

#### **4.8 Deputy C.F. Labey of Grouville of the Minister for Housing regarding waiting lists for housing built on re-zoned land:**

Would the Minister confirm that he has established a policy with rational and consistent criteria for determining admission on to waiting lists for housing built on rezoned land?

#### **Senator T.J. Le Main (The Minister for Housing):**

Members will recall that I supported this part of the Deputy's proposition last year and I certainly intend to work with the Connétables in establishing these criteria. Members will know that I have commissioned a review of social housing provision in the Island and one of the key terms of reference for that review is the analysis of present regulatory structure and, importantly, allocation policies. It will be compared to regulations in other jurisdictions and a recommendation of a suitable framework for Jersey. Professor Christine Whitehead from Cambridge University, Centre for Housing and Planning Research is due to report shortly and that report will be issued as a Green Paper for extensive consultation. This will provide a platform for discussing the issue of allocation criteria with the Comité des Connétables, once Professor Whitehead's report has been presented to me. This should be in the next few weeks.

#### **4.8.1 The Deputy of Grouville:**

As the criteria had not been developed at the time of the rezoning debate, could the Minister explain exactly how and why the numbers of people on the waiting lists made up the Ministers urgent, desperate need for sheltered housing? In other words, how did he know they were desperate and needy if there was no criteria established at the time?

#### **Senator T.J. Le Main:**

I have been very clear with this Assembly and Members, that the Housing lists provided to Planning were actual cases registered with Housing that were live cases and still the same position today. They are real people in real need and nothing has changed.

#### **4.8.2 Deputy J.A. Martin:**

I would like to press the Minister for Housing because in the written response from the Constables, and we have had this debate, they have not compared their waiting lists with Housing's waiting list. I think what the Deputy of Grouville is trying to get at, we need to know how many are on the waiting list ... and because the information is not going from the Constables to the Housing Department, are there duplications? It is quite simple. Is the same person on the Housing waiting list on the Grouville waiting list, or on the St. Ouen's waiting list? Could the Minister agree to find this out urgently and let the House know?

#### **Senator T.J. Le Main:**

I am not prepared to find this out urgently. The position is quite clear that within a month, I hope, there will be this report from Professor Whitehead. Then we will be able to discuss with the Connétables and Members on the whole issues about the need and allocation and waiting lists. I am duty bound, at present, with not being able to give names and addresses to Connétables over the data protection issue, and I have been invited. I am not trying to make any excuses, Deputy Le Hérisier is saying, but as you know that I have had one or 2 problems with data protection [**Laughter**] and I

am very careful of what I can and what I cannot do. But I have to advise this Assembly that there is an increasing amount of accommodation in the private sector ...

**The Deputy Bailiff:**

I am sorry, Minister. A concise answer I think to the question. I had seen the Deputy of St. Mary next.

**4.8.3 Deputy D.J.A. Wimberley of St. Mary:**

Would the Minister for Housing confirm that in the statistics produced by the Statistics Unit on housing and housing need, that there are projections forward of how many units we need in different categories and different types of household and the overall demand? Can he confirm that, and if not, what are the implications of this lack?

**Senator T.J. Le Main:**

I can confirm that there have been projections made over the next 5 and 10 years and the actual issue is that these projections are changing on a weekly basis. As I say, the issues are becoming more serious with the amount of accommodation in the private rented sector and becoming unsuitable for elderly people's needs and more people are coming and requesting parochial and States rental accommodation.

**4.8.4 Deputy G.P. Southern:**

Will the Minister assure the House that Professor Whitehead's report will be based on accurate and sound numbers for this particular area?

**Senator T.J. Le Main:**

The information that will be coming forward as a Green Paper, the report, will have the support, as we always do, of the Statistics Unit and other States departments to provide up-to-date information.

**4.8.5 Deputy T.M. Pitman of St. Helier:**

Could the Minister just give assurances that there is no-one on this waiting list for urgent re-housing who might have just sold a property for £1 million?

**Senator T.J. Le Main:**

I cannot give any assurances such as that, but if any case came to the department we have to meet a financial criteria and they are for people in actual need - on very low incomes - and if the Deputy knows of any case that has come ... he has obviously asked that question, he may have some information, I would be very, very happy to chase it up. But certainly no one, as far as I am aware, in all the years that I have been around Housing, would ever be housed on the basis that they have sold properties for that sort of money.

**4.8.6 Deputy J.A. Martin:**

Maybe I can help the Minister out, because what I think the Deputy is alluding to is the simple fact is we do not know who in the country Parishes do have half a million, £1 million houses and are in unsuitable, I may say, private accommodation. But unless they are going to share this information these people are being included on rezoned land and may be on the Minister for Housing's list. He needs to start talking somehow to the Constables because they are not in urgent need. They may be in urgent need of different accommodation but not social rented.

**Senator T.J. Le Main:**

I have to say I think that is an unfair statement pitting me to the Connétables because the Connétables know the people they are dealing with in their Parishes. I cannot think of any sheltered housing development in any of the Parishes or any of the Constables are going to house people that have just sold properties at a high price. The Constables and the Housing Department have a criteria that they will assist those in need, and the kind of people that the Deputy is speaking about, I am sure - and I cannot speak for the Constables - but I would respectfully say that the Constables know their clients, they know who they are dealing with and they certainly would not accept those kind of people on the housing lists.

**4.8.7 The Deputy of Grouville:**

The Minister has confirmed that he cannot speak for the Constables. There was no criteria at the time of the debate. He does not know whether the people on the Constables' waiting lists were the same people on his housing lists; would he not say that he misled this House at the time of the debate because he categorised everybody as in urgent, desperate need.

**Senator T.J. Le Main:**

Absolutely untrue. I still stand on what I said, that currently we have something like ... currently, right at the moment, 350 people that are urgently in need of accommodation to suit their medical and physical needs and 140 of those currently are on the urgent waiting list, and I am well aware that even the rezoned land would not even have met anywhere near what we have as requirements of the Housing Department. So I did not mislead the House. My officers have told me only yesterday again, that within the next 5 or 6 years there is an urgent need for housing themselves, to realign the stock and provide 400 units for retired and elderly people that have medical difficulties, apart from what has already been rezoned. I stand by my guns and I stand with the real people that I meet on a daily basis that need help.