



## **Children's Commissioner for Jersey**

Promoting and Protecting Children's Rights

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### **Office of the Children's Commissioner**

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Dear Catherine

Many thanks for your letter of 26<sup>th</sup> October, in which you sought my views on the compatibility of aspects of the Government's proposed Common Strategic Policy and our own Jersey Youth Manifesto, which was published earlier this year.

Before I address the individual questions that you asked, let me first begin by clarifying that the Jersey Youth Manifesto 2022, while a solid piece of qualitative work (which was carried out in line with our own participation standards), is not a statistically viable document. It is important to keep that caveat in mind when relating proposed governmental strategy to the views and priorities expressed in the manifesto.

In response to your specific questions:

1. Broadly, yes, I do believe that the aims of the proposed CSP are in line with the views and priorities expressed in the Jersey Youth Manifesto. Many of the same issues have been identified in both documents.

1 (a) Neither I nor my staff were consulted by Government during their drafting of the CSP but nor would we expect to be. There is a requirement for Government to consult the Children's Commissioner when drafting policy or legislation that affects children and young people but not when preparing a strategic document. I would, however, expect Government to have taken into account the views of children and young people while the drafting the CSP – there is certainly adequate official recent data for them to have drawn on.

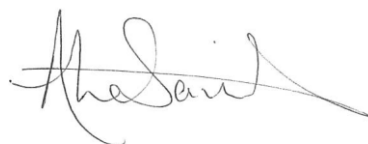
2. Article 24 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which was adopted by Jersey in 2014, states that every child has the right to the best possible

healthcare. With that in mind, the position of our office has historically been, and continues to be, that Jersey's obligations under Article 24 will only have been fully met when all healthcare is free for all children and young people under the age of 18. However, the realisation of children's rights is progressive, and objectives cannot always be achieved in one fell swoop. I therefore welcome the CSP's considerations of 'affordability' and 'quality of life' as positive steps in the Government's progressive realisation of children's rights in Jersey.

3. In the interests of avoiding speculation, I would prefer to wait and see what impact the investment in children's and young people's mental health has on service delivery, and the reduction of waiting times, in particular. The objective of reducing waiting times for young people who are due to be seen by staff at CAMHS is one that we certainly support, as it reflects a need that has been identified by many children and young people with whom we have had direct contact, either through special projects, casework or routine engagement over the years.

3 (a) I do not yet have any detail on the Government's proposed extra investment in early intervention services for children and young people who are experiencing difficulties with their mental health. But I feel optimistic that, if it is the right intervention at the right time, this strategy could be highly beneficial. Of course, it is still important to continue to watch closely and see what (if any) changes result from the extra investment, and to measure those changes appropriately. The ongoing collection of data will be key to this endeavour, as will feedback from professionals in education and frontline services. It is also worth noting that the work we have carried out with children and young people in the past few years would seem to support the theory that more (and more targeted) early intervention could yield positive results.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrea Le Saint', written in a cursive style.

**Andrea Le Saint**  
Acting Children's Commissioner for Jersey