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5.13 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet of the Minister for Home Affairs regarding the progress made in relation to the 1,001 Days Initiative:

Can the Minister provide an update on the progress the Council of Ministers have made in relation to the 1,001 Days Initiative including details of any changes to the funding of current projects and/or the creation of any new projects?

Deputy K.L. Moore of St. Peter (The Minister for Home Affairs):

I am delighted to do so, although as Members will learn very shortly, it is just in the very early stages which is why an announcement has not been forthcoming at an earlier stage. A multi-agency 1,001 Critical Days and Early Years taskforce has been established to analyse need, identify gaps in services and to bring forward solutions. The mapping and GAAP (Generally Accepted Accounting Principles) analysis work has been completed and a 20-point draft action plan has been produced. That plan is due to be considered by the Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy Group at its next meeting in early March. At that point, I will be seeking engagement with Scrutiny. No new projects have been commissioned to date, nor have there been changes to existing funding arrangements. These will be driven by the action plan once agreed by C.A.V.A (Children and Vulnerable Adults) Policy Group. In the meantime, the taskforce is working in close collaboration with the UBS Optimus Foundation to help ensure that the Foundation's proposed investment in early childhood is aligned with the taskforce's objectives.

5.13.1 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

I thank the Minister for her answer and it is excellent news that there is an action plan imminently available. We really look forward to seeing that. Can the Minister confirm whether the funding attached to 1,001 Days is only available to only new projects or is there going to be increased investment available for existing projects which are already getting results in line with 1,001 Days so they can expand their services?

The Deputy of St. Peter:

At this stage, the action plan needs to be approved before we can confirm whether key areas of activities will be funded with new funding. There is not a specific amount of funding allocated to the taskforce at this time. However, other areas and other States departments who provide work in the early years' environment have growth funding that may be accessible.

5.13.2 Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Given that 1,001 Days spans at least 3 different States departments, is the Minister satisfied with the level of oversight of the proposed initiative?

The Deputy of St. Peter:

Yes, I am satisfied that there is an excellent amount of oversight. As I have described, the action plan will be going to C.A.V.A of which the members are the Minister for Education, the Minister for Social Security, the Minister for Health and Social Services, the Minister for Housing and myself, and so I feel that there is an excellent amount of oversight and political involvement in this excellent initiative.

5.13.3 Deputy J.M. Maçon:

Yes, a supplementary. In which case, can the Minister explain, given all of those plans, which Minister has ultimate responsibility for this area, in particular with regard to the scrutiny of that please?

The Deputy of St. Peter:

I have ultimate responsibility as the ministerial lead on this initiative.

5.13.4 Deputy G.P. Southern:

Can the Minister explain to Members how much has been set aside in the 2016 budget to cater for the initiatives under the 1,001 Days Initiative and what sums are being discussed for 2017 and beyond?

The Deputy of St. Peter:

As I referred to earlier, existing work continues under existing budgets in this area and for areas of growth, those conversations for 2017 to 2019 will be taking place once the action plan is agreed.

5.13.5 Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Given that one group of children who will face particularly difficult circumstances growing up are children who are born into single parent families, 58 per cent of whom live in relative low income, what initiatives does she perceive being included within the 1,001 Days manifesto to get that proportion of children living in families in relative low income reduced so that they can also have the best chances to a good start in life?

The Deputy of St. Peter:

This initiative is about giving the best chance in life to absolutely every single young person in the Island. There are also very many excellent projects already in existence and that has been one of the major conclusions of the GAAP analysis that has come forward so far. There are several excellent programmes available to parents of children of all backgrounds. These are available to people regardless of wealth or position.

5.13.6 Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

A supplementary. Would the Minister agree that voting to take away £2,000 a year from these families, as the Minister did, is totally counterproductive to what she is trying to do with the 1001 Days initiative?

The Deputy of St. Peter:

I think this subject has been well-covered with the Minister for Social Security many times over the Assembly's question periods. However, this is a shared initiative. It has ministerial responsibility and I support the actions of the Minister for Social Security.

5.13.7 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Can some of the funding for the 1,001 Days initiative be allocated to establish a Child and Family Centre like the Bridge but out west, as I believe has been identified by other Ministers and Chief Officers as being necessary, and also to increase the capacity of some of the existing charities within the Bridge please?

The Deputy of St. Peter:

As I mentioned earlier, it is a little early as the action plan needs to go to C.A.V.A. but the positioning of children in family centres around the Island is most certainly an issue that is on that draft plan.

