

17 Deputy K.G. Pamplin of the Minister for Children and Housing regarding the Minister's response to the recently-published Youth Justice Review: (OQ.147/2019)

Further to the recently published Youth Justice Review, which expressed concerns about inequalities in accessing both health and education services in the Island, what action, if any, will the Minister take in response?

Senator S.Y. Mézec (The Minister for Children and Housing):

The Youth Justice Review has just been published and I can confirm that the Council of Ministers has endorsed it. I have already committed to bring forward an action plan in the autumn. The review highlights areas where access arrangements need to improve, for example training opportunities in custodial facilities and, rightly, in my view, it recognises that reducing inequality and providing good quality public services to our children has wide and long-term benefits. So, I look forward to bringing concrete actions, backed by resources, to improve matters and that will be in the coming months.

4.17.1 Deputy K.G. Pamplin:

I thank the Minister for his answer. I am aware that, obviously, as he stated, this report has just come out, this review has just come out and I ask it because I feel that it is urgent and I know he agrees with me following yesterday's Scrutiny hearing, but is he, like me, starting to get frustrated that things are not moving quickly enough?

Senator S.Y. Mézec:

I am probably even more frustrated than him, because I am having weekly meetings with my officers where I am eager to pursue things and get things done and the way our Government system works is often not as efficient as I would, personally, like it to be and often it is more difficult to get funding for the items you want to pursue. I would remind the Deputy that we are in the last year of a Medium Term Financial Plan, that I voted against when it was first produced and that I voted to allow flexibility over on 2 occasions in this Assembly and that constraint I find to be incredibly frustrating. The only light at the tunnel I can see is the fact that we have the Government Plan coming up, which is an opportunity to, hopefully, sort lots of this out.

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