

Senator S.C. Ferguson  
Chairman Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel  
Scrutiny Office States Greffe Morier House  
St. Helier JE1 1DD

Jim Hopley  
Hon. Chairman Jersey Voluntary and  
Community Sector.  
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By email

February 2014

Dear Senator Ferguson,

### Review of the Interim Population Policy

In response to your letter of 13<sup>th</sup> February 2014 requesting a written submission from the Jersey Voluntary and Community Sector in respect of the new proposed Interim Population Policy, as Honorary Chairman of this body I offer the following observations and concerns. In offering these comments please be aware that in the timescales available there has been no opportunity to gather feelings from the vast bulk of our “membership” (perhaps 800 organisations plus) but these are essentially a distillation of the views of our representative and diverse Committee covering a broad spectrum of the potential depth of the Voluntary and Community Sector.

We, like other organisations who have already publically expressed their views on the issues raised by the proposed policy, do understand the motivation behind what Government is attempting to do and that this is a response to the public’s concern over the Island’s growing population. So, in part, the issue is not about why such a policy is needed but rather about how it might be achieved.

As we understand it, the three key controls planned to secure a net migration of 325 people per year are:

- Businesses (organisations) that have more “permissions” for migrant workers than an average competitor should be focused upon supporting them to recruit more “entitled” / “entitled to work” staff.
- New businesses (organisations) should employ predominantly these types of people.
- Unused permissions for migrants should be removed.

In this context what has this to do with our Sector?

Well, many of the organisations that we represent have been created specifically to serve the interests of our Island community and in some instances the broader world. In this context we believe that instituting such controls may simply lead to economic migrants circumventing the same and there may eventually be ramifications for the JVCS to provide care and support to possible “illegal” immigrants. More worrying in some ways for us are the statistics on an ageing population and whether the organisations in Jersey that might be affected understand the implications and indeed if the bodies we seek to represent are planning for them. Part of our role in the JVCS may

be to help coordinate all such organisations in planning for future strains on their services. Given this situation we have already taken soundings from the Chief Minister's Department in respect of how the proposed Policy will impact on our Sector.

We do agree that wherever possible organisations, including those in the voluntary and community service sector should attempt to recruit locally when it is practical and indeed they should be able to demonstrate that they have indeed done this or at least made all possible efforts to do so. We are concerned however that even within our Sector there are examples of functions for which specific and considerable skills are required - for example, specialist nurses and veterinary nurses. We also appreciate there is an evolving Skills Strategy which over time might bring these skills to local people but it is early days and we do have some way to go at this time. Therefore licences are important to voluntary organisations, such as Family Nursing and Home Care, Jersey Hospice Care, the Cheshire Home and indeed the JSPCA, and are critical if services are to be developed and maintained. In the context of where there is repeated reference in the HSSD White Paper on a "greater role for the Third Sector" this demonstrates the point. Thus new permissions for specialist staff might well be needed by voluntary and community service organisations to provide these new expanded desirable services where the necessary skills and experience are not available currently in Jersey. The burden on our Sector is indeed increasing and is likely to do so over time.

Thus clarity surrounding the current levels of permissions granted to our Sector and thus our ability to serve additional areas if required is critical. New permissions must not only be granted to "high value" finance and Digital Jersey-orientated jobs but "high social value" positions must also be taken into account. Each application therefore should be looked at on its specific merits. Need should be the final arbiter, not simply a pre-determined finite number. To assist in this process we certainly feel that account should be taken from all areas of employment knowledge such as relevant educational establishments including Highlands College, Social Security-led operations such as Back To Work and not to be ignored Employment Agencies.

We hope these limited comments are useful in adding to the debate on the issue and we would, given more time, be happy to further consult across our wider Sector. Should you wish us to do so or should you or your Panel wish to explore this further, please do not hesitate to let us know.

Yours sincerely

Jim Hopley