4.15 Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade of the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs regarding the rehabilitation of offenders. (OQ.120/2026)

Will the Minister advise what level of importance she places on the rehabilitation of offenders, and will she give an assurance in this area that it will be sufficiently and sustainably resourced?

Senator H.M. Miles (The Minister for Justice and Home Affairs):

I thank the Deputy for the question. I place very high importance on the rehabilitation of offenders, both in prison and the community. Rehabilitation is essential if we are to reduce reoffending, protect the public and help individuals lead law-abiding and productive lives following their conviction. The work undertaken by both the States of Jersey Prison Service and the Jersey Probation and After-Care Service is critical to achieving those outcomes. I can assure all Members that rehabilitation remains a key priority, and I will continue to advocate for the resources necessary to support effective offender rehabilitation and reduce reoffending in Jersey.

[11:45]

4.15.1 Deputy M. Tadier:

Part of the reason for asking this question is that I am mindful that her predecessor talked about the fact that there could be up to 300 new offences being committed by the second year of some of the new legislation we have put in around offences to the persons. That means more people in prison and they will need to be rehabilitated as part of that process. Can the Minister give an assurance that well into the future, and indeed in this forthcoming Budget, there will be sufficient resources being put in, not just to house any new custodial sentences but to look at and monitor them in the longer term, and whether this involves any new acquisition of staff?

Senator H.M. Miles:

I thank the Deputy for the opportunity to clarify that the model that has been put in place to fund the outcome of the new offences created by the V.A.W.G. legislation, is demand-led and there will be sufficient resources for agencies to access over and above what has originally been identified in order for them to meet these demands. One of the pieces of work that I am doing is around our criminal justice strategy and around sentencing policy. It does not necessarily follow that we will see a rise in the prison population. We have an excellent Probation and After-Care Service, and they have the confidence of the court. We already know that they have a 75 per cent success rate in the outcomes of the community penalties. This is a complex area; it does not necessarily mean that everybody will be put into prison. The other area that I am bringing in next year is going to be the post-custodial supervision legislation. That will not be brought in until we know that it is appropriately resourced. The Probation and After-Care Service have already been awarded 2 full-time posts in order to manage the demands that that will place upon that particular service.

4.15.2 Deputy H.L. Jeune of St. John, St. Lawrence and Trinity:

The Minister mentioned at the end of her answer about the post-custodial supervision law she will bring in. Just to check for the record that this relates to ensuring the introduction of mandatory probation and mandatory support for post-custodial supervision. If the Minister can confirm that and how will she ensure that there will be sufficient resources to support such mandatory support?

Senator H.M. Miles:

The post-custodial supervision law has been a long time in the making and a great deal of work has been done to understand what the resource capacity will be. As I said in my answer to Deputy Tadier, that funding has been put in place in the Budget. The Probation Service are due to receive funding for up to 2 probation officers who will manage the case load of post-custodial supervision, which will be compulsory supervision until the end of sentence.

4.15.3 Deputy M. Tadier:

I just ask for clarification. The Minister referred to a 75 per cent success rate; I think that was referring to the non-custodial route which, if one was being critical from the other side could say it is a 25 per cent failure rate. Would the Minister explain what she sees as a good benchmark or what are the benchmarks for success in this area? What would she be doing to try and improve that, particularly in this area?

Senator H.M. Miles:

A 75 per cent completion rate for community sentences is considered to be a very good outcome and significantly higher than you would find in England, Wales and Scotland. Rehabilitation is not an exact science, it is a process. When you are dealing with very high-risk offenders, it is highly likely that they will go on to reoffend. Whereas I would love some Utopian situation of no crime, and I could talk about this for hours, we will never achieve 100 per cent. I am very satisfied that 75 per cent is a very satisfactory level.