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Deputy David Johnson
Chair
Economic and International Affairs Panel
By email

08 September 2021

Dear Chair

Re: Discussions over Island help for Afghan refugees

Thank you for your letter of 19th August and I apologise for the delay in my reply.

The Panel will now be aware, following developments which are in the public domain, that it is very unlikely that Jersey will be able to directly accommodate any refugees from Afghanistan. As a small Island community, we do face additional challenges in providing some of the facilities and services that are ideally required when accommodating refugees and, as you reference, there are legal barriers which we have again unfortunately not been able to overcome. These mirror those that we faced in 2015.

I can confirm that Jersey Overseas Aid is working to provide any assistance they can to people in Afghanistan, ensuring that any support is properly and carefully targeted. In addition, I hope further announcements will be forthcoming regarding means by which the Government and wider community in Jersey can give its support for the refugees who have come to the UK. I can inform the Panel that a number of options are under consideration.

I note that this topic will, rightly, be an area of questioning at the quarterly public hearing on Friday 10th September. I cannot be certain as to how matters may have progressed by that time, and in a public forum I may not be able to give full details if certain matters are still being finalised. I would, however, be pleased to brief the Panel in private either prior to, or after, the hearing.

Yours sincerely



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