

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS  
BY DEPUTY K.G. PAMPLIN OF ST. SAVIOUR  
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 18th JUNE 2019**

**Question**

Will the Minister explain the purpose and rationale of moving governance of the probation service to the Department of Justice and Home Affairs, highlighting in particular what non-budgetary justification there may be for the move?

**Answer**

As yet there has not been agreement on whether the Jersey Probation and After Care Service (JPACS) will move to my department, this is still subject to discussions. To inform these discussions I have agreed with the Probation Board to commission an independent review of how effectively the Probation and Prison Service manage offenders, to examine the opportunities of any potential move and whether greater collaboration could better manage offenders in the community, in prison and their return to the community.

I believe that there are likely to be a number of benefits to be gained by bringing the Probation Service into the department of Justice and Home Affairs. These are mainly around enabling an integrated approach to managing offenders by designing, planning and delivering a coordinated, joint programme of activity and intervention for offenders in the community, in prison and their return to the community.

Currently there are two different approaches to managing offenders including different case management IT systems and two different programmes of activity for those that end up in prison and in due course get released.

Managing offenders should not be seen as an activity by separate services in isolation. We read too much about the revolving door syndrome where offenders enter the criminal justice system, often end up in court and then prison, only to get released and start the whole journey again.

The reoffending rate when last measured in 2016 was in the region of 45% for those who commit an offence within 2 years of their release. This is high compared with some other countries and could be reduced by the Probation and Prison Service working much more closely together. There are opportunities to bring Probation into the department and start a truly joined up strategic conversation and programme of activity that will reduce reoffending rates on Jersey.

Less reoffending means less victims of crime. Practicalities of working between two forms of governance can result in duplication of effort, lack of joined up thinking and not always all pulling in the same direction.

The current arrangements also mean there is no democratic accountability or political oversight of the Probation Service. Democratic accountability and political oversight is important in an area that affects victims, offenders and the wider community and moving Probation into the JHA department would provide that oversight and bring together the services tasked with managing offenders under one roof for the first time.