

**REPLY BY THE MINISTER OF  
THE HOME DEPARTMENT  
TO QUESTIONS ASKED PURSUANT TO RULE 6 OF THE  
RULES OF PROCEDURE BY DEPUTY LESTER QUERIPEL**

**Question 1**

*Does the Safeguarder Service always take Minutes of meetings held with children and the members of their family?*

**Answer**

Minutes are not routinely taken at meetings unless specifically requested. The Department is aware of only one occasion when this has occurred. Notes are ordinarily taken which will inform the report for Court.

**Question 2**

*If the answer to that question is 'yes' then can you tell me please if the family members concerned are allowed to retain copies of those Minutes?*

**Answer**

The party being interviewed would be able to keep a copy but the information would be bound by Court confidentiality.

**Question 3**

*If a family member asks for amendments to be made to those Minutes, are the family members then given copies of the amended Minutes?*

**Answer**

Yes they would be, or a disagreement would be noted.

**Question 4**

*Do all members of the family always see the final assessments completed by the Safeguarder Service?*

**Answer**

Only the parties to the proceedings would see the final report.

**Question 5**

*Once a case is resolved, does the Safeguarder Service have any further contact with the children and family involved in that particular case?*

**Answer**

The Service does respond to contact from clients as set out during the recent public hearing of the Scrutiny Committee's review of the Children Law.

**Question 6**

*What does the Safeguarder Service do with all the records and paperwork of cases once they've been resolved: are those records and paperwork kept on file or destroyed?*

**Answer**

Records are maintained in accordance with the Home Department's retention policy which also takes into account HSSD's policy in terms of Care and Adoption cases. Not all information is stored; copies of police reports supplied to the Safeguarder Service are destroyed when the Safeguarder is discharged from the case. Guernsey Police retains the originals.

**Question 7**

*If those records and paperwork are destroyed, then who is responsible for doing that and is that destruction witnessed by another person?*

**Answer**

The administrators of the Service securely destroy records as and when appropriate. This is not witnessed by anyone else.

**Question 8**

*Would that information ever be passed on to other agencies by the Safeguarder Service and if so, would consent be gained from members of the relevant family by the service before the information was released?*

**Answer**

Information would only be passed on with the consent of the person concerned unless it was an urgent child protection matter or subject to a legally binding request for information such as a Court Order.

**Question 9**

*Does the Safeguarder Service welcome or object to a family enlisting the support of a States of Guernsey Deputy?*

**Answer**

The Department has no concerns about people enlisting the support of their Deputies, however it is important this is done in a way which does not undermine or otherwise usurp due process and in particular the established complaint procedures.

**Question 10**

*If a Safeguarder is off work due to illness or on holiday, does another Safeguarder take over their casework or do children and their families involved in those cases have to wait until they return to work?*

**Answer**

Subject to the circumstances of the sickness absence either another Safeguarder temporarily takes over the case or it is permanently reallocated.

**Question 11**

*If the Head of Safeguarder is off work due to illness or on holiday, who takes over their duties and their responsibilities?*

**Answer**

Subject to the circumstances of the sickness absence either another Safeguarder temporarily takes over the case or it is permanently reallocated.

The line manager of the Head of Safeguarder would assume responsibility for the Service in the event of absence.

**Question 12**

*Guernsey and Alderney have yet to sign up to the United Nations Convention of the Rights of a Child. Therefore can you tell me please if the Safeguarder Service are actively pursuing any measures to accelerate our application to sign?*

**Answer**

This is not an area that is within the remit of the Safeguarder Service, however is addressed within the new Children and Young People's Plan which was approved by the States in February.

**Question 13**

*Jersey have introduced several operations in the last couple of years to mitigate against the exploitation of vulnerable children. (one such operation is entitled Operation Phoenix) So with this thought uppermost in my mind, can you tell me if the Home department work with Jersey and monitor the results of their operations please?*

**Answer**

Guernsey Police has a good working relationship with the States of Jersey Police and the two services regularly share information. With regards specific operations carried out by the States of Jersey Police, should any information come to light that is relevant to colleagues in Guernsey, this would be passed on and acted upon. The same is true vice versa, regarding any specific operations carried out by Guernsey Police.

More broadly in terms of work on child sexual exploitation, the Home Department continues to play a key and active role on several joint-working platforms, such as the Multi Agency Sexual Exploitation group and the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub, to ensure that relevant information is shared between agencies involved in the care of young people.

#### **Question 14**

*In June of 2014, Elizabeth Coe, the CEO of the National Association of Child Contact Services expressed concerns that the contact service and centre here in the island, was far too 'low key'. She went on to say that it was absolutely vital that families 'in crisis' here in Guernsey were made aware of its existence. In relation to that I ask the following questions:*

- A. Do you have an opinion as to why the centre and the service was so 'low key' at that time?*
- B. Are you aware of any measures being put in place since 2014 to raise the profile of the service and the centre itself?*
- C. Do any members of the Safeguarder Service currently play any role in the day to day operations of the service or the centre? If so, what exactly is that role?*

#### **Answer**

The Child Contact Centre is a charity which operates outside of the responsibilities of the Home Department. The Department however notes and is grateful for the important contribution the Child Contact Centre makes through its representation on the Safeguarder Advisory Group. The role and function of the Safeguarder Advisory Group was explained in response to a question you asked the Department at the recent public hearing of the Scrutiny Committee's review of the Children Law.

**Date of Receipt of the Questions:**

**Monday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2016**

**Date of Reply:**

**Monday 11<sup>th</sup> April 2016**