

2016.06.28

11 Deputy G.P. Southern of the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding consideration given to incorporation in plans for the modernisation of the delivery of health and social services: [9530]

Will the Minister inform Members what consideration, if any, has been given to the role of incorporation in his plans for the modernisation of the delivery of health and social services?

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

As I stated in my reply to the Deputy's similar written question today, there are no plans to incorporate health and social services, i.e. for it to become a company like Jersey Post, Ports of Jersey or Andium Homes. The department is, and will remain, a public service organisation. However, I can confirm that I am reviewing the governance arrangements for health and social care to ensure that Jersey has the best health and social care system for the future. This review will look at the different health and social care systems across the world, how they are organised and established, what we can learn from them, and what is best for Jersey, and this work is expected to begin in the last quarter of this year.

3.11.1 Deputy G.P. Southern:

Could the Minister explain in what way his consideration of governance differs from the structure set up for Ports of Jersey or Andium Homes, which is incorporation which contains a shadow chair and a shadow board in its initiation?

Senator A.K.F. Green:

The Deputy is trying to put the cart before the horse. I said that we would carry out a review into governance. Why do we need to look at different models of governance? It is because the services that we currently are providing and plan to provide in the future, particularly those in the community, are going to be very different and I want to ensure that we have the right sort of structure available to ensure that we have the skills and the governance available to ensure that the proper and robust challenge is there for staff. I do not know what that is going to look like, but I do know that we need to look at it.

3.11.2 Deputy M. Tadier:

Will the Minister give examples of how the current governance arrangements are either not suitable currently or may not be suitable in the future?

Senator A.K.F. Green:

What I do know is that things have changed rapidly in the way that we provide services. The system that we have in terms of governance and oversight and political challenge has not changed and I want to make sure that we have the right system going forward. If I knew what it was going to look like, I would not be here, I would be working as a consultant on £700 an hour.

3.11.3 Deputy M. Tadier:

That is all very interesting. Could the Minister answer my question about what the issues are currently with governance that need to change? I think the expression is: "If it ain't broke, don't fix it", so the Minister clearly must think that something is broken or may not be working in the future. Could he give specific examples of how the current system of governance is not, or may not be, suitable?

Senator A.K.F. Green:

For example, the relationship between internal and external providers is changing almost daily. I, as a Minister, feel sometimes that I need to have greater support and oversight. It is not broken, but I am not going to wait until it is broken. I want a system that is fit for purpose going forward.

3.11.4 Deputy G.P. Southern:

Is it not the case that this incorporation - and I will continue to refer to it as such - is a precursor to large-scale outsourcing of services on the Island?

Senator A.K.F. Green:

Absolutely not. We are not looking at incorporation and it is not a precursor to outsourcing. This is about ensuring a robust governance system for services going forward with big changes in the community.