

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CHIEF MINISTER  
BY SENATOR S.C. FERGUSON  
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 15th JANUARY 2019**

**Question**

Further to the publication of the [One Government organisation chart](#), can the Minister advise what safeguards are in place to avoid conflicts in the new Growth, Housing and Environment Department, which is able to make and determine its own planning applications, for example, and state what permanent changes, if any, are proposed to eliminate conflicts in future?

What measures are in place under the new structure to establish clear accountability for the Island Plan given that Article 3 of the Planning and Building Law 2002 confers a statutory duty for the Plan upon the Minister for the Environment, but the departmental structure places responsibility for the Plan on the Director of Future Island Strategy in the Strategic Policy Performance and Population Department?

In addition, what safeguards and procedures have been put in place under the new structure to ensure the independence of Statistics Jersey, given that the organisation chart indicates that Statistics Jersey reports into the Director General of Performance, Information and Statistics?

**Answer**

A decision-making protocol has been agreed within the Growth, Housing and Environment Department to ensure that the regulatory section of the Department can operate effectively and independently of the many areas of Government that it regulates. There will be no management conflict in respect of regulatory decisions when this protocol is followed.

Responsibility for the Island Plan continues to rest with the Minister for the Environment. Officials from the Department for Strategic Policy, Performance and Population will advise and support the Minister in developing the new Island Plan.

The independence of Statistics Jersey is guaranteed within the Statistics and Census (Jersey) Law 2018, which provides for Statistics Jersey to act independently in exercising any of its official statistical functions. The Law also provides for the independent Statistics Users Group to oversee the quality, relevance and integrity of official statistics.

As a States Member, I very much value the work of Statistics Jersey and its independence, and the advice it provides to all of us. It is important that its independence is protected and should be strengthened wherever this is necessary.

Furthermore, as Chief Minister, I am aware that concerns have been expressed about whether the checks and balances for the present structure could be strengthened. This is a matter which will be considered by COM in due course.

Additional steps have already been taken, whereby the C&AG and Complaints Board reports are being directly presented to and discussed by COM, which has never happened before.