

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CHIEF MINISTER
BY DEPUTY G.P. SOUTHERN OF ST. HELIER
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 1st DECEMBER 2015**

Question

When discussing the work of the Grace Trust in delivering support on “in times of the most desperate need” on BBC Radio Jersey on Friday 20th November the Chief Minister stated that “we should not always expect that government will provide that support”. What vision does the Chief Minister have for the role of government and charitable institutions in supporting the vulnerable and the poor in Jersey?

Answer

Charities and voluntary organisations provide support to vulnerable people in our community. That includes, but is not limited to, those whose vulnerabilities arise from their personal circumstances (such as age; health; mental well-being; substance misuse; life experiences) or are as a result of living on a low income.

These organisations are often well placed to reach those in need, in part because some vulnerable people mistrust government and also because the organisations can develop specialist services and adapt more quickly to changing needs.

Government supports such organisations through:

- direct support to individual organisations working in key areas of need
- helping charities and voluntary organisations to flourish - for instance by introducing the Charities Law, by ensuring the success of the Channel Islands Lottery
- providing relevant developmental support - for instance by holding information sharing events

Government provided grants and subsidies to hundreds of organisations in 2014. Some organisations, like Family Nursing and Home Care (£7million in 2014), Les Amis (£2.3million) and the Shelter Trust (£1.1million) are paid to provide valuable services for the community under partnership arrangements.

In addition to supporting such voluntary organisations, the government is responsible for the direct provision of services to vulnerable people (through benefits, mental health provision and social services) and for delivering policies that support vulnerable islanders.

The 2015 to 2018 Strategic Plan sets out a range of actions which aim to address some of the key causes of vulnerability. These include improving the housing stock and providing more social housing; delivering the 1001 Days agenda; bringing forward a disability strategy; investing in education and transforming health and social services for an ageing population.