

2018.10.23

11 Senator S.C. Ferguson of the Minister for Health and Social Services regarding the decision not to refurbish Sandybrook Care Home: [OQ.159/2018]

Why was the refurbishment of Sandybrook Care Home not undertaken at the time the budget was allocated in 2014 for the work, as reported in R.132/2018?

The Deputy of St. Ouen (The Minister for Health and Social Services):

I refer to the reasons given in my response to the question by Deputy Southern but, essentially, the reasons why were that management decided to conduct a review into provision. Then, secondly, when it was decided to proceed with refurbishment works, it was found the costs had increased and the budget was insufficient.

5.11.1 Senator S.C. Ferguson:

What was the money, or part of the money, used for by the department?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I think that is the point: the money was not used. Therefore, the Minister for Treasury and Resources has made the decision to return it to central contingencies as the department no longer has a current business plan for the use of that money. The money has not disappeared, it remains taxpayers' money available for use within the central contingencies pot.

5.11.2 Deputy G.P. Southern:

I will make a second attempt to get some sort of assurance from the Minister that the future of Sandybrook Residential Care Home is safe in his hands, will he do so?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

I would like to refer to my previous answer. I can give no cast-iron guarantees in perpetuity, but there are no current plans to close Sandybrook.

5.11.3 Deputy G.P. Southern:

With no intention to revisit that decision with a view to closing it down?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

We are not prejudging anything. We are carrying out a review of services at Sandybrook and I want to make conditions for residents and staff as comfortable as possible.

Deputy G.P. Southern:

That is no assurance.

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

The answer I have given is what I have given. It would be irresponsible to say that something will continue for ever and a day.

5.11.4 Senator S.C. Ferguson:

Given the history of Sandybrook and the fact that much needed remediation work was ignored and not done, will the Minister contain a condition survey of all hospital property in order to quantify the size of the necessary maintenance programme of the estate, which, I understand, is significant?

The Deputy of St. Ouen:

When the Senator suggests all hospital property, is she including the General Hospital in that? Because, of course, there is much work that has been carried out in planning the continuation of the General Hospital while a new hospital is to be built; there are serious concerns over that. But I trust that this sort of work is planned maintenance and is being carried out on a regular basis in accordance with budgets allocated.