

STATES OF JERSEY



STRATEGY FOR INCLUSIVE VOCATIONAL DAY SERVICES AND EMPLOYMENT (P.102/2008): COMMENTS

**Presented to the States on 8th July 2008
by the Minister for Social Security**

STATES GREFFE

COMMENTS

The Minister for Social Security welcomes the actions of Deputy Gorst in bringing this important issue to the attention of the States.

There are a number of factors which have led to increasing demands in this area. These include the increasing diagnosis of some conditions, changes in the nature of the services provided by the Health and Social Services Department, and the increasing aspirations and expectations of individuals, parents and carers.

The message that “work is good for you” is one that applies across all sectors of society, and it is important that every individual is given the opportunity of employment and to undertake appropriate training to develop their work skills. The Social Security Department and the Health and Social Services Department both provide grant funding to the Jersey Employment Trust.

The Social Security Department has recently provided capital funding of over £500,000 for a new building to increase the facilities available for employment focused training. This additional modern facility may have contributed to the growing demand for services.

The provision of appropriate training facilities must be accompanied by suitable employment opportunities. The States and partner agencies are already working hard in this area to encourage employers to take on additional staff with disabilities.

Whilst the strategy contains many interesting suggestions, it is important that any new initiative is co-ordinated with other work that is on-going at present. I would support the setting-up of a joint working party between the three departments to examine both the issues and proposed solutions set out by Deputy Gorst.

The Social Security business plan for 2009 already makes provision for a grant of £870,000 to Jersey Employment Trust. This includes additional funding of £120,000 in response to an increased demand for existing Trust services.

The Social Security Department has no additional resources available to fund new initiatives in 2009.

If the States approve this Proposition and provide the required funding, the Social Security Department will work with the Health and Social Services and Education, Sport and Culture Departments and partner agencies to examine these proposals as well as alternative strategies to ensure that people with learning disabilities or on the autistic spectrum have the opportunity to realise their work potential.