

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR CHILDREN AND HOUSING
BY DEPUTY M.R. HIGGINS OF ST. HELIER
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 17th NOVEMBER 2020**

Question

Will the Minister advise Members how many independent advocates have been appointed by his Department to act as a point of contact between the Children's Service and its clients; and, furthermore, will he provide the following information –

- (a) the role taken by advocates in this context;
- (b) any qualifications or experience an advocate is expected to have;
- (c) the number of people each advocate represents; and
- (d) a list of names of all those persons appointed to date?

Answer

- a) The role of the advocacy and participation worker is to support children and young people to fully participate in decisions about their lives, directly benefit from the relationships with carers and professionals and ensure that there is proper accountability.

There has been one adult who we have sought to arrange Welfare advocacy for and to provide financial support to achieve this. It is not in place yet, as the adult is considering this offer. This advocacy is to support the adult in fully participating in decision making around her children.

Currently we have the Children's Rights Team within Children's Social Care and two organisations that are commissioned by Government to provide independent advocacy to children who have the involvement of Children's Social Care:

- b) The expectation is that advocates are trained to the Diploma Level qualification in independent Advocacy. The children's Rights Team have enrolled on this training which is a two-year course. A relevant qualification, to a minimum standard of level 3 in a discipline related to working with children and young people and/or promoting rights
- c) Jersey Cares provide independent advocacy to children in care aged 5 – 18 years and young people leaving care aged 18 – 25 years. They have been commissioned since October 2019 and up to the end of August 2020 they have worked with 40 children and young people.

Barnardo's provide independent advocacy for children aged 5 – 18 years who are subject of a child protections plan. In the period January – September 2020, they have provided advocacy support for 76 children.

Since the Children's Rights Team was established, they have provided advocacy to 40 children and young people.

We are unable to say the number of people that each advocate represents.

- d) Jersey Cares have the following staff; an advocacy and participation lead (30hrs per week), an advocacy and participation worker (30 hours per week) and, when needed, by the CEO (37.5hrs

per week). Barnardo's have one employee that provides 37 hours per week and the Children's Rights Team is resourced by a Team Manager and two Children's Rights Officers.