and the move to introduce school nurseries was causing private businesses to close. It was noted that the current set-up of the NEF was unsustainable.</p> <p>The Review Panel thanked Ms J. Taylor-Pointon for attending and invited her to submit any further information she felt was relevant to the Panel’s work.</p>	
511/2/3	<p><b>4. Meeting with Victim Support Jersey</b></p> <p>The Review Panel received Mr B. Heath, Vice-Chairman of Victim Support Jersey (VSJ) to discuss the submission made by the organisation.</p> <p>It was noted that the response to the IJCI was a broad subject and as such it was felt more appropriate to speak with the Panel in person, as opposed to submitting a written submission. It was noted that Mr B. Heath had been involved in the Inquiry Response Group, and VSJ had been represented throughout. It was explained that they had been consulted and were very generally supportive of proposals.</p>	

	<p>It was noted that 10 people had accessed the service in respect of support for sexual abuse in 2017, 5 in 2016 and 9 in 2015. It was explained that the service was accessed more during significant trials and events in the island. The States of Jersey Police (SoJP) had been heavily involved in bringing forward initiatives and it was noted that a lot of work had happened prior to the inquiry being reported.</p> <p>It was noted that there were some potential gaps in provision that needed to be covered for child witnesses, post prosecution, which were partly being addressed by Health and Social Services and the NSPCC's 'let the future in' project. It was noted that these services were only focused on sexual abuse victims and victims of other forms of abuse faced significant waiting times to access talking therapies. There was also no designated support for child witnesses offered by VSJ at this time.</p> <p>VSJ had replicated organisations in the United Kingdom in terms of the support it offered, however due to its size it was not as flexible as it could be. It was noted that some cases had slipped through the gaps and the organisation was not always aware of some cases. Logistical problems also occurred when a trial was subject to a quick turnaround, which did not allow the organisation's volunteers to build relationships with the victims.</p> <p>It was explained that the role of VSJ was to support those going through court proceedings, by briefing them on the process, explaining their rights and entitlements and by providing emotional support. It was noted that at no point was the evidence in the case discussed with the witness or victim.</p> <p>Mr B. Heath shared his thoughts on some of the risks to the IJCI response and noted that the proposed children's plan would need to be resourced properly in order for it to be a success. It was also noted that the upcoming election posed a risk and it was important that the new Assembly agreed the children's plan and fully costed it.</p> <p>The Review Panel thanked Mr B. Heath for attending and invited him to submit any further information he felt was relevant to the Panel's work.</p>	
<p><b>Item 4</b> <b>10/01/18</b>  <b>511/2/3/1</b></p>	<p><b>5. Recommendation One: A Commissioner for Children</b></p> <p>The Review Panel recalled its meeting with the Children's Commissioner on Friday 19th January and was impressed with the discussions that had taken place. It was noted that a follow up meeting had been arranged with the Commissioner during the Review Panel's next meeting on 7th February 2018.</p>	<p><b>AH</b></p>
<p><b>Item 5</b> <b>10/01/18</b>  <b>511/2/3/2</b></p>	<p><b>6. Recommendation Two: Giving Children and Young People a Voice</b></p> <p>The Review Panel noted that a meeting with the young people that interviewed the candidates for the role of Children's Commissioner was due to be arranged. The Officer advised that the Jersey Youth Service (JYS) would facilitate this meeting and confirmation was expected from the JYS imminently. It was noted that the meeting would likely take place in the evening owing to the availability of the young people.</p>	<p><b>AH</b></p>

	<p>The Officer advised the Review Panel that the number of children currently being home schooled in the Island was 40, as recorded by the Education Department. The Panel requested that the information be circulated via email.</p> <p>The Review Panel noted that information requested in relation to the Voice and Participation Project (VAPP) had yet to be received and would be followed up by the Officer.</p> <p>A letter was due to be sent to the Chief Minister requesting an update on the new post of Children's Rights Officer. The Officer advised that a draft would be circulated in due course for approval.</p>	<p><b>AH</b></p> <p><b>AH</b></p> <p><b>AH</b></p>
<p><b>Item 6</b> <b>10/01/18</b>  <b>511/2/3/4</b></p>	<p><b>7. Recommendation Four: Building a Sustainable Workforce</b></p> <p>The Review Panel recalled its meeting with Mr C. Parker, Chief Executive of the States of Jersey, and agreed it was a positive meeting.</p> <p>The Review Panel noted that the Chairmen's Committee had established a Review Panel to examine <i>P.1/2018 Draft Machinery of Government (Miscellaneous Amendments) (Jersey) Law 201-</i>.</p> <p>It was noted that a response from the Managing Director of Community and Social Services had been received in relation to questions about the Jersey Practice Model. The Review Panel agreed that it would ask further questions about the model in an upcoming public hearing with the Chief Minister.</p> <p>The Officer advised that written questions relating to health staff, submitted by Deputy M.R. Higgins to the Minister for Health and Social Services, were due to be circulated.</p>	<p><b>AH</b></p> <p><b>AH</b></p>
<p><b>Item 9</b> <b>20/12/17</b>  <b>511/2/3</b></p>	<p><b>8. Panel Reporting</b></p> <p>The Review Panel noted a draft comments paper that was due to be presented to the States Assembly in advance of the in-committee debate on <i>P.108/2017 Independent Jersey Care Inquiry report: implementation of recommendations</i>. The Review Panel agreed changes to the report and the Officer advised that a draft reflecting these changes would be sent out as soon as possible for final approval.</p>	<p><b>AH</b></p>
<p><b>Item 8</b> <b>20/12/17</b>  <b>511/2/3</b></p>	<p><b>9. Public Hearing with the Chief Minister</b></p> <p>The Review Panel noted it was due to hold a public hearing with the Chief Minister on Thursday 8th February at 2:00pm. The Review Panel agreed question areas for the hearing and the Officer advised that a question plan would be circulated for approval.</p>	<p><b>AH</b></p>
<p><b>511/2/3</b></p>	<p><b>10. Meeting with Independent Visitors for Young People</b></p> <p>The Review Panel noted it was due to meet with representatives of the Independent Visitors for Young People on Friday 26th January at 10:00am in the Le Capelain Room, States Building.</p>	
<p><b>511/2/3</b></p>	<p><b>11. Future Meetings</b></p> <p>The Review Panel noted that its next meeting was due to take place at 9:30am on Wednesday 7th February in the Le Capelain Room, States Building.</p>	

	The Review Panel agreed that it would move its meeting on Wednesday 28th February to 2:00pm on Thursday 1st March 2018. The Officer advised that a meeting request would be sent out shortly.	<b>AH</b>
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