

19-21 Broad Street | St Helier
Jersey | JE2 3RR

Senator Steve Pallett
Chair, Migration & Population Review Panel
By email

13 January 2022

Dear Chair

**Migration and Population Review Panel
Review of P.116/2021 Common Population Policy**

As part of your Panel's review of the Common Population Policy, please find my responses to the questions which were originally put to the Assistant Chief Minister on Thursday 6 January 2022. For ease, I have included the questions, in bold.

1. Are you able to provide a timeframe for a register of property ownership to be developed and implemented?

The Assistant Chief Minister, Deputy Huelin, has been assigned responsibility for the development of the property register. I understand that he has requested that the initial discovery phase of the work be completed in the next six months, including examining how the project fits with other data projects within government and protocols for maintenance. Following completion of this discovery phase, more certainty on timescales and costs will be available.

**2. What actions are outlined in the policy to address Jersey's residential housing crisis in the context of the desire to find a 'stable population' level?
AND**

4. How do you believe the proposed policy will impact areas under your Ministerial remit?

There is a significant interaction between population and housing issues. This was highlighted in my Creating Better Homes report (R.98/2021) published in June 2021.

My report identifies links between housing policy, population policy, the Future Economy programme and the bridging Island Plan.

Priority 2 of my Plan is 'Increase supply, manage demand', and this section sets out plans to significantly increase the number of new homes built in coming years, with 1,000 affordable units delivered by 2025.

Action 2C of my Plan required progress on a pipeline of Government-owned sites to be established by the end of 2021, and this was achieved with the publication of the 'Publicly owned sites for housing' report in November 2021, identifying nine sites with an estimated yield of more than 1,000 units.

Action 2D of my Plan identifies the close connection between housing and population policies as follows: “The Minister for Housing and Communities will work with other ministers to ensure housing availability and housing policy considerations are fully considered in the development of new migration controls and the future population policy.”

The first Common Population Policy (P.116/2021) lodged by the Council of Ministers also explores the interaction between housing and population issues. Pages 25-26 of the report examine these issues but note that much current data is based on the 2011 Census and that the results of the 2021 Census will be extremely valuable in developing policies in these areas.

The results of the public survey indicate the strong connection in the minds of the public between housing and population. Increasing the supply of homes was identified as the 5th most popular government action from the public survey. Business and community groups also identified housing as a key issue.

The actions listed in the proposition with particular relevance to housing issues include:

- Chief Minister – publish 2021 Census results.
- Chief Minister – create a register of property ownership
- Minister for Housing and Communities – encourage the use of modern methods of construction in residential developments.

As the proposition explains, the first iteration of the Common Population Policy starts to create a framework upon which more detailed policies will be developed over the next few years. This is particularly relevant to housing policies and I would expect the next Minister for Housing and Communities to continue to play an active role in developing future common population policy reports.

3. What review has been undertaken to ascertain the current impact of high cost of renting and property purchase upon population levels, and young people of working age leaving the Island or not coming to work here because they see housing cost as a barrier to living here?

Work is underway to understand better the additional drivers of recent price increases, over and above the structural challenges of supply and demand that were considered by the Housing Policy Development Board. This work will support the development of further policy to seek to improve housing affordability.

As discussed in the development of population and migration policy, data does not currently support the regular tracking of Island population, outside of the Census, and this extends to a lack of data showing *why* people choose to locate themselves in Jersey or elsewhere, which is likely to be a combination of factors reflecting their personal and professional circumstances and, for some, including the cost of housing.

Yours sincerely



Deputy Russell Labey
Minister for Housing and Communities
D +44 (0)1534 440624
E r.labey@gov.je