

3.10 Deputy J.A.N. Le Fondré of the Minister for Housing regarding the net increase in units of accommodation for social rental purposes over the next 20 years:

Would the Minister confirm the net increase in units for accommodation for social rental purposes arising to the new housing company as identified in P.33/2013 over the next 20 years?

Deputy A.K.F. Green (The Minister for Housing):

The proposed housing company stock development plans are noted in section 5.4, appendix B, of the *Housing Transformation Programme - Full Business Case*. The housing company plans to deliver and let 434 new social housing units. Additionally certain social housing trusts will deliver a further 203 new social housing units. The proposals also include a sale of 300 States social housing units to tenants which will move those tenants from the social sector and create more home ownership. The proposals taken together will allow for 637 families to be housed from the affordable housing gateway in addition to the normal vacancies created each year. I think it is important though to pick up that in addition should the strategic plan require further homes to be delivered - and I think they will - by social housing providers then these will be delivered so long as appropriate sites are made available and the proposed rent policy is adopted.

3.10.1 Deputy J.A.N. Le Fondré:

I will get to my next question but my question was very clear. I wanted the net figures to the company of social rented. It is not 637 units. It is 84 and that would have been a very simple answer to give. The question I would like to ask is: in the schedule that is included P.33, a reference is made that this is gross additions of 598 units which includes assets currently in development, and I was wondering of those 598 units what was the number of assets currently in development? If he does not have the information could he arrange it with the other information and provide it before the start of P.33?

Deputy A.K.F. Green:

I have a partial answer and I will come back with the rest. The company will be building 598 homes but that includes that to make space for those we will be knocking down, 164 of them. The point is that if the rent levels are at the right amount... and the Deputy knows this full well from his work in Housing, and you have the sites you can develop the homes. It is as simple as that. The only limiting factor is whether we can afford to develop them, i.e. the income from the rent is correct, and there is a site to build on and both are being tackled by the Council of Ministers.

3.10.2 Deputy G.P. Southern:

Will the Minister come clean and admit that the net - the net - if you take away the 300 sales and those houses which are going to be demolished, is in fact 84 in P.33, and will he in particular release the Tribal document on housing trust capacity study so that we can be comfortable that the trust sector can deliver the 203 he has talked about?

Deputy A.K.F. Green:

The Deputy can be comfortable that we will deliver and that the trusts will deliver. As I said before, and Deputy Le Fondré knows this better than anybody else, if you have the right income for your investment the only limiting factor then is the number of sites and I am pleased to say that the Minister for Planning is working on that as well. Okay, the figures do not give us the number of homes that we would like to see immediately but once the rent levels are at the right level and the sites have been released the world is our oyster in terms of development and I have had very good talks with the trusts about them taking on their share and it is quite likely that one of the trusts will be taking on one of our sites very soon to develop that.

3.10.3 Deputy G.P. Southern:

I wish the Minister to answer the second half of the question because I have been seeking this Tribal report on housing trust capacity from the Assistant Minister for a fortnight and from him for the last 4 days, I believe, or 3 days. Will he release this document so that we can all be very comfortable that the research has been put in to back-up the capacity claims that the Minister has just made?

Deputy A.K.F. Green:

Everything the Deputy has asked for that we have, he has. I am not hiding anything.

3.10.4 Deputy G.P. Southern:

That is simply not true. I have asked for the Tribal report listing the housing trust capacity. I know it is there because I have seen a copy of it but I do not have a copy of it and I have not received it either in hard-back or electronically and I have been asking for a fortnight.

The Bailiff:

You have clarified the position then. It is the Tribal report that you want. Minister?

Deputy A.K.F. Green:

I know of no report known as that but I will go back and double-check.

3.10.5 Deputy M. Tadier:

Will the Minister explain why it will take 20 years to get a net increase of 84 social units of housing - which is 4.2 houses per year incidentally - and surely do we really need a company structure in order to deliver 4 new homes for social housing every year, and would it not be better if the Minister concentrated on, rather than providing purchase homes, sorting the backlog of the waiting list for social tenants which he has promised to do when he was elected Minister for Housing?

Deputy A.K.F. Green:

It is a very, very good question because the business plan will give us a sustainable company that will be able to deliver homes that will be only limited by the site availability. As long as we have the right income stream from the rental then we will be able to deliver. I believe we need to be delivering in the end, and it will not take 20 years, the Statistics Unit tell us 400 additional homes. That will be a joint effort between the trusts and ourselves. I believe it is probably nearer 800 additional homes and I will fulfil my election promise but we need to have a company that is based on sustainable income. That is what the rent levels are for. That is when we debate the 90 per cent rent levels. I will prove to Members that once we have that, the only limiting factor of providing further social housing is the sites, and my good friend the Minister for Planning and Environment is working on that with the Council of Ministers as well.

3.10.6 Deputy J.H. Young:

I find the cross-firing of statistics and numbers confusing. I wonder if therefore the Minister could just confirm, is the number of new social housing units that will be produced as a result of the new rental policy 434 or is it 84 as the Deputy for St. Lawrence said, and of course whatever the number could he please tell us whether or not those new social units are going to be on sites that are already available and identified for housing or is it in the category of sites where we are working on it?

Deputy A.K.F. Green:

I was trying avoid this one. I am going to have to read you a long list. Units added and demolished by the housing company, Le Squez phase 2C 2014, 24 units added; 2-4 Journeaux Street 2014, 9 units added.

The Bailiff:

Minister, do we need them all? The question, I think, was the figure of 400, was it?

Deputy A.K.F. Green:

In total, 598 new units, 164 demolished, 433 remaining.

Deputy G.P. Southern:

How many sold?

The Bailiff:

It is not your turn, Deputy.

3.10.7 Deputy J.H. Young:

Now I have the numbers – 433 - I do not want to go through a list of the sites but are they all sites that we know about and already available to us? That was my question.

Deputy A.K.F. Green:

They are all sites that we know about and all are available but over a period of time. Some sites do not become available until 2018. Some sites are now available and we are on them.

3.10.8 Deputy T.A. Vallois:

Could the Minister explain why we were able to build 1,600 social housing units from 1991 to this period without the need for 90 per cent of market rent levels, and why we will only be increasing our units by 84 by the end of this 20-year period of the Housing Transformation Programme?

Deputy A.K.F. Green:

I cannot explain what happened in the past. Presumably the financial model was very different, maybe the States subsidised it with capital grants.

3.10.9 Deputy J.A.N. Le Fondré:

I think what I would like to say and I will ask: does the Minister agree in the end ... the point is that the Minister frequently makes reference to the gross additions but what we should be looking at from the point of view of the delivery of this plan is the net movements. What the Minister is mixing up is the sale of 330 units to affordable buying which is ownership, which is fine, but that is different to the impact on social rented and the fact that on gateway at the moment we have over 1,000 people who cannot afford to buy. They are looking for rental. That is 1,000 people, not 1,000 applications and the Minister therefore when he talks about 598 units or 637 units, he is talking gross. He is not taking account of the loss of units on the social rented sector to the affordability sector. There is also a distinction between the company and what it delivers and what the existing trusts can deliver, and whether it is on their existing models or not. Does the Minister agree that that is the confusion that Members are coming to and can he clarify?

Deputy A.K.F. Green:

No, I do not. The only confusion around here is the confusion that people who are opposed to this proposition are trying to put in place. It is quite simple to me that the sales are over 20 years, they are a small number, to help people who find themselves that have worked hard in a better position who can afford then to come out of social renting into affordable to buy homes, one of the objectives of the Council of Ministers. The Deputy knows all this full well.