

4.11 Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier of St. Saviour to the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding the debate of the *New Directions* policy:

I am proud and sad to follow Deputy Baudains last oral question. When is it so intended to bring New Directions to the States for debate?

Senator B.E. Shenton (The Minister for Health and Social Services):

I was a little bit surprised that the Deputy asked me this question as we had a meeting at Health with the Minister for Social Security and the Chief Minister and Deputy Le Hérisier was there as well where we discussed the timetable. So I wonder whether the question was electioneering or whether he was asleep during the meeting. **[Laughter]** I am pleased to confirm that New Directions will be brought to the States for debate in the new session once it has been considered by the new Council of Ministers. In the interim further work has been undertaken to refine and finalise some of the detail contained within the cost of the strategy. This includes full engagement with some important stakeholders and during the past fortnight, for instance, a very successful and positive workshop was organised with groups and individuals representing local carers. Through working together this group has developed a carer strategy which will now be included within the overall New Directions proposals. I can confirm to the Deputy that I will keep him fully informed with regard to the timetable.

4.11.1 Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

In one of my rare waking moments I wonder if I could ask the Minister which is the most difficult part of the report to implement and is that the reason why it may not have surfaced as quickly as it should have?

Senator B.E. Shenton:

I think the difficulty with regard to the report is not only getting the costing done but also putting different parts of the report into a priority area because obviously it cannot be an all or nothing thing for the States; we cannot hold a gun to the States head and say: "Give us this amount of money; it is all or nothing." That would be wrong. Also breaking it down by department as well because this is not just a health initiative, this is an initiative that goes across many, many departments. That was another reason partly for the delay because obviously we are moving towards a new Council of Ministers. Many of the posts will be changing and because we have to work so closely together to bring it in this late in the electoral year I think would be wrong. So we are carrying on the work behind the scenes and we will bring it early next year.

4.11.2 Deputy S.C. Ferguson:

Would the Minister not confirm that one of the biggest sticking points has been the costing of this, unofficially the costing that is circulating within the corridors of power, so to speak, is something in the order of £60 million. Perhaps the Minister would like to confirm this?

Senator B.E. Shenton:

The costing figures will come to the States early next year. What you have got to take into account as part of the whole process of *New Directions* - and this particular part does not come under my department - is the insurance policy so that people can hold on to their homes in old age. Now obviously that is a considerable cost and we are looking at different ways of funding this. So although the figures may be large, what we need to do is break them down into bite-size pieces and make them more understandable. Perhaps apportion them more on the rounds of various departments as opposed to come out with some shocking figure that everyone will faint at when they see it.

4.11.3 Deputy S.C. Ferguson:

So that, in fact, you are confirming that it will be ...

The Deputy Bailiff:

The Minister is in fact confirming ...

Deputy S.C. Ferguson:

The Minister, I am sorry. The Minister is confirming that we are talking about rounded figures of around £60 million.

Senator B.E. Shenton:

The cost of *New Directions* will be whatever the States pass and the cost of it therein.

4.11.4 Deputy C.J. Scott Warren:

Does the Minister agree that the costs must be considered against the overall benefits that are likely for the health of people in Jersey which may be difficult to quantify in terms of money over the years ahead but which will obviously be substantial and will mean that ... overall, an improvement in health for many will mean that there will be a reduction in costs overall.

Senator B.E. Shenton:

The Deputy is very correct. Sometimes you have to spend early to save later and this is very much the ... part of the *New Directions* process is by investing in the health of the population now we will reap the rewards in later years.

4.11.5 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:

Would the Minister not acknowledge in the excellent work done in *New Directions* that it calls for a very different approach to the way general practitioner services operate on the Island? Has money been suggested to move the general practitioners from one way of operating service to another way? Is there money indented in the proposals for that purpose?

Senator B.E. Shenton:

The Deputy is partly right in that it very much will take ... we will have to take a look at the way the whole of the medical profession operates, not just general practitioners but the whole way that we operate. You know, it is a New Direction so to speak. There will certainly be changes in the way of remuneration and so on and so forth. However, whether this adds to the budget or not, we will have to work the figures out.

4.11.6 Deputy S.G. Ferguson:

Has the Minister considered where the funding from this is going to come from and is it correct that he has been casting covetous eyes on the Health Fund and Social Security?

Senator B.E. Shenton:

I have been casting covetous eyes on every part of money that is hanging around the States system. It will be funded from where it is best to be funded and it will be funded, as I say, in accordance with what the States decide should be funded. So we have been looking at all forms of revenue and all forms of income from every single area.

4.11.7 Deputy J.A. Martin of St. Helier:

I am slightly concerned, and I just want a reassurance from the present Minister for Health and Social Services, we have had at least a 2-year delay in *New Directions* and he says it is too late in this House to bring forward for consideration. My concern is leaving it again to a new House and maybe a new Minister, how far advanced are all the departments to whoever is at the helm that we can look forward to seeing this at least in the first session of the new House? Thank you.

Senator B.E. Shenton:

As I stated in my reply, although *New Directions* has not been brought to the States the work is very much ongoing and parts of what you would say are New Directions, a tobacco cessation strategy and so on, they are ongoing and they are all part of what we are doing at the moment at Health. *New Directions* ...

The Deputy Bailiff:

Minister, I am sorry, I have been advised that we are not quorate so if the usher could bring in Members. Very well, we are now quorate.

Senator B.E. Shenton:

I am confident that we now have a package together that can be brought to the new House by the Minister for Health and Social Services next year. When I took office last year the whole *New Directions* had not been costed yet. Obviously that is a major, major part of the whole policy is to make sure you know how much anything is going to cost. So that did take up a considerable amount of time. But, as I say, work is ongoing. Just because the House has not passed *New Directions*, it does not mean that the New Directions work has stopped.