

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING
BY DEPUTY G.P. SOUTHERN OF ST. HELIER
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 4th JUNE 2013**

Question

Does the Minister accept that the figures he presented in his response to a written question on 14th May 2013 show that the weighted average rent increase resulting from the move to 90% of private sector rent levels from the current average of 74% under the Housing Transformation Plan on new tenancies in States social rented housing will be £35.51 per week (21%) and if not why not?

Does he further accept that the average rise for tenants on new tenancies for 2-bed properties will be £49 per week (27%)?

Will he explain to members why he stated in his answer that the policy “would add, on a weighted average, a further £11.89 or 6% on new tenancies” when the correct figure for the level of rent increases was to be gained by comparison with actual rents (2012) and not with fair rents, as he had given elsewhere in his answer?

Does the Minister accept that in doing so he has misled the States and, if so, will he apologise for having done so?

Answer

As noted in my answer to the Deputy’s question (7639), the Housing Department has, for a number of years, operated a policy of uplifting rents for new tenancies to more appropriate levels following refurbishment. On a weighted average, this adds £23.62 per property per week compared with weighted average rents at 2012 levels. The new 90% of market rents policy will add, on a weighted average, a further £11.89 or 6% to weekly rents on new tenancies.

For 2 bedroom properties, the current rent policy adds a weighted average of £28.84 and the new 90% of market rents policy adds, on a weighted average, a further £20.06 per week.

My answer to the Deputy’s question 7639 clearly laid out the weighted average rent levels at the 2012 levels and compared this to the weighted average rent levels under the current rent policy and the new 90% of market rent policy. I therefore do not accept that I misled the States in any way and indeed my answer clearly laid out the implications at varying rent levels in tabular form.

I also noted in my answer to the Deputy’s question (7639) that considering the impact on the tenant of the average change in rent levels is meaningless. The change in rent for existing tenants moving to new tenancies is dependent on a wide range of circumstances such as where the tenant is moving to and from and for what reason. Furthermore, all tenants on low incomes and receiving Income Support will be fully protected and only those tenants who move are subject to the current and new rent policy.