

2015.10.20

3.5 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet of St. Saviour of the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding support for charities working within 'The Bridge':

Given the Assembly's commitment to the 1001 days initiative, can the Minister describe how charities working within 'The Bridge' such as Brighter Futures are supported and valued and outline what plans, if any, there are to assist them in further developing their services to help more families?

Senator A.K.F. Green (The Minister for Health and Social Services):

The Bridge, as the Deputy knows, is a child and family centre and it brings together public services and charities who work to achieve better outcomes for babies, children and young people. These charities include the Jersey Childcare Trust which receives £178,000 from the Education Department; Brighter Futures which receives £82,000 from my department plus the Chief Minister, in accordance with the decision made by the Council of Ministers, has agreed to provide some additional funding to help them manage their cash flow; Family Nursing and Home Care, which overall receives £7 million from the department. In addition to direct funding those charities are also supported through the provision of The Bridge as a facility. Work is underway to determine the services that are required to best support families during the first 1001 critical days and beyond. All these charities and many others are involved in that work and this work may involve extending services or investing in different areas of work.

3.5.1 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

The Minister mentioned that Brighter Futures was receiving £82,000 a year, is that correct?

Senator A.K.F. Green:

Yes.

Senator L.M.C. Doublet:

And that some additional funding was being provided. Could the Minister please detail how much this additional funding is for this year please?

Senator A.K.F. Green:

This is funding coming via the Council of Ministers and the Chief Minister. I have a letter in front of me here ... just trying to look at the figure. The States will make a payment of £100,000 both in 2014 and 2015.

3.5.2 Deputy G.P. Southern:

Has the funding for any of the bodies he refers to been frozen for 2016 and is it the case that where agreements are made with third party bodies to supply services is that these agreements are made for at least a 3-year period to provide continuity or are we talking about one year renegotiating year on year?

Senator A.K.F. Green:

The Deputy raises a good point because I do know that because of the Medium Term Financial Plan only being agreed one year at the moment, although the headline figures have been agreed for the remaining years, I do know that this is worrying some charities. But as soon as we have done the work going forward so that we can see what it looks like for the next 4 years, so up to 2019, then charities will probably be more comforted by that. But it is very difficult. We have not at the

moment taken money away from charities but we are asking them to do things differently to provide very clear outcomes for the money that we are providing them with.

3.5.3 Deputy G.P. Southern:

Can the Minister confirm that these bodies have to go in and bid again, negotiate, for 2017 money and beyond 2017? Does he not accept that one year at a time is no way to run a charity or a wheel stall and that 3 years is the minimum anybody needs to work to be able to plan for the future and to provide decent services into the future?

Senator A.K.F. Green:

I was not suggesting we run a wheel stall although that is something Jersey does not seem to have at the present time. What I am saying is that we are in an unusual position and I agree that working forwards 3 years in advance is better for everybody because we have a very clear understanding. But this year we had a 4-year plan. We have got very clearly the first year and charities, like other States departments, will be very clearly shown what the next 3 years look like. We have the headline figures. We now need to do that detail.

3.5.4 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Could I just touch briefly on the £100,000 for Brighter Futures for 2014 and 2015? Can the Minister just confirm: have the charities received that and if they have not will they be receiving that soon and will the Minister be writing to them to confirm because I think there is some confusion there over what they are getting? Also with regards to rent, given that The Bridge is a States-owned building does the Minister think it is appropriate that Brighter Futures, for example, is paying ... it was paying £11,000 last year in rent and that has been nearly doubled to £20,000 this year. Is that appropriate given the valuable services they are providing?

Senator A.K.F. Green:

I am afraid the Deputy has me at a disadvantage on the rent. As I understand it the building belongs to - and I am not trying to pass the buck, but I suppose I am - the Education Department and as such they need to discuss their rent with their landlord. With regard to the clarification on the £100,000. As I understand it, the payment has not been made. That is my interpretation. It is not something I am responsible for but, as I understand it, the payment has not been made but there is an assurance that it is there if there is a need to help with the cash flow. That is my understanding, but it is there if required.