

4.9 Deputy J.A. Hilton of the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding the housing of sex offenders:

Did the Children's Service decide not to inform other relevant departments that a convicted sex offender had been housed within yards of a playground at Le Marais and, if so, given the reaction of tenants and her responsibilities under the Children (Jersey) Law 2002, does the Minister consider that not sharing such information was appropriate?

The Bailiff:

Assistant Minister, I understand you will be answering this question.

Deputy J.A. Martin (Assistant Minister for Health and Social Services - rapporteur):

I am sorry, but it is not appropriate to comment on specific and individual cases. The process for dealing with sex offenders placed on the register is dealt with by a board called J.M.A.P.P.A. (Jersey Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements). This is chaired by Probation and it has representatives from the police, prison, Customs and Immigration, Health and Social Services, Social Security and Education, Sport and Culture.

4.9.1 Deputy J.A. Hilton:

Interestingly it is appropriate not to comment. Too often these matters are swept under the carpet, in my opinion. I will ask a question not specifically related to that one. Can the Assistant Minister tell me whether she feels it is appropriate that a convicted sex offender is housed by the Housing Department when they are not in full receipt of the information applicable to that person? Does she think that is appropriate in general cases?

[11:00]

Deputy J.A. Martin:

If the Deputy had not been specific in the first question maybe that would be a general case. The Deputy is asking me about a specific case and it is not appropriate to comment on. The Deputy was at the meeting with the Chief Probation who chairs this J.M.A.P.P.A. - which helps reduce reoffending and protect the public - and she was told exactly the same thing. So I do not know how further the Deputy would like me to go. Health has a place on this board, it started running after the introduction of the Jersey Sex Offenders Register in January 2011 and the Deputy will know, as she was the Assistant Minister for Home Affairs then, that these cases are very sensitive and it is not appropriate to debate one in a public forum, especially in the States Assembly.

4.9.2 Deputy J.A. Hilton:

Does the Assistant Minister not recognise the irony of her answer to that question? By not including all the professional members of J.M.A.P.P.A. in that information, the person that the Housing Department ended up housing... it was blatantly obvious that in an Island as small as Jersey residents on that estate would know who that individual was. So by the very token of doing that they drew attention to the person and did that person a gross disservice as they did to the tenants of Le Marais. Does she not agree?

Deputy J.A. Martin:

I cannot agree on something that I cannot be specific about. The Deputy talks about irony. I have not commented on any case. The Deputy seems to have much more information than possibly I do and I know she does not, unless there is somebody who is leaking something to her. I really cannot comment any further.

The Bailiff:

Very well. Question 10 falls away because of the illness of Deputy Baudains so we come now to Question 11 which Deputy Young will ask of the Minister for Planning and Environment.