

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CHIEF MINISTER
BY DEPUTY R.J. WARD OF ST. HELIER CENTRAL
QUESTION SUBMITTED ON MONDAY 20th FEBRUARY 2023
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON MONDAY 27th FEBRUARY 2023**

Question

“Further to the Chief Minister’s [published delivery plan](#), part ‘CM P6’ of which states that the Government will –

- *“bring forward a lasting solution for the Haut de la Garenne site*
- *amend Commissioner for Children and Young People (Jersey) Law 2019 and appoint a new Children’s Commissioner*
- *prioritise making our safeguarding approach and underpinning relationships increasingly effective, to protect children now and into the future”*,

will the Chief Minister advise what actions, if any, have been taken in relation to these delivery plans and state what the timeline is for actioning each of these areas?”

Answer

Haut de la Garenne site

Following the Independent Care Inquiry (2017) recommendation to demolish Haut de la Garenne, the Government conducted a public consultation on the building’s future which ran from the 8th February to 22nd April 2018^[1]. The consultation found significant public support for the building to remain, with almost 94% of respondents ‘strongly disagreeing’ or ‘disagreeing’ with the Care Inquiry recommendation.

The Care Inquiry panel also expressed their belief that that the Haut de la Garenne site needed to be ‘redeemed.’ Responses to the public consultation demonstrated support for the current use of the site, with just over 86% of respondents stating that this was a ‘very important’ or ‘important’ factor in informing their views about whether or not the site should be demolished. The site tenant now has a long lease agreement and provides outdoor activities, catering, camping and hostel accommodation within Jersey’s tourism, leisure and hospitality sector.

More broadly, the plan for Aviemore site, which is adjacent to Haut de la Garenne, remains its sale when it becomes vacant in March 2023, with the proceeds forming a fund which will be dedicated to improving outcomes for care-experienced Islanders

Children’s Commissioner Appointment

Following the resignation of the Children’s Commissioner earlier in 2022, the Chief Minister and President of the Scrutiny Liaison Committee (SLC) set out the interim arrangements in their Report presented to the States (R.102)^[2] on 26th July 2022.

As a result of these interim arrangements, a member of the current Office of the Children’s Commissioner for Jersey was appointed to the role of acting Commissioner. This temporary appointment is consistent with the provision 7 of the Schedule to the Commissioner for Children and Young People (Jersey) Law 2019 (“the Law”)^[3].

Officers are now in the final stages of preparing a proposition describing amendments to the Children’s Commissioners (Jersey) Law (2019) which is intended to be lodged with the support of the President of the Scrutiny and Liaison Committee. Following the Assembly debate the recruitment process will

commence and it is intended that the Chief Minister would be in a position to recommend to the Assembly a new Children's Commissioner ahead of the summer recess.

Safeguarding Approaches

The Government Plan (2023-26)^[4] set out significant new investment to provide sufficiency for those children who are most vulnerable in our community. The Minister for Children and Education has set out in her recently published Delivery Plans (2023)^[5] how this investment will be invested, and the Service Performance measures which will use to understand how we have made a difference.

In addition, the Chief Minister approved the terms of reference for the establishment of the Safeguarding Ministerial Group (SMG)^[6] to ensure key Ministers are appraised of key developments within safeguarding of children and adults at risk, as part of an overall objective for islanders to live safely, minimising and preventing harm, abuse and neglect.

The SMG is established as a sub-group of the Council of Ministers, comprising Ministers whose services most interact with vulnerable Islanders, to provide a collective ministerial forum to hear from the Independent Chair, promote shared ministerial understanding and learning, political coordination, and cross government discussion and oversight

Footnotes

^[1] [Public Consultation Haut de la Garenne site public consultation](#)

^[2] [Children's Commissioner: Notice of Resignation](#): 26 July 2022

^[3] [Commissioner for Children and Young People \(Jersey\) Law 2019](#)

^[4] [Government Plan 2023-26](#)

^[5] [Minister for Children and Education Delivery Plan](#): January 2023

^[6] [Ministerial Safeguarding Group](#)