



Office of the
Children's Commissioner
for Jersey

Deputy Hilary Jeune
Chair, Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel
BY EMAIL

18th March 2026

Dear Deputy Jeune,

I am writing to you in respect of the proposition [P.43/2026](#) Draft Dogs Law (Jersey) Amendment Regulations 202- which has been lodged by the Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Panel for debate on 24th March 2024.

We understand that the purpose of the proposition is to replace and expand upon the offence of livestock worrying and address the concern about the prevalence of this issue. In the lodged proposition it states that no impacts had been identified in relation to Children's Rights, and that a Children's Rights Impact Assessment (CRIA) was not required. The OCCJ holds some concerns about the impact of this proposition on children's rights in the context of the Dogs Law (Jersey) 1961 more broadly and that it could in turn create a number of negative impacts for children and young people as it is currently worded.

- The Dogs Law (Jersey) 1961 specifies an owner as being someone over the age of 16 years. As such this impacts children and young people aged 16 and 17 where they are an owner of a dog.
- Article 9(1) which states that a person in charge of the dog other than the owner can also commit an offence. It is not clear whether this could potentially lead to children and young people being liable under the amendment. As worded, it could be interpreted as any person which may include children and young people aged 10 years and older.
- Article 9(3) provides some mitigation; however, we are not clear what is meant by 'satisfaction of the court' or 'fit and proper person' in the context of the amendment.

We have previously suggested to the Panel that a CRIA would help to identify these issues and any potential mitigations and relayed the points above to officers. The OCCJ was provided with a copy of the draft CRIA screener by your officers on Wednesday 11th March for comments which we shall provide below for clarity.

CRIA Screener Comments

It has been identified in section 3 of the screener that there are direct impacts on children and young people which would suggest that a full CRIA is required to address these impacts and provide details of mitigations against these impacts. Affected UNCRC articles include Article 31 (Right to



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rest, play, culture and arts) and Article 40 (Children in conflict with the law). We would also suggest that Article 3 (best of interest of the child) should be assessed as being impacted, as the decision being taken is not necessarily in the best interests of children if it has the potential to criminalise them.

It is important to note at this stage that conducting a full CRIA after the amendment has been lodged does not provide sufficient time to provide for any mitigations within the legislation itself. This is an example where undertaking a CRIA prior to developing a proposition is helpful to fully identify the impact of the proposals on children's rights. In this instance, there are some issues arising and had these been known prior to the legislative drafting, then they could have been mitigated within the proposed wording.

Given the negative impacts identified, one such mitigation could be further legislative amendments to the Dogs Law (Jersey) 1961 which would update the definition of an owner from aged 16 and above to age 18 and above, as well as the age of those deemed to be in control of a dog to 18 years. It is noted that previous updates have been made to the Law that require a registered owner of a dangerous dog to be aged 18 or over. Whilst the amendment maintains what is in the existing law in terms of the definition of an owner, as drafted it continues to perpetuate an impact on children's rights.

Recommendation

It is likely that a full CRIA will identify negative impacts which are not possible to fully mitigate in the legislation as currently worded and the time has also now passed for any amendments to be made to the proposition. The OCCJ would therefore respectfully recommend that the proposition is withdrawn until such time as a full CRIA can be completed which mitigates the impacts assessed. Given the time remaining in the current Assembly, I appreciate this will lead to the proposition falling away and being unable to be debated prior to the election. However, given the concerns raised and the need to ensure sufficient mitigations are in place to address them, we would suggest that this matter is raised within the Panel's legacy report to be taken forward by its successor.

I, and my officers, remain available to meet with you on this matter should you wish to.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Carmel Corrigan



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